

**MAN-GOD'S
REVELATION
OF
HIMSELF**

MAN – GOD’S REVELATION OF HIMSELF

(As it was in the beginning)

G.W.North

First published Spring 1977

Revised Spring 1978

Copyright © 1978 G.W.North

The text

This edition is based on the texts of Mr North's books which first appeared on the website of Lanark Christian Fellowship many years ago.

We have exercised as much care as possible in the conversion into this format, but if you are aware of any errors, could you please let us know.

Contents

1. THE TESTIMONY OF DAVID — A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.6

2. THE TESTIMONY OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD.....8

3. IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.16

4 THE TESTIMONY OF THE IMMUTABLE LAW OF GOD.41

1. THE TESTIMONY OF DAVID — A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

The Heavens Declare...

King David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, sings many a lay of the glories of God's creation. Reading his collection of psalms we come upon some outstanding examples of inspired praise, and bless the Lord that David ever took up his pen to touch so sweetly upon some of the glories of the mysterious universe.

Perhaps the chief of these psalms is the nineteenth, in which he views the heavens and the great heavenly bodies and orders in relationship to the greater spiritual treasures which God had committed to Israel. His comments upon the outer universe reveal that he approached the whole in the attitude of worship, in the spirit of meditation, holding God's being in reverence and beholding His works with awe.

Saint and poet that he was, it seems that by observing the effects of scientific laws in the heavens, David became more aware of the immutability of God's utterances and commitments to Israel. Did these heavenly orbs move with invariable precision in unchangeable patterns? Did they exercise immeasurable influence over the earth, and had they power to greatly affect men's lives? Did they speak in a universal language, perfectly understandable to all men? Then likewise so did God's law and testimonies and statutes and commandments and fear and judgements. They also are immovably fixed. Unchangeable in decree, they are immutable as the stars in their courses. Their end, he declares, is conversion to God, that the soul may be preserved in purity, sweetness, enlightenment and innocency. It is evident that from the knowledge of the law he had in his mind and the love of God he had in his heart, David gained great reward from his study of God's works in the heavens.

.... The Glory of God

Psalm 19 is an inspired gem of spiritual meditation; but perhaps even greater than this is that little jewel of heart-simplicity which the shepherd-king so beautifully set for us in the language of psalm 8. In these verses his comparison is not between the heavens and the law; instead his purpose is to lay emphasis upon man, for whom both the heavens and the law were given. God's glory is above the heavens, he declares, His name is excellent in all the earth. Babes who see and say such things shall grow strong; when the infants of God speak the name of Him who is above all heavens, the heathen enemies who only see the signs of God in the heavens shall take note and fear.

'What is man that Thou art mindful of him and the son of man that Thou visitest him?' David is seeing things through the eternal Spirit, and is perhaps under His guidance speaking from a consideration of the creation story. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is. He created man also, and being mindful of him, placed him in a garden and regularly visited him there. Adam with his Eve, surrounded by beauty, kept in plenty, honoured by deity, was then God's sole example of humanity; he was the lord of all earth's creation. There were no human babies then. There may have been baby animals and baby birds, but there were no human babies. Cain and Abel were not born to Adam and Eve while they were still in the garden, and God's man was the lord of creation.

When later, through sin, Adam was excommunicated from God and turned out of the garden, though still retaining the form of lordship, he had lost his power. Outcast, he no longer had authority to call himself the son of God, but then he begat his own children. While Adam and Eve were still in paradise there were no sons of man for God to visit. He was just mindful of man.

Revealed unto Babes.

In accordance with God's statement to Eve, by the time David wrote and sang his psalms to Israel many sons of man had been born and had lived and died in ever-quickenning succession. He himself was both a man and a son of man, and had been visited by the Lord, his Lord, yet this great king only regarded himself as a son of man and a babe. He was so humble that he never even considered himself to be a man, leave alone a great man. He saw God and knew himself to be but an infant, and behaved himself as a weaned child, so he later said. In this psalm he

speaks as a babe in its simplicity, and for that reason sees further into truth than many would-be teachers in Israel.

God's great enemies had conspired against Him, both in heaven and in earth. They had seemed to succeed too, for by their subtleties Adam had become a wreck and God's plan for him had been ruined. When at last the garden was finally closed, communion between God and man broken, and death reigned, not a child had been born to man. But despite the desolation, David the son of man sang his praises unto the name of the Lord as a babe sings to its father. To him creation and the name of the Lord and the idea of the human family seemed to be joined.

At no time, however, did David attempt to assemble his flashes of inspiration and meditative insight into a philosophy, nor did he ever compile a doctrine of man. Instead, with the hand of God upon him, he praised the Lord in sagas of creation and power and love and salvation, writing them down by the Spirit of God which inspired him. What a heritage he has left us; the consistency with which he saw truth reveals the constancy of his anointing. Sin he may have, and certainly did; many a time he stumbled and well-nigh slipped, but repentance in some dark valley and restoration beside waters stilled by God for him to drink, caused him to lie down again in the everlasting pastures he so much loved.

How his soul loved the evergreen covenant; if ever he wandered from those feeding-grounds of eternal righteousness, his heart longed to find rest in them again. They never changed; the unvarying stream of water bringing life to all flowed unhurriedly through those evergreen fields; here would he stay until, by God's goodness and mercy he should dwell in God's house for ever.

Abiding in the knowledge and unparalleled blessings of this security, the life-stream of inspiration flows consistently through his inward man, so that whether his themes be revelatory or hortatory, the truth never changes. Psalm upon psalm flows from his pen; enlargements, additions and comparisons of truth are made, but no contradictions — truth is invariable.

The Unchangeable Pattern

On reaching his 139th psalm, David is again writing upon the theme of man. This time he is considering his origins and linking the son of man with the name of God and His enemies. Hating those enemies with perfect hatred, he says, 'Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting'. He clearly saw that the name of God, God's creation, the human family and the enemies of God were connected.

Upon consideration such a conclusion is not very surprising, for God and His name and the family unit are linked as a triumvirate joined together by Him in the beginning of creation for His glory. He brought the human family into being for that reason, and all the devil's powers and seeming successes shall not in the end prevent it. The fact is that the whole of creation, from the original thought right through to the finished universe, was brought forth by God. It was patterned upon Himself, and every part of it to some degree portrays the unmistakable tri-unity of His being, and bears the indelible imprint of His handiwork.

However, refraining from universal investigation, we will rather pursue David's theme as already set out in condensed form and stated above. For this purpose we will mainly confine our meditations to the opening section of the book of Genesis and the story of creation unfolded there.

2. THE TESTIMONY OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD.

In Our Image, after Our Likeness.

Reading the first chapter of Genesis we are immediately introduced to God, His creation, His name, His Man and the suggestion of the human family. With classic brevity best befitting such a theme, Moses loses no time or opportunity to clarify our thinking about God. He does this by using a name for God which, by its very grammatical form, indicates that at least He is triune in being.

Unlike the English language, which only permits of, and therefore uses, the singular and plural forms of speech, the Hebrew grammar incorporates three forms — singular, dual and plural. When the English plural is used, any number from two upwards may be indicated, but when the plural is used in Hebrew, only that which is triple or more is implied. When the plural is used in English, it cannot refer to that which is singular, for to do so would be against the rules of grammar. Similarly, though with greater precision, when the Hebrew plural is used, it cannot refer to that which is either singular or dual, but only to that which is triple or more.

It is therefore of great significance that when speaking here of God, Moses uses the name Elohim. This name is the Hebrew plural form of the singular Eloah. By this we learn that the God of creation is at least a being of triple plurality. We also discover that although He is One, so that He says of Himself 'I AM', He is also recorded in this chapter as saying, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness'. The word 'us' in this verse must be either a direct reference to God triune, and apply to Him only, or else be thought to imply an appeal or suggestion by God to some other agencies, such as angels, to assist Him in the creation of Man. Beside being highly improbable, this latter is an entirely unacceptable idea, for angels do not have creative powers; they are themselves created beings.

Elohim, the Triune God.

We also see that although there are more than one engaged in the counsels of deity, He does not say 'WE ARE', as though there were or are three Gods, but 'I AM'. Recognition of this fact prepares us for the later definition of God as the sacred trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost as revealed in the New Testament.

By these things God has safeguarded us from the monadic ideas of traditional Jewish theology. Moreover, He has at the same time invalidated the perverted teachings of many latter-day cults, and also liberated us from the delusion and blasphemy of idol-worship.

There have been those who have made play of the fact that 'Elohim' may be used of God merely in honorific politeness, and need not therefore imply trinity at all. As we know, this kind of thing is commonly practised among men, as when they use the royal 'we'. It is true that by such artifices men do pay useless compliments to their superiors, who they know are commonly weak and just as singular as themselves. The use of such language is nothing but a sop to majesty among men, a vanity which has no reference at all to the persons addressed. It is either done for the direct purpose of flattery, or else with deference to protocol. It can never be really true of men, and when used of them is at best only honorific, a mark of esteem and / or acknowledgment. However, when the honorific is used of the being of God, He is properly honoured thereby, as indeed He ought to be, for He has by self-revelation shown that He is absolutely triune.

We cannot compliment God; He does not receive honour from men and it is certainly impossible to flatter Him. Nevertheless, it is only right and proper that we should both acknowledge and confess His true state of being, and worship Him as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Therefore, when used of God, the honorific becomes more than a grammatical form; it is the truest testimony to Him who is one in being and nature, and three in persons.

Let them have Dominion.

This trinitarian revelation of God is remarkably brought out both in the language He uses to state His concept of man (quoted above) and also in the record that Moses gives of that creation: 'so God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them'. The sequence of words is 'man',

'him', 'them', and is in entire accord with the verbatim quotation from the words of Elohim, 'let us make MAN ... and let them have dominion'. In view of this, it can hardly be thought that it was Moses, the writer, who devised his own personal, or Israel's national concept of God and imposed it upon the world at large. God is here reported as thinking and expressing Himself about man in the same kind of language that is used of Himself.

Although at this point it cannot be shown that when used of man the word 'them' allows a trinitarian definition, we know that later events proved this to be exactly what God had in mind. There can be no doubt that when God said 'Man' — 'them', He intended us to understand that to a degree, perhaps beyond our expectation, Man was deliberately fashioned upon the trinitarian pattern. It must therefore be concluded that when Moses reports God as saying of Himself, 'let us make Man', by 'us' He meant 'we three'. He is not puffing up, as when men vainly seek glory, nor is He worthlessly seeking to gain unwarrantable adulation from men who are ignorant of truth, but is stating plain fact, in which case the suggestion that the name Elohim is merely honorific is scurrilous.

We ought also to note here that God at that time did not use the specifically masculine pronoun 'him' when speaking of Man. God is most particular with language, and when He intends us to understand that He is only referring to the male, He says 'him' but when He wishes us to understand He is including both male and female, He says 'Man'. When He does this, He is always speaking of Man, the species, and not of a particular male member of the race.

The Unique Creation.

Now if it be true that when speaking so it is proper to use the term Man, it also follows that there could be a sense in which it is proper to think of God in somewhat similar terms. Not that there is a species of God; there is not. He did say, however, 'let us make Man in our own image, after our likeness thereby implying that as Man was created and is seen to be a singular yet plural species, so also must God be singular yet plural.

All things considered, it must be true that by creating Man, God achieved His most highly successful attempt at self-expression in this world. Adam was directly created by God, a living being. He was a man who could recognize himself; he was a Self. He had personal individual existence. But although he had independent existence, unlike his Maker he was not self-dependent; he had to receive air, food and water from without himself, and for these he was entirely dependent upon God's provision. In himself he was by God's design a tri-unity. He had an outward form and so was a body, but he was only a body because and when, by inspiration, within his body God created (a) soul.

The body was not created but 'formed of the dust of the ground'; the form was made, but the man was not created until God breathed the breath of life into the clay He had modelled from the watered dust. In that instant Man became a living soul; that was the act of creation and that was what He created. God created just one soul; He did it by combining breath with sculptured clay made from moistured dust that day. Adam then became a man; he was just one man, and yet he was also Man; in him, though as yet all unknown, lay Eve and all his children. In fact the whole race of Mankind lay within him; he was the first of a species, but although their procession from him should be cumulative through thousands of generations to myriads of myriads of human beings, each individual could only be like him in nature and being. Join together as male and female as they may, and certainly did, their union could only produce and display the trinitarian stamp of God the Creator in the larger unit of a particular family group within the human race.

The Breath of Life.

Man was a special creation. It seems as though all other forms and species of animate life came into being en masse by God's will when He spoke His word. To use a phrase which may be acceptable in this connection, they, in common with the inanimate creation into which they were brought forth, were mass-produced. Presumably, in accordance with God's design, they lived simultaneously with their emergence into existence from His mind, by in-breathing the air in the atmosphere which surrounded them. But Adam was made as an individual, God's special creation made from dust. Neither he nor Eve after him was mass-produced. Each was made as one of a kind. Animals and birds were produced male and female in great numbers; man and woman were individually made.

Not only in method of creation and style of formation is Man different from the lower orders of creation, but also in life itself. For having been finally sculptured by God, and while still lying in his surrounding native dust, he did not spontaneously live by inbreathing the air around him. To give him life God had to stoop and directly breathe into Man His own breath of life. How truly Man came from God.

In common with Man, at death all animate creatures and everything of God's inanimate creation on earth goes to dust, yet we are told that man only was made from dust. Two methods used by God in creation are here set forth by Moses. The first is displayed by the way in which birds, fish, all vegetation and heavenly bodies sprang into being at God's word. This method has a parallel in the New Testament. In it is set forth an example of Jesus' works as instanced when He by-passed the process of wine-making when turning water into wine at Cana of Galilee.

Perhaps we should pause here and briefly note that in John's Gospel we have testimony to the beautiful precision of God in inspiration. It commences with, 'In the beginning was the word', and in keeping with that, sets forth 'this beginning of miracles'. This miracle reveals Jesus, the Creator, using the same method of working which He employed when creating at the very beginning of time, namely the direct word. When making man, however, He took dust and moulded and shaped and sculpted it into the form 'likest to the divine'. This second method reveals the painstaking artistry that God used in making His chiefest creation, and it finds its parallel in John chapter 9. When giving the blind man sight, the Lord again used clay, and thus laid indisputable claim to being the Creator. Note the words of the man upon whom the miracle was wrought: 'since the beginning of the world'. He evidently knew of and believed that Adam was formed of moistured dust. The implication of the miracle was greater than the miracle itself: Adam's Maker was here.

When God breathed His own breath into His handiwork that day, the work of His fingers was crowned with the glorious blessing of having His own type of life. By that final gesture, God implanted in Adam a different spirit from that which was in all other forms and orders of animate life on earth, True it is that Man now continues to live by breathing the same air as do the beasts and the birds, but that is not how he began life.

Man became a Living Soul.

On that day of creation something was imparted to Man far beyond mere air, something so important that had it not been given him, he would have been only another form of animal life, but which having been given him, made him superior to all. That 'something' was soul. God-imparted, divinely designed, deliberately limited in capacity though it be, it was nevertheless so deeply impressed in Man, that it is ineradicable. Soul is a conditioned summation and implantation of God's characteristics, an adaptation of the basic qualities and powers of God, subsisting by spirit in Man. The Lord, in that act of inspiration, exhaled from Himself into Man high degrees of will, affection, emotion, reason, imagination, desire and conscience; in short His own image — Man-soul. The true image of God on earth is Man-soul without sin, as it was in limited capacity in Adam in the beginning and as it was in fulness of development in Jesus, the last Adam, in the end. Man was a living Soul, and he was so because he was a spirit direct from God, living as (a) soul in a specially designed body. We are aware that unregenerate man now exists in his body, a dead soul, a mere shard. He is left empty because he is bereft of God at the centre of his being. This is because righteousness of spirit, the basic moral life-principle of pure being, died in him directly he refused to live by every word that proceeded from the mouth of God.

The spirit which God breathed into Adam that day was a direct expiration from Himself. God is Spirit-Being, and when He begat Man, He begat another spirit-being a little lower than the angels. Being from Himself, that spirit was righteous and holy, gentle and loving, upright and noble, as capable of ruling over all the lower animate creation around him as he was of having communion with God. Spirit is the real being of Man; it is impossible to destroy; it can never know annihilation. While indwelling a human body, spirit is knowable only as soul — Man became a living soul; soul is capacity. It may be likened to space, into which at the beginning God brought forth all creation, that within it His works should have both being and function.

Space is immeasurable, a vast capacity which, though at first void, is seemingly limitless; it is sometimes spoken of wrongly, though understandably, as infinite. Of itself space has no power, but God's power and powers are moving in it to express and manifest His mind. Because this is so, the universe is said by some to be God — this kind of thinking finds expression in such statements as 'God and Nature are the same' A moment's thought reveals that

this is not any more true than that sun and sunlight are the same, or that fire is the same as warmth or heat. Soul is capacity, in and by which spirit expresses itself, into which it develops and displays and through which it communicates, as sun into light by beams, and fire into heat by radiation. Because it has such seemingly unlimited capacity, and is capable of tremendous development, soul holds great possibility and powers, but this is only because of the power of spirit which works within it.

Man was created (a) soul by God breathing (a) spirit into dust. Body fixes and retains soul in this world and identifies it until it is released by the departure of the spirit from the body at death. From that moment body rapidly corrupts and goes to dust, and soul-growth (development) completely stops. While resident in body, spirit all the time and under all circumstances has been developing to an inevitable end according to the source from which it draws its life. Upon departure from body, spirit has grown in good or evil to the extent to which it has developed in soul-dimension or stature while in (the) body. The aggregate of its words and works ought at that point to be found entirely good as were God's works of creation in space. His outward works were exact reproductions by power of His words, which in turn were precise definitions of the thoughts, imaginations, desires and purposes of His heart.

Likewise a man's outward works can have no more worth before God than the value and standard of the morality which is developed in his soul. This is transmitted by spirit to soul and is achieved as his spirit lives in communion with God. It is accomplished in man-soul only by reason of the Spirit of God indwelling his spirit to empower, guide and instruct it. This combination by identification results in parallelism between inward development and the outward work. Spirit and soul develop (or deteriorate) together and can do no other. This process is called spiritual growth — whether for good or evil, it develops during earth existence to a logical and inevitable end.

There was not found a Help ...

Adam was created to be the good lord over all the good earth, but there was one thing about him which was not for his good — he was alone. Whereas other forms of life on earth were all created male and female together if not in pairs, the man was created one single being. In such a state he was too inadequate a means to show forth the three persons of God; God knew he was too limited for that, therefore that was neither good for Man nor God. By his triune being as a person he could by himself exhibit the idea of threefold being, but he could not possibly be a manifestation of three persons in one being. That was quite impossible, and God intended that it should be so. Adam, wonderful as he was, could only be but the first vital step toward the fulfilment of God's purpose with humanity.

Although he did not know it, Adam was Man. He was the foundation upon which God was going to build the whole house of man; God planned to found upon him the whole human race. So with this in mind, God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man, giving him a commission to tend it for Him, which Adam did. But do that as he may, he still fell far short of all the potential within him; besides there was no-one to help him fulfil the greater command of God, which was that he should multiply and replenish the earth; in this respect Adam was entirely helpless. So having accomplished the first steps of His plan, God moved toward its further development.

For this God brought all the animals to Adam that he should see and name them; this Adam did, but among them all none was found capable of being a help meet for him. In the whole of creation not a living thing could assist him to do God's will, and he knew it, so neither he nor God chose anything from among the lower order. At that time Adam made no first choices for himself, but was content to have God choose for him. The Lord's intention had always been to make Eve; He had not planned that Adam should choose some animal from lower creation for a wife. In fact the thought of such a thing was to Him a monstrosity — an abomination which was later directly forbidden by Him when He gave the law to Israel.

God's Law written in His Heart.

This episode furnishes us with an opportunity to contrast God's methods with satan's in the matter of temptation. Before doing so, firstly let us understand that the word temptation simply means 'test', as when it is said in Genesis 22 that God did tempt Abraham. When satan tested Eve, he deliberately solicited her to evil by inciting

her to act against God's will. This is the sense in which the word is generally used today. Quite opposite to that, when God tests a person, as here in the garden, His simple purpose is to grant opportunity, create a situation or allow circumstances, (in this case He arranged everything) whereby man has fullest possibility to make a free choice.

God never solicits to evil, but in all circumstances He always encourages freedom of choice and grants opportunity to exercise the will, for this is the only way the moral growth or soul-development He desires in man can be achieved. By God's overruling power, at this stage of man's training, satan was not allowed to interfere at all. Adam, though created bodily a man was spiritually only a babe; the man was young, therefore the whole episode, though vast, was quite elementary. In process of time more advanced types of testing were developed by God in His dealings with man, but these He used only on the more highly developed souls. An instance of this may be found in the story of God's test of Abraham at Beersheba and Moriah. What took place when God tested Adam in the garden was only a very simple exercise.

It is a testimony to the man's likeness to God that although he did not know God's will about it, Adam nevertheless did that will quite naturally, a fact which undoubtedly pleased the Lord, for following this He moved forward to the next event in His plan of self-revelation.

Bone of My Bones.

God did so by first causing a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and removing a rib from him. Healing up Adam's wounded side, He then made a woman by building her from the bone. Having done so, He brought her to Adam to become his wife. Forthwith Adam named her, and said, 'this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh'. From such a knowledgeable statement it becomes obvious that God must have told him what He had done, for otherwise he would not have known from whence she had come. Perhaps the Lord even explained to him beforehand what He was about to do. Realization of this enables us to see the probabilities and possibilities of conversation, information, revelation and instruction which lay in the communion established between God and Man.

By this, His latest miracle at that time, we see that God had set forth the fact of duality, for one became two; Man became 'them', male and female, as God had said. Paul has this in mind when writing his first letter to the Corinthians. As usual he has thoroughly grasped the truth, and refers to it with depth of understanding in chapter 11, verses 8-12. 'The woman was created for the man', he says, and then goes on to reveal what was in God's heart right from the beginning. Although 'man is not of the woman ... Neither was the man created for the woman ... Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man ... For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.' They are of one, for they are of God; they are also one because they share one bone and flesh. More than that, in the act of creation they were each involved in the creation of the other, for she was in his body as a rib and he is in her as bone, built up into a body. In the mind of God to this day neither one is, nor can be, without the other, for on the level of humanity man cannot achieve his greatest possibilities as a man without her, and neither can she achieve her highest potential as a woman without him.

These things are all of God, who set them in the being called Man exactly as He originally planned and designed them. Therefore in order to properly become Man, male and female must be joined together. Man and wife, each a unit in themselves, when joined by God become a unit complete in itself. In His plan and execution of creation, God did not intend that there should be any addition either to the singularity or union of 'man and woman as such, and because God willed and created it so, no further addition or development is possible along the line of the sexes. There are only two, there cannot be a third. Man is complete as male and female. Woman is the only development made by God from man and is included in Man the species. Because she was made from him, in marriage with him she is his glory, but even so she has to realize that he must be her glory too, for he is her glory, though in a different way. The male primarily is the glory of the marriage union, for he not she is God's first glory.

They shall be One.

We are told that there are differences of glory, both in kind and degree, and this is nowhere more clearly revealed than in the creation of Man. Man was created directly from dust, when as yet there was no other such creature on earth. At creation he was at once Man the species and Man the foundation of the race and man the male. But the woman, wonderful as she is, having been created from a part of a human being already in existence, was only a prototype of all women, not of the whole species. They were each a special creation in that each of their forms was made directly by God and each began life by direct inspiration from God. In this they were equal, for Eve as well as Adam was inspirited by God; but manifestly it was more glorious for God to create him than her. Nevertheless, whether male or female, and whichever method of creation He chose to use for His respective ends, dust or bone, since this is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.

This then is the most perfect picture of duality of being which it was possible for God to create — two persons living together and becoming one — male and female — Man. But wonderful example of God's handiwork though it is, duality is still an insufficient unit and medium by which to display to fullest advantage the being and purposes of God, for it is not basically true to His triune Self. Duality in unity could not properly portray trinity, so it could only be a step, (though a necessary one) along the way to its portrayal.

God now moved on to the final stage in the development of Man into the fullest possible revelation of His image and likeness on the earth. As we shall later see, much intervened between the second and third stages of God's plan, but eventually God achieved His particular goal, and the final state appeared, namely the human family.

The Unique Revelation.

There can be no doubt that of all creation, the human family unit is most suited to be the greatest revelation of the divine Being, for it is a trinity patterned by God upon Himself for this purpose. The family unit reveals God in three basic ways:

1. In the same way as the name God includes and is intended to convey the idea of trinity, so also does the name Man. The name Man is a group name implying the whole of mankind; so also is the name God (Elohim) a group-name implying the whole of God. The difference lies only in the numbers involved and the numerical value of the noun. Man is a race of persons each of separate being; God is three Persons only. As we have seen, God is also honorific, but Man cannot be spoken of in that manner. As each member of the Godhead is God in His own right, so that whether He be the Father, the Son or the Holy Ghost, each ought to be referred to as God, so also it is with Man. Each member of the human family, whether father, mother or child, ought properly to be called Man, for that is exactly what each person is:

2. As God eternally lives a Trinity, and can only continue to be that and can be no other, so Man also is perpetually in trinitarian form, and in order to be Man cannot change that form of existence:

3. As no member of the Godhead can have being independently of the other two, yet together they comprise one unit of Father, Holy Ghost, Son, so also is it with Man — he must continue to be a family unit of father, mother, child (son or daughter). It may possibly be objected that this trinitarian pattern of father, mother, offspring is observable in fish and birds and animals, and indeed in inanimate forms and expressions of life also, That is so, but the fact of individual creation marks Man as being distinctly unique. Not only is this so in the physical realm, but also in the directness of spirit transmission from God, which resulted in him being the soul he is with the high degree of moral intelligence he has.

Every Living Creature after his Kind.

There is no doubt that beside humans, other animate beings are of trinitarian pattern also. They have bodies and without doubt are indwelt by spirit of some sort, and in measure are souls. It seems that the factor largely determining the presence of soul is whether or not creatures have lungs and are air-breathing; if so, they are spirit-soul-body in being. Soul cannot initially be in or continue to exist in a body except spontaneously as a result of in-breathing.

Although this is so in all forms of animate life on earth, in the case of animals and birds, by the intention of God, there is no capacity for moral function and ethical behaviour as there is with human kind. They are therefore

known for their coat or plumage or skin or colour or song or meat — all to do with body, and none with soul. Therefore, unlike man, they are not called Souls, for although they are intelligent to varying degrees according to species, and may be trained to accomplish certain things, they are not moral intelligences. In them both the perceptive faculty of inward knowledge and also the guiding principle and directive is instinct, which in the majority, if not in all, is far more highly developed than reason. Their minds are geared to intuitive habit rather than intelligent thought and moral choice. When God created them He carefully precluded that possibility, though what degree of moral rather than intuitive intelligence they may have had before the fall who can tell? We do know, however, that when speaking them into existence, the Lord deliberately refrained from special creation and individual inspiration. Physical, biological, natural law governs them; therefore they are more natural than spiritual; conscience, the governing factor of morality and ethics, seems to be missing from their make-up, leaving them prey to instinctive knowledge, desires and behaviour. For that reason these cannot be as admirably suited as Man to express Him who is the highest moral intelligence of all.

The Interdependent Tri-unity.

All human beings are in themselves a demonstration of the tri-unity which, by Paul's definition, is one whole spirit, soul, body. God patterned Man upon Himself exclusively because He wished this particular creation to reveal His own likeness and image. When existing in isolation in the beginning, Adam was exactly that in himself. But when God used the word 'them' concerning Man, He revealed the intention He did not precisely state, namely that He planned to use Adam the singular tri-unity to bring into being yet another and greater trinity. In himself the man was a true adaptation of the Being of God as He naturally is in each Person of the Trinity. But although this was so, Adam was not the best likeness of the relationships which each Person of the Godhead knows with the others.

Each Person of the Godhead, whether He be Father, Son or Holy Ghost, is in Himself a perfect trinity. Father is indwelt by Son and Holy Spirit; Son is indwelt by Father and Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit is indwelt by Father and Son. One cannot be without the others; each is dependent upon the others for His personal existence; each consists of three. Upon this knowledge of true eternal life, Paul bases his statement in 1 Corinthians 11, that neither is the man without the woman. This is the mode of eternal existence, it is the only possible form or way of Life that is God. It has always been thus, it is now and ever shall be so; no single person of the Godhead can possibly be without the others. The Trinity is a trinity of tri-unities. That is why God made Adam a trinity in himself — He had to do so if He wished Adam to be the true kind of being He planned that he should be.

Since Adam, every human person is likewise patterned upon the same trinitarian principle, and except he were, could not have existed, for God placed that same pattern forever in the race as the indelible mark and infallible proof of its Creator.

A Help ... Meet.

Although all this is indisputably so, the trinitarian pattern as displayed in Adam the individual could not fully satisfy the desires of God unless it could be developed further. So from Adam the Lord produced Eve, who in herself was as trinitarian as he, and therefore perfectly suited to be a help meet for him.

Perhaps before her appearance on earth other creatures had been of some help to Adam, but although this might have been so, none of these, helpful as they may have been, were in themselves 'meet' for him. They were purposely made to be creatures of a different order than he, and although perfectly suited to whatever purpose God had in mind for them, they were of an inferior pattern to man. The idea of the Great Original trinitarian principle was copied out in them on a lower plane, and in them the glory of God is only dimly discernible; indeed in some it is scarcely traceable at all. As has been suggested, they could possibly have been of help to Adam to a degree on the level of companionship or usefulness, but not on the level of parity — they could not commune with him.

At last God gave him another person admirably suited to him, who was basically like himself, differing from him only slightly in the bodily realm, so quite logically they cleaved together, for they were one and of one; she was meet for him. She could be of help to her husband, and together with her husband a help to God also, for she met

Adam's need of help to fulfil the greatest purposes God had in mind when creating Man. Although she did not know it, she was necessary both to God and His man.

We see then that two persons in trinitarian form of life, one created and the other made from that creation, were placed together by God to exist as one, together forming a duality. We observe also that in the limited medium of flesh God was developing the thought, desire and intention of His heart. Man was not a spontaneous, self-existent being as is God his Creator, nor could he be, nevertheless he was the chosen means of God's self-expression; by him God was beginning His plan to gradually bring the knowledge of Himself to light.

The Undefeatable Purpose.

How long Adam and Eve continued in their natural, innocent relationship we do not know. What we are told is that there came a day when they fell from their state of innocency, and their communion with God. This was a great tragedy, but great as we know it to be, it was far greater than may at first be thought. For although we all acknowledge the tragic, ever-increasing results of this catastrophe, the worst thing by far was that the devil for his part had deliberately, and apparently successfully, interfered with God's plans. At that stage of God's work, Man had not been developed into the fulness God intended; in fact he was very far from it. The incoming of sin broke communion with God long before God had finished His designs and completed His trinity of Man to perfection.

This seemed a master-stroke on the part of satan; all now seemed lost to God. But, as we shall see, God's enemy did not prevent His plans from being fulfilled, he only delayed their fulfilment. The devil's attempt was to foil God's plan to reveal Himself as the Tri-unity of Persons He is; but the devil failed. In His love and wisdom God had already placed within Man the ability to reproduce himself, and some time later Cain and Abel were born.

So it was that though by then shut out of the Paradise of God, and in conditions other than God at first provided, the original plan was seen in its fulness. Man, by God's will and power, was shown to be exactly what He is — a trinity. The family unit was at last displayed as a trinity of trinities. The family unit is the masterpiece of masterpieces — father, mother, sons. When viewed in the light of the entire scripture, this fact speaks volumes to the Spirit-taught man, for it reveals far more of God's heart than the bald statement of the actual text itself. Singular father, singular mother, plurality of sons; what depth of implied spiritual meaning is revealed here. Beyond the wondrous promise that 'the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head', there lies before our eyes the hint 'that He, by the grace of God, should bring many sons to glory' also. The devil had got in and seemingly ruined it all, but he could no more turn God from His eternal plans than he could prevent Him from His immediate design, or from His ultimate purpose with Man. Hallelujah! The immediate will of God in creation **was** that Man should be sinless in his own personal being and that being so, he should reveal the: (1) existence, (2) being (manner of), (3) life (state of), (4) persons, (5) relationship, (6) order, (7) purpose, of the Godhead.

Through his folly the man failed of God's highest desires, and fell from his original position long before God had completed his education in paradise. Yet although by reason of this Adam was forced ever afterwards to live in adverse conditions, he still had opportunity to learn much of the One who was his Maker and Lord.

3. IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

1. Of His Existence.

The Opening Understanding.

Had Adam existed on the earth alone, God's plan could never have been known. Although it is possible that Adam knew three persons in God, and that he himself, though formed of dust, had been inbreathed by God into a living soul, he could never have known his own trinitarian being unless he had physically died. If he had done so, no-one would have known, for there would have been no-one to know. To be told, even by God, (as we have been) that we are a trinity, is to be left in much uncertainty about our being, for who can divide between spirit and soul except God? However, Adam was a living proof of the existence of God. The very fact that he was a living soul, able to commune with God his great Creator and Superior who came to talk with him, who also planted things in an orderly manner, gave him commandments and made him superior over all other animate life in a garden most beautiful, proved to him that God existed. He had never seen Him, but had never doubted that God was. It must have been a most wonderful experience to walk and talk with someone invisible.

Thousands of years later, with perfect knowledge and full understanding of these things, the apostle John took up his pen to write his first epistle. Whether or not at the time his thoughts were upon the creation story and Adam we cannot tell, but we do know that He whose Spirit inspired the privileged apostle was most certainly dwelling upon it in thought. Praise God for the grace and wisdom which caused Him to give to us the New Testament, for it holds the key to all His former works and writings. By doing it this way He has ensured that we read the entire Bible, for unless men do so, they cannot arrive at the fullest understanding of God and His ways as they ought.

John wrote of 'that which was from the beginning', and by those words reveals God's desire that we should know how things were during the period of creation and also between Himself and Adam. In the opening words of his Gospel, John tells us both how and what things were with God before the creation period began. 'In the beginning was the Word (Logos = thought, idea, beauty, plan; the word is a veritable cosmos of truth) and the Word was with God and the Word was God'. That is the inspired revelation of the original position, or how things were with God before creation and time.

The Bible goes no further back than that; there are no records, for God has volunteered no further information along this line about Himself. Inquiry beyond this point is impossible, and having reached it, all one may do is allow the soul, by the Spirit, to enter into union with God infinite. Uncreation; that which is and hath no beginning and ending; where everything just is; eternity.

The Hallowed Communion.

Passing on from that profundity, John in briefer terms reaffirms his statement with a view to disclosures concerning God and creation and thereby prepares our hearts for Moses' words in Genesis 1, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. Here Moses reveals how God moved from uncreation and timelessness to creation and time. First of all God made the grand beginning, and from that initial beginning, as day succeeded day, entered upon a series of beginnings and endings, each one commencing with the evening and finishing in the morning. So it continued, until on the seventh day He ceased from His works of creation and together with the man He had made in His own image and likeness, entered into a hallowed rest.

After resting awhile in enjoyment of love, in communion with His creature, God extended His works still further by planting a very special paradise garden in Eden. Creating it for the man, He placed him in it, that in ideal conditions He should develop him into the person He wanted him to be. This He commenced to do by coming down regularly in the cool of every day to fellowship with him in the garden. At those times Adam would cease from everything else, laying all aside to walk with his God. Being triune in his being, Adam found no difficulty in this, for he was like his Creator. In that he was flesh and God is Spirit, Adam was unlike Him, but he was His very image in that he was a soul / spirit, a bodily being impressed with the abilities of his Maker. Adam was a marvellous miracle, the reflection of God to His creation.

Image and likeness though Adam was, however, he was but a babe, and only at the beginning of the realization of the potential within him. God intended as time proceeded to develop this spirit / soul being into more godlike proportions, and this was one of the chief reasons for His visits to His garden. We do not know that He appeared in bodily form upon those occasions, in fact it is practically certain that He did not, for, as John says, 'no man (not even Adam) hath seen God at any time'. So Adam needed to be able to recognize God by other means and faculties than physical sight and touch. We know that Adam knew God's voice, for we are told so, but beyond that there is no record that he either saw or touched Him.

The Living Word.

Yet Adam knew God all right, and it is John to whom we are indebted for knowledge of the means. In his Gospel he tells us that 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us ... full of grace and truth'. During that time John, together with his colleagues, heard, saw with his eyes, looked upon and handled the Word of Life. He goes on to explain that this was possible to them then only because the life was manifested to them (in the flesh). Having told us of their unspeakably special privilege, he says that we who never heard or saw or looked upon or handled that man of flesh may with them also have fellowship with the Father and the Son. Seeing that this is entirely beyond the possibility of physical powers, he must be referring exclusively to spirit / soul powers, entirely beyond the range of fleshly ability. In other words, fellowship with God is dependent upon, expressed by and manifest to powers other than are possessed by the outward body of human flesh.

It was by these powers that Adam knew God. At the appointed hour God would come, and although He did not descry a form, Adam would sense His presence; He was there. Man, the real inward man, touched and handled God; he saw Him with the inward eye; heard Him; was taught by Him. There was no covenant made, no words written, no vows taken, no extraneous means at all: Adam's life, growth and development began to mature in bonds of perfect love and communion. God appeared to Adam by His word; He revealed Himself by it just as everyone else does. Adam was vividly alive to Him; he knew, and was learning and all the time coming to an understanding of God and His plans for his life.

2. Of His Being.

The True Communion.

Beyond all this, Adam discovered what manner or kind of Being God was. During this period of his life the man never knew sin, so he had no standard of comparison on moral and ethical levels whereby to assess the character of his Maker. Perhaps it is true and could be taken for granted that God revealed to Adam that He is I AM, but that can only be an assumption, for we are not told. It is likely also that Adam knew God by the name Elohim, or perhaps by the word in its more simple form, Eloah, but again we do not know.

In none of his recorded conversations with God does the man call Him by any name, which at first thought may be very surprising. However, when it is remembered that there was no other person on the earth at that time, this is not really surprising after all. When Adam spoke to any moral intelligence other than himself, it had to be God, for as far as he knew only God and he existed. It may be that God had informed him of the devil and his angels and sin and rebellion and its punishment, but again we are not told so. Perhaps also God brought His angelic train to earth when He talked and fellowshiped with Adam, but that too is only conjecture. In any case we have no information that Adam had conversation with any other form of animate life at that time except God.

We do know that Adam named animals and birds during this period; he may have talked to them in much the same way as humans do to animals and birds today, but he did not hold conversations with them. So when he spoke to a moral intelligence other than himself it was God. Therefore he did not need to know a name whereby to address God, for there was no possibility of confusion about who was being addressed. As we know, names are used for distinction and originally came into use as descriptions.

It was the same also with God. He only created one man, so when He commenced to speak to the man He did not use a name as though to distinguish between him and another person or another lower form of being, He just started to speak. That is the highest mark of true communion. Every man who lives in communion with God knows this. It is the ideal, the unspoken testimony to the actual enjoyment of the sweetest and most natural form

of eternal communion, in which there exists no need for introduction or preliminaries. This living communication, uninterrupted and without cessation is the everlasting state of God; it is the norm of spiritual life.

The Union of Love

It is not until the idea leading to the building of woman is introduced that the name Adam appears in the text. This is because distinction has now become necessary. Even so, God Himself does not use either name when speaking to them. Instead reference is made in the narrative to 'the man' or 'the woman'. The word Adam simply means 'man', and the word Eve means 'woman (Heb. ish, isha). Here we have the original instance of how descriptions became names. They were called what they were as a result of God's handiwork; they were 'God's workmanship; created'.

Whilst still alone, Adam not only knew that God existed, he also knew His mode of being. He knew the state in which the three persons maintained existence as one, namely communion or fellowship. God lives in eternal mutual love, or the giving of the whole self to each of the others, thinking, feeling, willing, desiring for the others, seeking their glory and moving with them in concert, so that no division of interest, purpose, desire or works can exist. Perfect union, perfect being, perfect love. Adam not only knew that God is, but also that He is One, and that He is Love.

3. Of His Life.

From Life into Death.

Adam knew also that God is Life, for he himself was alive. While living in the garden he had no means of knowing this by comparison, for he had never seen a dead body. It was not until the fall that physical death entered the world. Perhaps soon after that he witnessed animals fighting and slaying one another, and wondered at the lifelessness of the carcasses of the dead creatures, but until then he had not seen physical death. From the moment of his fall from ignorance and innocency into knowledge and sin, however, Adam died spiritually. He continued from that event in a state of soul-death, until centuries later physical death occurred.

It is hard for us to imagine what the fall from life into death must have been like to Adam. As the days passed he was to find out much about it, but only by contrasting his present state with his former self and what he had known of God then. Perhaps an idea of what Adam felt can best be understood by those who, by contrast, have been raised from spiritual death into newness of life by Christ in regeneration. Certain it is that no-one else on this earth but they can possibly know a sudden passing from death to life or in any way grasp what happened to Adam in the reverse order upon partaking of the forbidden fruit. At that moment he experienced an instantaneous passing from life to death.

Previously he had known only life, which presumably was sustained in its basic principle upon its original ground by eating the tree of life in paradise. The fact that Adam knew and kept in touch with God was the direct cause of his spiritual life; the fact that he obeyed, co-operated with and continued to learn from God was the direct cause of his soul-life; and although he could eat of all the trees of the garden except the tree in its midst, the fact that he ate of the tree of life was the chief means of sustenance for his physical life.

The Vulnerable Love.

During that period, ignorance for Adam lay chiefly in ignorance of good and evil, and his innocence in that he had never known sin. He knew that good and evil existed, for there was a tree of that description producing fruit in the garden, but he had never needed to make moral judgements between these two ethical opposites. All Adam needed to do was to obey God. He did not need to know the fine line which philosophy or sophistry may draw between good and evil in some issues. God did not require that of him, for evil is far too great a mystery for that. Adam would not have known that however good the fruit of the tree was, the reason for its presence was an enigma hidden in a mystery. Its roots were deeply embedded in God's heartache because of unrequited love.

For the most part God has drawn a veil over the jealousy, envy, pride and folly which arose among some individuals of His former angelical creation. The disobedience, rebellion and hurt in heaven was too painful to recall; it was best left shrouded in unspoken mystery. Why God ever put the tree in the garden at all is very

difficult for us to understand. He knew very well what would happen; He fully anticipated a repetition of the trouble; then whatever made Him allow the possibility? Did He want to be hurt again?

The answer to these questions lies in part in the greatness of His loving desires for Man. He did so truly want Man to achieve his utmost potential and become all He had designed him to be, so although He knew what it could mean in terms of self-suffering, He was prepared to expose Himself all over again. Love, which originally produced and developed a creature capable of being, thinking, speaking and doing right, also wanted him to will and choose the right; the Lord wanted him to be an embodiment and expression of His righteousness, as well as of His love and power. Adam was the first step toward the achievement of His honest attempt to reproduce His own perfections in a race of lesser beings than Himself.

At the time God created Adam, both good and evil were already fully known and openly displayed among the men of His former heavenly creation. Many, perhaps most, of these who had observed the evil which had arisen in some of their fellow-creatures, had with dismay watched its development and spread, and had been forced to make their choice against it, lest they themselves should be implicated in it; these only knew about evil as opposite to good. But there were others of them who, although they also knew both good and evil, and were originally made good like their companions, deliberately refused to remain so; they chose the evil and became evil. Chief among these was Lucifer, son of the morning, the anointed cherub. This being chose to set himself up against his God and Maker. It was he who originated and spread sin in heaven and organized and led the first great rebellion against his Creator and His loyal subjects. Therefore, at the time God created Adam, both good and evil were already known among the angels.

Nevertheless these things did not deter God from His purpose. Even though He fully realized that by creating Adam He was creating a person in whom lay the same possibility of rebellion, God carried through His purpose. The true and righteous Lord so dearly desired a creature of perfect moral uprightness and finished perfection, that despite all the dangers involved and the situation which He foresaw He took the risk. He made Adam a little lower than the angels, crowned him with glory and honour, set him over the works of His hands, and quite deliberately placed him in a garden wherein He had already planted the tree which held the possibility of temptation and death.

The Loving Prohibition.

In keeping with all His former works, God made Adam good; he was the crowning glory of a glorious week of creation in which everything was very good and pleasing to God. In the whole of the inanimate creation the only thing which held possibility of threatened evil was one solitary tree. The tree and its fruit were as good as any other tree and fruit, for God said so, but to eat of its fruit under prohibition from God was certain death. Although it was good in itself, at that time, for reasons best known to Himself, God forbade the man to eat of it. We do not know whether or not the prohibition was only a temporary measure, introduced by God because the man was at that time insufficiently developed to handle the knowledge that was to be gained from eating the fruit. God knew though, and He also knew perfectly well what He was about.

There was nothing morally or ethically wrong in what God did. He had pronounced everything good. The whole range and provision of His creation for Man, limited by just one prohibition, could bring no hardship and be no wrong. To the contrary it would test the morality of the man and thereby assist God in His plan for the spiritual development of Man — that of itself was very good.

Perhaps it is true that by everything He created, God originally illustrated and set forth something of His own self, or nature, or characteristics, or beauty or being. Design, order, power, exactness, meaning are all around us throughout the whole universe. Whether viewing the microscopic world of incredible minutiae, or the telescopic world without, where vast bodies move through uncharted paths of outer space, we discover that by whirling atoms and inescapable law, God has revealed to men some little details of His own greatness. When He began His work there was nothing for Him to copy. No-one before Him had created a Cosmos or made a world. There was no god before Him, neither is there any beside Him; no-one has been His counsellor, neither has He consulted with anyone; He is both Architect and Artificer of the universe. The whole of creation therefore came from Himself. If

therefore serious thought is given to the matter, it is not really as surprising as it may at first seem that there should be a tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden He made for man.

The Unavoidable Hazard.

Through Lucifer's fall and felony, evil had already come into being. Before that, evil had never been. In the very beginning there was nothing but perfect good — God and the Word. God is and always was and ever shall be good only; but the fact and existence of good postulates that its opposite must have been a possibility also, even though as yet it had no existence save in the mind of God as a conjecture. Indeed, had this not been so, God could be charged with naivety and ignorance. The thought of a possibility however is not sin, nor can it constitute the one who thinks it evil in nature and disposition.

Evil had no being until Lucifer, a creature who was possibly the highest moral intelligence next to God, conjectured for himself a position outside of God's will for him. By the very law of mind, this thought developed into an imaginary possibility, the contemplation of which filled him with delight. Had he rejected it then and there all would have been well, but instead he gave himself over to thinking and feeling himself to be in that position. Developed further, this imagination and feeling hardened into intention to be what he at first mentally pictured and then heartily imagined. This gained such power in him that he decided to induce the conditions whereby he could create for himself the position he coveted. He then attempted to bring about the situation by inciting and leading a rebellion, and so evil was created.

Evil did not exist until then, nor could it have come into being except by this kind of process. It was an abortive coup, but from it we learn that like good, evil cannot exist until someone gives it being. When therefore Lucifer turned possibility into actuality, evil had come to stay, and from that moment God could not ignore it. Evil was and is, and ever shall be it seems. Just as God is, and good is because God is, so also because Satan is, evil is.

Therefore when bringing forth His creation, and especially since He was intending to make Man and place him in it to develop him into full moral stature, God could not do otherwise than He did. If He had not done it precisely that way He would have needed to have done something of a similar nature; but since He did it this way, it must be the best. He dared not make another moral intelligence whom He intended to be to Him as a son, and not allow him also the possibility of choice between the opposites of good and evil which now existed. What had first been to Himself a postulated possibility, and became by Lucifer dreadful actuality, must now be placed within the reach of Man as a perilous possibility. The whole drama must be outworked again. Only this time not in two heavenly minds, (to one of which it was known only as a possibility and eternally rejected, and when conjectured in the other was also conceived and brought forth as sin) it must be done within man on earth. Truly everything is seen in the form of a riddle within an enigma, only to be solved in eternity.

To Love is to Trust.

It may be that there are many reasons for this which have been hidden by God well beyond the power of human comprehension, for which we ought to be extremely grateful, and rejoice that our salvation does not rest for its power upon the ability of men to understand the Infinite. But there are also some reasons not so deeply hidden, nor entirely incomprehensible to the spiritual mind, which when properly grasped, enable us to understand the righteousness of God in doing as He did.

One of the most endearing features of God is His trustfulness. He does not always explain His acts, and this is not because He is God and can please Himself, or that we would not understand anyway, or that we have not sufficient brains to take it in, or that in order to do so it would require more books than the world itself could contain, or any such thing. The deepest and dearest of reasons why He does not always explain Himself or His acts is that He trusts us and wants us to trust Him. He does not expect His trusting people to demand an explanation. Enlightenment gradually comes to the mind which is taught of God to be as trustful as He.

In one of his most indignant passages, Paul cries out, 'nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?' His enlightened mind understood, but O he was finding it difficult to make men see what he saw. Even Jesus once said, 'how is it that ye do not understand? Do ye not yet understand?' But the Lord and His servant do not often speak in such a way; more

usually their mouths are filled with patient appeal to heart and mind. For the most part forthright statements and loving appeals crowned their logic and love, bringing enlightenment to darkened minds.

When we read Moses' account of creation, we find little but narrative; explanations are rare, and on many subjects we are left completely without answers to our questions. Why did God place the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in paradise, forbid Adam to eat of it, and yet tell him to tend it? Simply because He knew it was the only way to achieve His ends. If God wanted what He said He wanted, He had no alternative but to subject man to the same kind of tests as those through which He Himself had gone. Though not of equal degree, the tests must be the same in principle and purpose.

The Unassailable Righteousness.

When Jesus, the last Adam, came down to earth, He was made like His brethren in all things. One of the stated reasons why He took our nature was that He should be tempted in all things like as we are. In accordance with this, right at the beginning of His ministry, we find Him out in the wilderness being tempted of the devil. What happened upon that occasion between Him and satan was substantially the same kind of thing as that which took place between satan and Adam in the garden of Eden. That is the reason why it was engineered of God.

When reading the account of Jesus' temptations, it must be borne in mind that when God made Man, He had already been through His own great test. Remembering this, it can scarcely be doubted that it was as much in memory of that ordeal as being correct procedure in those circumstances that Jesus told satan, 'thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God'. Millenia earlier the tempter had already done so to God in heaven, and at that moment was doing it again to God on earth, but — and here is the great difference between the first and the last Adam — although he succeeded with Adam in the garden, satan could not succeed in making Jesus tempt the Lord His God as Adam had done.

By tempting Jesus, the devil was attempting the master-stroke of diabolical cunning far beyond the seemingly simple solicitations to evil which lay in his words; all at once he was tempting both God and Man, and also seeking to destroy the very existence of God and His kingdom. But satan was defeated. The Man Christ Jesus neither fell from His position in the Godhead; nor did He, as being God, succumb to the devil's wiles; nor did He, as being Adam, tempt the Lord His God to excommunicate Him for the same offence as Adam. He did not forsake God's word in order to live by the word which came out of the devil's mouth; He lived by every word which proceeded out of God's mouth. What would have happened had He not done so is surely too ghastly to contemplate.

The Inevitable Exposure of Love.

We have then a reason why God acted as He did when placing Man in the garden. The man He had made was a perfect example of His handiwork, but He did not only want a very good man, he wanted both an image and a perfect likeness of Himself. He did not create Man to be a god whom He should worship and serve, He wanted His creature within certain limits, to develop from a perfect beginning to the ultimate perfection of the full moral stature of God's son.

Just all He had in mind for him we are not told, even though we may gather much information about it from scripture; one thing however is certain: whatever the Lord desired and visualized as the finished character was not attainable by Adam unless he were given the opportunity to fail as well as to succeed. God knew that failure on man's part would mean more than just the sadness of unsuccess, for the temptation which was sure to come involved morality. If man failed the test, he would also cease to be the man he was. Though not in so many words, when forbidding him to eat of the tree God told him that: 'thou shalt surely die' He said.

Nevertheless, love in God's heart and the perfection He desired for Adam demanded that the risk be taken; there was no other way. Although the risk was great, the end in view justified the means. What God did was right. Adam was not only the man he was, but must also be shown to be the man he was. That is a universally accepted principle of justice and morality.

The Chiefest Glory.

Connected with all this, deeply involved in the mystery of God, something else emerges with regard to God's purposes by the tree. As we have previously noted, on some occasion preceding the creation of the world and the advent of man, God created a heavenly race of angelic beings (called men by John in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ). These men were of at least two orders, seraphim and cherubim; the latter seem to be much less in number than the former, although they have a higher function. Of these Lucifer was the greatest and most privileged. He was the most glorious of all God's heavenly men and could be spoken of as the glory of God.

It seems that having reaped disappointment from the first created race of heavenly men, God made a new creation and commenced afresh with earthly Man. The man Adam, the highest of all earth's creatures, became God's glory, taking fallen and dethroned Lucifer's place in His affections. Imagine then the rage, hate and jealousy in satan's implacable heart against God and Man. How long Adam remained alone as God's chief single glory is not revealed, but it would appear that all the time that first state and simple relationship continued the man was invulnerable, though the tree stood in the garden and satan's wrath was bitter. But there came a day when, in His great love for the man, God decided to make Eve and give her to him. As we know, God did this by causing a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, extracting one of his ribs, and from it building a woman.

This loving gesture, done in wisdom and intended entirely for Adam's help and blessing furnished Adam with some indirect ground for glory. God knew that it would do this, but in the nature of the case could not do otherwise than He did. Hitherto nothing had been made by God through the media of Man; all things had been created by God directly from Himself through the media of His word and dust. But with the advent of Eve, Man could say, 'this creation came forth from me'. Although he did not create her, he knew that God had made her from himself. She was not only his by gift from God, but also because his bone and flesh were her basic substance — she was indeed his glory, and subsequent events proved that he gloried in her. Foreseeing the possibility of this, satan at once devised a scheme for man's destruction, and patiently awaited an opportunity to put it into effect.

The plan was devilishly clever. When it was finally put into words it was simple and plausible, but it was full of diabolical cunning and planned with ruthless logic. He knew that it was through himself (God's former chiefest glory) that the great test had originally come to his creator. He therefore reasoned that as it had been with himself and God, so also it could be with Eve and Adam. God knew that too, and that is why He arranged things the way He did.

The Test of Glory.

God did not make a mistake by placing the tree in the garden and making Eve for Adam. He knew exactly what He was doing and what was going to happen as a result of it. He also knew that, unless pride had completely blinded satan's eyes, he would not be slow to take advantage of his opportunity. Why then did God do it? Simply because, being righteous, He is as righteous in His dealings with satan as He is in His dealings with men and angels.

Satan was a creation of God originally, so, fallen though he is, he also must be treated completely fairly. Man, though fallen, is still loved by God, and finding grace in God's eyes, is handled most fairly by Him, that in all His doings He might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Therefore in absolute justice the Lord God gave opportunity to satan. With what end in view we may only surmise, but it is certain that by the tree he also was being tested by the Lord. Satan's wisdom had become folly, and his love implacable hatred — his heart was stone and his mind fixed. He was then and still is hard, bitter, jealous, envious, totally unrepentant and openly militant against God. From the beginning of his existence as one of the cherubim, he had perfect knowledge of God's ways, and knew them to be love and holiness, so perhaps he thought he knew exactly what God would do.

The devil knew that his Creator and Lord had completely vanquished him; it was blind stupidity that made him fail to see that God was giving him a chance to restrain himself from further sin. But instead of doing this, with skill and subtlety befitting his evil genius, he gave himself over entirely to entrapping the man. When the opportune moment came, he threw himself into tempting Adam, luring him on until he committed the devil's own sin. Author of sin and creator of evil, the devil also became the father of death by suicide. By seeking to take God's (kind, position of) life from Him, Lucifer lost his own kind and position of life. It was for this reason that centuries later he tempted Jesus to commit suicide by casting Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem. In the past satan had committed spiritual suicide; he had also murdered Adam by successfully tempting him to

spiritual suicide and soul-death, so he was bound to try and convince Jesus that He should do likewise, but he failed. Spiritual, mental, moral and physical suicide is sin; satan is the father of it all. Not being in possession of all the facts of the matter, it is impossible to be dogmatic, but it seems that in sheer devilish hatred, satan deliberately set himself to ruin God's plan and destroy Man.

The mysteries of sin and iniquity and death were already working, and so were the mysteries of redemption and love and sacrifice and life, So God did not restrain him, nor refrain from creating the tree and the man and woman. Righteousness decreed that the test be given to both satan and Man. Man must not only be tested, he must be tempted in the same way as God was. Adam was tempted by satan through Eve, his glory, and he fell.

The Perilous Glory

There is a lesson here for us all to learn, namely this: it is that in which we glory most, other than in God alone, which is the greatest source of danger to us. Even though God created that glory for us and not we ourselves, does not alter the fact that it is from us, and that is its greatest danger, for there we are most vulnerable. Yet, although this is true, and the Lord knows the danger, God has no alternative but to allow us some measure of glory now. How else shall He prepare us for the future exceeding and eternal weight of glory He has in mind for us? The element of risk is always involved, for although the present glory is entirely by His grace, it is also as of ourselves, and so brings with it the possibility of danger. Because Paul knew this so very well, he says, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world' ... 'not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God'.

If only Adam had thought nothing as of himself, but had remained true to God, the whole story would have been so different. Eve, his glory, would either surely have fallen and died, or else, upon his refusal to partake, might have repented unto restoration to obedience, so that no division could have occurred. But whatever might have been the case with Eve, Adam would still have remained alive as God is alive. What is more, if Adam had remained true and faithful to God, and Eve had perished, God could have repeated His former mercy and given the man another wife.

Having lost Lucifer, His own first chief heavenly glory, God made for Himself another glory in the person of Adam, and had the man chosen aright He could have done the same for him also. Instead of withstanding the temptation to seek his own glory Adam failed and fell, with the result that God reaped His second great disappointment. His efforts for perfection had failed in both the heavenly and the earthly realms of created beings.

So it was by death that Adam knew life. The knowledge came along two lines:

- (1) by contrasting his present state with his own former state;
- (2) by contrasting himself as a fallen human being with the Being of God.

It was tragic knowledge.

4. Of the Persons of the Godhead.

The Inexorable Death.

How much Adam knew about himself is not told us, though we may imagine that during those days in which he had walked alone, or in company with Eve and the Lord, he had learned much from Him. Whether he then knew the three persons of the Godhead as such is open to question, but the subsequent events of the fall provided him with sufficient facts to enable him to draw conclusions and gain knowledge about himself. These in turn should have provided him with ample clues as to the constitution of the Being who had originally created him a perfect being also.

Perhaps he knew he was formed from dust; He certainly knew that he would die if he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for God had said he would. Yet when he did eat of the tree he did not immediately go back to his original dust. Whatever he understood later, both at the moment of eating and during the following minutes he still remained physically intact. He was alive and breathing and well; his health had not suffered, Eve was still his,

the garden was still there, but he had changed. All the fulness of sin and death which he let in by his act he had yet to discover, but he knew that something within him had changed.

For instance he found he could no longer look upon Eve as he had formerly done, nor she upon him, so they sewed fig leaves together for their covering. Some parts of their bodies became immediately private to themselves, and must be hidden from their own and each other's eyes. At the same time fear and guilt entered his soul and he somehow knew that he would no longer be able to look upon, or even to face whatever he knew as the presence of God. This was soon proven to him, for later in the cool of the day, when as usual the Creator came into the garden, Adam hid himself. His communion with God was broken. His confidence with God was gone; his conscience within him was accusing him, his childlike innocence had come to an end; he was desperately afraid.

The process of death had commenced; he had begun to understand what it was to die and die. Soon he was to know the full outworking of death, but he had already tasted it; the fruit of the tree may have been sweet, but the knowledge he had gained through it was bitter as gall. He did not then know that he was sharing satan's death, but he learned that, while still existing in full enjoyment of perfect physical life in outward conditions of absolute bliss, he had died. The real, essential Adam was dead, and he was entirely conscious of the fact. What was it that God had actually said? 'Dying thou shalt die' — now he knew what that meant.

Against the stated will of God, as well as against His obvious desires and plain warning, Adam had committed himself to continuous death. By his act he had not only immediately died, he had also started the process of death. He had launched himself firmly and surely along the road which only led into more death. Now he knew what God had meant when He said to him, 'thou shalt die immediately (He had spoken with intensity and certainty), die without end'. What a dreadful consequence! Was it a sentence or had it been a warning? Had God passed judgement on him or solemnly told him what would be the result of contravening the word of God and breaking a spiritual law? He did not know; what a terrible thing he had done.

The Ultimate Love.

We shall never know the depth of sorrowful anger against the man, nor yet the fullest degree of burning hatred against satan lying in God's heart because of Adam's sin that day. Whether He had pronounced sentence, or sounded a warning, we do not know; we can only rejoice that any degree of sentence implied in the words God uttered was in the end passed upon Himself.

Oh the mystery of sin and hatred, of righteousness and love; oh the eternal infinite reach of Calvary's death. Who shall explain the incomprehensible love and make plain the miracle that God by Christ should punish Adam and Christ by Adam? It was by Jesus that Adam's sin was expiated, therefore it was because of Adam that Jesus was punished. Who can understand how it was that Jesus became the last Adam, so that Adam's crime against God should end? But it was so. That word spoken in Eden ran its inevitable course until He came who was its terminal end, that by Him sin should be finished for ever by God.

History can furnish nothing comparable to this, for its love has no equal. King Saul said to his son Jonathan, 'thou shalt surely die', and did not keep his threat. David cried out for his son, 'Oh Absalom, Absalom, would God I had died for thee', but couldn't fulfil his wish. But by God's royal word and law Jesus was made sin bodily. The Man was made the last dreadful manifestation of evil at which God struck; His Lamb bore away the sin of the world. God had to be its logical end, for no-one else could be.

Strangely the tragedy of Adam's sin and God's sentence worked itself out in all the complexity of dead and dying humanity's unexplainable torments and emotional turmoil, and will do so until doomsday. But God has made an end of sin and death for us. The feelings that smoked in His eyes in Eden and blazed into fire at Calvary, are the twin flames burning now in the eyes of the Lord of the churches, the Light of the world. The mystery is resolved in Him, and blessed are all they who lie on His breast to find the solution.

Dying thou shalt die.

Adam knew death by sin. The life of love and communion with God had gone. He could no longer walk and talk with his Maker. He could no longer stay in the garden; he was cut off from the tree of life; he was

excommunicated, thrust off into an outer world of enmity and conflict and death. He not only found it impossible to commune with God, he was rejected by Him. All hope of restoration to paradise and communion died at the point of a flaming sword. Adam no longer lived, he existed.

Eve also was condemned to a life of sorrow. She brought forth two sons, Cain and Abel, who for a while brought them happiness and hope, but this soon died in their breasts. Murderer and Murdered they might have called them; their fruit brought death to them. Broken-hearted they bowed to the outworking of the worst results of the conflict that rent their breasts. Poor, sad, hopeless pair; death was their heredity, their progeny and their destiny. Their souls had died, and now they existed in a world of inescapable death. Bathe their own and each other's souls in sympathy as they would, they could find no remission, the results of their sin were cumulative. Their original folly was magnified unto them on every hand, multiplied and compounded into destiny of death.

What is soul-death but the outworking and manifestation of the suffering and misery of a dead spirit in understandable terms of pain? To intelligently grasp the possibility of unending miseries is to drape the heart in the black horror of terrible fear. Even though some of the joys of life may bring temporary alleviation, always the tide of suffering comes surging back again, relentless as the unconquerable ocean.

Adam knew he was dead and constantly dying. Spirit and soul he was already aborted and at the conclusion of almost a thousand years he knew physical death also. It is to be supposed that before Adam personally tasted it, he had seen it a hundred or more times, as the same curse and sin he knew in himself worked with dreadful effect also in the creatures around him. What remorse and self-recrimination must have gripped him as he witnessed creatures that he had named and fondled and loved, dying as a result of his own selfish folly. The whole world was full of death. Little lives expired or gigantic bodies either hurled themselves against each other in hate or ran in fear.

He had to stand by in helplessness and watch it happen, or else filled with anger or fear or sorrow or remorse flee from it in self-protection. But there was no respite from it. Where and how it all would end, and how long he would be a witness of it he did not know. If death happened to them, when would it happen to him? And how about Eve; would he have to stand by and see the dread spectre carry her away too? He had no answer. He was more ignorant now that he had eaten of the tree than he had been before. How the devil had deceived them both.

The Great Gulf Fixed.

He knew that now he no longer had right to the tree of life. He was cut off from it, yet he was fully aware that his life depended on it — he knew that if he could not eat of it he would surely die. No other food could take its place. God had put it there specially for him, so that by constant partaking of its fruit he would live for ever. But now it was impossible to exist eternally; God did not want him to; he had forfeited the privilege. The way to the tree was kept by an angel with a flaming sword. Everywhere he looked he saw death, if he did not eat of the tree he would die, if he attempted to approach it he would be killed.

Everything had been so bright and full of life when waking from sleep he had first seen the woman God gave him. He had called her Eve; it had seemed so appropriate then — the mother of all living. But she brought forth death to him. What a hollow mockery everything was. She was death — had been death to him, was still death to him and he only begat death through her — she was the mother of all death and dying, and he was the father. Mental suffering, pain, grief, inward torture wracked him; of all deaths this was surely the death. What was the physical death he witnessed and now anticipated compared with this, and how long would this go on?

There was no answer, only the word — 'thou shalt surely die'. Somehow he knew that, ask himself as he would for a solution to his sufferings, there would still be no answer — he was dead. God, he knew, was alive, but where was He? Somewhere up in heaven, or behind the flaming sword? Unapproachable. His body, he knew, would die; every carcase he saw and perhaps buried out of sight, shouted unavoidable death to him. He was permanently under the devil's power of unending death. What contrast to his former state of life and glory; he had sold his heritage for nought. Instead of being the god the devil suggested he would be, he felt more like satan. So this was

death. Coming to an understanding of these things, Adam, the wonderful creation of God, could have learned by circumstantial evidence of his own triune being and also of God's.

5. Of the Relationships within the Godhead.

The Invincible God.

It is doubtful whether Adam knew much if anything about the relationships between the persons of the Godhead, for these may only be known to souls taught of God. To such persons one of the exceeding wonders of God is the marvellous way in which He brings untold blessings out of terrible tragedy. They know that whatever the devil does, he cannot prevent God from manipulating Satan's worst works to the best ends. Grace has taught them the truth written in the word — the devil is only the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air. Boast as he may, and work as he can, he is not God Almighty, whose Son is the Prince of the kings of the earth.

God was determined that as nearly as possible He would set forth by Man a true representation of Himself. The fall of Adam prevented God from finishing His work at leisure in paradise, but He did not allow it to force Him to abandon His plans altogether. He therefore speeded up His entire programme so that sin, abhorrent as it is, far from deflecting Him, was made to serve His purposes. This is His greatness.

As we have seen, until the fall Man only knew and set forth duality — man and woman. But man and woman, beside being dual Man, were also male and female. Between them they possessed the ability and potential to bring forth. So upon their fall, with the pronouncement of the curse, God also announced the fact of a speeding up of conception. Thus it came about that soon after their expulsion from paradise, a child was born unto the fallen pair. From within themselves the twain produced a third, and so in time, despite the devil's intentions, the human family appeared. They who had been one nature became one flesh, then one family also.

Whether Adam and Eve understood then all that God was doing is arbitrary, but for those who have eyes to see, the most wonderful and natural picture of the trinity had emerged and was now solidly displayed. Man is a trinity. He is not a monad, nor yet just a duality, but a trinity like his Maker, a trinity of three distinct persons.

No Other God.

Apparently God could not or did not wish to make Man three persons in one being as He Himself. He had designed Adam and Eve and their progeny to exist as separate individuals. They were modelled upon the basic plan of the tri-unity that each person of the Godhead knows within Himself, as well as between themselves. He did not, indeed could not, create another God, which in the nature of things simply cannot be. There was no other being before God to create Him God, and He did not create any other being to be God beside Him, neither has He created anyone to be God after Him. He has no before or after in terms of time. According to His will He has before and behind in terms of position, that is in relationship of others to Himself as a divine being, and Himself to others as His creatures — that is all. He is, always has been, and always will be.

Perhaps the most profound truth of the whole Bible is stated and suggested to us by the form of the opening words in the book of Hebrews: 'God, who'. This is more profound even than the Mosaic 'In the beginning God', and the Johannine 'In the beginning was the Word'. God! There is no talk of beginning here; no introductory easing into the profound immensity. Human understanding must at some time bow and acknowledge that it has no right to reason beyond a certain point, and that to enquire further would be impertinence. God is the ultimate challenge to all men. He is the unchallengeable, eternal bedrock of faith.

Upon consideration it may be conceded that the English language is singularly adapted to the expression of the eternal Being. In simplest words, constructed by joining letters together in easiest numerical formation, moving from singular through dual to trinitarian, we make up and use the phrase 'I AM GOD'. Looking at it in print, it seems almost as though our very language gives us added advantage. It enables us to express our understanding of God's self-understanding in terms of Hebrew numerical thought, singular, dual, plural — all is comprehended within six letters in this form — one, one two, one two three.

The Changeless Prototype.

Unlike his Creator, Man, as of himself, has no consciousness within himself of eternal being. However, although this is so, Man is nevertheless a representation to consciousness of the triune being of God, and purposely so. In creating Man, God incorporated into the human race certain possibilities and powers which suggest the idea of eternity.

As we know, there was an age when human beings did not exist — for Man there had to be a beginning. We also know that there is an age to come when Man shall have no further physical being. Nevertheless God has imparted to the race a certain means of continuity, thereby suggesting to the mind the fact of endless being. This He did by placing within Man powers of procreation that He may perpetuate human life by reproduction. However faint a picture of Him it may be, to do this was necessary to His plan, for it ensured continuity of the species in the exact image of the prototype, Adam. There could be no allowance for evolution of form or being; throughout the ages Man has remained unchanged, he is exactly the same as he ever was. From the very beginning he had to be so, and still has to be so, because God is so. The whole idea of the evolution of Man is thus seen to be ludicrous, the contemptible brainchild of atheistic delusions.

These things had to be of course. Man has to explain himself somehow. Science demands it; philosophy demands it; God demands it. However, unlike science and philosophy, which have produced their own theories, God has produced His self-evidence. Science seeks for answers from deductions based upon laws of existence which it discovers in the material universe; philosophy searches the inner universe of the mind, seeking for logical explanations of self. They were both bound to fail, for each refuses to account for spirit and finds sin unacceptable. But God created Man a living soul by spirit with physical being, that he should indicate, witness to and, with certain limitations, explain His own being.

Contrary to the majority of the predications and hopes of scientists and philosophers, and the suggestions of biologists, ever since Man's fall, all the elements of devolution and corruption have become inherent and manifest in him. Sadly enough grotesque forms of life have at times been produced from human parents, but these live and die without introducing a new strain among men. The original form still remains unaltered and will do so until the end. God has set certain things in Man which are the hallmark of his Creator, and these must not vary from generation to generation. All the time Man begets Man there will be a threefold testimony on earth: (1) to the existence of God, (2) to God's mode of being, (3) to God's eternity of being.

The Profound Mystery.

But beyond this, God also placed in the race a testimony to the relationships in the Godhead. He wanted us to know the manner in which the persons of the Trinity relate to each other. For this the family unit was devised and produced. Adam by himself could not do this — his was a personal testimony — but given Eve, they could together show forth more of God's being than each could do individually; yet not until the family unit was displayed could the fullest truth be shown. As a man Adam was as a god reigning in his majesty in his kingdom. This continued with him throughout — it was permanent; he represented God. The later creation of Eve from himself and their union in flesh in no way altered the man's primary privilege, in fact it underlined it. Adam was first formed, says Paul.

Adam was formed, that is he was complete in himself. The building of Eve from his rib in no way depleted him; he lost nothing, he gained an improvement of one of his bones. Adam stood for God as a god, both in the whole creation and in his union with Eve. But great as that was, his function was not just to establish himself as a god over all created life; he had other roles to fill also. These were bound up with the consummation of his marriage to Eve. He had to be a father. Alone and in himself he was a triune being, but the triune God had decided that each member of the heavenly trinity must have personal portrayal in Man, and it was Adam's part to display the Father.

In his first role he displayed God the Son, for he was the child of God's desire and design, created and begotten a son; so sonship was his first glory. Secondly he was as God, being the god(head) over all creation — which at that time represented the kingdom of heaven on earth. Thirdly he displayed fatherhood; he had a son. God is not only a Creator, He is a Father also. Bound up with this is the display of a further function of God, namely headship. Although in order of realization this should precede fatherhood, it is perhaps better placed here than earlier, for it more naturally leads to the consideration of other relationships at this point. Adam here represents Jesus, the

Son. Joined to Eve as one, he was nevertheless her head. She was to him as body to head; the woman is man's body, the man is woman's head. The relationship between Adam and Eve was as that between Christ and the Church; they are one.

The Paraclete has come.

The woman taken from Adam had a most precious part to play in this self-revelation of God through His handiwork. She, according to Adam's enthusiastic admiration of her being, was 'the mother of all living'. By this statement it is evident that Adam considered himself to be the father of all living, which to say the least, is most illuminating. Eve's actual marriage in flesh to Adam, followed by her sin and subsequent temptation of him, leading to the fall, was unparalleled tragedy, for in her eventual motherhood she became the mother of all dying. Nevertheless she was the logical one through whom God should show forth certain divine mysteries.

Firstly she was taken from the son, Adam, whilst he was in deep sleep; bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. How truly in this she represents the Church which is His body. Then she rightly speaks of the woman who was married to Him who was raised from the dead that she should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7). Also, in a yet more mysterious way, she was to represent the precious Holy Ghost, without whose aid the Son could not make anything, nor the Father beget any children. She was the help meet for Adam, the one who proceeded directly from him as did the Holy Spirit from Jesus who sent Him, and His name is Paraclete — 'one called alongside to help'.

That is precisely what happened in the garden. Eve was called alongside Adam to help him beget children. He was the head, she was the body from which the sons came, and by her those two mysterious scriptures find union which respectively say, 'His name shall be called ... the everlasting father' and 'I and the children that God hath given me are all of one'. In the latter He acknowledged both His eternal Sonship and everlasting Fatherhood; He is of the Father God, yet He is Himself a Father, by God's grace. In the former His everlasting humility is magnified as He allows natural procession of thought to exalt Him to a fatherhood of which He is the everlasting Son. His consciousness of this is plainly revealed in scriptures like the following: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the father, I and my father are one — no man cometh unto the father but by me'. By the family unit it is naturally seen that although the father begets the son, the son in turn himself becomes the father, for that is how perpetuity or continuity, the human counterpart of God's eternity, is maintained.

It is Eve, the mother, by whom it is all possible. She represents the bride; she speaks of His body the Church, which beside being born of the Spirit, is also the embodiment of the Holy Ghost who came to possess, fill and dwell in the Church in Jesus' name. She helps Him to Fatherhood; He helps her to motherhood; the Father begets His family by and in the Holy Ghost. How marvellously the whole Godhead is displayed by and mysteriously engaged in the family unit. What a composite picture of God it is, of the Being, persons and relationship of God; of their nature, dispositions and unity; their love, humility and sweetness, their individual power and combined might.

A Son is Given.

The family unit is the truest revelation of God in the whole earth. It has no equal. Peerless in its comprehensiveness, unrivalled for its dumb eloquence, unequalled in its precision, undeniable in its testimony; to this present day a human family ineradicably typifies God. Man, woman, child, — father, mother, son; between them they set forth an order of thought most readily acceptable to the mind. If this is not the way in which the three members of the Godhead thought of themselves in an unrecorded eternity, it is certainly that which is revealed in the portion of eternity which we call time and has to do with creation.

This need not be pressed beyond the bounds of sense, for it is not an all-important point which we discuss here. It is not common for members of a family which is of adult age and mature thought to be concerned with correct order of thought about priorities among themselves. Nevertheless it is in the inescapable nature of things that father and mother have their proper place in the midst of their children. 'Honour thy father and thy mother', the Lord commanded the children of Israel. It surely cannot be without deep meaning that longevity and enjoyment of their possessions was made contingent upon obedience to this commandment. It was the first commandment with promise, we are told by Paul.

If the foregoing analogy is correct, there is much to be gained from a proper recognition of God in His Father / Mother capacity; His ability to beget and give birth to children has been reproduced and represented in the human race by creating Man male and female. Father and mother combine to produce the son. That is the sacred order revealed on earth, when God brought forth His Son made of a woman. The Father and the Holy Spirit did it; their combined work is the Son. He is their glory — God's Son — the eternal Son displayed on earth in mortal flesh. The Son, the fruit of Father and Mother is the focal point, of the whole Trinity.

The Speaking Blood.

The son of Adam and Eve became a murderer, the outworking and first-fruit of their disobedience. He exhibited what it was that secretly lay in sin — death. In him it became death to God's creature and his own brother. It had commenced in the heart of Lucifer as death to God. Had it been possible for that wish to have been fulfilled, it would have meant defeat, dethronement, shame, mockery, total loss, undeserved punishment, enslavement, despair. That is what death, had it been possible, would have meant to God.

To Abel it meant cessation of physical life, that is all. He was the first martyr. His blood speaks great things to God and to us. To God it cries out for vengeance, as does the blood of the martyrs in Revelation 6:10, and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their blood must be avenged; it is so precious. Abel's blood had to be avenged — it was the blood of a simple, obedient man, who was killed because he was righteous. The righteousness which was in his blood was testified to by God, who centuries later visited it upon the same generation which crucified His Son, whose blood has yet to be avenged upon all mankind that rejects Him.

In His righteous manhood, Jesus' blood and death are linked with all the righteous who preceded Him upon earth, but in His unique Godhead they remain unavenged, awaiting the final judgements, which yet must be outpoured in order that perfect righteousness should be fulfilled. At that time the blood and death of all the holy martyrs, who when Jesus spoke the words on earth were as yet unborn and unsaved, will be linked with His, as was that of the former martyrs at the time of His death. But let us be grateful that the days of vengeance are staved off for us by the days of grace in which we live.

The Triumphant Righteousness.

Unlike Cain, the Lord Jesus was the embodiment of obedience. He was full of humility and submission to the Father. Many of the virtues and qualities we ascribe to the Son stem from our knowledge of the fact that He is eternal God, co-equal with the Father, but there are some which have been made known to us by direct statement. Among these, and perhaps foremost of all, He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is also the mysterious information that He was the Word which was in the beginning with God.

Each of these descriptions, coupled with such Old Testament statements as 'Behold my servant', and 'Out of thee shall he come forth unto ... whose goings forth have been from of old', (each spoken of the Lord Jesus) point to someone who is subservient to a higher, greater person than the speaker. Someone must have slain the Lamb, and spoken the Word, and be the Lord and Master of the Servant, and to have called Him forth to Himself.

As God, in unison with Father and Holy Ghost, Jesus decided that God's purposes should be fulfilled in Himself; as Son He allowed Himself to be His Father's idea and Word; as God's Seed He co-operated to be brought forth by the Holy Spirit to the Father at Bethlehem; as Servant He kept His eye upon His Lord and His ear open to His commands; to become the slain Lamb, He submitted to be led by men to Calvary.

His was the perfect human life resulting from the union of Father and Holy Ghost in Mary. He was their single glory and joy, the realization and setting forth of their love. Love is nothing else but obedience — the interaction of perfect Being in self-giving, resulting in reproduction in exact likeness. Not as Adam and Eve, who combined to bring forth in the likeness and image of their death, Father and Holy Ghost united to bring forth their ideal in the likeness and image of their life — His name is Jesus.

6. Of the Order within the Godhead.

God — Triune and Uncreated.

How much was known by Adam of the order of the persons of the Godhead is uncertain. There is no absolute statement upon this subject in the whole of scripture. It is therefore very doubtful that Adam knew much about it, unless he was privileged like Isaiah, who at a much later date was made privy to conversations between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Nevertheless we will at this point give some time to a consideration of the order of the Godhead revealed in Genesis 1, as being: God the Father — verse 1, God the Spirit — verse 2, God the Son (the Word, later revealed in John 1:1-14, as Jesus) — verse 3.

At first sight this statement of what appears to be an arrangement of order in God may be found strange, especially as the Lord Jesus Himself used a different order in Matthew 28:19. But there is no discrepancy here, for the statement of order as above set out has only been adduced from a simple analysis of scripture. It is not an inspired definition of God given by Himself; the record was not given for that purpose. This is how it was in the beginning, and it was like that simply because it had to be so. We may be sure that God never does anything out of proper order or apart from righteousness and without good reason. Likewise the order pronounced by the Lord Jesus is not to be taken as the final definition of the order of God; it is simply a presentation to the mind of the natural order of procession of the persons of God from Himself to Man.

Like the above order it is not a statement made with the intention of defining the order of importance or self-recognition in the being of God. Neither is it a revelation of voluntary eternal alignment, or of degree of honour or merit in the Godhead. No statement in scripture involving the holy Trinity is to be regarded as a definition of the order of their being. None was made with that intention, nor is it possible that there can be any such formula. Moreover, as has been previously said, it is essential to bear in mind that on no account may God be thought of as existing first as singular, then as dual, and then as triune, as though He existed as Father first, Son next and Holy Ghost last. The tri-unity of God has ever been; all three persons have existed together simultaneously and spontaneously as one. Father is eternal, Son is eternal, Holy Ghost is eternal.

The Immortal Being is three persons. None of them is successive; the Son did not come into existence and proceed to be after the Father, neither did the Holy Ghost commence to be after the Son or the Father had commenced to be; not one of them preceded the others in being or life, nor did any one of them follow the others, as being created by or for the others. Each person is, and all three together are, God uncreated. God in three persons is eternally self-existent. At no point did one exist without or apart from the other two; they each existed and exist and shall for ever exist with and in the others. Could one of them have been after the others, that one would not have life in Himself as being the source of life and would not therefore be eternal. The point of emergence, or generation, or manifestation, or recognition by the others would have dated Him. He would have been a child or a begetting of time, even though that time be calculated in ages and not in centuries or millennia. Far beyond the power or grasp of finite minds, God ever has been, and ever shall be as He is.

Co-equal and Co-existent.

Our minds can readily grasp the idea and propriety of order in the creation of Man as being first male, second female from the male, third child from male and female. Equally we also grasp the fact that, although the child of any family is subsequent in existence to its parents, it by no means follows that the father existed before the mother, for she may be the older of the two. The fact that in the course of history multiplication of families may be seen to vary in this respect helps to illustrate the point that there is no strict order of persons revealed in the Godhead.

It is distinctly noticeable that in Genesis 1:1-3, where God reveals His approach to the work of creation, it is in the order of Father, Holy Ghost, Son. The Hebrew word 'brooding' used in verse 2 definitely evokes the idea of the female gender and therefore motherhood. To the human mind it seems to be a logical enough order, for that is the order we find in Man. We ordinarily speak of father, mother, child, rather than mother, father, child, or father, child, mother, or any of the various possible alternatives.

In God this has nothing to do with differences of sex, there are no sexes in the Godhead; He is not male, female, child. The Holy Ghost is not the mother corresponding to father, as Eve to Adam. Nevertheless it is easily traceable in scripture that whenever the female or female element or idea is involved to any major degree in what God is doing, the Holy Ghost is the particular member of the Godhead mentioned. Instances of this are Mary the mother

of Jesus, and the Church which is the bride of Christ. When God made Man in His image and likeness, He created a male, not a female. This in itself is testimony enough to the fact that, although God ought not to be thought of as either male or female, He is always referred to in the masculine gender.

Yet even so, there is that in God which in order to be rightly revealed, could only be represented by the creation of male and female. One person of God is called the Father, that is masculine enough, another is called the Son, that is also masculine, but the word mother is nowhere used in scripture regarding God. Therefore He ought not to be addressed nor be referred to as such. However, we rejoice that the fact of begetting in the Godhead has been very pointedly made known to us. In fact the whole plan and achievement of salvation turns upon the only-begotten Son.

According to our knowledge of the means of birth among men, because God is a begetting God we must of necessity ascribe to another person the obligatory function of bearing. In the Godhead it is the Holy Ghost who holds that glorious position in relationship to God's activities among men. However, from our knowledge of the sexes and their function, we must not argue backwards to impute to God identical genders in Him. Male and female creatures are not exact copies of identical persons in God, they are designs expressed from His powers — forms of expression only. God has power to beget, so according to His desires He created the male to have that power. He also has the ability to be begotten, and this ability also He revealed to His creatures. Male and female in their physical form, gender and abilities are representations of God's powers, not His person.

A Spiritual Likeness.

The image and likeness of Himself which God created in man is not physical but spiritual. Mankind, which is male and female, is an adaptation of and projection from the principle of God's being. We are also an expression according to God's good pleasure of His manifold power of life. That this found demonstration in creation as male and female is only because God willed it so. We see then that because Man is male and female, issuing in child or offspring, it does not mean that God is male and female issuing in offspring, any more than an oak tree bearing acorns proves that God is stock, root, branch and leaf, bearing fruit with cup and seed. Nevertheless there is a traceable pattern discernible in all nature. The principle of life found in inanimate spheres is the same as that which is found in animate life. Everything follows the law and pattern of life and being recognizable in the Godhead as shown in Genesis 1.

When Jesus made His orderly statement in Matthew 28, He did not change the order of the being of God; He simply made a pronouncement which set out the order of human recognition of God according to His self-revelation in the New Covenant. This order is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. His words recorded in John 14 clearly show us the reason for this; but we will commence still further back than that.

When the Lord began His teaching-mission among men, He did not plainly mention His Father, but as time proceeded He gradually began to introduce the fact of His divine sonship. Having done so, He steadily persisted in making two closely allied statements about Himself, namely: (1) God was His Father, (2) He and His Father were one. These basic claims, together with others of equal significance, were the direct cause of the hatred in men's hearts which eventually brought about His death. A summary of these sayings may be collated and set out thus:

- (1) 'My Father is greater than all;
- (2) I proceeded forth and came from the Father;
- (3) I came out from God;
- (4) No man cometh unto the Father but by me;
- (5) I leave the world and go to the Father;
- (6) I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father;
- (7) He shall glorify me, for He shall take of the things of mine and show them unto you.'

These provide the scriptural foundation for His arrangement of order in the Godhead. They also outline the scheme which underlay the order of procession of God to man. Eventually this found expression in the statement of Matthew 28.

The Only True God.

This raises the problem of Jesus' statement concerning Himself as the Alpha and the Omega — the first and the last — the beginning and the ending. The Lord's personal claim seems to militate against the demands of the trinitarian doctrine of the tri-unity, coexistence and co-equality of the three persons of the Being of God. If a person claims to be the beginning and the ending, he is either asserting that everything commenced and finished with him, and that therefore nothing else exists, nor could have existed outside of him, and that he alone is God and none other, or else he is making an elliptical quotation, a contraction of, as well as an extraction from a far greater truth of which he knows, and in context of which he is speaking.

If that be so, then reason has it that it ought only to be made upon the ground that the fuller truth be expressed elsewhere, for if this is not done the statement is definitely misleading, and the person could be thought guilty of giving false impressions. For how can we be assured of the certainty of truth if statements which seem contrary to it are made without possibility of substantiation or contradiction? Thank God we do have the entire Bible from which to gather the full truth God wishes us to know about Himself. This being so, we are able to place this statement upon the subject alongside many others made both by Jesus Himself, and also by the apostles and prophets. By so doing we shall be able to assess its truest meaning.

From such comparison it is certain that the Lord was not making claims to be the only true God. Far from meaning that, He publicly expressed the fact that His Father was the only true God, who had sent His Son Jesus into the world. At first glance, until we realize what He is meaning, this statement seems to imply some sort of contradiction to His other assertion, but this is not so. It is certain that He did not mean to imply that He Himself was not true God, for He also said, 'I and Father are one', which is the same as saying, 'I and the true God are one'. The seeming anomaly is solved when we realize that at the time of speaking He was referring to Himself as a human being in relationship to God. This is a position He loved to adopt and which He made clear upon many occasions.

Jesus mostly referred to Himself as Son of Man, and John 17 is one of the occasions when He was praying as a man from His manhood to God. He counted not equality with God a thing to be grasped at; that was Satan's sin and the cause of his downfall. The Son is co-equal with the Father, but being found in fashion as a man He prayed as a man should to His heavenly Father who begat Him. Having humbled Himself to this human relationship to God, He faithfully observed it; in every way and to fullest degree He regarded the Father as His God.

At His birth Jesus for the first time was manifest on the earth as God incarnate. He had appeared on the earth before that, but was not manifest in the medium of flesh until then. Now flesh is not everlasting; it was never intended to be eternal; ordinarily it is subject to mortality — Jesus' incarnation was only a temporary arrangement between the members of the Godhead for the purposes of redemption. Therefore men could not be allowed to think that God manifest in flesh, true God though He was and is, was the true God, or God in truest form. True God is ever Spirit, which, though temporarily veiled by incarnation, can never be flesh. God did not die when Jesus died. He publicly cried out 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' The body of God manifest in flesh died. That body was subjected to mortality by the sheer power of God.

Jesus told Pilate he could have no power against Him except it were given him from above. Jesus' death was God's greatest miracle. With advance knowledge of this, Jesus made His statements with care according to eternal truth. Even though His body was going to be resurrected and changed, He would not allow people to think that incarnated God is truest eternal God.

The Only-Begotten Son hath Declared Him.

Perhaps the flesh and form that Jesus took by birth cannot be better described than by the word 'tabernacle', which John uses when writing of His incarnation (John 1:14). As we know, the Tabernacle of old was not God; it was God's tent, the place where He lived. It was manufactured to be a type of the body and person of Jesus Christ. It was made by flesh and blood to house God, but it was not Him. Likewise, the flesh and blood body of Jesus that men saw and handled was not God, it was made of a woman to be the human house or tabernacle of God the

Son. It is noteworthy that He said of Himself, 'the flesh profiteth nothing'. When answering His challengers in John 2, Jesus said of His body 'destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it again'.

It is significant that although He invited them to destroy His temple / body, He did not say 'destroy me', That would have been impossible, so He did not invite them to do so. He spoke in full knowledge of the fact that by crucifixion they could not destroy Him. It was because of this that He so confidently said, 'I will raise it (My body) again'. He called His body 'this temple', which we know is the house of God, but not God Himself, nor yet His outward form. Jesus was in the form of God before He became a man, not when He was found in fashion as a man. He was not fashioned a man at birth, but was found in that fashion by the shepherds at Bethlehem.

We see then that in His prayer in John 17, the Lord was shifting the eyes of our understanding from flesh to Spirit. The only true God was never visible to mortal eye in eternity past; in His wisdom He who was immortal also remained invisible. He is not now visible and shall never be visible to mortal eyes, for He is not manifest in flesh. That God has 'form', is quite clearly stated by Paul in the memorable words of Philippians 2, but just what we are meant to understand by that is not explained.

Perhaps the key is given us in the words used of Moses in Hebrews 11, 'he endured as seeing Him who is invisible'. The power of sight referred to here is neither to be linked with mortal eyes, nor confused with the sight of the Visionary. The eyes that need to be enlightened are the eyes of our understanding. We are told that the nobles of Israel saw God, but Moses who wrote that, also informed all Israel that at Sinai 'your eyes saw no form'. This was one of the reasons why Israel were commanded by God that they should not make idols or engrave images of any description. The fact that every eye shall see Him at His returning simply means that He will again assume visible form.

Despite greatest pains, we are in difficulties here. It is absolutely impossible by words to convey God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to man. God Himself could not do it either by creation, or generation, or simulation, or imagination, or manifestation, or words. While on earth, Jesus was only a veiled revelation of God, and He knew it. Within Himself He was not spiritually veiled from God, but from man. The veil of His flesh was so thick and heavy upon Him that He longed to be free of it all — He felt and said that it straitened Him. When seen in transfiguration on the mount He was marvellous in the eyes of His apostles. His glowing spirit radiated through His flesh like glory through the veil. Later, in resurrection, He was so changed in form that occasionally even His disciples could not recognize Him. Obviously the outward bodily manifestation was not the important thing. That was only a means, an adaptation.

It was the spiritual form in which He existed before being made in the likeness of flesh which was and is and ever shall be God. He was eternally that in heaven and was also that while on earth. Because of this alone He could be made truest Man. But although He laid aside and emptied Himself of much in order to be made truest Man, He never lost or forsook His form or position as God. He retained all that is meant by the word 'form' and humbled Himself to be incarnated in the fashion of Man. Being found in fashion as a man, He enslaved Himself to the Father's will — as all men should to God. Having done so, He declared His Father to be true God, for He was ever God and never a man.

The Profound Equality.

Man though He was, Jesus was ever God. Being in the form of man on the earth, He directed our attention to the possibility of man in God. In the very same chapter as that in which He commenced praying with the words, 'Father, glorify thy son that he also may glorify thee', He also said, 'now come I to thee'. It is therefore obvious that when the Lord said that He was the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, He was not asserting that He alone is God. He was not implying that He is the first or beginning of the three persons of the Godhead, but that He is equally first with the Father. They are one God. In the same way, when He says that His Father is the only true God, He does not mean that He is not equal with the Father, or that there was a time when He had no being.

The Father and the Holy Ghost are not second and third to the Son. If this were so, it would unavoidably mean that there was a time when the Father and the Holy Ghost were not, and that a time came when they commenced

to be, which is absurd. More foolish still, by all rules of logic, the Son must be thought of as being the Father, which, if it could be true, would be tantamount to insisting upon a reversal of the persons and roles in the Godhead, which would be confusion worse confounded.

Not to pursue the subject further, but to assist understanding, it may be profitable to say that the scriptures are purposely given by God to be informative to the point He deems sufficient. It is quite impossible for Him to fully explain Himself to His creatures, therefore He addresses Himself to faith. Where necessary He introduces truth adequate enough for our hearts to believe. If it is imperative to explain it He does so; if not, He relates truth to the matter in hand, just because we need to know the particular fact, and then passes on to more important or relevant things.

The Unrevealed Son.

From a careful perusal of the whole Bible, it becomes apparent that until the Son introduced any other idea about it, the revealed order had always been Father, Holy Spirit, Son. Re-reading Genesis and moving on from the creation story to chapter 6, we note that God says, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with Man'; there is no mention of the Son here at all. That we may find Him typified in the Ark and agree that typically He appears thereby to be most largely there is true, but quite beside the point, and to speak of it only reinforces the truth of the original pattern. The order here is definitely : God — the Spirit — the Son (ark). As at the creation, the Son is mentioned in the text by implication, but the Father and the Holy Ghost are spoken of directly. Breaking into scripture again at Zechariah 4:6, we read, 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the Lord'. Again the Son is not mentioned — just the Lord (Father) and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit). That is how it appears to have been ever since God introduced Himself to us by His word from the beginning.

When in process of time the Lord Jesus wished to show Himself in all the scriptures to His apostles He had to open their eyes. They knew the Old Testament scriptures, but in common with all the lawyers, scribes, pharisees and priests, they had never seen Jesus in them. The reason for this is very simple. As we have seen, they could plainly read about God the Father and the Holy Spirit there, but they had never seen the Son; He was there but hidden. The person of the Lord Jesus is written into the Old Testament sometimes deeply, sometimes less obscurely, in types, figures, shadows and prophecies. To discover His hidden presence there is to uncover one of the major secrets of the Book. But even so we see that in the Old Testament the open order of the revelation of the persons of the Godhead was firstly the Father, then the Spirit, and lastly the Son.

There is One Mediator.

Upon entering the New Testament, we discover it to be exactly the same again. In fact this order of Father, Holy Spirit, Son is brought out never so clearly as upon the occasion when God made His first move to bring His Son into the world. Luke reveals how it all took place; God the Father sent His angel to tell Mary (Note: 'tell', not 'ask permission of') that she was to bear His Son into the world. Upon enquiring how this could be, she was told, 'the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God'. The secret was out; He who had been hidden was now to be revealed, and a brief moment of thought shows that again the order is as it was in the beginning, Father, Spirit, Son.

The idea of a rearrangement of thought concerning the order of persons in the Godhead only emerged during the lifetime and ministry of Jesus. As we have noted, this came out when He urged men to ask the Father for the Holy Ghost. It also appears in His assertion that the Father who had sent Him would also send the Comforter. As well as this, the Lord says that He personally would pray the Father, with the result that He would give them the Holy Ghost. Rising from this expression of intention, an order of divine thought is plainly suggested to us. By His own words it appears that Jesus is here showing Himself to be both the intermediary between God and Man, and also the middle person of the three persons of God. Following His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus gathered up all the inferential truths implicit in His teaching, and with clearest statement put the order thus — the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Later still, upon the conclusion of the ministry which followed His resurrection, and before finally leaving the earth, the Lord directly re-stated and reinforced what He had earlier said about Himself and the Holy Spirit. Then, as a climax to His ascension to heaven and the throne, He substantiated His words by receiving of the Father the promise of the Spirit and pouring forth upon man(kind) the third person of the triune God. By this the Son is now revealed as the Mediator between God and Man — a kind of middle person — mediating the Holy Spirit from the Father to men. By such a plain succession of events, an understanding was gained and an order of thought concerning God became established among men.

Reason has it that since the Holy Ghost is the person who men knew to have come to them after Jesus departed, and the Son who preceded Him had repeatedly said that the Father was greater than He, then this must be the eternal order of the divine Being. It is the logical procession of thought that men should place the Father first, Son second and Holy Ghost last. Jesus did not confuse men's minds by reversing or in any way interfering with that order, but to no degree does it alter the original one. However, since this original order was never expressed in any form, the single expression of divine order attributed to the Lord Jesus Himself by Matthew is the one usually adopted. Even so that is not the final word on the matter, for by reading 2 Corinthians 13:14, we discover yet a different order still, namely the Lord Jesus Christ first, God (the Father) next and the Holy Ghost last. We may well ask 'why this change? What does it signify?'

... but God is One.

As we have now seen, there are three statements of order concerning the relationship of divine persons in the New Testament. One is implicit in the text, and two are orders of utterance. From the first one we infer that the trinity, as originally discoverable in the Old Testament, is Father, Holy Ghost, Son. The first of the two statements in the New Testament is plainly Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The second is clearly the Son, the Father, the Holy Ghost. That this is so should be to us a sure indication that there is no set order in which the Holy Trinity should be mentioned. It also indicates that we should not even think that there is a set order which they themselves keep and in which they think of themselves in relation to each other.

This discovery brings us to the belief that the three persons live as one, combining in and relating themselves to and working with each other according to their united purposes in and through the thing they are doing. This may mean that for a particular event one person and His function and work must for a time be emphasized above and before the others. Unavoidably this allows the possibility that He may be thought by man to be the most important of all, whereas He is only most important at that time and for that particular purpose.

Obviously the Son came into the world from the Father by the Spirit; it could not be otherwise. The Father begat Him when the Spirit came upon the virgin to conceive Him. In the event, and upon her willing consent Mary was taken over completely by God, that from God, through God, for God, God should be a man. Thereby the Son was born and lived and died on earth as a man, so that He should remove all the reasons why man, while still on this earth, could not or should not receive the Holy Ghost. Having successfully done that, He returned to the Father and from Him mediated through Himself the Spirit to us. By doing this the original order revealed in the story of creation, (namely Father, Spirit, Son) was restored and can now take effect in a realm which hitherto was impossible, namely regeneration. It is at once obvious that the second order could be thought of as a convenience and means to restore the first order — 'as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be'.

We will come.

In regeneration, the Holy Ghost (by whom Jesus preaches the gospel through men to men) comes upon people in much the same way as in the beginning. He brooded over the waters for creation, and upon Mary for conception and birth. Because this is so, by the work of Jesus which has been established and is now being held in the eternal Spirit, Father begets a son. This may seem very mysterious and complicated, nevertheless it is the way it was arranged in God and the way it is all done. When Jesus set forth the order — Father, Son and Holy Ghost, He was stating the logical procession of the Spirit from the Father through Himself to us for sonship in His image and likeness. He was most certainly not thereby stating an order of reception as though He was telling us that first we must receive the Father, then the Son and then the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, on the contrary, according to His own words in John 14, we must receive the Holy Ghost first, and with that reception the Son and the Father also. This is a complete reversal of all generally accepted ideas among men. If it were to be accepted as it ought, it would constitute a major change in gospel preaching. But seeing it is the Lord who says it, and He is the central figure in the work of salvation, we do ill to disbelieve it. Worse, we betray men into the dead formalism of evangelical belief. No less a person than Peter makes this same order unmistakably clear on the day of Pentecost: having set forth the death, resurrection, ascension and glorification of Christ, he says 'believe, be baptized, receive ... the Holy Ghost ... save yourselves'.

The order of procession and of thought revealed in these words is designed to lead us to an understanding of the order and procession of personages which takes place in new birth; God has no other end in view here. Both John and Peter are in accord over this. John records Jesus as saying, 'Father will give you the Spirit. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you ... we (My Father and I) will come'. That is the way Jesus speaks according to John. The Holy Ghost by Peter is very clear also, saying that He, the Holy Ghost, must be received first.

The order in which Paul names the persons of God, though different from that in which Jesus mentions them, is not intended by him to notify us of a revolutionary new way of approach to God. It simply is the best possible way of presenting the different persons of the triune God in relationship to the matters of which he has been speaking. The statement underlines the acknowledged fact that only by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ do we know the love of the Father and are made partakers in the communion of the Spirit.

God — the Infinite Mystery.

We see then that the fellowship spoken of here is the end objective, and is revealed as such by a procession of logical thought. That is the reason why the Trinity is set out here in this order, for the Fellowship is God, in whom we shall eternally dwell. Without doing harm to the truth, we can just as truly say that it was only by the love of God that the grace of Christ was revealed to us, and in doing so restore the order to its original position, but there is no need, for it does not matter. By none of these things do we come nearer to truth, but only to a logical procession of thought more suited to our feeble grasp of infinity and the Infinite.

Of all the great mysteries of the Bible, none is so great as the mystery of God, and all statements about Him which differ in order from that which is revealed in the beginning, even if they be made by God Himself, are only adaptations and accommodations made to men's understandings and their abilities to grasp truth according to their own experiences of it.

Christ Greater than Words.

Better than any statements about it, the Lord set forth in Man, and especially in the family unit, the true order of the trinity, for He said He would make Man in His own image and likeness. What He made, and therefore what is, is greater than what He caused to be spoken and written, and what is implicit in the text is greater than the text.

As an illustration of this, we need only take one of the answers Jesus made to satan during the period of temptation in the wilderness. When satan tempted the Lord to turn stones into bread, the Lord answered, 'it is written that Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God'. He was quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3. His answer was absolutely scriptural, it was equally true; but what was implicit in the answer was more than the text quoted, and also the truth of the text quoted. Jesus was implying that contrary to the first man Adam, He the Son of Man and of God was living by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God, which fact enabled Him to quote the text with truth and power. The Christ of the scriptures is greater than the scriptures of Christ.

7. The Purpose of God.

They shall have Dominion.

Much has been said about this subject in course of the previous pages, and a composite view of God's purposes may be gained from reading them with this in mind. Despite sin and its results, we have seen His will displayed in each successive stage of the development of Man. Yet there is a further truth connected with the human family, which although obliquely referred to earlier, needs emphasis, and takes its logical position at this point, namely the purpose God had in mind when He made the original proposition to create Man, as recorded in Genesis 1:26-

28. "Let us make Man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion ... male and female created He them and God blessed them and said unto them, 'be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over behold I have given you meat'."

God created Man in His own image and likeness in order that he might have dominion. God made him specifically for the purpose of being His representative on the earth. Adam was made and was being trained by God in the garden in preparation for the day when he could rightly be acknowledged and renowned as lord over all the earth. God had planned a day when the whole of creation should say, 'Adam is lord; he is king of creation'. That was the purpose in God's heart when He made His statement; it arose and was expressed synchronously with the imagination of the idea to create Adam — 'let us make Man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion'.

A Glorious Destiny.

That was both the concept in God's mind and His expressed purpose; so in His own mind and probably synchronously He imaged Man 'according to the purpose He purposed in Himself'. Having with power imagined Adam, He conformed him to His own image and then with skill and delicacy moulded him exactly in the form most suited to display His own likeness. He then created him, fully endowed with faculties ideally suited to His plan to reproduce His own spiritual and moral similitude in the Man.

This verisimilitude was the crowning glory of all His handiwork, even taking precedence over all He had accomplished when formerly He had skilfully formed Man's body. The precious faculties which God projected and impressed from Himself into the yielding clay turned it into throbbing flesh. Under the warm breathing of His Spirit, the clay form became a living creature, a soul endowed with ability to imagine and think as God. God thought of Himself as God; Man thought of himself as man, and both were at a new beginning. To God it was one of many, to man it was the first.

Gently, in the dawn of a new era, into this innocent babe of a man God gradually began to instil the idea of his destiny. From His own loving imagination the Lord impressed and introduced into Adam's the intuitions, suggestings and images of greatness. The spirit of his mind having been inbreathed gently from God did not puff up the man's soul; he was not proud of his predestined position and glory; everything was perfect. He learned he was to be changed from glory to glory, and that the glory of each successive position would be greater than the glory of the former, and he was perfectly content to abide God's will and time.

A Man Under Authority.

God's words begin and end with the word 'dominion'. Following the occasion when God herded all the beasts and birds in to the garden to be named by Adam it must have been perfectly obvious to them all that this was God's intention. At that time all cattle, fowl and beasts came to be named according to their species by this one creature who was different from them all and their lord. He was placed 'over' them right from the very beginning; there was none greater than he in all the earth, save God: the man certainly held unchallenged dominion. But wonderful as this event was, God had far greater things than this for Adam. His purposes for Man were no more than begun.

How much knowledge of these the man had at that time is not revealed, for although Moses informs us of God's intentions, he does not indicate whether God instructed Adam about them. However, we do know that the Lord began to train Adam for his destiny by placing him in a divinely planted and well-watered garden specially created for him. Eden was a paradise, but it was only a very small portion of God's new creation, and God's plans for Adam's life embraced the whole world. It all commenced in a small acreage of ground, yet His purpose for Man was that he should eventually subdue the whole earth which stretched away in its vastness — north, south, east and west of Eden. Whether it exactly or closely or remotely resembled the earth as we now know it is impossible to tell, but we do know that God spoke of its need of subjugation. Whatever is implied by the word 'subdue' is not within conjecturable knowledge, but putting aside far-fetched ideas about it, we know that with the passage of time, untended nature would have needed some degree of mastery, training and cultivation.

It is perfectly feasible that ideas developed in Eden were to be put into practice and applied later when Adam went forth to subdue the whole earth. Paradise was only a training ground. That is why God caused to grow there every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. Man would find these different species all over the world, when having served his apprenticeship under God he should set out upon service in the world.

Love's Plan Aborted.

There can be no doubting God's original intentions to keep Adam and Eve in His garden for a much longer period than finally transpired. Nor can it be seriously doubted that Man was finally cast out of paradise long before his training was completed. For when they were excommunicated by God for their sin, there was no man in the whole earth 'to till the ground', and they as yet had no children. How then could they have subdued and dominated the whole earth? God intended their children to be born in paradise so that there should be multiplied Adams and Eves to fulfil the commission. Therefore when they were expelled from the garden God greatly multiplied Eve's conception, lest the curse He had pronounced upon the ground for Adam's sake should imperil the fulfilment of the promise to which He had committed Himself.

In judgement God was very merciful. Grace is always greater than we know or deserve, but the curse took effect in the earth far beyond what is normally associated with it in thought. Beside the thorns and thistles which at present mar the world's fertile lands, sterile deserts, howling wildernesses, barren tundra and frozen wastes all testify to the power of God's curse. Unless men were to be multiplied quickly, the spreading dereliction would have desolated the entire globe. God ensured that men must till the ground and eat their bread in the sweat of their faces. It was all an emergency plan, devised by God to prevent inexorable nature, now cursed, from swamping its former lord out of existence.

The Gentle Husbandman.

In the beginning God did not intend to thrust out Adam and Eve alone, ill-equipped and totally unable to cope with the gigantic task ahead of them. He wanted Adam to have dominion over everything as a lord. He did not wish him to slave as a serf, fighting desperately to defend and save his life in a hostile world. Therefore, when He originally made them, He blessed the man and his wife and said, 'be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over ... behold I have given you meat'. The man in God's image and likeness, destined for dominion, was to be given meat for the task, that he may be sustained in his strength. All seed-bearing herbs and fruits were to be the means of his bodily life, and the fruit of the tree of life was to be his chief source of sustenance. Everything was conceived in terms of growth, fruit, fulness, multiplication — productivity and abundance were natural states of Paradise.

While working in the garden under God's supervision and instruction, Man himself was God's husbandry; in common with all life he was under command to be fruitful. The special commission given to them to multiply and replenish the earth was entirely dependent upon their ability to bring forth fruit unto God the Lord. He caused the garden to bring forth fruit unto them and He wanted them to bring forth fruit unto Him. The garden was their special husbandry, just as they were His special husbandry. Kept for a while under God's care and cultivation in that garden, they were ultimately to go forth fully prepared, multiplied and multiplying to replenish the earth.

With what or how they were to do the latter we are not told. Whether they were ever informed of anything further along that line we do not know. We can be sure that if God did not explain Himself fully then, He would have done so in time. He intended paradise to be the nursery or seed-plot of the earth — a kind of Arboretum or Botanical Garden in which to fully develop, multiply and equip men and women for His purposes all over the earth. In His mind this was equated with lordship, which entailed subjugation with a view to having dominion, and was expressed openly among the persons of the Godhead in this way. By these means Man was eventually to attain unto the dominion for which he was created.

The Ruined Plan.

When first Adam lay breathing in his native dust, and rising stretched himself to his full physical stature as a man, he was only a babe. His knowledge of God was nil. However, being created by God in a garden of holiness, he was

perfect; he had neither hindrance nor handicap. Nothing could prevent him from being all God wanted him to be. He had nothing to unlearn; his heart was as a blank sheet of paper, ready and prepared to receive God's writing.

Almost certainly he was a quick learner, with a great capacity to be taught and retain his instructions, plus a natural aptitude to obey God's directions. His growth would have been fast and his abilities phenomenal. But in spite of this, when he was turned out of the garden he was far from full-grown or mature. 'He went out not knowing whither he went', in much the same way as man commences his spiritual life when he steps out with God by faith. Adam did not go out in faith though — he obeyed because he had to, and went out in unwillingness and fear. His garden had been his home; it had been to him as the house of God, a Bethel as was Luz to Jacob. Excommunicated, he was a lost soul in a lost world. What was to have been his kingdom was now his grave, for glory he had shame, and finally he fell into the ground and died alone, an utter failure. The harvest of the tragedy is yet being reaped; for some endlessly.

The Lord from Heaven.

Imagine therefore how great was God's disappointment with His 'new creature'. He had made and expressed such wonderful plans for Adam when He created him. To best understand how these should have worked out, it is essential to firmly grasp hold of one of the reasons why Jesus Christ is called the last Adam. The Lord was deliberately given this name in order to draw our attention to the possibilities which were open to the first Adam. The first Adam failed to achieve his destiny, so God Himself became Adam. He did this, that by so doing He could, as He should, achieve all and more than the first Adam could and should have achieved. Just all that was in God's plan for the man Adam and Man his progeny, had he remained faithful to God, we do not now know, for when Adam was rejected the plan was dropped, long before it could be developed in its fulness. But when we see Jesus, and read of all the fulness of the Godhead which dwelt bodily in Him, we are to an extent able rightly to assess what God intended for Adam.

With necessary limitations, and taking proper precautions to safeguard the fact of Jesus' deity, it may safely be said that what is true of Him as the God-Man from heaven could have been rightly displayed in certain measure in God's Man of earth also. This is the most precious of all the reasons why Jesus was called Adam — the last. Somewhere latent in God's work in the man of Eden lay potential, which could have been developed in all good time into the perfect image of God revealed in Jesus. How many generations it may have required and how much time it would have needed to accomplish it who can tell? What further measures or means or plans or moves God might have introduced in order to fulfil His purpose could only be of doubtful speculation. We do know, however, that by revealing Jesus His Son to be the last Adam, God has given us a glimpse into what was in His heart for man from the beginning.

We shall be Like Him.

The first Adam lost it for the whole race, but the gospel to us is based upon the certain fact that as all men were potentially in the first Adam, so are all redeemed men dynamically in the last Adam. In Adam all men died to the possibility of attaining unto the purposes of God; but in Christ all men are made alive again. We who have borne the image of the earthly Adam, must and shall bear the image of the heavenly. Just how much, if any of this was made known unto Adam is without our knowledge, but unto us God's purpose is made known; we are to be like Jesus. When He appears we shall be like Him, says John.

The statement is clear, the likeness must be unmistakable, the image unmarred. We must be as He is in this world, so that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, whether we be gathered from heaven or earth, we may be shown to be like Him. God has declared that His ultimate purpose along this line is to gather together those who are His workmanship and sum us up under one head. We all shall be so like Him, such an exact image in fact, that God can do no better than make His face ours. We the body and He the head are all one; the face of our head is surely our face; the purpose shall then in part be fulfilled.

Jesus — Lord of All.

Jesus is the last Adam; there is no possibility of development beyond Him. He is the fulfilment of God's original idea for man; the ideal; perfect above degree or compare; absolutely unique. In that final age when the last stage

of the plan is initiated, it will be seen that what was first begun in Eden is summed up in Christ. God only made a commencement in Eden. Paradise was the place He chose to set the whole plan in motion. What God said there only amounted to an outline, which barely indicates to us what His purposes were in flesh and blood. God was sharing with His creature as much as he could bear at that time. The fullest revelation however He reserved to show to us by Jesus Christ. Following His death and resurrection, it was made known to, and is revealed only to those who live in the Spirit.

Thanking God for such amazing grace, and returning again to the beginning of the Book, we read with joy the sevenfold declaration of His intentions when making Man. Before ever He commenced to create His masterpiece, He announced His reasons for doing so in these terms: Man should be in His image and likeness; be blessed; be fruitful; multiply; replenish the earth; subdue it; have dominion over all other forms of animate creatures. These are the seven pillars of wisdom upon and around which God proposed to build the whole structure of human life in this world; and what a house it would have been had He accomplished it! We cannot here fully examine each of these mighty pillars individually, nor explore their corporate strength and glory, but looking afresh at God's first man, we gain a glimpse of the greatness that lay within him through God's power and gentleness with him. The Lord was beginning to build him up into a mighty edifice, full of potential glory, but had scarcely commenced when Adam ruined it all.

4 THE TESTIMONY OF THE IMMUTABLE LAW OF GOD.

The Inward Similitude.

The tragedy of the fall and spiritual death of Adam lay in the fact that although by it he lost his likeness to God, he did not lose the image of his Maker. That is to say he did not then and there cease to have the powers of thought, imagination, desire, feeling (emotions), affections (love), will and conscience, which God gave him at creation. He retained these, but they ceased to be wholly good. The glory of God's handiwork in Adam lay in the perfect way He imaged or reproduced His own moral powers in and into His creature. When he fell, Adam did not lose these, he did not become amoral like the animals, he became immoral like the devil; until then he had been moral like God.

When men make images, their handiwork bears resemblance to features of men, animals etc. — they can only reproduce externalities. When God made His image, He created a likeness to His own inward features, that is His morality. Falling by an act of disobedience into a state of sin, Adam lost his likeness to God, but still retained the image of God. To this day that image has remained the living proof that he came from God by direct creation, and did not emerge or evolve to human through animal from some form of primeval slime.

There is an unbridgeable gulf fixed by God between human and all other forms and states of life. It is this which in the end defies and testifies against all the anti-scriptural theories men have concocted about man. Pure in spirit and moral in soul, Adam should have been more than able to withstand the devil's temptation. The same will which made him moral, and the conscience which kept him upright so that he did not descend to the habits and practices of animals, were sufficient also to keep him from falling into the sin of devils.

The informed mind, together with the enlightened conscience and a perfect will is capable of making moral choices honouring to God and preventive of evil. A man thereby remains good. But at the beginning of spiritual life temptation mostly comes to man concerning things about which he has had little information and of which he has had no experience. This is how it was with Adam. His information about the results of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was almost nil; his experience of it was entirely so.

It may then be asked, since he knew so little about the fruit, how could he form judgements about it and how could God hold him morally accountable for his act? In other words how could sin have been imputed by God to a man who acted purely upon desire, without having had sufficient grounds to form an opinion about the results of his action? Shouldn't the experiment have been excused? After all wasn't it a first offence?

The Irrevocable Choice.

The answer to such questionings may be arrived at very speedily when the grounds upon which sin is imputed are carefully examined. God knew that experientially Adam was totally ignorant of the consequences of taking the fruit in disobedience. But Adam had learned all he knew by living under the direct tuition of his Maker. God had never misinformed him about anything; everything was as God had made it and was what He said it to be. Adam had not ever been asked to decide the spiritual or moral qualities of anything by experimentation; he had taken God's word for it.

From the beginning righteousness had been imputed to Adam over and above his original innocence upon the ground of his belief in and obedience to God's word. This involved moral choice on his part, but decision for him was easy. He would have had no consciousness of real conflict. Righteousness or sin are still being imputed to men upon this same ground of moral choice. Sin is imputed when men choose to gain self-satisfaction by experimentation contrary to God's commandment. But righteousness is imputed when a man as a matter of course believes and obeys God.

At the time of his temptation Adam was not, nor ever had been, a sinner. He was to all intents and purposes a man of God. When Adam partook of the tree he fell into the temptation. Sin was then imputed to him by God on the grounds of his refusal to believe God's word and obey Him. Adam made a moral choice in full knowledge of what he was doing. That was serious enough in all conscience; but worse still, because in the act of disobeying

God he chose to obey satan, the devil imparted to him a nature to sin also. So Adam existed a fallen creature, having sin both imputed to him by God and imparted to him by satan.

Centuries later, Abraham, a descendant of Adam, and in common with all men affected by Adam's sin, was called on by God to believe that He would make his seed as the stars of heaven for multitude. This man had but lately left his native land, where he had been living in the darkness and sin of heathendom, worshipping idols. Yet that night, despite all difficulties and improbabilities, Abraham believed what God said to him. Because he did so, God imputed righteousness to him. We see then that imputation by God, whether it be of sin or of righteousness, depends upon a man's moral reaction to what God says to him. It does not depend upon choice made through knowledge gained from results of experimentation, either in the prohibited thing, or in the area concerning which the promise is made.

A New ... Living Way.

The subtlety of satan's temptation to Adam lay in the fact that he obscured this truth. By an insinuation against God's character, the devil implied that by barring Adam from the fruit of the tree, God was neither good nor wise, but to the contrary was his enemy. Eve was deceived by satan, but Adam was not. He knew what he was doing and chose the evil way. It was an irremediable act, for since he was the father of the as yet unborn race, in him all his progeny died. With the exception of Jesus Christ, every person born since that transaction with satan in Eden has been born fallen, inheriting from him a nature biased to sin.

In that each is a spirit / soul person he is born in the image of God, but none now has His likeness. When a man comes into this world his soul is structured in the same way as was Adam's and bears the same image. This gives him capability to develop into a most powerful personality. But although he applies himself to this with great zeal, in nothing can he be like God. To be like God, a man must be born from above. He must die to himself and the world and sin and the devil, and undergo a new birth.

When he is born from above he is born in God's likeness. It is totally impossible to attain to that blessed reflection by any other means. This likeness is a spiritual one. It is man's spirit which is born. He is then raised from the state of total spiritual death into which he was naturally born. By regeneration the nature of his spirit is made like unto God. This is accomplished by the incoming and indwelling of the Spirit of God.

From that moment a man's business in this world is to give all his time and powers without reservation to the development of a soul-life comparable to that of Jesus who is the last Adam. This is God's intention for him and is quite possible. By the power of the blood of the cross and the forgiveness made available because of the cross, plus old Adam's crucifixion on the cross, and the reconciliation made at the cross and the cross itself, the soul of man can be instantly and completely renovated. Therefore, with spirit newborn into God's likeness, and a soul regenerated in God's image, man may commence again to live as God desires.

The Foolishness of God is Wiser than Men.

Since the days when God created the earth and the heavens, He has made great changes in them both. By the universal flood in Noah's day and the global divisions undertaken in Peleg's day, together with local changes such as were effected during Abraham's lifetime and at the resurrection of Christ, the contours and areas of lands and sea have been purposely altered by the Lord. But the original purpose of God still lives on in human hearts. It is not recognized as such, for it has become greatly disfigured and changed by the fall and the curse. Nevertheless it is easily traceable in some, for it burns in them like an indomitable flame.

Sin has ruined all nature. God's pacific intentions have been defiled and mutilated, men have directed them to harsh and sadistic ends. Contrary to God's original will, throughout the centuries subjugation and dominion have been achieved by warfare and slavery. It is not surprising therefore that in view of the state of nature and the ways of man, speaking from the depths of his heart the cynic may ask the questions: what is the purpose of it all? Who will show me any good? Bitterness and hopelessness drive some men to wish they had never been born, for they see no reason for life. Perhaps the atheistic dialectic theory of evolution sprang from this source.

If thinking men, examining the amorality of men at large, conclude that their savagery precludes the probability of God who is love, then some satisfactory alternative to God and creation must be found. Man must have a way to explain himself and the universe in which he lives. Mind must think, and if he discards the Bible, man has no other recourse than to seek evidence from the universe in which he finds himself. He has no alternative. Under such conditions Man, the investigator, must become his own interpreter also.

Being inventive of ideas, coldly scientific as he may think he is, he is bound to make subjective decisions. Man cannot do otherwise than derive and couch his statements from the ground of what he thinks based upon his observations. To some extent in certain fields of enquiry man is able, by experimentation, to establish causes from effects, and can with confidence pronounce with exactitude upon them. He is therefore prone to think that given time, provided he prosecutes his investigations with sufficient zeal, he will come up with all the answers. But in the end, objective as he feels he may be or has been, if he is honest he cannot but admit that his conclusions are subjective and that after all it has been impossible to escape himself.

How can it be otherwise with men who insist upon rejecting intervention from, or who refuse to pay any respect to the words of any being other than Man? It is sadly true that men with no proof whatsoever insist upon saying and persist in believing that there is no such thing as special inspiration. Because they themselves have no personal experience of it, they cannot accept that any of their fellow-creatures have been inspired by God to furnish a book of facts. Taking up this unwarrantable attitude, they have no hope of being objective enough to be scientific.

The Inescapable Bias.

The Bible is the only ground upon which any scientist may stand with real hope of being sufficiently objective in his investigation to arrive at truth. It must be understood, however, that eventual proof of its assertions in all the most important realms of which it treats cannot be gained apart from a subjective experience. A man must discover that God asks no more of him than, that in pursuit of truth, he behaves as normally with what He says as he does with what anyone else says. There is nothing in the whole universe which supports the theories of atheism. There are many things in the world of men which in effect are not of God, but there is nothing which disproves that He is. The very things which seem by their existence to prove that there is no God, do in fact on the contrary testify that He is.

Such things or conditions for instance as disease, warfare, pain, suffering, famine, death, to name but a few of the more horrible conditions prevailing in the universe, do not deny that God is. Though these are contrary to man's good, they cannot of themselves prove that there is no God. How can abstract things prove or disprove anything? These can only be regarded as evidences for or against God according to the pre-conditioning of the mind that observes them. A man's mind is either judicious or prejudicial within him. He makes pronouncements on any matter, and especially with regard to God, according to his relationship to Him and his attitude to the Bible.

Man's mind is unavoidably biased and partial — he cannot help but think for or against God. This is because the mind of Man is either carnal or spiritual: it is quite impossible for it to be simply natural; such a condition is only theoretically possible. Mind is developed within the brain of man. It cannot exist as pure simple natural mind: it can only be carnal or spiritual according to the spiritual state of the inward man to whom it belongs. Man is not, never has been, and never shall be able to exist independently. Everyone is influenced by good or evil, and by one of two beings other than himself, therefore to attempt to construct a system of thought upon the assumption that God is not, is to be unavoidably influenced for evil by satan.

Indeed every man in his natural estate, however naturally religious he may be, can do no other than think anti-Christ, even when meditating upon God. Anyone who believes he can think completely independently, especially upon spiritual subjects, is deluded. Therefore to believe that it is possible to approach the task of formulating original opinions on any subject is in itself a delusion. A man may be able to think independently of other men, though in the last analysis this is very doubtful, but he cannot think independently of God or satan.

Bias to good or evil is endemic in the human mind, even though it be concerned with reasonings in things quite unrelated to religion. Whether he be engaged in the pure sciences, or in any other branch of study known to man,

including theology itself, Man cannot do other than pronounce upon it from either the carnal or the spiritual mind. The fact that these two kinds of mind may on some subjects arrive at the same conclusions and say identical things in no way proves that all mind is alike. The final test of a man's mind, both as to its quality and calibre, is how he pronounces upon God. It will be proven then, that although a man may seek to speak objectively, God being the object upon which he focusses his thoughts, he can only think about Him subjectively. This is because Man was made by God, who being Himself Spirit, devised mind upon the basis of spirit.

The Law is Good.

Man's spirit within him is either dead or alive to God. In practical terms this means that he is either aware or unaware of God. This being so, he either recognizes and takes cognisance of God, or else he does not. If he does not, it does not prove that God is not, but that the man himself is not (in life). When a man is born naturally, he is born unable to perceive and receive the things of the spirit of God. Therefore, as he develops, his spirit is not able to lay hold of and correctly interpret the spiritual truth underlying the phenomena he observes. His mind may range over the objects God has created, and be able to record, particularize and utilize some of the laws by which they function, but he cannot rightly assess the spirit within those laws. He may conclude that there must be (a) power or force, as well as (a) mind from which all came, but he cannot recognize the Spirit. Being dead he cannot 'see' the God in whose mind all was originally thought and planned.

Therefore such men do not know that the power, force or energy, call it what you will, is God's power; to that and to Him they are dead. For this reason they are not aware that the laws they recognize and classify and name are based upon principles of being and were originally expressions of personality. Yet with the complete illogicality, often so much scorned among them, they are prepared to base the whole of the science of psychology upon the fact that the human personality is derived from and functions by law.

One would have thought that a man as impartial as a scientist is famed to be would have accepted the logical implications of that. Surely there is sufficient ground to assume that evidence must also exist for the belief that behind all things lies a great personality, namely God the eternal Being, who is discoverable to everybody who will seek Him. But perhaps to admit the possibility would be too costly, for if this be acknowledged everyone is left without excuse.

In order to avoid the logical conclusions which follow from such an admission, the mind must swing away from unacceptable implications and say that the whole idea of God is but an unwarrantable inference, insufficiently supported by facts. 'Why, everything about Man is unethical and amoral', they say, 'there is no true justice among men anywhere'. But if there be no God, there can be no absolute standard of ethics or morals either. Similarly if this be so there are no standards of right or wrong by which to judge, for there is no finality, only group agreements. Instead of morals, convenient arrangements must be made, each as easy of adjustment or banishment as of establishment. Self-justifying societies are only zoos filled with animals, insufficiently educated to admit the fact.

The apostle Paul found it so in his day, saying, 'if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not?' His next cryptic comment leaves us with no doubt as to his estimate of the matter, 'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'. If there be no God and no resurrection, let us just live unto the moment and fulfil our basic animal lusts — death ends all. It is fine sarcasm, as well as complete logic. But he also said that God gives the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. The farther the human mind drifts or deliberately turns away from the divine mind, the greater its insanity and instability.

To quote Paul again, 'we see through a glass (in a mirror — riddle — or enigma) darkly' at best, but some see and can explain more than others according to their life with God and the accumulated and growing knowledge derived therefrom. This is by no means dependent upon formal education and can easily be acquired without it, though having it a person may use it to advantage.

The Firmament Sheweth His Handiwork.

It was with simple logic that of all the different branches of science then known to Man, the psalmist chose to relate his revelation to astronomy. He could not have chosen anything better suited to what he had to say, for

above all things, the heavens and the heavenly bodies are universal. Whether entirely landlocked in vast deserts, or ice-bound in frozen tundra, or lying upon the bosom of the embracing sea, Man has only to lift up his eyes and the heavenly orders lie open to his gaze. Of moral or civil, or criminal, or spiritual, or constitutional, or commercial, or scientific law, he may know nothing, but if he looks up long enough and often enough to the skies, he cannot fail to notice some basic and undeniable facts. However primitive he may be, given time the heavenly orders will speak volumes to him.

Morals and ethics aside, the existence and function of the stars and planets reveal law and order of absolute precision. Are the stellar and planetary systems accidental? Did law just happen? Is it all merely mechanical, or does such precision, order and power testify to the existence of a great mind working by an all-powerful Spirit from an everlasting throne?

The writers of the Bible tell us that God created it all, that His stamp is upon everything, that He is the source of all true law. He does not claim to be the originator of all rules. Men make and break those at their own convenience, as when devising games, or safeguarding institutions. These are then regarded as laws, but are not law. All real law is absolute. In its highest form it is as impossible of attainment as of destruction or even interference by humans, for it is God. Eternal life is eternal law. Absolute law is the function of eternal being, it is spontaneous.

For His own purposes, throughout history God has decreed temporary laws. For instance much of the Mosaic code was temporary. While it existed it was law; but it was only ordained for the time being. The whole of the Levitical sacrificial laws came to fulness with the advent, death and resurrection of Christ. Being fulfilled, they ceased to be of any more use, so God terminated them altogether. That kind or class of law, though a convenience ordained of God, was at that time completely necessitous. It could be broken, though to break it incurred penalties in the form of judgements. There is also a class or quality of law (for instance health laws) which may be broken at will, and being broken, immediately effects irremediable results. But there are some laws no man can touch, and therefore cannot alter, even if he can interfere with and change their effects.

The Unchangeable Eternal Law.

As an example of this last-mentioned class of law, which is within the reach of man's experimentation, we may cite a river. It is utterly impossible to stop the rising and flowing of a river. Man may alter its course, extract from it at places and lessen its volume, poison and pollute it, all contrary to its proper and original purpose and form, but he cannot interfere with its source. The law of a river governing its existence and rise is unalterable. If we move from land to sea, we are in a realm where all is beyond man's power of interference. The law governing tidal movement and its effects may be harnessed to a minimal degree, but it cannot be interfered with.

Moving yet again outward into the atmosphere, we are still more impotent. Man thinks he knows how air-movements are caused and can plot the course of the wind and take advantage of its undependable aid, but he cannot touch or interfere with the laws that govern it. Considering the heavens: God set the stars in their courses and man can do nothing about the laws that govern them.

These laws are projections by sovereign will according to original mind from principles of eternal Being. This kind, class or quality of law is everlasting. It is nothing other than God's fixed intention to have things as He desires them to be. By this He adapts His inward powers of self-existence to a specific end. That is why there is universal uniformity in Creation — Einstein stumbled upon the idea and demonstrated it as Relativity, but he did not find God. There is no personality in Creation, only evidences of it. God moves in His Creation, but it is not God; He is behind it, above it, over it, through it, but not it.

The Light Shined in the Darkness.

Although there be fire at the heart of the earth and at the centre of the solar system, there is no warmth of love. The heavens declare the glory of God's power, suggest the order of His Being, reveal the majesty of His mind, the immensity of His strength, the awe of His presence and the eternity of His existence. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard and to some extent understood. Whether or not it is obeyed or correctly interpreted is another matter. They are literally an expression of God — God said, 'Light be', and light was — and still is.

Whether or not it will ever be finally decided by man that light is waves or particles or both or neither is of little save academic interest. Light is vocal, it was vocalized from God with intent that it should become the universal condition in which He would work and in which all created objects and subjects should exist. It is therefore discoverable that God is Light. Because light came from Him and constantly remains unalterable, we know that He is Light. We know this is so in exactly the same way as we know that a person who constantly and unalterably does wicked things is wicked.

The instance quoted on a previous page of a river will serve us to illustrate a further point which needs to be understood. Because a river may be polluted, it by no means proves that it is wrong at source. What was originally designed good for purposes of good, if tampered with at source becomes a threat to life. Through men's folly, those same laws which God designed for good can be used to evil ends, spreading disease, poison, pollution and death. We see then that some laws, because they can be interfered with, can do the very opposite to that for which they were instituted. Precisely because they fail to take cognizance of this, men blame God for that which is not His fault. The devil knows how to take advantage of God's laws and use them to destroy men, the while blaming or inciting men to blame God for it, and the Lord allows him to do this.

Man's Inescapable Destiny — Dominion! Under Authority.

Sin from a former, higher creation has been transmitted to this lower one and implanted in man, a creature of law. Because this is so, it is now working out according to the laws of his being, and all the while he persists in rebelling against God nothing can prevent it. Nevertheless, despite this, God's original purposes are still being worked out. No-one can alter what God did in the beginning; pollution and perversion have caused His benign laws to serve evil ends so that His will is not being done, but His laws cannot be changed.

Whether for good or evil, man must have dominion — he was created for it. The means and kind of dominion are for him a matter of choice, which is as inescapable as the laws of his being. He must choose to have and serve one of two masters; he must either retain the devil as his lord, or he may choose Jesus to be his Lord. Man cannot achieve dominion unless he is himself under dominion. The devil offers man all the kingdoms of this world, at the price of the loss of his own soul, A man may choose them, but he will never have them. The devil is a deceiver. On the other hand the Lord Jesus offers Man an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for him in heaven. The earnest of this is made available to men on earth now. By His Spirit God seals it to a man's heart in utter sincerity from the moment of his new birth.

Immediately the Lord commences to educate His newborn child in the exercise of dominion; at first in the measure a baby can take and then in gradually-increasing measure the lessons must be learned. There is a fulness to which each must attain in this life, which leads to a greater fulness in the next. The greatest is held in reserve. What we have here is but a token. For all its glory, earth's period of dominion is as nothing compared with that which is to come.

Meantime we must increase and multiply, replenish and subdue the earth. God will give us meat for the task. Having created and blessed us, He will cause all things to work together for our good. Even the laws which have been tampered with by satan must serve His purposes. The devil cannot interfere with law, only with laws. Let us live for God's will alone. Through Christ Paradise and heaven are ours and the earth also.