

50 Robert Fludd

Robert Fludd was a great defender of Rosicrucianism, a successful London physician, the punching bag of Kepler, Mersenne and Gassendi, and was friends of William Harvey and William Gilbert. He ran in high circles. He also attacked Aristotle and Galen.



In 1638 his book *Mosaicall Philosophy Grounded upon the Essentiall Truth or Eternall Sapience* was published the year after he died.

“From Bk. 2, Sec. 1, Chap. 3.

Lastly, I will conclude and finish this Chapter, with the miraculous and supernaturall effects it [i.e., the true Sophia or Wisdom] produceth, and the admirable acts which it bringeth to passe, beyond the capacity of mans imagination; for that the man which is partaker of this divine Agent, and can firmly unite it unto his own spirit, may do wonders: . . . [Scriptural passages follow, cited in Latin and English.] To conclude, *Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, Daniel, Elias, Elisha*, with the other prophets; *Judas Maccabeus*, Christ and his Apostles, which were all the observant disciples unto the true wisdom, did by her secret art and operation, bring to passe all those miracles, which are mentioned in the holy Testament, both New and Old, as each man may find to be true, if he will be pleased to make a due enquiry into that holy story. But all this is most aptly expressed by the Prophet Daniel, in these words: *He is the revealer of things that are profound and hidden, and understandeth the things which lurk in darknesse, for light dwelleth with him* [Daniel 2:22]. All which being so, it is most apparent, that there is no art or science, whether it be abstruse and mysticall, or manifestly known, be it speculative or practicall, but had his root and beginning from this true wisdom, without the act and vertue whereof, no true and essentiall learning and knowledge can be gotten in this world, but all will prove bastardy or spuriously begotten, having their foundation not upon Christ, the true ground, firm rock, and stable cornerstone, on which all verity is erected, forasmuch as onely in him is the plenitude of divinity; but placing the basis or foundation of their knowledge upon the prestigious sands of imagination; namely, after the inventions or traditions of men, and according unto the elements of this world, from whence they gather the fruits of their worldly or human wisdom, that is quite opposite in effect unto the true wisdom; namely, the eternall one, which hath his root and originall from God, and not from man . .

From Bk. 3, Sec. 1: Touching the essential Principles of the Mosaicall Philosophy. The Argument of this third Book.

In this present Book, the Author teacheth in a generality, the true and essential principles of the divine Philosophy; and in particular he expresseth, how various and differing the Ethnick Philosophers have been in their opinions concerning the beginnings of all things; where he proveth, that the wisest amongst those Pagan Naturalists, did steal and derive their main grounds or principles, from the true and sacred Philosopher *Moses*, whose Philosophy was originally delineated by the finger of God, forasmuch as the fiery characters thereof, were stamped out or engraven in the dark Hyle, by the eternall Wisdom, or divine Word. And sheweth, that although the foresaid pagan philosophers, did usurp the Mosaicall principles unto themselves, and, the better to maske their theft, did assigne unto them new Titles; yet because they were not able to dive into the centrall understanding of them, nor conceive or apprehend rightly, the mystery of the everlasting Word, they erected upon their principles or foundations but a vain and worldly wisdom, carved out, not from the essential Rock of truth, nor relying on Christ, the onely corner-stone, but framed after a human invention, and shaped out according unto the elements of this world; much like a Castle of straw or stubble, which though it be planted on a Rock, yet is subject to mutation, and is easily shaken, and tottered at every blast of winde. In conclusion, here our Author doth set down what the true Mosaicall principles are, namely, Darknesse, Water, and Light: Then, that all plenitude and vacuity in the world, doth consist in the presence or absence of the formall principle, which is Light. And lastly, he sheweth how the two apparent active properties, namely Cold and Heat, do issue from the two fore-said fountaines of Darknesse and Light, as the two passive natures, Moysture and Drought, to challenge their originall from the said active . . .

From Bk. 3, Sec. 1, Chap. 1: Wherein is set down the uncertainty of the ancient Grecian and Arabian Philosophers, in their opinions, touching the principles or beginnings of all things.

Now the main errour of these [pre-Socratic] philosophers in their judgments concerning the [first metaphysical] principles, was, that they did not mark or consider, that the divine puissance or sacred word, was more ancient, and of a greater Antiquity, then were any of their foresaid principles; the which, if by a riper contemplation they had understood they would have confessed, being instructed and directed by reasons produced from the eternal unity, or essential point and beginning of all things, that the divine light, or sacred emanation

(which Scriptures entitle by the name of the holy Spirit of wisdom) was the actual beginning of all things, as nevertheless before it, there was another property in one and the same sacred essence, which was termed the divine puissance, or *potentia divina*, which did precede his act or emanation, no otherwise than the Father in time, order, and being, is justly said to exist before the Son, or the Creator before the creature: And thereupon the wise man hath it . . . *Wisdom was created before all things*. And yet it is most apparent, that some of the Greekish and Ægyptian Philosophers, namely, Plato, Pythagoras, Socrates, Hermes, &c. did so instruct their understandings, partly by the observation of their predecessors doctrine, and partly through the experience, which in their long travails and peregrinations they had gathered, among the Æthiopians, Ægyptians, Hebrews, Armenians, Arabians, Babylonians, and Indians, (for, over all or most of these Countries did *Plato, Pythagoras, Hippocrates*, and others of them travell, for the augmentation and increase of their knowledge, as Historiographers, that are worthy of credit, have related) that without doubt they did discern, though afar off, and as it were in a cloud, the true light in the humid nature. And among the rest it is reported, as also it appeareth by his works, that *Plato* had the knowledge of the Word, and had read the Books of Moses; and for that reason he was called . . . the divine Plato. In like manner, the excellent Philosopher *Hermes*, otherwise termed *Mercurius Trismegistus*, expresseth plainly, that he was not onely acquainted with *Moses* his books, but also was made partaker of his mysticall and secret practise, as by his Sermons, which he calleth *Pymander*, a man may plainly discern, where he doth mention the three Persons in Trinity, and sheweth the manner of the worlds creation, with the elements thereof, by the Word. And therefore of all other antient Philosophers, I may justly ascribe divinity unto these two: But in this I cannot much commend them, viz. in that they having had a view of *Moses* his labours, which were indited by the Spirit of God, did gather out, and confesse the truth of his doctrine, touching the principles of all things, and yet would not in open tearms acknowledge their Master, but altered the names of them; but as *Plato* served his Master *Moses*, even so was he dealt with by his schollar *Aristotle*, who knowing that his Masters three Mosaicall Principles of all things, masked under strange titles, were but truth, would nevertheless arrogate his doctrine unto himself, and for that cause did alter the assumed names of *Plato's* principles, gilding them over with new denominations, and did afterward rear up upon them a spurious philosophicall structure, carved and framed out after his own inventions . . . That Principle which *Moses* termed *darknesse*, the *darke Abyссе* or potentiall Principle, *Aristotle* doth call his *Materia prima*, or first matter, which he averreth to be something in puissance or potentially only, because it is not as yet reduced into act. Again, he seemeth to term it privation, but falsly, being that no position did precede it. On the other side *Plato* calleth it *Hyle*, which is esteemed to be nothing, forasmuch as it is invisible and without form. Also he compareth it to a dark body, in respect of the soul and spirit. As for *Hermes*, he intitlith it by the name of umbra horrenda, or fearfull shadow. *Pythagoras* maketh it his Symbolicall Unity: From in this its estate, it hath

relation unto nothing else but it self, which is mere Unity, and consequently it acquireth not so much as the name of a Father, because it doth not by an emanation respect or attempt the production of a Son . . . Is not this therefore a notable kind of Robbery amongst the choisest Ethnick Philosophers, thus falsly to ascribe and attribute the Principles and Doctrine unto themselves, which were revealed by God's Spirit, unto the wise Prophet *Moses*, and that of purpose to make themselves great and eminent, not only in the eies of the Gentiles, but also by subtill allurements, or false and fading suggestions, laid on those foundations, to distract Christian men from the Truth? And yet as for *Plato* and *Hermes*, I must excuse them, being that they do both of them acknowledg in express terms with *Moses*, that the matter or substance whereof the heavens and the earth were made, was a humid nature, and the internall form or act, which did dispose of it into diversity of figures or forms, was the divine Word, as you may find most plainly expressed in *Plato's* works, and in the *Pimander* of *Hermes* or *Mercurius Trismegistus*.

From Bk. 4, Sec. 1, Chap. 5: How the lower waters, or catholick sublunary element, were distinguished, ordered, and shaped out into sundry distinct sphears, which are called particular Elements, and that by the foresaid all-working Spirit, or divine word.

Since that it is most certainly proved already, that the universall substance of the world's machine was made but of one onely thing, namely, of a matter that was produced out of the potentiall bowells of the dark chaos or abyss, by the spagerick vertue of the divine Word: the which matter *Moses* tearmed Waters, and *Hermes* the humid nature, of the which in generall (as both *Moses* and St. *Peter* aver) the heavens and the earth were made of old, it must needs follow, that out of this catholic masse of waters, the universall sublunary element was derived, which is commonly termed by the name of *Aer*, as all that humid substance in the celestiall orbe is called *Æther*. Now this generall element is by the breath of the divine Spirit *Ruach Elohim*, altered and changed from one shape unto another; for that which is the visible waters, was made first of the aire, which is an invisible water, as again the visible water by condensation is made earth. And this is proved, first, by the words of St. *Paul* [Heb. 11:3 cited]. But besides these proofs, we are taught by chymicall experience, that earth is nothing else but coagulated waters; nor visible water anything else, but invisible air, reduced by condensation to a visibility; nor fire anything else but rarified aire. And, in conclusion, all the sublunary waters were in the beginning, but an invisible, humid, or watry spirit, which we call by a common name, *Aire*.

From Bk. I, Sec. 2, Chap. 4: Where it is evidently proved, as well by the ancient Ethnick Philosophers, as by the authority of Holy Scriptures, that there is a soul

of the world: Herein also is expressed what this catholick Soul is, and whereof it is composed or made.

In like manner the Platonists did call the generall vertue, which did engender and preserve all things the *Anima mundi*, or the soul of the world. And to this their opinions, the *Arabick Astrologians* do seem to adhere: forasmuch as they did maintain, that every particular thing in the world hath his distinct and peculiar soul from this vivifying Spirit. To this opinion also *Mercurius Trismegistus*, *Theophrastus*, *Avicenna*, *Algazel*, and as well all the Stoicks and Peripateticks, do seem wholly to consent or agree. Again, *Zoroaster* and *Heraclitus*, the *Ephesian*, conclude that the soul of the world is that catholick invisible fire, of which and by the action whereof, all things are generated and brought forth from puissance unto act. *Virgil*, that excellent Latine Poet, calleth it that mentall Spirit, which is infused through every joint and member of the world, whereby the whole Mass of it, namely the heaven and the earth, or spirit and body, are after an abstruse manner agitated and moved . . .

The wiser sort of Alchymists do make the Soul a certain infinite nature, or power in all things, which doth procreate like things of their like: for this nature doth engender all things, yea, and multiplieth, and nourisheth, or sustaineth them: and they also style it the Ligament, or bond of the elements, since by it they are fastned together with the Symphoniacal accords of peaceable harmony, although of themselves, that is in regard of their matter, they are dissonant. Also it is termed the true virtue, that mingleth and proportionateth every thing in this sublunary world, allotting unto each specifick creature a convenient and well agreeing form, that thereby one thing might be distinguished and made to vary from another: and, in conclusion, the mysticall *Rabbies* do averre, that this occult fire is that Spirit of the Lord, or fiery love, which when it moved upon the waters, did impart unto them, a certain harmonious and hidden fiery vertue, without whose lovely assistance and favorable heat, nothing could be generated of them, or multiplied in them. Thus you may discern the manifold opinions, as well of Christian as Heathen Philosophers touching this *Anima mundi*, or soul of the world, which will appear to vary little or nothing at all from the tenet of Holy Scripture in sense, but in words onely . . .

From Bk. 1, Sec. 2, Chap. 5: How all particular Souls are said to spring forth or proceed, and then afterwards to have their preservation and multiplication, from this generall Anima Mundi, or Soul of the World.

Hermes (called also for another reason *Mercurius Trismegistus*) said rightly, that the world was made after the similitude or Type of God, and therefore as the one is termed Archetypus, so also the other is said to be Typus: For this reason therefore in another place he saith . . . *God is the Father of the World, the world*

is the father of them that are in the world, and the world is the off-spring of God, and it is rightly called Cosmos, because it adorneth with verity every kind of generation, and also with a never ceasing operation of life, and a perpetuall celerity of necessity in the commixtion of the Elements, which by order are brought forth, &c. In all this he varieth not from Scriptures: For that in the beginning, God is said to have made the world of a matter without a form, and to have adorned his humid nature or the heavens with his vivifying Spirit, which filleth and operateth all in all . . . and that from the breath of the self-same Spirit of life, all the creatures of the world are animated, and from the substantiall Elements in the world they receive their matter. So that as God by the pouring forth of his bright vivifying and all-acting Spirit, did make the humid and passive nature of the world to operate, and that so animated Spirit which is mixed, *secundum totum & in qualibet ejus parte*, in all and every part, with his increated Animatour, is rightly called the Soul of all the Universe; So we ought to make no question at all, but that every particular Soul in this vaulted machine of the world, doth depend and is procreated, preserved, and multiplied from that catholick Soul, because it is an axiom infallible among Philosophers, that the whole doth comprehend each part, and again, each particular hath his existence and being from the whole . . . And therefore Hermes spake not amiss, when he said that the world was the Image of God, and man the image of the world: being that as God created and vivified the watery Spirit of the world, by adding unto it his creating Spirit of life, so that Spirit of life (which is all one in essence with the Father) being sent into the world, and filling the Spirit of the world doth vivify, multiply, and preserve, not onely man, but also every other animal, vegetable, and minerall, that is in the world . . .

The spirit of life was by God so inspired into man, that he was made a living creature, no otherwise then when *Elohim Ruach* was breathed on the waters, they were animated and vivified, and became a great world, which the Platonists for that reason called, *Magnum animal, A great living creature*. But as the world was made after the image of God, before man was made, and afterwards man by the same Spirit in the world, was framed by the Word, after the pattern of that Spirit of life, and the substance of the waters, which were in the great world. Therefore we must conceive that man hath the vivifying means of his sustentation, preservation, and multiplication, by generation from the soul of the world, and his elements. Wherefore *Hermes* doth not unadvisedly expresse the descent and ingression of the worlds vivifying spirit into man, after this manner, *Aer est in corpore, anima in aere, mens in anima, in mente verbum; Verbum vero est eorum pater. The aire is in the body, the soul or life is in the aire, the mentall Spirit is in the soul, the Word is in the mentall Spirit; and the Word is the Father of them all* . . . Whereby we may discern, the admirable tie, which every portion of each dignity in the great world hath unto other, in the composition of the little world . . .

From Bk. 2, Sec. 2, Chap. 1: That Sympathy is the offspring of Light, as Antipathy hath its beginning from Darkness.

Since the radical and essential Unity, with its two opposite branches or properties, which are the characters of his *Nolunty* and *Volunty*, have in general terms been thus evidently described unto you, with the two catholick effects thereof, namely love and hatred, and all those passions as well spirituall as corporall, which are derived from them, whether they be good or bad, in respect of the creature that suffereth: I think it now most fit, to enter into our main discourse, and to anatomise the secret bowels of that Sympathy and Antipathy, which is not onely seen and made manifest in naturall but also supernaturall creatures by effect. For no man of learning can be so ignorant and blind, being instructed by daily experience, (which is the mother even of very fools) as not to discern the hidden miracles both of heavenly and earthly things, daily shining forth in Sympathy and Antipathy, that is, in concords and discords, which are caused by reason of a secret league or friendship, which is betwixt them, even from their very mixtion in their first creation? But before we presume to enter into this profound discovery, it will be requisite to lay open the signification or Etymology of them both, that thereby we may the better conceive their distinct natures and essences.

[Sympathy] imports a passion, bred of unity, concord, and love, tearmed more properly compassion; and the other [i.e. Antipathy] an odible passion, mooved by two resisting and fighting natures, of a contrary fortitude: I may therefore rightly define Sympathy to be a consent, union, or concord, between two spirits, shining forth, or having their radical emanation from the self-same or the like divine property. As for example: All creatures that participate of those benigne emanations or beams, which are sent out from God, by his Angelicall Organs into the orbe of *Jupiter*, are from thence emitted down to the earth, and are conferred upon a multitude of creatures, that were created under this property; which, for that reason, do shine forth and emit their beams unto one another here upon earth, lovingly and joyfully, namely because they proceed all from one root; which descendeth unto *Jupiter*; also such as are friends to *Jupiter*, or like unto him in condition, send down influences in creatures, which are acceptable unto such as live, from their nativities, and are sustained and have their complexionary faculties from *Jupiter*, and therefore they send forth beams of friendship or benignity unto one another, as are also *Venus*, &c. But contrariwise, where the influences which are adverse in property, or of an opposite divine emanation, are sent down unto the Planet Mars, which is enemy to *Jupiter*, and from thence are poured out on creatures beneath, there will be ill and unwelcome encounters made between the secret emissions of those creatures beams: So that one by a naturall instinct doth seek to fly and escape the encounters of the other, or to resist and fight against the other . . .

From Bk. 3, Sec. 2, Chap. 6: How the feasibility and possibility of the Magneticall manner of cure by the Weapon-salve is produced and demonstrated to be naturall.

If after the wound is made, a portion of the wound's externall blood, with his inward spirits, or of his internall spirits onely, that have penetrated into the weapon, or any other thing, which hath searched the depth of the wound, be conveyed from the wound, at any reasonable, but unlimited or unknown distance, unto an Ointment, whose composition is Balsamick, and agreeing specifically with the nature of the creature so wounded, and be in a decent and convenient manner adapted, and, as it were, transplanted or grafted into it; the oyntment so animated by those spirits will become forthwith magneticall, and apply with a magneticall aspect or regard unto the beamy spirits, which stream forth invisibly from the wound, being directed thereunto by those spirituall bloody spirits in the weapon, or other thing, which hath received or included them; and the lively and southern beams streaming and flowing from the wound, will with the northern attraction of the oyntment, so magnetically animated, concur and unite themselves with the northern and congealed, or fixed bloody spirits contained in the oyntment, and stir them to act southerly, that is, from the center to the circumference; so that by this reciprocall action, union, or continuity, the lively southern beams will act and revive the chill, fixt, or northern beams, which do animate the oyntment with a magneticall vertue, and quickned spirits of the oyntment, animated by the spirits of them both, and directed by the spirits which were first transplanted into it, doth impart by the said union or continuity, his balsamick and sanative vertue unto the spirits in the wound, being first magnetically attracted; and they afterwards by an unseperable harmony, transfer it back again unto the wound. And this is the reason of that sympatheticall and antipatheticall reference or respect, which is by experience observed to be between the oyntment and the wound, so that if the whole space of the weapon that made the wound, be covered and annointed with the unguent, and the unguent be well wrapped and kept warm, the wound will find consolation, and be at ease; but if a part of the oyntment be pared away, or wiped off from the weapon, it hath been often tryed, that pain or dolour will immediately ensue and afflict the wound. Moreover, if the place anyoynted be kept temperately warm, the wound will also rest in temper; but if it be uncovered and left in the open cold aire, then will it happen, that the wound will also be distempered and vexed with cold.

The particulars of the foresaid Proposition are easily proved and maintained by such ocular demonstrations, as may be produced from the vertuous operation of the mineral Load-stone, unto the which we may rightly compare all magneticall bodies, with their actions, because they have their denominations from the mineral magnet, and therefore this weapon-salve is tearmed by some men,

Unguentum magneticum, and the cure is also called Magneticall.

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