

# The image of God: William Blake's approach from The Holy Bible in his selected poems

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This paper's focus on the various images of God being mentioned in the Holy Bible from the Old Testament to the New Testament. How Blake has imagined God and the interpretations of the image being discussed through his diabolical reading and his noted poems. It is evidently analyzed through discussion in this paper that Jesus is the image are fullness of God and men therefore receive the image of God by sharing in what Christ is. To receive the image of God through Christ is to share his glory, knowledge and holiness. This is nothing but to become like him.

*Let us make man in our image and after our (God kind) or likeness, and  
let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air,  
and over the cattle, and over all the earth. (Col 1:15)*

*-The Holy Bible -*

Man is said to be after the image of God, not as regards his body, but as regards that whereby he excels other animals. From time in memorial the image of God differs from every individual. The Holy Bible (The Word of God) is divided into two broad division. They are Old Testament and New Testament. When one moves to biblical definition, it has various connotations from various texts in it. The Old Testament's Gods are portrayed as beings have without mercy. In New Testament, God is portrayed as the lenient person having soul to forgive easily.

The book of Genesis, Psalm and Ecclesiastes in The Old Testament describe the image of God and their activities. The image of God in man may go beyond his imagination in many aspects. God has created man in his own image. It is His last creation and has given his dominion power to rule over the world.

People show their faith on religion by hanging wall pictures or paintings from biblical scenes. It has become their custom too. These were very common from the Book of Job and Blake had completed the mission in his later life. Blake's looking upon these images is something different from that of actually engraved in the biblical illustration. Blake's understanding of biblical images and illustrations were different from other writers and seen in the biblical narratives of his poems. The Holy Bible completely holds the futuristic things to come.

God is a [trinity](#) of persons: the Father, the Son, and the [Holy Spirit](#). The Father is not the same person as the Son; the Son is not the same person as the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the same person as the Father. They are not three gods and not three beings. They are three distinct persons; yet, they are the entire one God. Each has a will, can speak, can love, etc. These are demonstrations of personhood. They are in absolute perfect harmony consisting of one substance. They are coeternal, coequal, and co-powerful. If any one of the three were removed, there would be no God.

William Blake believed in the pulmonary Unitarianism which had been designed earlier in his life. To commend on his thinking, he can be called as a 'futurist' but his writings depict that he is the real 'mystic'. He too believed the four-fold God and represented this in his writings that includes not only the father, son and the holy spirit but also Satan being associated as one among them. To him heaven and hell were not the ultimate destination of human kind after his death.

Emanuel Swedenborg was a person who paved way for his spiritual understanding and influenced him throughout his spiritual life. His work *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* show that meant to be a parody on Swedenborg to understand the image of Heaven and Hell. According to Blake Swedenborg's greatest error lay in the hand of understanding the real nature of evil. To him spirit was like a muse, the daughters of Memory.

Almighty has poured the poetic inspiration for his poetic greatness. With this he had become great. But greater the man, the more dangerous his errors are. True poetic inspiration was poured from God according to the greatness of the prophet-philosopher, but the greater the man, the more dangerous his errors. Samuel Coleridge wrote some letters about Blake to H.F.

Cary in 1818, saying that he was as a man of Genius and guessed correctly that Blake was a Swedenborgian. Coleridge said he did not approve of *The little Vagabond* and said that he was liable to think that "the error which is most likely overwhelmed the scholars of Emanuel Swedenborg is that of utterly demerging the marvelous incompatibilities with an evil will.

Blake read symbolically in a diabolical sense. His religious ideas were purely based on the literal interpretations of the Bible. By tasting the fruit of knowledge, men have become the judges of good and evil. *Book of Enoch* hypothesizes his influence on the foresight of reading the Holy Bible. The Book of Enoch tells of a group of angels called Watchers who come down and have relations with mankind, producing giants and teaching man how to make weapons, apply makeup and use magic. Beer suggests that "The importance of the tradition was that it offered a possible version of the fall in which the problems of the human condition were created not by original sin but by the existence of the divine with the human." Beer suggests that this may have inspired Blake to see the answers to the problems of the world lay not in seeking forgiveness but in understanding the human condition and regenerating the creative powers of the divine image.

Blake's understanding of Gnosticism had shaped a different notion of the testaments declaring the preface of the coming of Christ. The opposition that Blake thinks between God in Old Testament and God in the New Testament is completely different. The former God signifies full vengeance and the later signifies peacefulness. This is manifested in two animals from his famous work : the tiger and the lamb. In William Blake, his philosophy and symbols, Foster Damon explains the metaphor behind Blake's popular poem 'The Tyger'. "The problem of 'The Tyger' is, quite simply, how to reconcile the Forgiveness of Sins (the Lamb) with the Punishment of Sins (the Tyger)." The burning that radiates from the Tyger's coat comes from the flames of judgment, which Blake dubs wiser than the Horses of Instruction in his *Proverbs of Hell*.

One of the most endearing concepts of Blake's Unitarianism is the idea of the Brotherhood of Man, a stark contrast to the classic concept of Priestly or Christian brotherhood. The Brotherhood of Man, which Blake believed to be the only solution to all problems. This was made possible by Jesus' great revelation concerning the mutual forgiveness of sins, which differentiated Christianity from all other religions. To Blake, Jesus came to abrogate the inferior system of Judaism by being crucified under that system.

Jesus is personified as the image tolerance of different forms, such as tolerance, enjoyment and 'love and wrath'. He is the image of God in The New Testament. Men identified God in Jesus. He is the representation of God's true nature. Blake didn't consider Jesus to have any credible claim to miraculous birth. He denied Immaculate Conception and suggested that Jesus was conceived in adultery. This makes Jesus the product of an enlightened household. The

New Testament is an idiosyncratic interpretation. Blake's respect for Jesus comes not from his status as an alleged moral teacher, but rather from the fact that Blake saw Jesus as unburdening people from empty moral formalisms and undermining the authority of state, empire, and temple.

It seems that, although Blake may have thought of himself as a "Christian", he didn't mean to imply that he believed the doctrines normally associated with Christianity. It was a personally evocative term that didn't condition Blake's clear perception of the stupidity of the religion called by that name.

Blake was much keen about the other world, a visionary world, the world of imagination where God's image seems to be eternal. Most of his contemporaries dare to take this subject to work with it, yet Blake had taken with the faith he had from the earliest childhood. At times the vision clouded, but its reality remained the one unshakeable tenet of his faith, the faith of eternity.

Every subject the Bible contains has got its origin from the book of Genesis. Many ignore this book thinking that it has no relevance and being a fallacy. God has created everything in the beginning and found man the best choice to rule them all because of his knowledge of understanding. For this reason he was given dominion over all the works of God's hands and sharing the same life as the creator. Because God is spirit, creation was not a difficult task, for he simply had to speak a word and that word accomplished exactly what it was intended to do. So creation began with a thought in the mind of God which became expressed as a Word, and exactly what God purposed within himself appeared.

The Divine Image is one of the Blake's most rhetorical Songs. The speaker praises both God and man while asserting an identity between the two. "The Divine Image" thus differs from most of the other *Songs of Innocence*, which deal with the emotional power of conventional Christian faith, and the innocent belief in a supreme, benevolent, and protective God, rather than with the parallels between these transcendent realms and the realm of man.

The poem uses personification to dramatize Christ's mediation between God and Man. Beginning with abstract qualities (the four virtues of Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love), the poem makes these abstractions the object of human prayer and piety. The second stanza explains this somewhat strange notion by equating the virtues with God himself. But the idea is still slightly unorthodox, suggesting as it does that we pray to these abstract virtues because they are God, rather than praying to God because he has these sympathetic qualities. The poem seems to

emphasize that Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love are not God's characteristics but his substance—they are precisely what we mean when we speak of God.

The speaker now claims that Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love are also equivalent to Man: it is in humans that these qualities find a kind of embodiment, and they become recognizable because their features (heart, face, body, clothes) are basically human. Thus when we think of God, we are modeling him after these ideal human qualities. And when people pray, regardless of who or where they are, or to what God they think they are praying, they actually worship "the human form divine", what is ideal, or most godly, in human beings. Blake's *Divine Image* is therefore a reversed one: the poem constructs God in the image of man rather (whereas, in the Bible, God creates man in his image).

Jesus, the Son, is one person with two natures: Divine and Human. This is called the [Hypostatic Union](#). The [Holy Spirit](#) is also divine in nature and is self-aware and the third person of the Trinity. There is, though, an apparent separation of some functions among the members of the Godhead. For example, the Father chooses who will be saved; the Son redeems them and the Holy Spirit seals them.

A further point of clarification is that God is not one person, the Father, with Jesus as a creation and the Holy Spirit as a force. Neither is He one person who took three consecutive forms, i.e., the Father, became the Son, who became the Holy Spirit. Nor is God the divine nature of the Son. Nor is the Trinity an office held by three separate Gods.

The word "person" is used to describe the three members of the Godhead because the word "person" is appropriate. A person is self-aware, can speak, love, hate, say "you," "yours," "me," "mine," etc. Each of the three persons in the Trinity demonstrates these qualities.

The [doctrine](#) of the Trinity is arrived at by looking at the whole of scripture—not in a single verse. It is the doctrine that there is only one God and not three, and that the one God exists in three persons: Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. An analogy would be time. Time is past, present, and future; but, there are not three times and only one. Satan is a real spiritual being, not a myth or figment of the imagination. Created by God as an angel, he rebelled against God and fell from heaven, bringing many other angels with him. Satan also plays a vital role in many of God's activity throughout biblical documents.

Blake in conclusion didn't believe in any God to judge sins or absolve sinners. He believed that it was up to human beings to understand the problems destroying their culture and to redeem themselves by learning to celebrate difference and conflict. In conclusion it is assumed that all men retain the image of God given creation. It is evidently analyzed from the above discussion that Jesus is the image and fullness of God and men therefore receive the image of God by sharing in what Christ is. To receive the image of God through Christ is to share his glory, knowledge and holiness. This is nothing but to become like him.

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