

The Eighth Book

That the Greatest Evil In Man, Is, the Not Knowing God

1. Whither are you carried, O Men, drunken with drinking up the strong Wine of Ignorance? Which seeing you cannot bear: Why do you not vomit it up again?
2. Stand, and be sober, and look up again with the eyes of your heart; and if you cannot all do so, yet do as many as you can.
3. For the malice of Ignorance surroundeth all the Earth, and corrupteth the Soul, shut up in the Body not suffering it to arrive at the Havens of Salvation.
4. Suffer not yourselves to be carried with the great stream, but stem the tide, you that can lay hold of the Haven of Safety, and make your full course towards it.
5. Seek one that may lead you by the hand, and conduct you to the door of Truth and Knowledge, where the clear Light is that is pure from Darkness, where there is not one drunken, but all are sober and in their heart look up to him, whose pleasure it is to be seen.
6. For he cannot be heard with ears, nor seen with eyes, nor expressed in words; but only in mind and heart.
7. But first thou must tear to pieces and break through the garment thou wearest; the web of Ignorance, the foundation of all Mischief; the bond of Corruption; the dark Coverture; the living Death; the sensible Carcass, the Sepulchre, carried about with us; the domestical Thief which in what he loves us, hates us, envies us.
8. Such is the hurtful Apparel, wherewith thou art clothed, which draws and pulls thee downward by its own self; lest looking up, and seeing the beauty of Truth, and the Good that is reposed therein, thou shouldst hate the wickedness of this garment, and understand the traps and ambushes, which it hath laid for thee.

9. Therefore doth it labour to make good those things that seem and are by the Senses, judged and determined; and the things that are truly, it hides, and envelopeth in such matter, filling what it presents unto thee, with hateful pleasure, that thou canst neither hear what thou shouldst hear, nor see what thou shouldst see.