

MYSTERIUM PANSOPHICUM

OR

A FUNDAMENTAL STATEMENT
CONCERNING THE

EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY MYSTERY

HOW THEY ARE IN ONE ANOTHER, AND HOW IN
THE EARTHLY THE HEAVENLY IS MANIFESTED
DRAWN UP IN NINE TEXTS

WHERE BABEL, THE GREAT CITY ON EARTH, IS
TO BE SEEN WITH ITS POWER AND MARVELS. WHY
BABEL IS BORN, AND FROM WHAT. WHERE
ANTICHRIST SHALL STAND NAKED.

A most wonderful revelation, taken out of the
highest arcanum. Herein is wholly revealed what
the turba of all beings is.

Written for the children of God, who by such
warning will flee from burning Babel, and shall
be born children of God out of the turba.

All very earnestly and faithfully given from knowledge
of the great Mystery, the 8th May, 1620

BY

JACOB BÖHME

NEWLY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

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THE FIRST TEXT

[MP 1:1] The unground is an eternal nothing, but makes an eternal beginning as a craving. For the nothing is a craving after something. But as there is nothing that can give anything, accordingly the craving itself is the giving of it, which j^et also is a nothing, or merely a desirous seeking. And that is the eternal origin of Magic, which makes within itself where there is nothing; which makes something out of nothing, and that in itself only, though this craving is also a nothing, that is, merely a will. It has nothing, and there is nothing that can give it anything; neither has it any place where it can find or repose itself.

THE SECOND TEXT

[MP 2:1] Seeing then there is a craving in the nothing, it makes in itself the will to something. This will is a spirit, as a thought, which goes out of the craving and is the seeker of the craving, for it finds its mother or the craving. Then is this will a Magician in its mother; for it has found in the nothing something, viz. its mother, and so now it has a place for its dwelling.

[MP 2:2] And herein understand that the will is a spirit, and different from the desirous craving. For the will is an insensitive and incognitive life; but the craving is found by the will, and is in the will a being. Thus the craving is a Magia, and the will a Magus; and the will is greater than its mother which gives it, for it is lord in the mother; and the mother is dumb, but the will is a life without origin. The craving is certainly a cause of the will, but without knowledge or understanding. The will is the understanding of the craving.

[MP 2:3] Thus we give you in brief to consider of nature and the spirit of nature, what there has been from eternity without origin. And we find thus that the will, viz. the spirit, has no place for its rest; but the craving is its own place, and the will is a band to it, and yet is not held in check.

THE THIRD TEXT

[MP 3:1] Seeing then the eternal will is free from the craving, but the craving is not free from the will for the will rules over the craving), we recognize the will as the eternal Omnipotence. For it has no parallel. The craving is indeed a movement of attraction or desire, but without understanding; it has a life, but without knowledge.

[MP 3:2] Now the will governs the life of the craving, and doth therewith what it will. And though it doth somewhat, yet this is not known till the same reveals itself through the will, so that it becomes an entity in the life of the will; then it is known what the will has wrought.

[MP 3:3] We recognize, therefore, the eternal Willspirit as God, and the moving life of the craving as Nature. For there is nothing prior, and either is without beginning, and each is a cause of the other, and an eternal bond,

[MP 3:4] Thus the Will-spirit is an eternal knowing of the unground, and the life of the craving an eternal being [body] of the will.

THE FOURTH TEXT

[MP 4:1] Seeing then the craving is a process of desire, and this desire a life, this same desiring life goes in the craving forward, and is always pregnant with the craving.

[MP 4:2] And the desire is a stern attraction, and yet hath nothing but itself, or the eternity without foundation. And it draws magically, viz. its own desiring into a substance.

[MP 4:3] For the will takes where there is nothing. It is a lord and possessor. It is itself not a being, and yet rules in being, and being makes it desirous, namely of being. And since it becomes in itself desirous, it is magical, and makes itself pregnant, viz. by spirit without being; for originally it is only spirit. Thus it makes in its imagination only spirit, and becomes pregnant with spirit as with the eternal knowing of the unground, in the All-power of the life, without being.

[MP 4:4] As then it is pregnant, the engenderment goes within itself, and dwells in itself. For the essence of the other life cannot grasp this pregnation, and be its container. Hence the pregnation must go within itself and be its own container, as a Son in the eternal Spirit.

[MP 4:5] And as this pregnation has no being, then that is a voice or sound, as a Word of the spirit; and yet remains in the primitive condition of spirit, for it hath else no seat.

[MP 4:6] But in this Word is a will, which desires to go out into a being. This will is the life of the original will, and proceeds out of the pregnation, as out of the mouth of the will, into the life of Magic, viz. into Nature; and reveals the non-understanding life of Magic, so that the same is a mysterium in which an understanding exists essentially, and thus obtains an essential spirit. There, every essence is an arcanum or a mysterium of an entire being, and is thus a comprehension as an unfathomable wonder of eternity; for many lives without number are generated, and yet all is together but one being.

[MP 4:7] The threefold Spirit without being is its master and possessor; and yet it possesses not the Nature-being, for it (the Spirit) dwells in itself.

[MP 4:8] The Word is its centre or seat, and is in the midst as a heart; and the spirit of the Word, which takes its origin in the primal eternal will, reveals the wonders of the essential life. There are, then, two mysteries: one in the spirit-life, and one in the essential life. The spirit-life is acknowledged as God, and is rightly so called; and the essential life is acknowledged as the Nature-life, which would have no understanding if the Spirit or the spirit-life were not desirous. In this desire the divine Being, as the eternal word or heart of God, is continually and from eternity generated; from which the desiring will as Spirit eternally goes out into the Naturelife, and reveals therein the mystery in essences. So that there are two lives and also two beings from and in a single, eternal, unfathomable origin.

[MP 4:9] And thus we apprehend what God and Nature is; how the one and the other is from eternity without any ground or beginning. For it is an everlasting beginning. It begins itself perpetually and from eternity to eternity, where there is no number; for it is the unground.

THE FIFTH TEXT

[MP 5:1] Seeing then there have been from eternity two beings, we cannot say that one exists beside the other, and is disposed so that the one comprehends the other; neither can it be said that one is outside of the other, and that there is a separation. No; but thus we apprehend it, that the spirit-life faces inwards, and the nature-life outwards and forwards.

[MP 5:2] Together, then, we compare them to a spherical orb which goeth on all sides, as the wheel in Ezekiel indicates.

[MP 5:3] The spirit-life is an entire fulness of the nature-life, and yet is not laid hold of by the nature-life. They are two principles in a single origin, each having its mystery and its operation. The nature-life works unto fire, and the spirit-life unto the light of glory. By fire we understand the fierceness of the consuming of the essentiality of Nature; and by light the production of water, which deprives the fire of power, as is set forth in the Forty Questions on the soul.

[MP 5:4] And thus we are able to recognize an eternal substantiality of Nature, identical with water and fire, which are as it were mixed together; where then this gives a light-blue colour, like the flash of fire; where it hath a form as a ruby mixed with crystal in one substance, or as yellow, white, red and blue mingled in a dark water; where it is as blue in green, yet each has its lustre, and shines. And the water checks the fire, so that there is no consuming there, but an eternal essence or substance in two mysteries united in one another, and yet the distinction of two principles as two kinds of life.

[MP 5:5] And thus we understand here the essence of all beings, and that it is a magical essence, as a will can create itself in the essential life, and so enter into a birth, and in the great Mystery, in the origin of fire, awaken a source which before was not manifest, but lay hidden in mystery like a gleam in the multiplicity of colours; as we have a mirror of this in the devils and in all malignity. And we recognize also from whence all things, evil and good, take their origin, namely from the Imagination in the great Mystery, where a wonderful essential life generates itself.

[MP 5:6] As we have a sufficient knowledge thereof by the creatures of this world, as where the divine Life awakened once for all the Nature-life, when it brought forth such wonderful creatures from the essential mystery; whereby we understand that every essence is come to be a mysterium or a life, and also that in the great Mystery there is a magical craving, so that the craving of every essence makes in its turn a mirror, to see and to know itself in the mirror.

[MP 5:7] And then the craving seizes this (namely the mirror), brings it into its imagination, and finds that it is not of its life. Hence opposition arises and loathing, so that the craving would discard the mirror, and yet cannot. And therefore the craving seeks the limit of the beginning, and passes out of the mirror. Thus the mirror is broken, and the breaking is a turba, as a dying of the formed or comprehended life.

[MP 5:8] And it is highly recognizable by us how the imagination of the Eternal Nature has the turba in the craving, in the Mystery, but not awakenable, unless the creature, as the mirror of eternity, doth itself awaken this, viz. the fierce wrath, which in eternity is hidden in mystery.

[MP 5:9] And we see here, when the Eternal Nature put itself in motion once for all by the creation of the world, that the fierce wrath was awakened too, and also manifested itself in creatures. As indeed we find many evil beasts, likewise herbs and trees, as also worms, toads, serpents and the like, — of which the Eternal Nature hath a loathing, and the malignity and poison is nourished only in its own essence.

[MP 5:10] And therefore the Eternal Nature seeks the limit of the malignity, and would abandon it. Then it falls into the turba, as into a dying; and yet there is no dying, but a spewing-out in the Mystery, where the malignity with its life must stand apart as in a darkness. For the Eternal Nature abandons it and casts it into shade, so that it stands thus by itself as an evil, poisonous, fierce mysterium, and is itself its own magic as a craving of the poisonous anguish.

THE SIXTH TEXT

[MP 6:1] When we consider and take cognizance of ourselves, we find the opposition of all essences, each being the loathing of the other, and enemy to the other.

[MP 6:2] For every will desires a purity without turba in the other essence; and yet has itself the turba in it, and is also the loathing of the other. Then the power of the greater extends over the lesser and holds it in subjection, unless it escape from it; otherwise the strong rules over the weak. Therefore the weak doth run, and seeks the limit of the driver or oppressor, and would be free from compulsion. And thus the limit, which is hidden in mystery, is sought by all creatures.

[MP 6:3] And hence arises all the power of this world, that one rules over the other. And this was not in the beginning commanded or ordained by the highest good, but grew out of the turba. Afterward Nature acknowledged it as her own being, which was born from her, and gave it laws, to generate itself further in the framed government. Where then this birth has climbed to regal prerogative, and has moreover sought the abyss, as the One, till it is become monarchy or empire. And there it is climbing still, and will be one and not many. And though it be in many, yet will the first source, from which all is generated, rule over all, and will alone be a lord over all governments.

[MP 6:4] And as this craving was in the beginning one government, but in time divided itself into many according to the essences; therefore the plurality again seeks the One, and it is certainly born in the sixth number of the crown, in the six thousandth year in the figure; not at the end, but in the hour of the day in which the creation of the wonders was completed.

[MP 6:5] That is, when the wonders of the turba are in the end, a Lord is born who governs the whole world, but by many forms of administration.

[MP 6:6] And then the self-grown authority and the oppressor will be sought; for the lesser, who hath lain under, has run to the limit. Then everything separates itself, for it is at the limit, and there is no staying or revoking.

[MP 6:7] Also the turba, as the fierce wrath of all creatures, will be sought; for it has with the loathing of the creatures run to the limit, and now becomes manifest, viz. in the midst, in the number of the crown, in the six thousandth year, a little over, not under.

[MP 6:8] In the day and the hour when the creation was accomplished in mystery, and was set as a mirror of eternity in the wonders [of this time]1.

[MP 6:9] That took place on the sixth day, past noon. There [also in the end] the mystery with the wonders is revealed and is known. Where then purity shall drive out the turba for a time, till the beginning pass into the end. And then is the mystery [of creation but] a wonder in figures. 1 The explanatory additions within brackets [] are from Claassen's book of extracts.

THE SEVENTH TEXT

[MP 7:1] Now, seeing in the mystery of the Eternal Nature we have such an arcanum from which all creatures evil and good were generated and created, we recognize it to be a magical essence or substance, where one Magic has by desire awakened another and brought it into being, where everything has elevated itself and carried itself to the highest power. For the Spirit of God is not a maker in Nature, but a revealer and a seeker of the good.

[MP 7:2] Thus hath evil as by magical craving always sought and found itself in the Mystery, and has been revealed apart from the divine purpose. For fierceness is a harsh rigorousness, and rules over the simple.

[MP 7:3] All has, therefore, grown from its own tree without premeditation. For the first revealer, viz. God, ordained not malignity to the government, but reason or wit, which was to reveal the wonders and be a guide of life. And here there meets us the great secret which has from eternity existed in mystery, viz. the Mystery with its colours, which are four. The fifth is not proper to the mysterium of Nature, but is of the Mysterium of God, and shines in the mysterium of Nature as a living light.

[MP 7:4] And these are the colours wherein all things lie: blue, red, gi-een and yellow. The fifth, white, belongs to God; and yet has also its lustre in Nature. It is the fifth essence, a pure unblemished child; as is to be seen in gold and silver, and in a white clear stone that resists fire.

[MP 7:5] For fire is the proof or trial of all the colours, in which none subsists but white, the same being a reflection of God's Majesty. The black colour belongs not to the mystery [of the wonders of creation], but is the veil or the darkness wherein all things lie.

[MP 7:6] Further, we find here the tree of tongues or languages, with four alphabets. One signed with the characters of the Mystery, in which is found the language of Nature, which in all languages is the root. But in the birth of plurality (or of many languages) it is not known save by its own children, to whom the Mystery itself gives understanding; for it is a wonder of God. This alphabet of the language of Nature is hidden among them all in the black colour; for the black colour belongs not to the number of colours. The same is mystery and not understood, save by him who possesses the language of Nature, to whom it is revealed by God's Spirit.

[MP 7:7] The second alphabet is the Hebrew, which reveals the mystery [of the language of Nature], and names the tree with the branches and twigs.

[MP 7:8] The third is the Greek, which names the tree with the fruit and every ornament, and first correctly expresses knowledge.

[MP 7:9] The fourth is the Latin to which many nations and tongues have recourse, which expresses the tree with its power and virtue.

[MP 7:10] The fifth is God's Spirit, which is the revealer of all alphabets; and this alphabet can no man learn, unless it reveal itself in man's spirit.

[MP 7:11] These alphabets take their origin from the colours of the great Mystery, and distribute themselves moreover into seventy-seven languages; although we recognize only five for chief languages, and seventy-two for the marvels wherein Babel is understood, as a mouth of a confusedness. Their reason abandoned her guide and willed to go alone, and to climb aloft into the Mystery.

[MP 7:12] As is to be known by the children of Nimrod at the tower of Babel, when they had fallen from obedience to God into their own individual reason; then they had lost their guide and did confound reason, so that they comprehended not their own language.

[MP 7:13] Thus many languages, viz. seventy-two, grew out of confused Babel, and each entered into itself and sought knowledge, each in its own reason and iniquity; for they had forsaken God and were become heathens. And he suffered them to walk in their wonders, for they would not cleave unto him, but would be a special self-ful growth. And their own reason (which was mixed of all the colours) had to rule them.

[MP 7:14] Then the turba was born, so that they were not of one mind; for every one would live under guidance of his own colour. And yet these were not the true chief colours, but only their evil selfhatched children, who hatched themselves out in reason. And they ran without the right guide, who had created all in one tongue, and revealed no more than one, — one tree with the branches and the power together with the fruit.

[MP 7:15] For the four alphabets are in one tree, and proceed from one another. But the multitude of languages must have recourse to their characters as members of the same family, and yet also will be their very own. And all shoot forth in opposition to the tree.

THE EIGHTH TEXT

[MP 8:1] We see here the origin of two sorts of religions, from which Babel as an idol-god is born, and that in heathens and Jews.

[MP 8:2] For Babel is in both, and they are two races in one. One, under guidance of its reason (as of the life and spirit of Nature), goes forward and seeks to elevate itself. It makes itself a way in its being; for its will proceeds out of its own craving and seeks its magic, as a great number for its government, and goes simply out of itself forward. Its will remains in its plurality, and is the god and guide of its plurality.

[MP 8:3] And though the Free-will of God oppose it and reprove it, yet the idol-god only flatters with its lips the Free-will, viz. the Spirit of God, and honours its own will in the number of plurality. For this will is generated from its treasure, from its own magic, and comprehends not the Free-will of God. It is born therefore from flesh and blood, from its own nature; and is a child of this world, and

regards its treasure as its love. Hence it is a hypocrite and a confused Babel. The number of plurality and its own magic confuse it, in that it goes out from one number into many. This multiplicity is a confused Babel; and its hypocritical mouth, with which it gives good words and solemnly promises much to the Spirit of Unity, is an antichrist and a liar. For it speaks in one way and acts in another. Its heart is a craving, and the spirit of its heart has turned itself to the craving.

[MP 8:4] Thus the Magician of multiplicity is a proud, arrogant, covetous, malignant devourer, and a spirit from the desiring plurality; and is a false god. He is not attached to the Free-will of Nature, which hath the might of wonders at its command, and he has no understanding in the Divine Mystery, for he cleaves not with his will to that Spirit. Else, if his will were turned towards Freedom, the Spirit of God would reveal his magical mystery, and his wonders and works would, with his will, stand in God.

[MP 8:5] But seeing they go out from themselves, the beginning seeks the end, and the middle is the turba. For it is not in the Free-will of God; but it grows from itself, and elevates itself like a proud tree.

[MP 8:6] And as God is one only in will, one in the eternal Desire or in the eternal Magic (so that the craving of the eternal Magic yields itself up to the eternal Will, and draws therein its life), then the apostate will is a perjured whore, for it is a generatress of falsehood, and hangs not on the Free-will.

[MP 8:7] And here we understand a separation from God; a cause of all this being Lucifer, who made the Magic of Nature subject to false desire. Thus two eternal lives are born: one in the will of God, the other in the will of the devil and of the fierce wrath; and this is Babel with Antichrist on earth.

[MP 8:8] All that goes out from God's will into its own will belongs to Babel. This is seen in Jews and heathens, and in all peoples.

[MP 8:9] The heathen remained in their own magic. But those who from the itch of corruption passed out into the light of Nature because they did not know God, yet have lived in purity, — these were children of the Free-will, and in them has the Spirit of Freedom revealed great wonders in their mystery, as is to be seen by the wisdom they have bequeathed to us.

[MP 8:10] But the others, who have lived only in their own magical will from flesh and blood, — their will was drowned in the turba. And the turba streamed forth in their will, and gave them a spirit according to the essences of covetousness and fierceness. These have sought only the number of plurality, as dominions and kingdoms.

[MP 8:11] And when the turba could not on account of power advance, it grew furious and began hostilities. And from thence war has its origin, viz. from pride and greed of plurality, and belongs with its number to the Mystery of wrath.

[MP 8:12] Thus also were the Jews. God revealed himself to them, but they were attached also to two wills. One part to the commandment, with their will directed into God's will, as the patriarchs and all the pious hoppers of Israel. The others performed with their hands the work of the law, and adhered with their will to their poisoned magic, viz. to covetousness, and sought only their numbers of plurality. Their mouth was a Jew, and their heart a Babylonish whore, a hypocrite and an antichrist, with fair words and a false covetous heart.

[MP 8:13] And in the same way in Christendom and among all peoples the Babylonish whore with Antichrist is established. In one people dwell at once two kingdoms, and are not miscible in the inward spirit so as to become one, like as clay and iron are not miscible. They mix indeed by the body, but their spirits are two kinds (Dan. ii. 43).

[MP 8:14] Whosoever will know Antichrist, let him seek him thus; he will find him in every house. But the worst of all is the crowned whore; and her sponsors at the baptism of whoredom are the brawlers who lead out of the one will of God into many wills, that they may inherit only the number of plurality, and fatten earthly bellies.

[MP 8:15] And the other part of the Free-will of God proceeds with its magical will out of itself into Freedom, viz. into the one ungraspable will of God. These stand turned backward in the magical figure. Their life seeks bread, and goes forward; yet their will is not in the bread, but passes out of itself, out of the craving, into God. These live with the will in God, in one number; these are children of the eternal true Magic. For God's Spirit dwells in their will, and reveals to them the eternal wonders of God; and their life's spirit reveals the wonders of this world.

[MP 8:16] These are free from Babel and Antichrist, even though they should sit in his lap. For the true image of God is in the spirit of the will, which is generated from the soul's spirit.

THE NINTH TEXT

[MP 9:1] Seeing then there are two Magics in one another, there are also two Magicians who lead them, viz. two spirits. One is God's Spirit, and the other the Reason-spirit, in which the devil ensconces himself. In God's Spirit is the love of unity. And man cannot better prove or try himself than by giving serious attention to what his desire and longing impel him: the same he hath for a leader, and its child he is. Nevertheless, he now has power to break and change that will; for he is magical and possesses the power.

[MP 9:2] But there must be real earnestness; for he must subdue the astral spirit which rules in him. To do this, a sober calm life is necessary, with continual abandonment to God's will. For, to subdue the astral influence, no wisdom nor art will avail; but sobriety of life, with continual withdrawal from the influxes. The elements continually introduce the astral craving into his will. Therefore it is not so easy a thing to become a child of God; it requires great labour, with much travail and suffering.

[MP 9:3] Antichrist indeed may call himself a child of God. But Christ says: They shall not all enter into the kingdom of heaven who say: Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name cast out devils and done mighty works? But he saith unto them: Away from me, ye stinking goats, I know you not (Matt. vii. 21-23). Ye have done this by means of false magic, and have never become known in my spirit and will. Ye are in your spiritual figure goats, tyrants, covetous muckworms, proud arrogants, voluptuaries. Ye have carried my name on your tongue, but sacrificed your heart to pleasure, to the itch of the flesh, and are generated in the turba. Ye must be proved by fire. And thus to every kingdom its fruit comes home.

[MP 9:4] Therefore, thou brave world, look at thyself in these writings, which the eternal Ground hath set before thee, and meditate on it further and more deeply. Else thou wilt be caught in thy turba. There thou shalt with thy substance pass through the fire of God; and whatsoever is a work out of God's will shall remain in the fire.

[MP 9:5] But whatsoever is done in the will of God shall stand to the honour and glory of God, and for the eternal joy of the image of man.

[MP 9:6] Now think what thou doest. For Babel is already in flames, and begins to burn. There is no longer possible any quenching, nor any remedy. She has been recognized as evil; her kingdom goeth to the end. Hallelujah.