

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.

From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy.

Here Blake equates God, Heaven and the principle of Good with reason ; the Devil, Hell, and the principle of Evil with imagination and poetic inspiration. Blake is arguing for the restoration of forceful energy (whether good or evil) in a world dominated and sometimes corrupted by reason.

Proverbs of Hell (from The Marriage of Heaven and Hell)

The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.

A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.

Eternity is in love with the productions of time.

Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion.

The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.

The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.

The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.

The nakedness of woman is the work of God.

Excess of sorrow laughs. Excess of joy weeps.

Expect poison from the standing water.

Exuberance is Beauty.

**Improvement makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without
Improvement, are roads of Genius.**

Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.

Composed between 1790 and 1793, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell attacks the sexual and social morality that, backed by religion and law, restrains energy, passion, and genius. The vehicle of this attack is an ironic reversal of conventional associations. The Angels of Heaven symbolize whatever limits and confines--priests, policemen, logic etc. Blake appears as one of the Devils, the inspired creators who are in every respect the opposite of Angels.

The "marriage" is a dynamic confrontation of contraries in which each must preserve its own identity. For "without Contraries is no progression".