

The Unceasing Glorification of God and Man

THE STORY OF THE UNDEFEATABLE INTENTION OF GOD

Nobody told me; not anybody, not ever. Nobody told me that it was and always would be, will be and continue to be, until it is told, and told fully, and told forever; that it is all a story, a powerful story with all the power of its being and for the time of its being, and its being issuing in an ever-being for the story emanating, flowing, projecting, fulfilling its projection unto full projection—projection beyond projection—and arising and outflowing unto its fulfilment and its fulfilment leading to fuller, richer fulfilment. No one, not anybody, not ever anyone told me that it was a story, and why. For that matter they never indicated—because they never seemed to know—that it was, and is, and will be a brilliant coruscating story, of intense light and glaring, flaring beauty, but not an idiot thing, or a senseless thing, without intelligence, without point, just a brilliant thing like a planet exploding but to no purpose other than the exploding, for such explosions are not to much point and lead to nothing but a momentary glory, so then they are crass and without a meaning beyond the momentary, dazzling, effulgence like a billion dollar planned fireworks display beyond which, in reality, is a billion billion dollar display of limitless light and colour and stars and planets, combining to outpace and outlive all the vast presentations of the combined lights and explosions that have ever become one to astonish even—we might say—the Creator of all things.

So nobody, no one person, not anybody, not just one out of the trillions to be born, to be intelligent, masters and doctors and hierophants and other servants of whatever is or could or would be. No one levelled all things of vast and impossible dimensions, and grasped them and brought them under his or her constraint, and worked masterfully to enclose them in reason, and so to develop that most heady and soul-moving and spirit-shattering conclusion that it is all a story, one story, and the story containing its millions of stories and details, but then a story, the whole story, the complete story, the story of God and Man and creation. No one told me it was and is and will be a story behind human conception and human grasp and understanding, yet it is a story that if a man or a woman or a child or a human race does not understand it as such, and as how it is, and even why it is, then that man or woman or child or race is even as mindless, and without comprehension of that, which only by its being comprehended will make anything to be what it is essentially, in the essential being that it is in its modes of its ontological being and purpose.

I say again, nobody ever told me. Nobody—it now appears—ever told anybody. It was never a lip to lip, mind to mind, spirit to spirit revelation or communication of what word you will which would indicate that somehow and at last, and as it should have been and should be, and must be, and will be, told. When, one night, the thought of it being there to be told, and not being told, and the ought of it to be told came to me, then I was dazzled and illuminated and surrounded by fire that did not burn but gave the heat of impetus and the assurance that it is what had never been told and that its telling must come to the human race. Of course it must have come to the human race but its coming

to me was as though for the first time to a human being, which doubtless seems to be the case when anyone receives it.

So, then, I was drawn to think upon it and about it, and to see—at least as a comprehensible illustration—the beauty and the blinding glory of the fact of the story, without which none is complete, none has yet attained to the fullness accorded to him in his creation betimes for the purposes of the mighty Creator, the God above all gods, and the coruscating Lord of all light and the quivering, vibrating beauty and magnificence that sets all things at the tips of imminent explosion yet holds them back from that so that elegance and loveliness be not prematurely erupting or discharging itself.

It came to me that when a person is humble, to humility's full and true being, then he will admit that though none has ever told him, it may not be that the story has never been begun, continued and continuing, and that none other than himself has ever sensed the reality of the fact, the possibility and the probability of it all; being the story as told by one Storyteller. In humility—as in gladness—he must say that there *is* a story which is *the* story. For having seemingly been mindless of this reality and now being wholly mindful of it he must concede that the Story-Maker may have put in the heart of every creature born—whether human or angelic—that the matter of everything *is* the story. Having in-hearted it to all as fellow-creatures, He must have in-souled them to dissatisfaction until the story comes to this one and that—if not all—the fact of, and reality of, the story.

To make personal being both satisfying and yet not satisfying He must have given gifts so prodigal that the distribution of them, the outpouring and dispersal and vast flooding of them must have brought the delight and sense and use of those worship elements of poetry, song and music and articulate literary powers, the arts which communicate the story—albeit in its delicate and gentle telling or in its magnificent, imposing and impressive majesty as cataracts of mountainous waves thunder out the roaring, purposive voices and utterance of mighty oceans—the sounding forth of the resounding waters upon which come the brightness and effulgence of the God of glory.

When creatures of all kinds are drawn into one harmonious, congenial worship, strong in its intent yet helpless to do so in the face of the worth they would give to the infinite Worthiness, then all that is within and which constitutes the story—all things and elements, I say—gather to gaze at and witness the outpouring of creation's adoration and worship in veneration, homage, submission, thanksgiving and illimitable delight. This cannot be thus unless, in some way, somehow, by some gift, the creation has an awareness of the story and the Story-Maker. Being part of, and yet gazing upon this Most High and Most Wise, the worship—as it were—thus expands and compounds itself and thereby enlarges the story and speeds it on in its way of fulfilment, for what is the story for but to be the glorification shed out by the Glorious One and received and returned by the created, adoring ones? In showing His glory He is showing the glory of that which He has created: He is showing His glory in creating them. In the story it is first the reflection of that splendour but then, in the way of its mystery, it becomes the very irradiation of it, which must mean that what has been created has full participation in what it desires to reflect. This, of course, at the *telos*, that is, the climaxing in the goal when all things are reconciled, filled up, and so completed in the harmony of His most powerful love.

What, then, is this story? Who can tell it? Is it the great God alone, or the meekest child upon all the earth? Is it that which has been created from pure nothing, that can regale us with this pure something—the created something, to which eternal life is being given

through the immense suffering of the self-emptied and self-filled Son?¹ Is it that all things can tell it by the simplicity of just being all things, or is it that we will be brought to that ultimate fullness towards which now we are gladly moving, and to which we are now being drawn in both pain and delight? Are we thus to understand that the story has ever been with us, as we ever with it, yet we have not known the story as it is the story, but have in some way substituted a story of our own, as though to be without *a* story is to be not ourselves, for as children sometimes say, when hearing a parent telling a story, ‘Mummy!’—or ‘Daddy!’—‘that is *my* story’, as though to be outside that story is to lose the mother or the father, or even one’s self. A person without a story is a person without a life, and a person without another, others and *the* Other.

Yet, can any story do? Given we all have a story—the meaning of ‘his story’—and that my story or your story is enough for me or you to make out, is any story, then, sufficient? Must we not, in a way put all stories, together since the whole race is constituted of being members one of another and, ideally, for one another? Yet how can this be? We catch the coruscations of one another, but are limited in our catching, whilst those flashings of splendour seem to be limitless in their being, in their vibratory, oscillating actions. We are nerveless hands—fingers wide-spread—trying to catch up the whole, and retaining only the impressions, for like water they flow through our fingers.

Ah! Then there is a story! That seems to be the universal conviction. We are always looking back to our story, seeking to perceive it in the strands and threads of the materials we hold and will not surrender. Warp and woof; woof and warp, and which are the strands, and whose, and where do they cross, interweave and become one eternal fabric? Is it that we are not to know, or to know only faintly? Has someone been telling the story and we cannot hear, listen though we may, strain at hearing though we do? Is it even worse: is another story—or stories—being told, and are the one and the others—or just the others—trying to black out comprehension of the authentic story, for comprehending it might be beyond our ensouling or inspiriting abilities. The matter which seems glaringly apparent to us in our high moments is that we ought to know the story, and that what seeks to withhold that inward comprehension of it is deeply an evil creature or community of devilish creatures. Can it be that on the one hand that which is deeply spiritual—He who is God—spares us from knowing the all of everything in one moment of astonished comprehension lest we die of it—the abundance, the splendour of it—yet on the other hand the deeply evil, he who is God’s ape and fierce opponent, could not bear the thought of us having even intimations of the story, and therefore applies himself night and day to keeping us in ignorance? Do these two elements operate simultaneously until the former overcomes the latter, and we know!?

I am now supposing that it is what we are which we ought not to be, which hinders us even more than does the impeding, terrified serpent from knowing the whole story. Even so, it is what we are truly at heart which urges us beyond knowing that a story *is*, to knowing *what* it is. Thus, in this moment of thinking, I am recognising that all my life I have known there had to be the story even though I may not have consciously comprehended it. In ways, in starts and stops, in flashes of light and stabs of darkness, I have in some measure comprehended—faintly though the intimations may have been received—that the story *is*, and is remarkable beyond description, and powerful beyond computing and knowing its essence. It is to do with everything one has seen and heard

¹ See my yet to be published book [The Emptying and the Filling: The Kenosis and Plerosis of Christ](#).

and comprehended, as also it has to do with what is unseeable, unutterable, unimagined because ineffable. There are times when the latter elements have come with a sudden sight, sound and imagination, but they have not been comprehended *as a whole*. They have been flashes of light, ideas unconnected with each other or others, revelations in part, mysteries barely graspable, but yet grasping us.

So I say, again, that we have been created to know what is essential for us to know, and so we warmly, avidly welcome the given understandings. We are all for receiving the mysteries the arts have perceived, the secrets which nourish our joys and our delighted apprehensions. From profound musician, depthful sage, depthless hierophant, fathomless artist we have garnered elements and artefacts of the story, and now know that we needed more and were required to puzzle less, for bright intellect and natural intelligence do not aid us in the long run. Helpful as all these giftings may have been, they have but helped to keep alive the instinct for the truth, and have aided us in not receding into the nothingness from which we came. Along with this has come the incredible enlightenment that that which has been created from nothing can never revert to nothing. It must ever come to terms with its creation and the purpose thereof.

So, then, I am at the point again when I cry out that no one had ever told me—not anyone, anywhere—that the story *is*, and is *what* it is. Yet I am beyond the point of declaiming, for I am knowing that the story *is* and what it is, so that my strong thirst over the years, my avid desire for knowledge of what is, and as to wisdom and what it is, has suddenly come to its fullness, to its intended goal of comprehension in my mind. Because it is born of the Storyteller and not of my creative or inventive powers, I am now in the vortex of the rivers that have flowed to—and then from—all corners of the creation from the primal time; from its centre and its perimeter, and then back again, so that the all of it has now come to my mind and has been ensouled and enspirited within me. I am in the midst of understanding.

So amazed am I, and so astonished in suddenly knowing, believing and understanding, that it seems to me that I have all but gone beyond the lawful bounds of human comprehension. Yes, even all this knowing is still a knowing in part, and an understanding in part and the utter knowing is yet to come. I am in the *prolepsis* but not yet in the *telos*.² I know what the Spirit has imprinted in my heart and though that has not as yet arrived, yet its presence is with me. Still and all, at the same moment, I am understanding that the divinising of humanity was always the intention of the Storyteller in telling the story. Even common humility tells me that I could not—on this strange and glorious night—have come to know the whole story, and know it from before its beginning to beyond its completion, and so knowing all, be the first of all creatures—ever—to know it in this manner. That would be pride and arrogance of the most terrible kind. Yet it is true that the story has come to me, and I know it in its fullness, if not in all its minutest details. I have to concede, and I do so willingly, that others have come to know the story. Of course: God has implanted the reality of it even in creating all things and all details of the story out of nothing, for He must give the sense of destiny or we would all be crass and mindless. Thus we conclude that all who will, will know the matter of the story. Indeed those who love God in His story have gained their greatness from it for their wonderment at it has been fed to fullness, and they could not have become what they were and are and will be, without that knowledge.

² The *prolepsis* is the anticipation of what will be—generally known and experienced by faith—whilst the *telos* is what will be, that is, the consummation of purposive history.

To what then will you put my astonishment of this hour? To some special power of my own? Certainly not. To God's kindness, goodness and love? Most certainly. And as you accord the revelation of the story to Him who is Father and love in concert with His Son and His Holy Spirit, then say, 'This man is not in pride and arrogance, but in grace'. Spare him of your criticism, for in seeing what he believes to be an ineffable reality, he has but joined the countless others, who through the ages have been permitted to see the beatific vision. One who once was lifted momentarily from this terrestrial sphere and translated to that most glorious heaven, had to live with a painful 'stake in the flesh', for knowledge—even heavenly knowledge, and perhaps heavenly knowledge all the more—can puff a creature up, whilst love alone can build up that one, that is, edify it to glory.

At this time of full revelation—I mean as full as a person can receive it in this earthly sphere—I am aware of consternation in the enemy camp, for there is horror, dread, dismay and trepidation, where once there was belligerent confidence, evil assurance and mockery at the weakness of the Creator, and carelessness regarding His love, purity and grace. They believed that they were not the embattled ones but the embattlers. They had no pity or love for the One who was steadily writing the story. In his nefarious designs, the seed of the serpent made much of original authority and power delegated to him, but the sight of human beings going beyond their imagined knowledge, and knowing the heart of the Creator of all things, and the designation of human creatures for the *telos* of *theosis*³ has lately brought dismay and heart-sickening dread into the halls of dark pomp and self-born majestic vanity. They who dwell there and imagine they call the tune of all life, and design all things in what is called by them 'the real world': these, I say, are given to deep misgivings, though they boast they are undefeatable. It is but a moment for them to think up misery and tragedy and to let horrors loose again in their 'real world', but this 'real' is but false, and the end of it all is in sight. Seemingly endless time is contracting to a constricting sliver of a moment, and ere they know it, will have brought tragedy to the tragedians. There is a long, dark and deep slide into nonentity and the unmasking of the deceit of the ages and the murderous intent of those who would pose as Love Himself!

Something has settled within me, so that faith has its full work in the depths of my spirit. I am aware that all the time I thought I knew so little, and was seeing as it were scarcely anything, when in fact I was seeing much, and knowing much and living much, but this last shower of grace that has come upon me as a flood does upon the desert, has come in such passion then, that by it, I do know the story and know it well. When I said that until now no one has told me aught, and all was hidden from me so that my yearnings were barren of fruitfulness and my mind of wisdom and my heart of knowing, then I was within myself in deep misunderstanding. All know something, whatever a shred or a snippet it may be, and others—all unwitting—know beyond that which they believe they know. It is the ones who have been stirred deeply by what has come to them who are urgent in their telling. They were retailing wisely to me, whilst I, for my part, knew I knew much, yet did not value it as rare and as the substance of His greatest gift—heart knowledge of Himself. I saw the movements of history, and it was like being in a wintered wood where the mists were deep and damp, and they swirled about the trees as hiding rather than limning the reality of the beauty. One sensed what they

³ *Theosis* is divinisation of a human person. It does not mean the person attains to, or receives *deity* as such but is brought to that pitch where he—or she—may henceforth *participate* in God's nature but not acquire it. Man is the image and glory of God and comes to this point of fullness by the grace of God.

covered, and one realised that if all that had been given were to be withdrawn, and all that had been made known were to become unknown, then one's partial sense of knowing and being would be lost in the same cold mists—mists of clouded nothingness—and that, of course, must never be.

How long an essay, how many, many words to cover acts and happenings and details, imaginings and cogitations and ruminations of decades of human living, and how because of this sudden revelation one at last knows the story, the words and thoughts, imaginations, fancyings, along with dreams and visions of all the times and situations of life. Yet how simple the story, the old, old story which is ever the new, new story, which once comprehended is never lost, yet once comprehended has, in its own way, done its tasks, for it is now ensouled and enspirited, and nothing can reverse or diminish it. Whilst faith must never be said to be completed and perfected, at least in what we call 'this life', yet as the base and foundation of the personal life of each, it is the corporate life of all; faith is now stabilised and sees what sight is unable to see or do, unless it be wedded to God Himself. This story I will now tell, and instead of the volumes I would wish to write, the endless descriptions of details and happenings and implications of the substantial story, yet I can state it in simplicity which contains all that is needed of wisdom, and all that can be felt of love.

THE STORY OF GOD, MAN AND CREATION

Creation Declaring God

God, in His most Perfect Being, three-personned and One in essence, had planned from before time that He willed to reveal Himself to all creatures and all elements of His most beautiful and adoring creation, so that they would know He is love, and come into that love. Of course He is not only love, but holiness, righteousness, truth and goodness as well, and all as the one in His most divine wisdom. The Hebrew Scriptures tell us that creation is constantly declaring the glory of God and that all works of creation praise Him. Creation, we see clearly, is not to be called Nature as though it were an entity in itself, for such a concept is ancient and pagan; for all things created by God find their being only in Him, whether non-sentient or sentient, and ever much so if intelligent. We may speak of what is 'natural', meaning that which comports with creation. Paul tells us that by the works of creation we may know God's 'eternal power and deity', but he does not tell us plainly whether or not in all this he includes Man. If he, Paul, includes Man in the creation as such, then we can pursue the matter of Man in relation to the whole creation, and as being the image of God within it. As such, Man in context—and in concert—with all creation communicates God through all these glorious properties and essences of God we have called 'love, holiness, righteousness, truth and goodness', as all ought to have been known to all by all His creation, by His innumerable gifts and in the revelation of His Being, by Man, the one so chosen to be like the God of glory Himself, that is, to fulfil the image of God who made them such. Only so long as Man remained faith and obedient to God could this situation obtain.

If Paul was saying that the creation's revelation of God was only in terms of 'His eternal power and deity', then creation is to be seen as showing to that extent what it is uttering in a vast and profound pronouncement such as nought else can manifest, for its purpose is there to announce day by day and night by night and from succeeding day to

succeeding night with irrefutable insistence and without cessation. When we say, ‘only in terms of “His eternal power and deity”’, we do not mean that creation entirely lacks knowledge of His Being as the personal working of all His essences, but we mean it is Man who particularly was appointed to be the revelation of this personal Being.

Man Declaring God

We have already seen that Man was created in the image and likeness of God specifically to worship Him for in his relationship with God Man was blessed by God for the vocation God had given him as lord of all creation, so that in all his works he was to reflect his Creator. As Man, as God’s covenant partner, and as His willing servant, he was to do the will, purpose and plan of God to the climax of his human destiny and the destiny of all creation. As such a being, Man was to glorify by God, and primarily by his worship—service by which all else in creation could see God manifested in all His glory. When Man rebelled against God, in spite of such contrary will and rebellion by that Man, God has shown immense patience and loving kindness in not destroying aught of all. His design in creating Man as His image was in order to reveal Himself to all creation via Man, for it is what or who one worships which glorifies the object of his worship. Man was so marvellously made that he could only properly worship in love, God who *is* love. The same creating Father, though seemingly thwarted by the serpent, was essentially fulfilled in that He had planned before time His own incarnation and the redemptive suffering which would save the lost creature and bring it to genuine faith and repentance by the love-revelation of that Cross, and the life-revelation of that Resurrection, and the triumph-revelation of that Ascension and Reigning. That, then, was the grace of God which before time made provision for Man the image to glorify Him to all the remainder of creation, both terrestrial and celestial, until they became as one for ever. It is true that along the way Man in his rebellion did not glorify God as he ought to have done, but God’s love has ever been greater than human rebellion.

Israel Declaring God

Israel as His image was created *creatio ex nihilo* as a *corporate* being—that is, community—of love, intended as a newly created nation to be what Adam refused to be as Man. In this sense Israel—whose primal couple Adam and Eve was their ancestors—were to so love and worship God that all creation would look with wonder at God’s chosen *segullah*—that is, His personal and intimate possession—for being a kingdom of priests and a royal nation, it alone could glorify God by its given body of royal law and holy worship. Thus in place of Man’s primal rebellion came this new community of revelation to show God’s ineffable glory. So exalted and glorious it was by His creative grace. Yet Israel, though it can never be said of it that it finally failed, did not glorify its Creator as it ought to have done. Even so, as God has assured us by His word that Man will yet glorify Him, so He has purposed that Israel will yet glorify Him in true worship for He is the God of inexhaustible grace.

The Church in Christ the Image of God Declaring His Full Glory

Following Israel’s partial failure as the worshipping community, the Church, which is ever called ‘the Church of God’, was created by the Father, with Christ as Builder,

and the Holy Spirit as its Guide, Teacher, and Inspirer as the succeeding community of love, so that both Israel and the Church have triumphed ultimately in spite of all debasing intentioned opposition from outside, and deceit, seduction, treachery from within its own ranks. The love of the Bride of Israel and the Bride of the Church—in continuity—diminishes the once-seeming triumph of the serpent-worm until its last quiverings prove the achievement and victory of holy love, and the destruction of all that is evil, so that nothing vile, debased and unclean can be present within His all-victorious and eternal Kingdom—the Kingdom of the Son of His love—that is, within the redeemed creation which is one in its celestial and terrestrial being. In the *telos* which is God's intention for His whole creation, God is so worshipped by this Community, brought into being and action by creation and grace, that the entire creation will see and acknowledge His true glory.

The ultimate outcome, then, is a City so glorious that not even the words of Holy Writ penned by the Holy Spirit can give us more than marvellous intimations of its inexpressible beauty, peopled as it is to be by the trophies of Christ's suffering love—that is, sinners saved and kept by grace—for each is personally like the Son of the Father, and all together as the redeemed Community are the indescribable image of the Holy Three Personed One God who is love. The glorification of Man with all creation is God's intention for His elect people and His elect creation, but not without their redemption, their sanctification and perfection—for each being and all things in the ultimate. Thus Man—in the *telos*—will have come to his peak of being in *theosis*, that is, in being conformed to the image of His Son, complete in holiness, glory and love, living out the very righteousness of God, created forever in the New Creation to be Man and never God, for it is for God to be God and Man to be Man. This regenerated body of humanity will have been matured and equipped to be the people of eternity in the continued likeness of God and in the image of His Son to be—through the Holy Spirit of worship—to the praise of God's glory forever, as His will is worked in them and through them for all eternity.

The Story Is to Irradiate God's Glory to All Things

When I look at this story in its simple and unadorned form then I realise God has ever confronted all humanity and other creatures with this narrative—this story of all things from the Beginning to their appointed End—and that it has not been seen, heard, and accepted as God's anecdote of history because of the innate rebellion of the creature, be it earthly as it is Man or heavenly as are angels. Creation which we saw is somewhat erroneously call 'Nature' is not of itself rebellious, but only thinking humanity is thus, as also those ambitious celestials who refuse to accept the tale of reality, because they cannot bear the truth which condemns them, even as they criticise all things Godly in their scorn. Where pride is inflated, so is arrogance, but where humility is held in peace so are all things in harmony and tranquillity and true power.

The great conclusion we come to is that God has ever sought to create all things—things celestial and terrestrial—in order to show His glory to all the creation. Why then does He purpose to do this? Primarily it is, and magnificently so, that all creation, in seeing His glory and being made to worship that glory may come to know Him *as He is*, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom [he] has sent'. Of course, supremely only Christ, the Son of God, can bring all to true knowledge of God, 'And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in

his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.' To *know* God is to be one with Him—*theosis* as we call it—and that is the goal of God's purpose, for as Man knows God so does he live in that glory. When God is glorified to the utmost so is Man likewise brought into total glory, for Man was created to be the image to reflect God. In *theosis* he is made to radiate Him. This is the point of the story. This, itself is the story. What joy, then, what inexpressible delight, what inner and outer fountains of beauty and love! What immense praise and adoration, as we have seen above. How worthwhile the whole history of creation, rebellion, misery of conscience if, by grace, it leads to this unspeakable conclusion.

Who Has Ever Known the Glory?

I have to say that in one sense I have always known this story, and known myself to have been—as also to be—a sentient part of it. As for its details, its happenings, the law of it all, its priestly worship and the prophetic truth of it—why, that too I have known. The primal Adam has had much to do with my reluctance—ever and always—to go all the way with it, but my inner mind, along with my living conscience, has ever pressed me to be faithful to the God who in His sovereignty has gone contrary to my will on my behalf as well as for His own elective purposes. Have I not read the Scriptures written in Israel, and do I not know the mind of the Covenant Yahweh, as the elect Israel also knew it, and do I not know that idolatry is a miscarriage of the gift of holy love to the holy nation, and have I not been shown the measure of God's grace in the Scriptures written by the apostolic people, and have I not seen that the Scriptures of Israel and the Church are as one?

Have I not pondered my mentors in childhood, youth and the following ages, and have I not sung the songs which grew out of the revelation of the story, and have not these songs been born in me and all the lovers of God? Have not these songs, psalms, hymns and the like told the story over and over, again and again, in main theme and particular details, and have not writers and composers of them not told the story in their own ways, unwitting of any ability to be great and notable people? Have I not then heard and heard, time after time, the narrative, and have not my mentors and colleagues been with me in the desire and endeavours to know it? They have, and yet I have to say that this night of seeing it *as though I had not seen it before* does not mean I haven't seen it before, but then *never in this manner!* I am not speaking about degrees of comprehension, but of being apprehended by the story which effectually means being personally and intimately apprehended by the Storyteller.

Others in history have been thus apprehended. No person could be a prophet if he were not first taken in to so see the works of God that he could not, henceforth, be the same person he was before the revelation. The prophet Daniel was told to seal up what he had been shown until the time for it should arise, but it is clear that the revelation was for him in order to impress it on his inner being. Likewise, John in Revelation chapter 10 is shown something beyond the moment of its fulfilment. Undoubtedly Paul was translated to the heavens to be given understanding which was not to be voiced to others. This must happen innumerable times to many persons in the course of the story, but without the giving of fame to any, or causing to rise up and say, 'Look! I have been shown a most marvellous thing!' Undoubtedly this has been so, but none must boast in visions he has been shown, as though he would gain stature in the eyes of others. Visions are for edification and the spur to true worship. I ought not to continue this explanation, lest what has come to me should be exalted above its own simple measure

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and, as though daily, God were not showing all this story to those who have eyes to see it, ears to hear it, and hearts to comprehend it. All who run may see it and read it. What has come to them, and to me—so ever slow to see and comprehend—is for all: all may have it come to them, and most certainly should will it so. It is our story, the story in which we are involved. How dare we not know it? How long should we neglect that profound and given wisdom of God?

G. Bingham, Kingswood, 24/4/01. Revised 4/5/01