

# THE DIVINE PYMANDER



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**By Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus**

## **FIRST BOOK**

1. O MY SON, write this First Book, both for Humanity's sake, and for Piety towards god.

2. For there can be no Religion more true or just, than to know the things that are; and to acknowledge thanks for all things, to Him that made them, which thing I shall not cease continually to do.

3. What then should a man do, O Father, to lead his life well; seeing there is nothing here true?

4. Be Pious and Religious, O my Son; for he that doth so, is the best and highest Philosopher, and without Philosophy it is impossible ever to attain to the height and exactness of Piety and Religion.

5. But he that shall learn and study the things that are, and how they are ordered and governed, and by whom, and for what cause, or to what end. Will acknowledge thanks to the Workman, as to a good Father, an excellent Nurse, and a faithful Steward, and he that gives thanks shall be Pious or Religious, and he that is Religious shall know both where the truth is, and what it is, and learning that he will be yet more and more Religious.

6. For never, O my Son, shall, or can that soul, which, while it is in the body, lightens and lifts up itself to know and comprehend that which is good and true, slide back to the contrary. For it is infinitely enamoured thereof, and forgetteth all evils; and when it hath learned and known its Father and Progenitor, it can no more apostatize or depart from that good.

7. And let this, O Son, be the end of Religion and Piety; whereunto thou art once arrived, thou shalt both live well and die blessedly, whilst thy soul is not ignorant wither it must return, and fly back again.

8. For this only, O Son, is the way to Truth, which our Progenitors travelled in; and by which making their journey, they at length attained to the good. It is a venerable way and plain, but hard and difficult for the soul to go in that is in the body.

9. For first must it war against its own self, and after much strife and dissention, it must be overcome of the part; for the contention is of one against two, whilst it flies away, and they strive to hold and detain it.

10. But the victory of both is not like, for the one hasteth to that which is Good, but the other is a neighbour to the things that are Evil; and that which is Good desireth to be set at liberty, but the things that are Evil love bondage and Slavery.

11. And if the two parts be overcome, they become quiet, and are content to accept of it as their Ruler; but if the one be overcome of the two, it is by them led and carried to be punished by its being and continuance here.

12. This is, O Son, the Guide in the way that leads thither; for thou must first forsake the Body before thy end, and get the victory in this contention and strifeful life, and when thou hast overcome, return.

13. But now, O my Son, I will by Heads run through the things that are. Understand thou what I say, and remember what thou hearest.

14. All things that are moved, only that which is not is immoveable.

15. Every body is changeable.

16. Not every body is dissolveable.

17. Some bodies are dissolveable.

18. Every living being is not mortal.

19. Nor every living thing is immortal.

20. That which may be dissolved is also corruptible.

21. That which abides always is unchangeable.

22. That which is unchangeable is eternal.

23. That which is always made is always corrupted.

24. That which is made but once is never corrupted, neither becomes any other thing.

25. Firstly, God; secondly, the World; thirdly, Man.

26. The World for Man; Man for God.

27. Of the Soul; that part which is sensible is mortal, but that part which is reasonable is immortal.

28. Every Essence is immortal.

29. Every Essence is unchangeable.

30. Everything that is, is double.

31. None of the things that are stand still.

32. Not all things are moved by a soul, but everything that is, is moved by a soul.

33. Everything that suffers is sensible; everything that is sensible, suffereth.

34. Everything that is sad, rejoiceth also; and is a mortal living creature.

35. Not everything that joyeth is also sad, but is an eternal living thing.

36. Not every body is sick; every body that is sick is dissolveable.

37. The mind in God.

38. Reasoning (or disputing or discoursing) in Man.

39. Reason in the Mind.

40. The Mind is void of suffering.

41. No thing in a body true.

42. All that is incorporeal, is void of Lying.

43. Everything that is made is corruptible.

44. Nothing good upon Earth; nothing evil in Heaven.

45. God is good; Man is evil.

46. Good is voluntary, or of its own accord.

47. Evil is involuntary, or against its will.

48. The gods choose good things, as good things.

49. Time is a Divine thing.

50. Law is humane.

51. Malice is the nourishment of the World.

52. Time is the corruption of Man.

53. Whatsoever is in Heaven is unalterable.

54. All upon Earth is alterable.

55. Nothing in Heaven is servanted; nothing upon Earth free.

56. Nothing unknown in Heaven; nothing known upon Earth.

57. The things upon Earth communicate not with those in Heaven.

58. All things in Heaven are unblameable; all things upon Earth are subject to reprehension.

59. That which is immortal is not mortal; that which is mortal is not immortal.

60. That which is sown is not always begotten; but that which is begotten always is sown.

61. Of a dissolveable body, there are two times; one for sowing to generation, one from generation to death.

62. Of an everlasting Body, the time is only from the Generation.

63. Dissolveable Bodies are increased and diminished.

64. Dissolveable matter is altered into contraries; to wit, Corruption and Generation, but Eternal matter into itself, and its like.

65. The Generation of Man is corruption; the Corruption of Man is the beginning of Generation.

66. That which offsprings or begetteth another, is itself an offspring or begotten by another.

67. Of things that are, some are in bodies, some in their IDEAS.

68. Whasoever things belong to operation or working, are in a body.

69. That which is immortal, partakes not of that which is mortal.

70. That which is mortal cometh not into a Body immortal; but that which is immortal cometh into that which is mortal.

71. Operation or Workings are not carried upwards, but descend downwards.

72. Things upon Earth, do nothing advantage those in Heaven; but all things in Heaven do profit and advantage all things upon Earth.

73. Heaven is capable, and a fit receptacle of everlasting Bodies; the Earth of corruptible Bodies.

74. The Earth is brutish; the Heaven is reasonable or rational.

75. Those things that are in Heaven are subjected or placed under it, but the things on earth are placed upon it.

76. Heaven is the first element.

77. Providence is Divine order.

78. Necessity is the Minister or Servant of Providence.

79. Fortune is the carriage or effect of that which is without order; the Idol of operation, a lying Fantasie or opinion.

80. What is God? The immutable or unalterable good.

81. What is man? An unchangeable evil.

82. If thou perfectly remember these Heads, thou canst not forget those things which in more words I have largely expounded unto thee; for these are the contents or Abridgment of them.

83. Avoid all conversation with the multitude or common people; for I would not have thee subject to Envy, much less to be ridiculous unto the many.

84. For the like always takes to itself that which is like, but the unlike never agrees with the unlike. Such discourses as these have very few Auditors, and peradventure very few will have, but they have something peculiar unto themselves.

85. They do rather sharpen and whet evil men to their maliciousness; therefore, it behoveth to avoid the multitude, and take heed of them as not understanding the virtue and power of the things that are said.

86. How does thou mean, O Father?

87. This O Son: the whole nature and Composition of those living things called Men, is very prone to Maliciousness, and is very familiar, and as it were nourished with it, and therefore is delighted with it; now this wight, if it

shall come to learn or know that the world was once made, and all things are done according to Providence or Necessity, Destiny or Fate, bearing rule over all, will he not be much worse than himself, despising the whole, because it was made? And if he may lay the cause of Evil upon Fate or Destiny, he will never abstain from any evil work.

88. Wherefore we must look warily to such kind of people, that being in ignorance they may be less evil for fear of that which is hidden and kept secret.

## THE SECOND BOOK

MY THOUGHTS being once seriously busied about things that are, and my Understanding lifted up, all my bodily Senses being exceedingly holden back, as it is with them that are heavy of sleep, by reason either of fulness of meat, or of bodily labour: Methought I saw one of an exceeding great stature, and of an infinite greatness, call me by my name, and say unto me, What wouldst thou hear and see? Or what wouldst thou understand to learn and know?

2. Then said I, Who are Thou? I am, quoth he, Poemander, the mind of the great Lord, the most mighty and absolute Emperor: I know what thou wouldst have, and I am always present with thee.

3. Then I said, I would learn the things that are, and understand the nature of them, and know God. How? said he. I answered that I would gladly hear. Then said he, Have me again in thy mind, and whatsoever thou wouldst learn, I will teach thee.

4. When he had thus said, he was changed in his Idea or Form, and straightway, in the twinkling of an eye, all things were opened unto me. And I saw an infinite sight, all things were become light, both sweet and exceeding pleasant; and I was wonderfully delighted in the beholding it.