

Brief Treatment: Philosophy and Ethics

Before the beginning was Yahweh the Triune God, one God in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, joined in mutual love, coequal and coeternal. Thus we understand that one and many, universals and particulars, are equally ultimate, and find their reconciliation in the Trinity.

In wisdom Yahweh spoke the world into existence. He is the knower and lover of all the creation, and all of it belongs to Him. On the first day of creation, Yahweh made light and darkness, night and day. On the corresponding day in the second half of the week—the fourth day—He made the heavenly lights to rule the earth: the sun for days and years, the moon for festival times, and the stars for signs; the sun to rule the day and the moon, the night.

On the sixth day, Yahweh made man after His image, according to His likeness, to know and love the creation, to rule over all the works of His hands. Thus man lives, and moves, and has his being not simply in the world, but in Yahweh, and He is not far from any of us.

Yahweh commanded man to express his rule through naming the animals, and from true recognition of the nature of each one Adam gave its name. In the world's first poem he named his wife Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Thus man knows the creation because he is the image of Yahweh the creator and knower, because Yahweh made him to know the creation, and the creation to be known by him, that he may wisely rule over it.

Yahweh planted a garden and put our parents in it, and there He planted two trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He gave them every green herb to eat, and the fruit of every tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Of that tree, Yahweh said, "In the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die." Not content to rule as vassal king and queen of the earth under the sovereignty of Yahweh, our parents disobeyed, seeking to be like God themselves, following in the footsteps of the Serpent instead of following their Lord. Instead of life, they chose death, and God had promised, when they sinned, they died, and all their dominion with them. Cast out of the garden of God, the way back blocked by an angel with a flaming sword that turned every way, our parents went out into the world, still responsible to be the life-preserving king and queen of a planet now plunged into death and futility.

Through the generations of their offspring, mankind chose death again and again, becoming so corrupt that his every thought was only evil continually. But one man, righteous in his generations, found grace in the sight of Yahweh. Yahweh commanded this man Noah to build a boat, and in it he and his family were spared from the flood with which God destroyed the wicked world.

Leaving the ark and coming to a cleansed world, Noah and his family became a race of kings, founding civilization as we now know it. Again they chose death, and God confused their languages and scattered them family by family across the face of the earth. Not chastened, men turned still to worshipping animals, the stars, the sun and moon rather than Yahweh who created them.

From one such idolatrous family Yahweh graciously chose one man, Abram, and made a covenant to make him heir of the world, and bless the world through him. Though he was a wandering Aramean, God multiplied his descendants into a great nation and brought them from slavery in Egypt, through the waters of the Red Sea to Sinai to make a covenant with them. There they heard God's voice from the

mountain; there they heard the words of the covenant from Moses, all the commandments and offerings and festivals; there they said "All that the Lord has said, we will do!" Moses sprinkled them with the blood of the sacrifices to ratify the covenant there, but they shortly rebelled and God killed them in the wilderness. Moses instructed their children in all the Law of God, the covenant He had given them, and said "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live." They chose life, and received the blessings God had promised them. Future generations rebelled, and God raised up judges, kings and prophets to call the people to repentance. Some of these they heard, but most they persecuted, and many they killed. After a thousand years, God sent no more prophets, and for four hundred years God did not speak to His people.

The Mosaic festivals followed a lunar calendar, that is, they were ruled by the moon—which is to say that the old covenant was God's grace given to His people to see them through the long, long night. At the very end of the night, a Star rose out of Jacob. John the forerunner cried out in the Judean wilderness, calling on Israel to prepare the way for the coming of her Lord. John called the faithful from their homes, their holy city, even from the Temple itself, to come into the wilderness and pass through water, a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Among the throng of God's people came John's cousin Jesus, and at His baptism the Spirit descended on Him, and the Father spoke from heaven: "You are My Son, My Beloved; In You I am well pleased." The Sun of Righteousness had begun to rise, with healing in His wings. The Light of the world shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overwhelm it.

But men love darkness rather than light. As mankind has always suppressed the truth in unrighteousness, preferring a futile mind, a darkened heart and descent into the madness of idolatry rather than to worship and serve the Creator; as Israel unfailingly persecuted the prophets; so Jesus' own people rejected Him and delivered Him over to be crucified.

With His death Jesus purchased the nations for Himself, and all who believe Him are redeemed by His blood, given everlasting life. He was buried, and while still dead proclaimed His victory to the imprisoned demons, but the Father would not leave His soul in Hades. On the third day, He rose from the dead, and in due course ascended to the right hand of the Father, and has sat down on the throne of God, the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle made by Yahweh Himself. There Jesus has entered as our High Priestly forerunner, and we follow behind Him to worship. Following His example, we shine as lights in the world, earthen vessels full of glory, knowing that the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. We endure our present sufferings with our eyes on Him, knowing that as He was vindicated, so we will also be vindicated, and as He has ascended to rule, so also we will ascend to rule at the coming of His Kingdom, each one rewarded according to his works. Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun, and Jesus will sit on David's throne to judge the world and all in it.

Even in the Kingdom, there will be rebellion, and in due course, judgment. At long last, the books will be opened, and the dead, both small and great, will be judged according to their works. This world will be destroyed as in the days of Noah the world was destroyed, and Yahweh will make all things new. In that day, evil will be permanently quarantined in the lake of fire, the second death. In that day, the dwelling place of God will be with men, and we will live eternally with no sun to rule the day, because Jesus Himself, the Light of the world, will rule in never-ending day.