

# **OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS**

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Optimism and Pessimism in the Old and New Testaments by Adolf Gutmacher

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**ADOLF GUTTMACHER**

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PESSIMISM IN THE OLD  
AND NEW TESTAMENTS**



## PREFACE

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The subject of this investigation is too broad and too complex to receive exhaustive treatment within the pages of one volume. Yet, I may hope, to have contributed something toward a better knowledge of the philosophy of life of the Old and New Testaments. The many problems involved in the investigation have been discussed in an impartial philosophical spirit, uninfluenced by theological bias.

Due credit has been given in footnotes to all whose researches have been helpful to me. I welcome this opportunity to express my best thanks to my honored teacher, Prof. Paul Haupt, for the assistance given me in the pursuit of my work. My thanks are also due to my esteemed friend, Rabbi Clifton H. Levy, who has kindly looked through the sheets of the entire work.

ADOLF GUTTMACHER.

*Baltimore, Md., November, 1902.*



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## ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

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- A. R. V. . . . . American Revised Version of the Bible.  
D. . . . . Deuteronomy (original document).  
Dt. . . . . Additions to Deuteronomy.  
E. . . . . Elohistic document.  
H. . . . . Law of Holiness.  
Int. J. of Ethics. . . . International Journal of Ethics.  
J. . . . . Jahvistic document.  
J. A. O. S. . . . . Journal of the American Oriental Society.  
J. Q. R. . . . . Jewish Quarterly Review.  
K. A. T. . . . . Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament  
(Schrader).  
Kautzsch's A. T. . . . . Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments.  
Ed. by E. Kautzsch.  
Kautzsch's A. u. P. . . . Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des  
Alten Testaments. Ed. by E. Kautzsch.  
LXX. . . . . Septuagint.  
M. . . . . Massoretic Text.  
N. T. . . . . New Testament.  
O. T. . . . . Old Testament.  
P. B. . . . . The Sacred Books of the Old Testament.  
Ed. by Paul Haupt.  
R. S. . . . . Revue Sémitique.  
R. V. . . . . Revised Version of the English Bible.  
Z. A. T. . . . . Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissen-  
schaft.  
Z. D. M. G. . . . . Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen  
Gesellschaft.



## INTRODUCTION

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The terms Optimism and Pessimism are of comparatively recent date. Optimism became current in the first part of the eighteenth century to designate the doctrine of the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz (1646-1716), that this is the best possible world.<sup>1</sup> Pessimism as a designation for a system of philosophy originated with Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), who contends that this is the worst of all possible worlds.<sup>2</sup> A similar system of Pessimism was later developed by Eduard von Hartmann (1842—). The fact that every human being desires to be happy, but does not find happiness, furnishes him the basis for his

<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz endeavors to prove in the *Theodicee*, published in 1710, that our world, among all possible worlds, is the best, and that physical and moral evil are the consequences of man's limitation and imperfection, while, at the same time, evil is considered as a means for ultimate good. Here Optimism reaches its philosophic culmination. Wickedness is thus tolerated as a condition, *sine qua non*, in a world which but for it would not possess magnanimity and a host of other virtues. See also M. Kayserling. Moses Mendelssohn, Leipzig, 1888, p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Schopenhauer calls the arguments Leibnitz advances, to show that this is the best of all possible worlds, *sophistical*. Instead of being the best of all possible worlds, Schopenhauer contends that it is the worst of all possible worlds (Schopenhauer: *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Grisebach ed., vol. II, p. 687).