

PANTHEISM...

Pantheism is the belief that every and all the forces in the universe are God.

The belief that includes the entire universe in its idea of God. God is all around us, throughout the whole universe. Pantheists view **God** as immanent and impersonal.

Every seed is awakened and so is all animal life. It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being and we therefore yield to our animal neighbours the same right as ourselves, to inhabit this land.

Sitting Bull

Animals were respected as equal in rights to humans. Of course they were hunted, but only for food, and the hunter first asked permission of the animal's spirit. Among the hunter-gatherers the land was owned in common: there was no concept of private property in land, and the idea that it could be bought and sold was repugnant. Many Indians had an appreciation of nature's beauty as intense as any Romantic poet.

Religious beliefs varied between tribes, but there was a widespread belief in a Great Spirit who created the earth, and who pervaded everything.

It was linked to an **animism (the doctrine that every natural thing in the universe has a soul)** which saw kindred spirits in all animals and plants.

The Indians viewed the white man's attitude to nature as the polar opposite of the Indian. The white man seemed hell-bent on destroying not just the Indians, but the whole natural order, felling forests, clearing land, killing animals for sport.

Atheism is the belief that there is NO God. Nothing is Sacred. Man is the center of the universe. Although White Europeans called themselves Christian, many of their actions would define them as atheist for sure.

A part of Chief Seattle's original speech of 1854

To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their resting place is hallowed ground ... Our dead never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its verdant valleys, its murmuring rivers, its magnificent mountains, sequestered vales and verdant lined lakes and bays ...

Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as the swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people, and the very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch.

It matters little where we pass the remnant of our days. They will not be many ... Sad-voiced winds moan in the distance ... A few more moons, a few more winters, and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the Great Spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people once more powerful and hopeful than yours.

But why should I mourn at the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature, and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the White Man ... cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.