

GOD, THE INVISIBLE KING

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649171019

God, the invisible king by H. G. Wells

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

H. G. WELLS

**GOD, THE
INVISIBLE KING**

GOD THE INVISIBLE KING

GOD THE INVISIBLE KING

BY
H. G. WELLS

144233.
2/11/17.

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1917

All rights reserved

COPYRIGHT, 1917,
BY H. G. WELLS

Set up and electrotyped. Published, May, 1917.
Reprinted May, twice, June, three times, August, September,
1917.

PREFACE

THIS book sets out as forcibly and exactly as possible the religious belief of the writer. That belief is not orthodox Christianity; it is not, indeed, Christianity at all; its core nevertheless is a profound belief in a personal and intimate God. There is nothing in its statements that need shock or offend anyone who is prepared for the expression of a faith different from and perhaps in several particulars opposed to his own. The writer will be found to be sympathetic with all sincere religious feeling. Nevertheless it is well to prepare the prospective reader for statements that may jar harshly against deeply rooted mental habits. It is well to warn him at the outset that the departure from accepted beliefs is here no vague scepticism, but a quite sharply defined objection to dogmas very widely revered. Let the writer state the most probable occasion of trouble forthwith. An issue upon which this book will be found particularly uncompromising is the dogma of the Trinity. The

writer is of opinion that the Council of Nicæa, which forcibly crystallised the controversies of two centuries and formulated the creed upon which all the existing Christian churches are based, was one of the most disastrous and one of the least venerable of all religious gatherings, and he holds that the Alexandrine speculations which were then conclusively imposed upon Christianity merit only disrespectful attention at the present time. There you have a chief possibility of offence. He is quite unable to pretend any awe for what he considers the spiritual monstrosities established by that undignified gathering. He makes no attempt to be obscure or propitiatory in this connection. He criticises the creeds explicitly and frankly, because he believes it is particularly necessary to clear them out of the way of those who are seeking religious consolation at this present time of exceptional religious need. He does little to conceal his indignation at the role played by these dogmas in obscuring, perverting, and preventing the religious life of mankind. After this warning such readers from among the various Christian churches and sects as are accessible to storms of theological fear or passion to whom the Trinity is an ineffable mystery and the name of God almost unspeakably

awful, read on at their own risk. This is a religious book written by a believer, but so far as their beliefs and religion go it may seem to them more sceptical and more antagonistic than blank atheism. That the writer cannot tell. He is not simply denying their God. He is declaring that there is a living God, different altogether from that Triune God and nearer to the heart of man. The spirit of this book is like that of a missionary who would only too gladly overthrow and smash some Polynesian divinity of shark's teeth and painted wood and mother-of-pearl. To the writer such elaborations as "begotten of the Father before all worlds" are no better than intellectual shark's teeth and oyster shells. His purpose, like the purpose of that missionary, is not primarily to shock and insult; but he is zealous to liberate, and he is impatient with a reverence that stands between man and God. He gives this fair warning and proceeds with his matter.

His matter is modern religion as he sees it. It is only incidentally and because it is unavoidable that he attacks doctrinal Christianity.

In a previous book, "First and Last Things" (Constable and Co.), he has stated his convictions upon certain general ideas of life and thought as

clearly as he could. All of philosophy, all of metaphysics that is, seems to him to be a discussion of the relations of class and individual. The antagonism of the Nominalist and the Realist, the opposition of the One and the Many, the contrast of the Ideal and the Actual, all these oppositions express a certain structural and essential duality in the activity of the human mind. From an imperfect recognition of that duality ensue great masses of misconception. That was the substance of "First and Last Things." In this present book there is no further attack on philosophical or metaphysical questions. Here we work at a less fundamental level and deal with religious feeling and religious ideas. But just as the writer was inclined to attribute a whole world of disputation and inexactitudes to confused thinking about the exact value of classes and terms, so here he is disposed to think that interminable controversies and conflicts arise out of a confusion of intention due to a double meaning of the word "God"; that the word "God" conveys not one idea or set of ideas, but several essentially different ideas, incompatible one with another, and falling mainly into one or other of two divergent groups; and that people slip carelessly from one to the other of these groups