

The Parliament of Religions

Destined to meet in 1930 on the Physical Plane, holds its first preliminary meeting on the Mental Plane, February 4, 1929, at dawn, Earth-time.

Present: Words and thoughts of every religion and cult. Tongues and lips and sounds.

Absent: Every form of ears.

Samuel, directed by the blessed Pir-o-Murshid, is to become the Sufi Delegate. Alas! Samuel loses his body, his self—no, not exactly, he keeps his tongue, that demoniacal weapon, and his mind, which knoweth both good and evil, and enters the arena.

Scene: A large circular or rather globular arena with Words! Words! Words! Noise! Noise!

Noise! Discussion and wrangling and debate! Nobody listening. Words hit each other in the middle. They fly around and clash, and pop, and swell. The chairman is powerless.

I drive the chairman from his place and go visiting the acclaimants one by one. (Remember, I am Mind, not Body.)

Christians: (Eyes as well as ears closed.) Only by the blood of the lamb can you be saved. The Bible is the one Guide to Life.

Samuel: Will you please tell me what you mean by the Bible?

C: Why the book I hold here.

S: How do you know that just those books are Revelation?

Who decided what was Canon and what was not?

How do you know everything in those books is revealed?

Is the Mosaic Code all Revelation? Why don't you live it then?

How can man interpret those books unless he has the Grace of God?

Does knowledge come from Grace or Grace from Knowledge?

How will you interpret a passage which is different in the Greek text—one which has been interpolated later?

Do you know that the Lord's Prayer has been changed?

Do you know that the Shema translated directly from Hebrew is different than when it is first translated into Greek?

How can the Bible hold God, if He is All in All? Or maybe He is not All in All?

How do you know the Bible has been correctly translated?

Will you please disprove Mohammed's accusation that the text has been changed?

In what way is God Father and not Mother?

If God is All in All (as Paul said) where is He not? And if He is All in All, who can be damned? And if he is not All in All, how can every word of Scripture be correct?

What do you mean? He that believeth in Me, the things that I do, he will do also.

What about spiritual gifts? Name me ten Christians living who have them? If members of your church have not them, how are they better than non-members?

Why did the early Church Fathers insist on allegorical interpretations?

How can you decide the truth of the interpretation of the words of man unless you have the mind of man?

How can you decide the truth of the interpretation of the words of God unless you

Have the mind of God?

Christian is silenced, faints, and is dissolved in the atmosphere.

Samuel walks to the left where **Hebrew** and **Musselman** are discussing so loudly even the other wranglers are disturbed. (Remember—these are thoughts, not men.) Samuel steps in between them.

S. What are you fighting about? Why do you differ? I will tell you:

Mohammed did not accept the Talmud. Mussalman: Yes.

Mohammed did not accept the foods of Moses. M: Yes.

Mohammed did not pray on Saturday. M: Yes.

Mohammed said that prophets came to all peoples. M. Yes.

Mohammed said that Allah belonged to all and all belonged to Allah. M. Yes.

Samuel to Hebrew :

Do you accept the Talmud? H. No.

Do you live according to the laws of Moses with regard to food, etc. H. No.

Do you always pray on Saturday? H. No.

Don't you work on Saturday? H. Yes.

Does God belong to all peoples and all peoples to God? H. Yes.

May God send prophets to other peoples than the Hebrews? H. Yes.

Name one such prophet. H. is silent.

Was Mohammed such? H. is silent.

Oh, ye viper! Ye generation of vipers! I am a Hebrew. You slur the Prophet because he did not live as the Jews of his time, and neither you live as those Jews, but rather live as the Prophet lived, and yet you slur him. How do you know he was wrong? Where did

(Hebrew vanishes.)

(Mussalman also vanishes, being a hypocrite. At first he admires Samuel as Shylock does

Portia in "The Merchant of Venice." Then he sees the trap. If Samuel should ask whether prophets came to all peoples and the answer was "Yes," and Samuel would ask about Krishna, his hypocrisy would be revealed.)

Samuel goes to the right where a **Buddhist** is acclaiming:

B. Amida is the Light of Heavens and of Earth.

Amida is All in All.

Amida is our Source and our Goal.

From Amida we come, to Amida we go, in Amida is Peace.

Only in Amida is Salvation.

Amida is the Light of all Buddhas,

Only Amida. Praise to Amida! Only Amida.

I go and address him. Very good. Very good. But what is the English for Amida?

B. There is no English; only Amida.

S. Suppose I said: **It** is the Light of Heavens and Earth;

It is All in All;

It is the Light of all Buddhas;

From **It** we come, to **It** return.

Would not **It** be Amida?

B. Of course. That is about the only way you can put it.

S. Suppose I put another word there, would it be all right?

B. Yes.

S. Quell, I have that word—it is **God**,

B. No! not no! no! no! no!

S. Yes; yes! Yes! yes! yes! yes!

B. No, God is a mental conception. God is a force. God is subject to evolution.

S. How nice! You accept Him and deny Him in the same breath. How do you know all this? Do you know Him that you can acclaim: "He is subject to evolution."

If you don't know Him, how can you talk?

Why is Amida not God and God not Amida?

One says God is All in All, and another Brahma and another Amida and yet all say they are different.

Do you know? Do you know?

Can one in Nirvana argue?

And if you have not Nirvana, do you know?

(Notice the subtlety. Samuel is naively claiming to have the truth and right to argue while denying it to others.)

Buddhist also vanishes.

Pundit in center: Most worthy sir, you are wonderful, you are sublime, you are a marvel.

Samuel, to Pundit: Most worthy sir, you are wonderful, you are sublime, you are a marvel.

P. Me? I am a poor humble soul, but I have the true religion.

S. Yes, you have the true religion. Let a man claim a true religion, a true doctrine, you have it.

Let him preach a pure ethic, you have it. Let him teach a theory, you have it. Let him posit a principle, you have it.

You have every theology, you have every moral, you have every revelation, you have every teacher, you have every holy book, you have everything.

You have everything and do nothing.

Nothing!

Samuel continues:

You talk brotherhood and practice inequality.

You talk humility and live pride.

You talk universality and pull your cloak tight.

You talk holy books and scorn them.

You talk revelation and balk its definition.

You talk future and think past.

You have everything and nothing—every good in theory and every evil in practice.

You are all in nothing and nothing in all.

You defy definition.

You are the marvel of marvels—worthless and valueless, and yet priceless beyond compare.

Pundit exits as others.

Samuel alone except for a Zoroastrian who has wavered between fright and admiration but stands in prayer.

Enter the Light, into which all are dissolved. The Congress takes the form of a ball of Light and this in turn is dissolved in the heart of the Blessed Messenger.

Finis.