

## Hume and the Image of God

### Malebranche's occasionalism

"... no body, large or small, has the power to move itself. ... But when we examine our idea of all finite minds, we do not see any necessary connection between their will and the motion of any body whatsoever. ... there is absolutely no mind created that can move a body as a true or principal cause, just as it has been said that no body could move itself.

But when one thinks about the idea of God, i.e., of an infinitely perfect and consequently all-powerful being, one knows there is such a connection between His will and the motion of all bodies, that it is impossible to conceive that He wills a body to be moved and that this body not be moved. ... The motor force of bodies is therefore not in the bodies that are moved, for this motor force is nothing other than the will of God. Thus, bodies have no action; and when a ball that is moved collides with and moves another, it communicates to it nothing of its own, for it does not itself have the force it communicates to it. Nevertheless, a ball is the natural cause of the motion it communicates. A natural cause is therefore not a real and true but only an occasional cause, which determines the Author of nature to act in such and such a manner in such and such a situation.

... All natural forces are therefore nothing but the will of God, which is always efficacious. ... He moves all things, and thus produces all effects that we see happening, because He also willed certain laws according to which motion is communicated upon the collision of bodies; and because these laws are efficacious, they act, whereas bodies cannot act. There are therefore no forces, powers, or true causes in the material, sensible world ... ."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Malebranche, *The Search After Truth* [1712] Translated and Edited by Thomas M. Lennon and Paul J. Olscamp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 448-49.

Rev. South and the image of God<sup>2</sup>

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we were taught without the help of a Teacher.

Now it was *Adam's* happiness in the state of innocence to have these clear and unfulfilled. He came into the World a Philosopher, which sufficiently appeared by his writing the Nature of things upon their Names: he could view Essences in themselves, and read Forms without the comment of their respective Properties: he could see Consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn and in the Womb of their Causes: his understanding could almost pierce into future contingents; his conjectures improving even to Prophecy, or the certainties of Prediction; till his fall it was ignorant of nothing but of Sin; or at least it rested in the notion without the smart of the Experiment. Could any difficulty have been proposed, the resolution would have been as early as the proposal; it could not have had time to settle into Doubt. Like a better *Archimedes*, the issue of all his Enquiries

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up in the obscurities of a Cottage, to fancy in his mind the unseen splendours of a Court. But by rating Positives by their Privatives, and other Arts of Reason, by which discourse supplies the want of the Reports of sense, we may collect the Excellency of the Understanding then, by the glorious remainders of it now, and gues at the stateliness of the building, by the magnificence of its ruins. All those arts, rarities, and inventions, which vulgar minds gaze at, the ingenious pursue, and all admire, are but the reliques of an Intellect defaced with Sin and Time. We admire it now, only as Antiquaries do a piece of old Coin, for the Stamp it once bore, and not for those vanishing lineaments, and disappearing draughts, that remain upon it at present. And certainly, that must needs have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely, when old and decrepit, surely was very beautiful, when he was young. An *Aristotle* was but the rubbish

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quies was an *εγνεα*, an *εγνεα*, the offspring of his Brain without the sweat of his Brow. Study was not then a Duty, night-watchings were needless; the light of Reason wanted not the assistance of a Candle. This is the doom of fallen man to labour in the fire, to seek truth in *profundo*, to exhaust his time and impair his health, and perhaps to spin out his days, and himself into one pitifull, controverted Conclusion. There was then no poring, no struggling with memory, no straining for Invention. His faculties were quick and expedite; they answered without knocking, they were ready upon the first summons, there was freedom, and firmness in all their Operations. I confess 'tis difficult for us who date our ignorance from our first Being, and were still bred up with the same infirmities about us, with which we were born, to raise our thoughts, and imagination to those intellectual perfections that attended our Nature in the time of Innocence; as it is for a Peasant bred

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rubbish of an *Adam*, and *Athens* but the rudiments of Paradise.

2. The Image of God was no less resplendent in that, which we call man's Practical Understanding; namely, that store-house of the Soul, in which are treasured up the rules of Action, and the seeds of Morality. Where, we must observe, that many, who deny all Connate Notions in the Speculative Intellect, do yet admit them in this. Now of this sort are these Maxims, *That God is to be worshipped. That Parents are to be honoured. That a man's word is to be kept*, and the like; which, being of universal influence, as to the regulation of the behaviour, and converse of mankind, are the ground of all vertue, and civility, and the foundation of Religion.

It was the Privilege of *Adam* Innocent, to have these Notions also firm and untainted, to carry his Monitor in his bosom, his Law in his heart, and to have such a Conscience, as might be its own

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<sup>2</sup> Robert South, *Twelve sermons preached upon several occasions* (London, 1692), pp. 64-7.

## The image of God doctrine in our own time

From *New York Times* October 2, 2005.

As the debate over whether intelligent design should be taught in schools continues, *New Man*, a Christian magazine for “men on a mission,” makes the case for a literal Adam in its September/October issue. The article, “The Search for Adam,” says that while “many people regard the story of Adam and Eve as a myth,” the scientific evidence is mounting that Adam existed, and the article quotes various creationists to support this case.

Fazale Rana, a biochemist and vice president of Reasons to Believe, a creation science group:

“Adam would have been a consummate hunter, an artist, an artisan and craftsman. He would have been the first Tim Taylor from the Tool Time TV program. There’s an obsession with tools and manufacturing. He was a man’s man, but also a Renaissance man capable of art and musical expression. You can imagine Adam conveying his love for Eve by giving her jewelry.”

John Morris, an executive at the Institute for Creation Research:

“Adam started out as what God intended man to be. ... Before the curse, Adam was a superman. Intellectually and in every sense he was probably vastly superior to us. After the curse, I suppose he was in our league, but still quite brilliant.”

