

ABOUT THIS BOOK...

- * Do we really know who Man is?
- * Do we know and understand the human male?
- * Do we know and understand the human female?
- * What is the key to true understanding of humanity and its sexuality?
- * What has God always intended for the human race?

These often asked and seemingly innocuous questions have a rather unusual answer in Geoffrey Bingham's book *The Heavenly Vision*. Far from being 'out of this world', the author has a startling close-up view of the human race, its nature and destiny. He starts his (so-called) vision from the fulfilled goal of the human race, rather than from its creation. In many ways he bypasses modern findings—both theological and secular—in regard to God, man, woman and sexuality. The book is intriguing and none must miss reading it.

Geoffrey Bingham is an Anglican minister. His experience as soldier, prisoner of war, farmer, missionary, writer, teacher and family man, as well as theologian, has given him grounds for writing material which is Australian in tone, and relevant to the society in which we live. Some have found his books life-changing.

**NEW CREATION
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The Heavenly Vision

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

The Heavenly Vision

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,
for the first heaven and the first earth
had passed away, and the sea was no more.
And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,
coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband

REVELATION 21:1-2

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

Published by NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.
P.O. Box 403, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051
1994

First published 1987
NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC., AUSTRALIA
P.O. Box 403, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051

Reprinted 1994
© Geoffrey Bingham, 1987

National Library of Australia cataloguing-in-publication data

Bingham, Geoffrey C.
The heavenly vision.

ISBN 0 86408 090 5.

1. Christian Life I. Title.
248

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Cover design by Glenys Murdoch

Wholly set and printed at
NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.
Coromandel East, South Australia

CONTENTS

Chapter One	1
Chapter Two	9
Chapter Three	15
Chapter Four	19
Chapter Five	24
Chapter Six	30
Chapter Seven	35
Chapter Eight	39
Chapter Nine	46
Chapter Ten	51
Chapter Eleven	58
Chapter Twelve	63
Chapter Thirteen	70
Chapter Fourteen	75

CHAPTER ONE

The prophet is visited with a dream, a vision, in which he sees the glory of the Woman, which he discovers to be the glory of Woman also. He understands from the vision that in the End-Time, the Time of Eternity, this Woman will represent the true people of the Human Race, and be the Citadel of Refuge and Healing for the Nations

Then I saw in my dream—that dream within a dream—such beauty as I had never before, nor since, beheld. In such dreams and visions you do not analyse and classify, or even compare with some precedent. You are the object of the vision, not its subject. It comes upon you, because a vision is a gift, and you see with inward eyes, and when you see you know, although knowing does not mean you can express the truth of the vision in the way you can express non-visionary things.

When, then, I saw the glories which came in this dream, I knew nothing could equal such beauty, so

rare was it. I can only make that claim and leave it to you who wish to read and know the vision. It was the beauty of purity, or the purity of beauty: I cannot rightly say which, but both thoughts penetrated me in a strangely wonderful way, for true purity has never been known by the human race, except by some incredible grace. What the human race once knew in nature—its created reality—it has long since lost So then I was deeply moved by that beauty and purity, and wished I would never cease to behold it. To tell the truth I have never ceased seeing it.

I was seeing a woman whose beauty can only be called glorious. She could not be called handsome or pretty, but simply glorious, for radiance shone forth from her, as though the inner splendour had become free and outwardly visible. It emanated from her, breaking out in shining rays which them-selves kept compounding their brilliance, their own pure brilliance.

Her eyes were clear as crystal but of a colour that defied description. They shone as richly as any star, and had within them such regality that I was humbled even to look at them. I did not desire that she should see me, but that I should see her, and never cease seeing her. Her hair was a glory too, about her, flowing in long tresses that I would have called golden except that the brilliance seemed to absorb all colour.

Her arms also were regal, raised in utter joy, the slim fingers stretched and pointing to the heavens, the palms at ease and open, but when I looked to see the heavens to which she was reaching, I saw that the heavens were about her no less below her than above, and I knew in this dream and vision that she was a heavenly creature, albeit she was by nature a woman, and surely of our human race. That did not mystify me, for nothing in a dream mystifies, but often the meaning comes gradually to the dreamer, for understanding is never ultimately withheld from the willing beholder.

As I gazed in awe and delight upon the beauty of her, I found joy in purity which possessed me. It was as though I were in an invisible cocoon of sheer holiness, one felt and recognised rather than seen. I could behold her form without impurity of thought and desire. Oh yes, thought and desire were there, but peerless and impeccable, and the genuine mystery of love was beginning to break over me, and grasp me in its wonder.

I thought to myself, 'Her name is Love, and she is pure love,' but a Voice spoke to me and said, 'She is not Love, for He is Love, but she is "the Beloved," and love has made her what she is, pure in love, for His love has made her pure.' The thought then came to my mind that pure love always makes pure.

'Who, then,' I asked myself, 'is this Beloved, and Who is He Who is Love?' Yet I knew.

I marvelled at the Voice, for it had the strange property of simplicity so that nothing which was said was not understood, and the history of the truth was also itself communicated. I knew then, that as there was Woman—the one I beheld—so, too, there was Man, and that he was the Voice, and I had a great longing to see him, but at that point he did not appear, and so I was content to look upon the beauty of the Woman.

I saw, as I looked, that she was arrayed in the most glorious of garments, and my heart told me simply that this Woman was to be wed, and that she was clothed in a garment that epitomised purity, a garment of light, but a garment that had not been made by human hands. I saw it to be soft and gentle linen, flowing about the form of the Woman as though it were alive, and almost an entity in itself, but an entity which worshipped and served the beauty of her femininity.

Then, suddenly, I wept. I wept for the knowledge that until this moment I had not known such purity. My own impurity—and impurities of the past had been things to me of shame, and—if you will—secret shame. How many shames I had had, and how often! Yet this purity did not confront me. It did not accuse. It was there, but it seemed in the moment of my genuine yearning that I, too, entered into the purity of that Woman. Suddenly I lightened in my heart and my head and my spirit, and

cascades of joy came tumbling out of me, and they seemed to go laughing on their way, and joy and pleasure such as I had not hitherto known possessed my whole being, and I understood much—if not all—of the joy and radiance of the Woman, and why she stood steeped in worship and wholly enriched by the devotion to the Man which he—for his part—had evoked by his love for her, and his love to her.

When this came upon me, then I suddenly understood the nature of the Woman, or, I might say, the nature of Woman, not just a woman, but Woman herself. I had always known something of femaleness, as I imagine every person knows—be that person man or woman—but because a man is a man he knows femininity from the point of view of his own masculinity, and woman knows it from the vantage point of her femininity, but there was a place here—in this vision—that all who watched could know the open secret of true femininity, for it was before the eyes in the beauty and the glory of this holy Bride. The whole of it soaked itself into me, and I was greatly amazed, for I certainly had not known this truth before.

What at first perturbed me, but later emancipated me, was the unmasking that took place within my understanding. I realised how much in error I had lived, and how strongly I had thought, regarding the truth of femininity. Vivid ideas lost their

brightness, and unholy ideas were dredged up and despatched into a limbo of non-recall. The loss of untruth does something wonderful for the human spirit, as even more does the inrush of pure truth. I was amazed and gratified at this new comprehension.

The wonderful thing about this new knowledge was that I also understood masculinity in a way I had not seen it before. As yet I had not seen the Man, the Bridegroom, but I sensed this was to come, and that then I would know even more of true masculinity; so I bided my time, and greatly enjoyed the new insights that had come to me. Suddenly it seemed to me to be a wonderful thing to be a man, as also it was—for a woman—a wonderful thing to be a woman. I doubted whether any of our race had ever fully known the essential truth of femininity and masculinity, and I greatly longed that they should, for I felt that were we all to know, then we would glory in our humanity.

Then, as I looked, I knew this Bride had a marvellous history, but how I had come to know this history still remains a mystery to me. I can only say that since truth came flooding in, so did all the action of man's history. I knew in some way that Woman had been created with this purity which I now saw, but that this purity had been attacked by a beautiful, sinuous and sinister power, and the purity had become defiled, not only through subtle seduction, but through surrender to untruth, the

acceptance and pursuit of the lie. Of that I wish to speak later, but the outcome of this pristine purity lay not in the deceit but in the restoration, for the Woman was to become the centre of the Divine Plan for all history.

I saw, then, in my dream, a City of splendour. It was a fair City, and its ramparts glowed warmly, as though the very stones of it were alive. Indeed the whole City seemed sentient and palpable. It appeared to throb with inner life, and that life showed itself in a gentle and strong glory. It was vibrant with the same purity that I had seen in the Woman, and I gazed with great joy. I seemed to see the City and the Woman as one, as though she were the City and it were her.

In my dream I walked around her, and the walking took many days, but the hours of those days were filled with an indescribable joy. The City seemed to fear no besieging, for its gates—high and noble as they were—remained open perpetually. I cannot say 'night and day', for there was no night there. All in that City was light and bright, for there was a pulsing glow that throbbed from its very heart

At that time I did not enter the City, for it was not in my dream or vision to do so, though later it was so. What, however, I did see was a constant stream of people coming from East and West, from North and South, and often they were led by their monarchs, noble of face, regal in stature, and bringing

with them the brilliance, gifts and treasures of their people. It seemed that all humanity—all true humanity—looked to this great City as the goal and home of the only creatures who were ever fashioned in the image of their Creator.

As I looked I knew the Woman and the City to be one. At that point there entered into my heart a yearning not only to look at the Woman, and at this great City, but to penetrate, understand, and know the mystery of both City and Woman.

CHAPTER TWO

As the seer longs to know the mystery of the City and the Woman, he is taken back in time to witness the beginning of the Woman, and to behold also, the Man.

It may have been because of my desire that I was transported in my vision to the Beginning-Time when the preparations for the mystery of the Woman and the City had been planned. I do not know, but I was suddenly aware that the future had receded from me, and I was in the beginning of the Past. It was a situation of absolute quietness until the Commands issued from the Voice.

I saw in my dream that the heavens and the earth were taking their beginning. Monumental things were happening, such as the movements of great masses of water, and the appearing of vast areas of dry land. Through it all I heard the Voice, and the Voice uttered Commands, so that as the Word went out, what appeared to be chaos and disorder began to take form, showing order.

While this was all happening, I saw and heard celestial creatures of great beauty and dignity' These were so amazed and entranced with the things that were happening that they could not contain themselves for the wonder of what they were witnessing, and suddenly these sons of God shouted for joy! Their thunderous applauses seemed almost to rend the heavens and the earth, and their delight was so infectious that I knew all the creation to be a thing of joy, and nothing whatever to be dreaded, even though to me the mighty movements of land and sea were in themselves awesome, and productive of a holy reverent fear of the Voice and His Commands. As I watched, wonderstruck, I saw green things grow and appear, colour emerge and flourish, creatures small and large sporting themselves with utter freedom on land, in the sea and in the air. All the time the shouting choir of celestials spoke the joy of all things. All things seemed to admire all things, and their humility in worship of the Voice was something rich to behold. Then, when I thought all things were complete, came the creation of Man.

My heart was strangely moved as I gazed upon this event. Man, it seemed, was to be the very essence of all things. His substance was drawn from the earth, but his pure life from the very Breath of God. In a moment of creation he became a living being. Within his being was amassed all that makes

him the noblest of living creatures—nobler, even, than the celestials themselves. None of them was made in God's likeness; none of them was in His image. Part of me trembled with fear, and part with joy, that God should create Man as a creature, yet design him to have fellowship with Himself.

What came to me, as I gazed upon Man, was that he was most regal. His nobility was that of one given the highest destiny in history. The Voice spoke and told him to fill up the earth with his kind, to subdue those powerful elements which needed true control and leadership, and at the same time to exercise wise and warm stewardship of all creation. I was breathless with joy and gratitude that humanity had been given so high and lofty a calling.

I saw then, in this vision, that Man sported amongst all the creatures of God. They seemed to delight in him, and he in them; in fact all things seemed to be in concert. Their awe of him contained no dread, and his concern for them no domination. It seemed their very characters comported with his naming of them, so quick he was to discover what they were, and what they were about. In all this my wonder never diminished. I understood wholly what it is to worship Him Who is the Voice and Who created all things. I knew what it was to worship Him with all creation.

Even so, my wonder turned to amazement and then to enraptured astonishment when I saw the creation of Woman. It may well be that she was there, in the depths of the Man, and that the Holy Creator drew her out of his inner being, but suddenly she was there, and my heart and bones ached with the beauty and splendour that I beheld. The joy and the delight of the Man was no less, and he uttered words that sounded like echoes of the Creator Himself, so noble they were, for he said, 'She is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone'.

Then he called her 'Woman!', that is, 'She is out of man!'

I knew then, with a deep sweet ache in my heart, that the total union of Man and Woman must arise from their total union with Him Who is the Voice. To be one with each other they must first be one with God. Then their union would be one of indescribable fulfilment, of utter oneness, and the richest of all human experience. For one human to have entire oneness with another seemed to me to be unbelievable, yet 'flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone' could mean no less than that. Such union must mean a human being would know no aloneness, and also no loneliness. The joy of such union would spread through all of life, giving it pure meaning and rich living.

So I knew to my never forgetting that the Man and the Woman are one, one humanity which is

neither male nor female as such, but male-female in the one. This is the true humanity. I trembled with the simplicity and the beauty of this understanding which had not previously come to me, but now came through the vision I was beholding. In a flash—so to speak—my understanding was changed. Now it was one with my understanding of the Woman I had seen at the End-time, and in the situation of the Holy City. I knew all that was male was one with all that was female, and that this was to be for always. To divide these into two streams, even streams that flowed in parallel, would be to do despite to the true unity of the human race in its inseparable male-femaleness.

I watched the Two who were as One sporting themselves within the rich garden, the earthly paradise which was theirs. Every tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes. No shadow of guilt lay across the life of the Man and the Woman. Fear and dread were wholly absent. Innocence was present in its gentleness, wisdom and power. Colour, movement, emotion and affection—all combined to show unsullied love. Tears of joy started from my eyes as I watched the truth of love between Man and Woman, the unity of purity, and the nature of the image of God as it lived itself in true life. I knew that I really understood the nature of Man, of the truth of Man's masculinity and Woman's femininity. I understood with this the

utter oneness, the fusion and union of the two, in the physical consummation.

What came to me with that understanding was that the human race, as a whole, ought to know the dynamic reality and the powerful truth of that union—that utter oneness. This would be the joy that would make the human race to have wholesome unity, ie. of husband and wife, parents and children, children and children, neighbour and neighbour. This marital love would be the foundation of all true human relationships. I saw too that this utter oneness, expressed by that Primal Couple in marital union, must be the basis of the wider union of all that is male and all that is female across the whole human race. As I understood that creational union of Man and Woman—they constituting the one glorious race—then my joy, again, knew no bounds.

Then in that very moment, as my joy was so full, I saw the darkening of all things, the vast shadows that began to loom across the race of Mankind. Light seemed to be there, as it had come in creation, but the presence of evil in the form of beauty was about to invade the paradise of Man.

CHAPTER THREE

In the midst of the paradise the Creator gave to Man came evil in a subtle and beautiful form. The prophet saw the action which divided man from God, man from woman, and man from his true self. This was the darkness that brought sorrow to the seer.

I saw in that dream of mine something which I too had hidden deeply within myself. Indeed, I came to see that the whole human race has drawn the blind down upon its beginnings. It cannot bear to renew the memory of its primal innocence, its primal beauty, and its natural and careless joy that once it knew. This was when Man was one with his Creator, and Man and Woman one with each other' Hence recall for the human race would be most painful' The contrast of the 'then' with the 'now' would heighten the anguish the human race knows, the anguish which came to it at the time of its temptation'

Later someone would describe the evil actor within this event. He would say, 'The thief comes to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.' Undoubtedly jealous of both God and Man, the serpent of beauty sought to do just this. It came to steal the primal innocence, the primal joy, and the primal fellowship the Man and the Woman had with each other, and with God. It desired to bring this hated human race to death, and so it insinuated itself into the presence and mind of the woman. It came to take her by guile, and by guile it took her.

I saw, then, in this dream of mine, the cunning of the subtle serpent.

At first it simply asked the question, 'Hath God said. . .?' The woman replied, 'God has said. . .' This was enough for her, and ought to have been enough for the serpent, but it persisted and called the Voice, the Word of God, in question.

The woman heard the Word of God: 'In the day you eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you will surely die.'

The woman heard the word of the serpent 'You shall not surely die.' She listened to the word of the serpent as it continued 'God knows that in the day you eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil.'

She rejected the Word of God and accepted the word of the serpent. Her link with God was broken. A new link was forged—with the serpent.

The man listened to the Voice of God. It was the Voice he knew and obeyed.

The man listened to the word of his wife. It was a voice he loved. Now he refused the Voice of God and the true Word. He preferred the word of his wife. His vertical link with the Creator was broken in his desire to maintain the horizontal link with his woman'

I saw in my dream that these two were no longer one' That which was most precious of all to the Woman and the Man, and to the entire human race, now dissolved. Unity-in-love gave way, Man being man in his own self, and Woman being woman in her own self. That was when I wept, for I knew the tragedy of that division. Never, fully, would man see himself as Man and woman herself as Woman. These true images would become weak and distorted to them, and a gulf of sadness would widen between them. The children they would bring forth would also not understand, or be wholly one.

As I watched in that dream of mine, I knew all was not lost. Had I not seen first in my vision the Woman at the End of time, then I would have despaired beyond measure. An entity called 'Grace' came to intervene between me and my sorrow, and of this I will speak later. A Voice seemed to say, 'What was, and now is not, will yet be again; and when it comes to pass the reality will return, and

with it the joy and the peace that now are lost.’

I wondered that the Creator did not at once destroy and dissolve the sinuous and subtle serpent, but in my spirit I knew that had He done so, the disunity of man and woman would not have been reversed. I knew that man and woman must themselves desire to see the evil defeated, and that such defeat could not come from some power-play, but from a humility which would unmask the serpent and destroy his venom. When, then, God told the serpent, the man and the woman, that out of woman’s seed (by man) would come the destruction of the evil one, I knew that the word called ‘Grace’ was the word yet to be spoken. It alone could bring peace to the human race.

So then, I took heart in my dream, and understood the judgement which God brought down upon the serpent upon the woman and upon the man. I knew then that it is Grace which brings judgement, and judgement brings liberation. These thoughts were new to me, but they came silently into my inner being, and from that time of dreaming have never departed. Even so, the terrible sorrow did not depart. I knew what we could be—we who are men and women—and I longed that the time of (Grace should quickly come: that it should quickly come.

CHAPTER FOUR

A sight comes to the prophet of the division between man and woman, and between parents and children, stemming from the desire of both the woman and the man to be as God, knowing good and evil. He sees the new thrust to human living to prove oneself before God and man, and the danger of this to the whole human race

This part of my vision I have to recount with great sadness. There are no words which can describe the division which came between the man and the woman. I can no longer call them ‘the Man’ and ‘the Woman’ but simply ‘the man’ and ‘the woman,’ for their rebellion against God was also rebellion one against the other. Before this they had been utterly one, and one in the great mandate God had given them to be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth. Each had drawn back somewhat, in order to be an individual, and part of God’s judgement was that the man should rule the woman,

whilst the woman would have desire towards the man. Some would say that it was desire which did not necessarily have love in it, whilst others would say it was 'desire to rule over man.' Whatever these meanings, the two did not now know the utter oneness they had had in God.

Whilst suffering lay within this new relationship, yet the tragedy of it emerged in the birth of the children. I saw, in my dream, that the older brother hated the younger. I did not marvel at this, for I had come to see that since the full union of the man and the woman had been broken, the union of parents and children could also not be complete. I wondered at the degree of anger which had grown, anger which was full-grown when the older brother offered a sacrifice to God. It was an unbloody sacrifice, and this may have made it bland, but I think that it was not the nature of the sacrifice but the way of its offering which made it unacceptable to God.

I saw, then, that every human being is responsible for his own choices and decisions, for his reactions to his parents, his environment, his circumstances, and what comes to him through heredity. I remembered so clearly the words of a later fellow prophet who once uttered God's words, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' I know that he meant, 'Only he who sins shall die, for he makes his choices and cannot blame another for such sins.' 'The son shall

not bear the sins of the father, or the father the sins of the son.' This is why the God of the prophets rejected the ancient proverb, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.'

The horror of anger I saw as the elder brother vented his rage against God, and doubtless against his own parents, as he murdered his brother. His brother I knew to be a prophet, a man of righteousness, and one who loved his older brother. I wondered that from the union of the man and the woman there could be spawned a murderer and a prophet, both. These two, I knew, had been made in the image of God Who is Creator and Father and universal King. I knew that the one who strikes a human, or vandalises his person, is the one who attacks God. I saw that such anger is not a momentary indignation, but arises from an implacable enmity towards God.

'If you do well,' the Creator said, 'will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin couches at the door to spring on you, and to have mastery over you.' So anger had become compulsive in its guilt and bitterness, and the division between the man and woman expressed itself—fully grown—in the murder of their son by another son.

I saw that parental love of the true order will bring family love in its wake, but I also saw that he who hates God hates his brother also, though the

brother he hates loves him. I marvelled afresh at the love of the younger brother for the Creator, and for his own brother. I wept at the hideous rejection of that love, and the foolish slaughter of the godly brother, Yet, even as I wept, I knew why these things are: I knew from my own heart how such things can be.

In my heart there came the truth that man has been fashioned in the image of God, having been made male and female. Male and female together make the image of God. Man as a whole is the image and glory of God. The husband is that image and glory of God but he is not complete without the woman—the wife—who is his glory: thus together they are the glory of God. In His image made He them: male and female made He them, and called them Man.' Man, then, I saw, is male–female, containing what we may be pleased to call 'the male and female elements of God,' for in the likeness of these he was fashioned. I saw then that the 'male' and the 'female' must never be divided. That which God has joined must never be put asunder. To divide them, each from the other, is to divide God in His very Self, His indivisible unity.

I saw then that when, through their sin, the Man and Woman became divided, the corruption of the human race had taken place. Had there been no Grace, no election of God, then the whole human race would have destroyed itself. When each believes

he (or, she) knows what is good and what is evil, then when one differs from another the each is against the other. As with the older and younger brother, so with the human race. I wept for the lost unity of the Man and the Woman, and for the wide breach that no man can close.

Thus in my dream I could not desist from weeping. The sorrow of the human race kept pouring from my heart in an unending stream, and I longed for the 'might have been,' until the truth of Grace rose before my eyes, dried my tears, and brought relief to my aching heart.

CHAPTER FIVE

The prophet is now shown the reality of idolatry. He sees the inner compulsion of man to worship, and the searching out of that which will supply his personal emotional needs. He sees also the deceit of false worship, and the tyranny of the idols, the lords and the gods.

I knew in my heart that the older brother had not really worshipped God in his sacrifice, for had he done so he would have been accepted. I saw, too, that he had created a god after his own image, the one which he desired should be as he imagined him. I saw his anger when God would not be that god. I saw that the younger brother had worshipped God as He is, and had been accepted because of his faith.

In my vision I saw the history of mankind, from the beginning to the end. In the beginning worship had been pure, for there was no rebellion and no guilt. With the fall of man from his fellowship with God, there was a hiatus. Those who did not see the

Creator as the God of all Grace saw only the God of judgement I heard your sound in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I went and hid myself.' The sound (Word) of God had not made the man naked, but had revealed to him his nakedness, so that man feared the One with Whom, previously, he had walked, and from Whom, now, he fled.

I saw then, in the understanding of my vision, that man cannot live alone. A fellow prophet once said, 'The way of a man is not in himself. It is not in a man to direct his own footsteps.' Proud though he may be, and self-ruling though he may seek to be, he has to lean upon someone or something. His pride recoils from any form of dependence, but his desire to worship forces him to make a surrogate god. He thinks in his heart, 'What sort of a god or lord do I want? I want one who will protect me, but not dominate me. I want one which will do as I desire, serving me. So shall I give this idol or lord great worship, but in return he must do me good.'

Often in the night he dreams up his gods, and in the morning bows towards them and worships them. He sometimes has fierce joy and delight in his heart, that at last a god will supply his emotional needs, his need of power and fame and security. So he is strong in his demands whilst he is adoring in his worship.

I saw that none of his gods and lords had this power, namely to relieve the man of his guilt, to set him free to be without dread of life, of death, and of others who also had their gods. I saw that man will make himself believe that the gods hold the treasures of human delights, and that when a man finds the key to full worship of them, then by some strange mystique, and through some esoteric knowledge, he may unlock the storehouse of pleasures and other treasures which are so dear to him. This ancient delusion I saw was the deceit in which man was glad to live, hoping against hope that he would find his fullness within his gods.

I saw the tragic waste of countless human beings, the slain and the dead, the starved and the dying, the corpses and the carrion that littered the shores and mountains and deserts of man's history. I knew now from the vision that such had not happened by accident, by a chance coming together of many things, but by man's refusal to worship the only true God and his insistence upon worshipping what he would and how he would.

I for one had never connected idolatry with sexual promiscuity, perversion and deviation, yet I saw that when the powerful drive of love in man was turned inwards to himself, and simultaneously upon the gods of his own making, then man was in union with his idols. Sexual contemplation and action—normally a right expression of true love—

then became a perverse thing. I saw that all premarital and extra-marital expressions of sexuality are in fact twisted forms of human union.

I saw then, as I pondered, that creation is a truly functional unit, and so all its operative laws and principles conform necessarily to a functional harmony; and it became clear to me that when man seeks to rebel against the Creator he will rebel against creation, seeking to turn its functional operations away from their normal course. It came to me that whilst homosexuality and bestiality are clear examples of this deliberate perversion, yet so are fornication and adultery. I saw, too, that man refuses the true norm which fits with the utterness of union that the Man and the Woman had known.

In my dream I began to realise that idolatry is man's expression of his rejection of God, and his intention to live as he wills; yet his breaking of the functional principles of living in the creation can only lead to tragedy in many forms. Now I understood that where a man and a woman do not live in utterness there will be dissatisfaction. Emotional fulfilment they take to be a creational 'right'. I saw that it is built into human beings to be wholly fulfilled in marital love, as it is built into children to live in the security of parents who live in marital love, and so, consequently, parental love.

As I pondered these revelations and ideas, I saw that where there is not emotional and personal

fulfilment there will be dismay, a sense of being cheated, a striving to get fulfilment in other ways, and since, by nature of the case, true fulfilment cannot come, the anger increases. It is vented against parents, against others, and against God. God, after all, is Ruler of the creation, and He has not planned things as they ought to be! I could see this to be the mentality of many of the angry ones.

It came to me, then, that the desire for security increases the endeavour to be self-sufficient. Competition with others who are in the same action must bring rivalry, fear, and the like. Fear, guilt, anger, and compensatory idolatry would then all combine to break relationships, increase anger and rebellion. Hence the descriptions of man down through human history—as cruel, rapacious, evil-minded, unjust, homicidal genocidal and devilish—now made sense to me. I came to see also that no less to be feared are the ‘justice people’ who, being self-righteous, imagine all others are wrong and live in self-gratulation. Some of them, I saw for the first time, become the social activists, the new messiahs, the utopians and the terrorists.

This, then, is the outcome of man’s idolatry.

I saw, through that time-wide vision, that man is passionate in his idolatry, fascinated by what his gods may bring forth for him, and darkly wrathful when they fail to produce his demands and fulfil his desires. In his anger he grows bitter, cynical and

callous. He cannot believe that there is a beautiful, innocent, and pure love.

CHAPTER SIX

The prophet sees the sad plight of man, despairs at first, and then remembers the promise of Grace given to the primal couple, the prophetic word spoken to the serpent and he looks in history to see it come to pass. He finds something of this in the simple mystery of Covenant.

I thought, in my dream, that the plight of the human race was hopeless, that what the evil men do was without redress, and when I saw that no man can dissociate himself from the race of which he is part, then despair grew within me. I wondered what men and women could live for, when their consciences were not clear before their own laws—let alone the great law of God. I knew that eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, occupy much of man's time and energy, and even act as a diversion from the emptiness of living, but I wondered how man could traverse his life's span and not give thought to the abysmal failure of the entire human

race. Only by constantly shifting blame could a person justify himself, but how uneasy and insecure he would be, nevertheless, in his inner person.

As I was musing in this way, light grew in the vision, slowly expanding until it filled the heavens and the earth. I was anticipating something dramatic and spectacular, but what I saw was a man, an ancient chief and a desert dweller. He was moving with his household, penetrating into areas that were new and strange to him. I sensed in this dream that he was an ordinary man, yet of the nature of a father, and enough to equal, if not surpass, others of his ilk.

What I saw arrested my mind, for I had remembered in my despair the words of judgement and Grace spoken to the serpent in the primal garden. There the serpent's doom had been foretold, and the triumph of woman's seed over him. With that memory came the assurance that the Creator is faithful, moving in His own world, and assuring the human race of the good outcome of His integrity.

Thus, when I saw the simple ceremony that He had ordered to bond Himself with this man of old, I felt my pulse quicken, and my tired mind renewed itself. I stood, waiting and watching, wanting to know the outcome of the ritual. What I witnessed was the slaughter of animals, the flowing of blood,

the placing of the divided carcasses, and the waiting of the old man for the action of God. This came, not in the day, but at night.

The old man, whose name was Exalted Father, suddenly fell into a deep sleep, and in it the Most High spoke to him in terms of promise, that is, of Covenant. Covenant was for the man, God bonding Himself to him through a ritual of a bloody sacrifice. More than once God had promised him amazing things—that he should be the patriarch of a great family, and that all the families of the earth would come to know blessing through him, and if they cursed him would not find the blessing, but only a curse. These statements had moved the old man deeply, so that at the time of his personal testing he did not waver. He believed his Covenant God, and rested on his promises, to the point where he was prepared to offer his own son, the son of his old age, were God to demand that beloved life.

I saw, then, in my dream, that God had not only bonded Himself to this ancient patriarch, but to all his people also; not only his blood descendants, but those whose minds were towards the God of glory, to worship Him, and to serve Him. I saw then why the Most High had changed the name of the man from 'Exalted Father' to 'Father of Many Nations.'

Having this key to history I was glad to see the times unfold, the prophetic promises grow, the actions of God for His elect people work them-

selves out, and a new people develop who understood the mystery of worship. It was this mystery of worship which began to grip my mind, my heart, and my sight, for I knew the perverse power of wrong worship, that is, the worship of idolatry. Hope began to grow in my spirit, for I knew that if mankind could turn to the living God, to the faithful Creator, then evil could be thwarted, and the primal relationships man had known might be restored. I delighted in the thought that man could regain the paradise he had lost, and the love which he had so slighted.

That, then, was why I watched closely the history of the Covenant people, tracing the sovereign hand of God upon them, in suffering as well as in triumph, knowing that out of them would come the blessing of the universal Covenant. The prophets who attended this people kept predicting the coming of a special person, whom I knew was to be 'the seed of the woman,' the one pointed to as the destroyer of the serpent's seed. The prophets greatly magnified his office, giving him the qualities of a king, a son of the Most High, a wise counsellor, and even a suffering servant. With him would come the fulfilment of the Covenant, the Kingdom of God, and the great act of saving Grace.

This all grew to some form over many centuries, and was only understood as many of the people and the prophets suffered. What seemed to me to

be most important was that they were people of the law of God, and people who worshipped Him in the beauty of holiness. They were in contrast—the loyal ones amongst them—with the nations who were idolatrous, and sought to build their own empires and walk their own ways—apart from the Most High.

So deeply moved was I by this worship, that I know I must recount to you this important part of the vision.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The prophet is deeply moved by God's giving of His law to His people. Such an event had not taken place prior to this in the history of any people Intimately linked with that law—the prophet clearly saw—was the worship of the Most High God, and this as distinct from the varieties of idolatrous worship. Somewhere in all that worship was the gradual emergence of the true Woman.

I knew in my dream that from creation itself man had known law. He could not seek to suppress what he did not know to be there. His rebellion against God was also his rebellion against law. The law of God is not a thing apart from Him, some rules He has formulated, but the law is the very outshining of His holy self. It cannot be otherwise than what it is, for it shows the righteousness of God, and demands the righteousness of God.

I knew that from the first moment of creation this law had been there, and man could know it if he would, and could not not know it, even if he

tried, though much of his energies were devoted deliberately to not knowing this law. I saw that men suffer from refusing this law, for it is the way of life and truth for all who seek to follow it.

When, then, God led the people of His Covenant to their destiny—first in the desert, and then in their own land—He gave them the law in a form that they could understand. It was not merely a set of commandments. It was instruction, designed to lead them in the right path of life. It was the basis of true living, but it was not a law that man dared know apart from God. Only in worshipping Him would this law be intelligible and life giving. Only in obedience to the law could worship be full and rich

I saw, then, in my dream, that the worship was first in a tent, ‘the tent of meeting,’ and the leader of the people had been given a pattern answering to the reality of God and His celestial dwelling, that sanctuary where great and intelligent powers worshipped and served Him. Time and again in my dream have I seen this beautiful worship, and heard the glory of its praise. Such, then, was to be reproduced in the world of man, and especially in the people of the Covenant. Other nations had ‘exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator,’ Now the new people of God were to ‘exchange the lie for the truth of God and worship and serve the Creator rather than the creature,’

I cannot here reproduce all details which I saw in my dream, but I saw the place of worship, the place of sacrifice, the court of priestly mediation—the place of holy worship—and I saw the most holy place where God was said to dwell, and this at the heart of His people. There was such awe in worship when the people’s hearts were pure. They came to see their tent as holy ground, and later, when they transformed it into a more substantial temple, then their worship was no less reverent.

God made it known to them that He was the Holy One, the Most High, and that His dwelling was not confined to a building made with hands, but that the hearts of simple, humble and contrite people was as much a temple to Him as any other. Thus worship was not an empty ritual, not a muttering and murmuring of things that only the elite could understand. They were told, ‘The things that are secret [hidden] belong to God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law,’

I saw then that the law and worship were one. To obey meant to love God, and to love meant to worship Him. They had been given the gifts of love and worship. This was to make them the true people, the matrix of the King to come, he who was also the holy and wonderful Messiah, the marred and suffering Servant of the human race.

What came to me in this dream was that God

the Most High saw His people not only as His family, but even more as His Bride. I wondered how such a thing could be, and how God could be so tender with any part of the human race. It was then I came to see that there is no more tender and intimate relationship than that of the Bridegroom and the Bride. I saw also that the temple was the place where true adoration took place, especially in the intimacy of worship. As I thought and pondered I came to see that the temple stood for the whole people, as it did also for God, and hence the intimacy of worship is that of true union with God. This was one part of the dream which, when it was understood, was so amazing as to be almost beyond belief

Thinking not only on this detailed but glorious law and this rich and systematic worship, I saw also that what the prophets spoke about concerned God, His temple, His law, and the obedience, love and worship of His people. I knew then that God, law, worship, and the prophets were all parts of a great unity. In my spirit I longed to see the consummation of these things which, to that point, were contained within the great order of the Covenant.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The seer sees the coming of 'the Seed,' the rescue of God in the midst of history. He sees the forces that are arrayed against this coming One, but also the mild power which defeats them, and establishes the power of the Bridegroom. This holy King liberates his people in true Covenant, and makes them the Bride of himself, and the true worshipping people of God

What I had come to know in the time of my vision was that the forces which contend against God are many, and carry great power. Time and again they brought their assaults against the Covenant people. Nor was their attention limited to this small nation. Their emissaries over many centuries had spread themselves out into all the nations, and there were great unseen princes and rulers who sought to keep in their grip the peoples who worshipped the strange gods and idols.

So then there was suffering within the Covenant people, and as law and worship were attacked both

from within the nation and outside of it, the battle grew fierce and grim. From time to time there was some respite, after which the battle would be renewed. For this reason many longed for the coming of their promised King and Messiah. They looked to political liberation and even a kingdom which would extend its rule over many, if not all, nations' They jealously kept to their pure worship, claiming themselves to be the nation which worshipped God. Only under pain of death would any dare enter their court of sacrifice.

Then he came, but not with a fanfare of trumpets or announcements that impressed the ruling powers. This one was born of a woman, the Seed who had been promised to the Woman at the beginning. He, too, was the Seed of the great human father—the Father of Many Nations—and was designed to bless all the earth. He was born in a humble situation and grew as an ordinary child, youth, and young man. It is true that the greatest of prophets amongst men announced his coming, but like all prophets his announcement was unacceptable. The substance of his message was that the coming One would bring in the Kingdom, cause men's sins to be forgiven, and be the cause of a great outpouring of the Spirit of God on all the human race.

The faithful heard this message with great joy, and some trepidation. The heavens opened for

God to acclaim that this 'seed of woman' was in truth His Son, the one who would bring righteousness to the nations; yet the opening of the heavens seemed—to those who saw and heard it—but a passing and almost unreal incident. The Man who had come was of their own race, not notable, and although his words were acknowledged by some to be with power and authority, and the signs which he did to be unusual indeed, yet at the last they screamed themselves hoarse to have him killed, as killed he was.

Even so, the truly faithful—the holy remnant—knew him to be the true Man of God, Son of Man, righteous Branch, humble King and suffering Servant. When he broke through the trappings of the tomb, and showed himself alive, they knew the ultimate had happened, that his death was not useless, and his rising from the dead the primary news of all history. Death could not entrap him. Guilt could not come near him. Here at last was the True Man! All of God dwelt in him, and worked through him.

He had great news for the human race. It was now freed from the condemnation of its guilt. In his death he had destroyed death, abolished it, and brought life and immortality to light. He had withdrawn the sting of death—sin—and he had broken the power of sin—that is, the guilt of man—before the law of God. Death's terrors were cancelled.

In the good news was the promise of new birth. What God had made to be true in the creation of Man, He would now restore man to be. If any man would be in this True Man, then his old things would be renewed. In this lay hope for man and woman. They could again become Man and Woman, and all that was inherent in their love at the first would be re-established. This meant that the true Kingdom of the Most High would prevail in all the earth, and particularly in the hearts of the children of the Father.

Because in a vision a seer may know the full truth as he watches, so this burst in upon me, and my heart went wild with joy. I knew in a flash that the full love of the Most High—now to be known as ‘Abba,’ which means ‘Father’—had risen in a king-tide, and had been made manifest to the world. The abandoning up of His Son to fulfil the ancient Covenant was without precedent. It took the holy anointing of the great Spirit to bring all of this truth home to the human heart.

And what was this great love of the Eternal Father? It was that in His Son He met the full onslaught of the serpent and his seed, the vicious accusation that man was a paper person, a shell of a creature, lacking substance, never able to rise up and be lord in his creation; that he was indeed the Creator’s great failure. He not only met this accusation head-on and denied it in that the Son who

suffered was also Man, True Man, and no failure; but that Son identified himself with all sinners, being made sin for them, bearing their sins in his body on the tree, and by this most intimate and powerful of all knowledge justifying many. It needed only for the dreadful guilts and guilt of the human race to be destroyed in the fire of his love for that race to be liberated into a community of holy saints—‘saints of the Most High’—and for the Kingdom to be established for ever through the blood of this Lamb, and through the love of this most glorious Bridegroom, constrained as he was by one true and eternal Father.

I saw then, as I watched that once-for-all drama of love’s titanic battle, that great tides of holy love swept in on those who now—through the Spirit of Truth—had come to know the secret of the death and resurrection. These tides flowed out of that twin event, and cleansed every nook and cranny of mind and memory, and set flowing the new and perpetual tides of love within the new person. Thus the gates were opened to true love between man and God, man and woman, between new friend and ancient enemy, between man and wife, parents and children, older brother and younger brother.

He called his new people his Bride. In his death and resurrection he ‘loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having washed her with the water and the word, that

he might present the church [his Bride] to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.'

His New People were the New Temple. One of the Man's followers wrote, 'You are the temple of God,' and, 'You are members of the household of God . . . a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you are also built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.' Another wrote, 'Come to him [the True Man]. . .and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer sacrifices acceptable to God.'

His New People were people of worship, people of the Spirit who came to worship God in spirit and in truth, the true circumcision who worship in the Spirit. The Spirit of the Man had come in a floodtide at one of the festivals of the Old Covenant people, and he had brought to birth a New Covenant people, for the Old Covenant was now made New.

With the New Covenant came the New Law, and with the New Law—the Law of love—was the new worship. The old people of the Old Covenant had been commanded to worship with love for God in their hearts, because of His love for them, and now, as they became the New People of the New (renewed) Covenant, their worship transcended even the old. Just as the old nation had been centred in the temple, and it represented

them and their God together, so the new people were the new temple, and so one with their God, and this new worship, under the glory of Grace, brought a temple of purity to the world.

Now in my dream I was not confused, but the light kept pouring over me in sheer brilliance, and revelation after revelation kept breaking through into my mind and heart. I was glad to be a prophet of God and receive such truth from Him, but it showed all the more how frail I was (and am), and that surpassing splendour may be held within earthen vessels such as we are, and yet those vessels not be destroyed even when they contain such 'weight of glory.'

For all of this I praised the God of heaven, and adored Him because He shows such things to man, things out of His own depths which change and transform those who look and see, who listen and hear, who know and believe.

CHAPTER NINE

The prophet is now gripped by the love which he has seen as never before. He sees too, at this point in his dream, the birth of the New People, and grasps the mystery that they are the people of true love. He sees how this love alone can transform all things into the new heavens and the new earth, and—at the heart of them—the Holy City. He sees that this transformation had its genesis in the identification suffering of the Cross.

Because a prophet is never a spectator of the truth but is drawn into its very heart, I too was gripped and held by this revelation of holy love. I knew it was a love which not only destroyed the power of the serpent and its seed, but which was set to build the Holy City for the ushering in of the New Age, the new heavens and the new earth, long ago promised to the true people of God. This New People—builders with the Father and the Lamb, of the Holy City—would build by love, God's holy love, for

whilst knowledge puffs up, true love builds up. It destroys that which is evil, but never breaks down that which is good.

How then is this community of love born, and how is it empowered to build the future habitation of God, the true City and the Temple of eternity? I saw in my dream that on that Cross the loving Bridegroom became one with his Bride, identifying with her pollution, her sludge of sin, her fearful lostness, the inner distortion of her being, the fruits of the ancient rebellion in that garden paradise in which God had placed her as the First Woman, with the First Man, when together they were Man.

On that Cross he became sin for sinners, he took the ancient nature of fallen man and destroyed it with every part of his being, he died the death of every sinner, and absorbed into himself the impurity of the human race, of the elect Bride, until her pollution was cleansed, her guilt abolished, and her death destroyed. For love a man will become one with his new wife in all her beauty, in all her virginal power of passion, but who will become one with the woman who is defiled? Who will find joy where true purity is absent?

On the Cross he took his defiled bride and made her to be virginal. He turned back the dark and dreadful tides of her guilt, her sin, her hardness, bitterness, anger and hatred. He won her by love into an irreversible purity, into a shining holiness.

In the cleansing of his blood—being immersed into his death, and drawn up to life from his tomb—she became a creature of glory, the Woman of beauty.

All this is a mystery. The scholar whose dry bones parchment flesh, and restless darting mind demands chapter and verse, proof upon proof, will miss the mystery in his unconscious rationalism' It is a mystery which can only be understood by him or her who can cry, 'I have been crucified with him!'

I saw then, in my dream, that the old prophetic promises were fulfilled in and by the birth of the New People. Ancient Israel lay as dry bones in a desert, without life and without hope. The prophet had said that a great wind would come sweeping into that desolate valley, and bone would come to bone, flesh to flesh, and when from the four winds the Breath would come, then this Spirit of the Most High would breathe on the slain of Israel, and they would live.

This was what came to pass. At the Festival of the First Fruits the beginning of the harvest was presented. There came a sound as of a rushing mighty Wind, and all who were present were filled with the Spirit. The new community was born, the Bride had her beginning, the holy love burst free into the human race, small beginning though it may have appeared to be.

I saw in my dream that this New People were one in love. They had all things in common. No

man thought anything was his own. They shared all things, being of one heart, one soul and one mind. They cared for the poor, the orphans, the widows. They healed where that was the will of the Most High. They brought joy into cities and villages as they proclaimed healing to the captive, sight to the blind, good news to the poor, and as they released prisoners from the incarceration of sin and the serpent.

I knew then that this was a powerful people, although their power was not that which man generally calls power. Many were poor in political might, in material wealth, in intellectual brilliance, but they drove themselves against fallen celestial powers, the serpent who had grown to be a glorious dragon, and against the might of human creatures who prided themselves that they had power and punch to build Babels and defy the Most High.

They began to build—unseen to human eyes and eyes of evil powers—the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. They knew the Most High to be the Master Builder, and the Lamb to be the Cornerstone, assessed by many in the Old Covenant people to be unworthy, but chosen by God to be the foundation. They knew themselves to be fellow workers with God, labourers in this building, as their acts of love formed brick upon brick, and stone upon stone. Acts of love proved to be the only materials by which such a City could be built,

by which such a Bride could become clothed in fine linen.

I saw then, and in part understood, the mystery of love, its power and its goal.

CHAPTER TEN

The seer is now gripped by the vision—the building of the Holy City. He sees that under the guise of little or no power, the work of God proceeds apace, moving towards its destined end. He is tempted to be dismayed by the forces which contend against the City-builders, but the vision informs him of the true power of God working in His people, so that he is assured the end will be achieved.

It seemed to me in this vision that the ultimate City I had seen in the initial phase of my dream was so great a goal that it would surpass the power of man to accomplish it. In this I was correct, but then I saw that it is not man who accomplishes it but God. His Son, having triumphed over sin, death and evil, can now give the fullness of himself to his people, and they, in their turn, under his direction can use that power to accomplish what God—even before time—planned should take place,

It came to me in that dream that the powers of evil vaunt themselves, displaying their might before

others, seeking to vanquish the faint-hearted, and delude the minds of brilliant beings. It is as though all power belongs to them, and not to the Most High' I saw the foolishness of this display, but had to confess that so often I have feared and even admired those who seem to have political clout. How easy to envy the rich, to desire wealth and power and comfort, and to believe it is a sign of genuine success. More often it is to the contrary, were the truth to be fully known.

When I looked more closely at the City-builders I realised their innate weakness, and weaknesses. Until the time of the coming of this vision I had often thought that God had—in His mercy—picked up the raggie-taggle of humanity because of His compassion, but then I knew, as one of the Son's followers has taught us, that He deliberately chose the weak things of the world to confound the wise, the foolish things to shame the brilliant, the despised and 'things that are not' to nullify the things which seem to have the high places in the human scene. He did this to show that no one ought to glory except in the Most High.

The vision, then, has taught me that it is not the seen things, the apparently peerless and the powerful, who build that which is eternal, but the simple men and women of love whom God has chosen. I saw again that only love can build. Man may do much for the sake of fame, for acceptance with

earth and heaven, seeking praise from both, but unless it is under the constraint of love its value is nil, What is inspired by fame is not a thing of substance, and cannot be used to build anything, Only those who live and suffer in the cause of the Kingdom, yes, and who die for its sake, may truly rest from their labours, for their deeds (works) do follow them, Some, though they be saved by the marvellous Grace of God, will come to eternity with empty hands and fruitless lives, and doubtless will know the shame of having worked for fame, or not worked at all. Though they be living stones in the walls of the Holy City, yet they will have brought forth no work, nor wrought any true thing of art or beauty,

What, then, is it which does build something, and especially something which is eternal? The answer is, 'The simple works of love.' What do we mean by this? Firstly let us look at what we do not mean, We do not mean ostentation, self-displaying works, calculated to gain the approval and encouragement of others We do not mean works which are insincere, or works which are offered as self-atonement, ie. works to pacify God.

Works which have eternal value are works done out of love, and not even love which arises in us, from us, but God's love working in us and through us, and this means that God is the builder and we build with Him, We too, who have been created by

the love of the Most High, are part and parcel of that edifice. Love edifies; that is, love builds. Firstly love builds us up, and then love builds us into the very fabric of the Eternal City. We become the habitation of God.

I saw also in my dream that this work of beauty became the cause and occasion for the anger and rivalry of the seed of the serpent. Nothing would satisfy this gaudy dragon but that he have a city of his own, called in one breath 'that great city' and in another, 'Babylon the great!' Her devotees would cry, 'Thou great city! Thou mighty city, Babylon.'

I saw then that as the City of God was the Woman, so too 'the great city' was the woman who was the harlot. The first was pure and clad in white linen, fine and pure, the holy deeds of the saints. The second was a gaudy whore, clad in purple to betoken riches and royalty, but her eyes were eyes that led men down into hell. One of the ancients said of her kind,

*The lips of a loose woman drip honey,
and her speech is smoother than oil;*

*but in the end she is as bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword.*

*Her feet go down to death;
her steps follow the path to Sheol.*

So I saw in my dream that in all history man— by the aid of the serpent and his ilk—has striven to build the city of his desire. The first murderer

desired to build a city, and another, called 'a mighty hunter [of men] before the Lord,' sought also to build a city that excluded the Lord. Another proud king also built a mighty city, whose name, too, was Babylon, and his boast of building brought him into madness.

I thought, 'How deluded, how easily deluded are men! They reject the true City of God yet must have an equivalent of their own, so they build on the plan of great Babylon, and boast in the works of their hands,' I saw then that man must have a city, must have a temple, and must have a god, so created is he for these things, and he is bent on having them as the works of his hands, and not as the works of the Most High,

A woman, a city, and a temple! That is it, for in the vision that I saw, the brilliant dragon had brought forth his seed—a son of perdition, of death and destruction and not of life. He, I am sure, was supposed to be the counterpart of the True Man, as the obscene harlot was supposed to be the counterpart of the pure Bride. Now this unholy bridegroom appeared as a son of the Most Low, He appeared in the temple of God, making out that he was God! I remembered in that moment that the serpent had appeared to the Son and offered the kingdoms of the world if he—the Son—would bow down and worship him!

I saw then in my dream that there is nothing

that is holy that the Unholy One will not try to emulate. Hence it took no great power of thought to see that as the dragon builds his city, his temple and his bride through the might of power-politics, through scheming and manipulation, through outward appearance of success and all such things, that the true City, the true Temple, and the true Bride can only reach their climax and completion through pure love, the most mighty power in all the universe, but yet in appearance seeming to be the weakest of all.

I thought long on this as I pondered the vision, and I could see that men count true strength to be weakness, and see false strength to be mighty in power and achievement. I meditated long upon this delusion, remembering the kingdom of history which had risen for brief times of triumph and then sunk into the dust of lost fame and forgottenness

There was weeping too, in my depths, for I knew of the times in man's history when the church itself had seized power, or fought political powers with its own political weapons, thus denying the true power of the Son and of the Father. Doubtless it had thought human reasoning a gift of God, but where reasoning is Spiritless it is no true wisdom. I remembered that it was once written of the Son of God, 'He was crucified through weakness but lives by the power of God.' Also it was written by one of his followers, 'When I am weak, then am I strong.'

I said then to myself, 'It does not matter if the New People do not gain power over the nations by their brilliance, prowess, and accumulated knowledge, Better they be weak now, building the walls of the Holy City from the rubble that men reject Better they do this in patience and love, for not one true thing or act they do will ever be lost, and He Who makes all things new will make this rubble to become living matter.'

Even so, the vision was not yet ended, although I knew in my spirit that the end was near.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The prophet is convinced that all things must soon come to their climax, and he watches day and night to see this plan of God come to its conclusion. He sees a mighty angel descend to tell of the near-fulfilment, and then the processes of history seem suddenly to knit themselves up in the final acts of the Most High The New People of the New Covenant are drawn into the eternal acts of worship and priestly service

I knew, as I gazed into the vision, that this was not the ephemeral stuff of human dreams but the substantial reality of the Father and the Lamb, the quality and accomplishment of eternity.

Because as a prophet I had been long tutored in these final things and events, I knew the Son would complete his work in unifying all things, filling all things, reconciling all things and harmonising them into one. It was as I pondered these things that a mighty angel descended from heaven, 'with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire.' He had a little scroll in his hand—that word of God for this hour.

And the angel whom I saw standing on sea and land lifted up his right hand to heaven and swore by Him Who lives for ever and ever, Who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there should be no more delay, but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as He announced to His servants the prophets, should be fulfilled

I knew then that the time was very near.

That time needed to come quickly. The martyrs of God cried from beneath the altar that God's avengement of their faithful ministry should not tarry. Those who had on their foreheads the mark of the Father and the Lamb were persecuted by those who had the mark of the beast, the creation of the crimson dragon.

I saw in my dream that the New People did not resist arrest, did not raise their swords to destroy their enemies. They submitted, not in sullen silence, but in quiet and noble patience. They allowed the secular powers that ruled to defeat them, as men count defeat, but in reality they triumphed over those powers by their refusal to recant. Their submission was not to evil to do evil, but to evil not to do evil. Some were tortured, others were cruelly oppressed, and yet others were ignored and despised. Many joined the noble army of martyrs, received their white robes, and waited for evil to fill up its own cup of judgement in its ripening hours.

What I saw as I watched were the judgements of

God. Judgements, rightly taken and understood, are the goodness of God. When men see in them cause for repentance then judgements save them, but I saw that the great leaders, and the powerful ones, the princes of might and the rulers of evil did not repent. They suffered obstinately in their kingdom of evil, and explained away the stripes of God as things that happen naturally in history.

When they had no care for the judgements apart from anger and hatred, I knew the end was near. I saw them gather together their forces to fight the King of kings, the crucified One, and they drew together their armies and their weapons, marching upon the people of God. Prior to, and during all this, there had been those in every clan, people, tribe and nation who, on hearing the good news, had believed in the slain Lamb, and their number grew as they filled up the roll of the elect, the people whose names were written in the Book of Life.

They were the people of the King, and they had refused the beast and the dragon. They had rejected the false prophet. They had spurned the harlot clothed in purple, and had refused the way of worldly power or worldly aggrandisement. They overcame, time and again, the dragon, doing this by the blood of the Lamb, witnessing to the Holy One of God by their obedience, and by having no fear of death.

Then it began to happen. The earth mourned the destruction of Babylon. Evil itself had turned on the hitherto fascinating flesh of the gaudy whore, and had burned her. Whilst this seemed the anger of evil upon one of its own—for this is intense jealousy in the company of the evil ones—yet, in truth, it was God's judgement upon Babylon. It was retribution for her slaying of the saints, and her spreading of immorality amongst the nations. The city—the great city with all its delicacies and coveted trade—was destroyed in a day. The source of entertainment, the place of countless amenities was suddenly non est. The power-peoples of the earth wept for her demise, and the carrion crew of evil opened wings and took flight. Babylon was no more!

Evil itself was in disarray. Never could it be said of evil, as was said of God, 'It [He] is one!' The seeds of its own disunity had grown to maturity, and the fissiparous nature of evil showed itself in the explosions of anger and wrath, of hatred and bitterness. Turned fully against the people of God, evil set out to abolish the people of God from the face of the earth.

But he rode forth! He, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Word of God. From his mouth went a sharp two edged sword. It was his Word, not some mighty powers of worldly armaments, which destroyed the oncoming army. The great

leaders who had impressed and oppressed by their might were suddenly destroyed, together with the beast and his living image, for their fate was the lake burning with fire, the unquenchable judgement of God.

Though the remaining forces of evil retired for a time, the climax was inevitable. The recuperated army of power and anti-God defiance made its way to surround the camp of the saints, but the same fire which has always issued from the mouths of the prophets, that living and consuming Word, came down upon them from the holy heavens, and all evil was devoured in predetermined judgement. So perished from the face of earth and heaven the unclean rivals of the Holy City, the Holy Temple, and the Holy People. The polluted city, unholy Babylon, the polluted temple of all idolatry, and the unholy people of the deceiving serpent met their judgement at the appointed time. In all of this the Most High was neither premature nor tardy in His actions.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Now the jubilant prophet is led to see the ultimate in God's plan, namely the manifestation of the True Woman and the True Man, and their coming together in the union of Holy Matrimony. In seeing this manifestation, the prophet is led to understand the truth of man and woman, and their union in Marriage.

I had seen the end from the beginning, and so I had come to understand the nature of the beginning from its end. I shall tell you what I saw in the splendour of this vision, and you must listen, and you must read, for the telling of the vision is with great purpose, and the non-receiving of a vision is akin to quenching the jubilant Spirit of the Most High.

I tell you, then, again, that I saw the Woman! She was the pure Bride made holy by the King of kings and Lord of lords, the true Son of God, and yet Son of Man, and so Very Man. I remembered as I gazed at the joy of all creatures celestial and

terrestrial—those who had been invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb and his Bride—that my first sight of this Womanhood had shamed me, for the inadequate views I had had, and for the ideas that I had held in my ignorance. I wept for the sheer wonder of true Womanhood, for in it something of the great Godhead was being reflected.

She was not, of course, True Woman without the True Man. His presence delineated her true being, as her true being was the glory of him. Only when they were together did the wonderful truth of womanhood and manhood come through to me. And come it did! It came in wonderful waves of silent joy, for in this Womanhood all mankind—all God's elect—were present. Not only were the women of the ages present in her, but also the men, all girls and boys, young children and babes, as also those who are aged. They were part of this Bride, this true people of God, this holy community of love.

So then I understood the truth of femininity, although description of it would baffle me whilst in this body. I sensed and knew it, and know it, and I know that a man can understand womanhood, as womanhood can understand manhood, and there need be no barrier between the two.

I saw too, in my dream, that it is a wrong thing to consider woman without man, and man without

woman. A greater evil is to set one over and against the other, as also to make one superior or inferior to the other. With this came also the comprehension that a woman is a person, and a man is a person, and that being a person is other and beyond their femininity and masculinity, although it is related to it. I knew also that the masculinity of the one and the femininity of the other is no clog, hindrance or burden to any, and if ever it seem so then it is because of the mind of the person, and perhaps the anger and rebellion of that one. The gift of sexuality, as God has given it, is a pure thing, a needful thing, and a most enriching one.

As I gazed at the beauty of this holy Woman I saw her adoration of her Spouse. She was for ever looking at him with pride, with admiration, and with joy. Whilst she was greatly animated with her pure affection, she was not merely excited, as though passion were an end in itself, but she showed great tranquillity. What came to me strongly was that she was wholly one with him, and trusted him. There was not one doubt in her mind concerning him. So then, when I say she was submitted to him, her acceptance of her femininity in the presence of his masculinity was not that of an inferior to a superior, but of a lover to the beloved. She was gladly dependent upon him, for her task in their partnership was a high and lofty one, and could only be accomplished in the mutuality of their unity.

When I looked at the Holy Man, Son of Man and Son of God, my heart was gripped for ever by his lordly mien, his high regality, which though firm was yet tender and yielding and of infinite compassion and love. As he looked at the Woman I knew that I—with all the elect race of the Father—was contained in that Woman, and that our race was beloved in his sight, and loved for ever. We were all in the feminine to his masculine. Not one trace of human rebellion, or self-assertion, or self-seeking could remain in me. I knew now that the true union of the Man and the Woman is a mystery. Whether a person be wedded or not, she or he can know the ultimate truth of love-in-union, only when in Christ.

There was a gentle sorrow in my heart that countless numbers had wed, down through the centuries and millenniums, and yet had not known the joy of this union, so unsgiving of themselves— each to the other—had they been. I saw, too, how this failure in unity had brought pain and problems to their children, and then to their children's children. With an even deeper sense of sorrow I understood why many had become angry at the sexuality of their parents and others, and had hated the innate masculinity or femininity of themselves. I saw why women had been angry at men, and men at women. I saw then that envy of one against the other had led to futile rivalry and sterile relation

ships. I saw that the demands they made each of the other—were, by nature of the case, impossible to fulfil,

It then came to me—as though in a floodtide of comprehension—that the anger the human race holds in its complexity of sinfulness, is not primarily against another human, but against the Creator' I saw that anger at the gifts of womanhood and manhood is really anger at God. Now I knew that to despise or spurn the gift of sexuality is to despise and spurn the Creator in Whose image we were made. 'Male and female created He them, and He called them Man.' That, then, was the clue. He made them in the image of His own unity of being. One without the other would never be complete. He had joined masculinity and femininity, not only in marriage, but in the entire relationship of the total race. That which God had joined must never be put asunder. If it is possible to speak of male and female elements in God—though, of course, with. Out the equivalent of human sexuality—then these would never be divided in Him, but be integral to the unity of Himself.

I saw then, in the presence of the Man and the Woman, what was, and is, and ever shall be—the indissoluble nature of the unity of masculinity and femininity. This Man and this Woman were now to be joined in the bonds of holy and eternal matrimony'

No wonder then that the four celestial living creatures, and the twenty-four celestial elders, and the great multitude of all creatures sounded forth their praise and adoration like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying,

‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure.’

What came to me wonderfully in that hour is that a man and a woman are shaped for the same kind of union. Doubtless the primal couple’s sin against God was also their sin against themselves, and so marriage must have been incomplete. Their union for procreation could not have been utter, utter bliss, for the seeds of destruction were in their beings. Death and sin had entered to dominate the lives of human beings.

Even so, I saw with joy that the Grace of God can—and does—override the failure of man. God can—and does—grant Grace for human marriages. Where man and woman cannot be one by nature— for their sin has become an impediment—they can be one by Grace. That is why a follower of the Saviour-King could speak of a couple being ‘heirs together of the Grace of life.’

‘Ah yes,’ I thought, as I gazed at the True Man and the True Woman, ‘now I know what being man and being woman and being wedded is all about,’ and my heart sang for joy’ Yet even in my moment of joy I wept inward tears for the lacerated and broken marriages that littered our long human history. I wept for the hardness of heart that men and women can have.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Marriage is not the end of all things but the beginning of much more. The prophet sees this as he beholds the mystery of the Holy City, of the Temple which is the Father and the Lamb, and of the oneness of redeemed humanity as they become partakers in the Divine Nature.

Now, in my dream, I saw the climax of all things. Not only had evil been destroyed, and the judgements made, but all things had been made new. The former heavens and earth had been purified and renewed. Now they were impeccable and peerless.

Out of the new heavens descended the Holy City. For millenniums she had been being prepared, and the preparation had been specially for this hour. She was as a Bride adorned for her husband. This Holy City may also be called 'the eternal Temple', for it was the place where God would for ever dwell.

I saw then that His dwelling brought true perfection to His creation. Sickness, disease, unrest, confusion, pain, shame and death had been abolished,

and life and immortality were the true new order, I saw then that this was the ultimate age which the prophets had predicted would come, These promises had been of grace, and hope had been born from them, but now hope was wholly fulfilled.

I realised the mistake that even Godly people make in their thinking, They seek to realise the ultimate in the penultimate age, They insist on saying the Kingdom of God is fully come, and that there must be no sickness or disease, no suffering and sorrow in this present age. They promise total healing in the now-time, but they must also promise no death, and an already realised resurrection'

I saw also that men and women make demands of each other for total marriages—such as that of the True Bride and the True Bridegroom. They— sadly and foolishly— demand the perfection which will come only with the new heavens and the new earth' They leave no place for human error and imperfection and the Grace that is needed to deal with these' I saw clearly that in this penultimate age we must live in love, and faith and hope. Our love must be patient, and hope and believe all things. Our faith must work through love, and our hope must be rooted in the love of God.

So then, to gaze on the Holy City brought incredible joy, True bliss was the lot of her inhabitants, for they dwelt wholly with the Father and the Lamb, as the Father and the Lamb dwelt with

them. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem had come down out of heaven, and was with us on the new earth, yet I sensed that heaven and earth were one.

The beauty and the glory of the City entranced me, for the truth of its twelve gates, the names of the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles, all seemed clear. The first people of God of the first Covenant, and the second people of God of the renewed Covenant, were all one. The patient gathering out of every nation and tribe and tongue and people was now complete. They—the kings and the leaders and the people of all the nations—had brought their treasures to lay at the feet of their Holy Creator and Redeemer.

One of the old prophets had predicted that the New Temple would be ‘the house of prayer for all nations,’ and I saw then that the Holy City was the Universal City. I saw also that its Temple was the Temple for all nations, where they could worship and serve the Creator. Yet as I looked a great and beautiful mystery unfolded to me. I saw that there was no Temple within the City, but that the Temple was the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. The Temple—so to speak—was co-terminal with themselves.

That meant also that the Holy City was co-terminal with the Godhead, and since the Holy City and the Holy Temple had been—and still was—the People of God, then they had now

become one with the Godhead. Not merged into it and lost in it as would be in some vague pantheistic absorption, but one in relationship, one in the unity of love. Had not the Messiah unified all things, filled them up, having reconciled and harmonised them?

I saw then that the utter oneness of all things, far from destroying the reality of each thing, gave it its true place and identity. I understood the promises of Messiah when he told his people that each would be given a new name, and yet his name and the Father’s name would be written on them, and the name of the New Jerusalem would be written upon them, and that they would be pillars in the Temple of God. This, then, was their total identification with the Most High and His Messiah-Son.

My heart was overwhelmed with this visionary sight of the completeness of all things. Nor was that vision in any way static and inert Things were not fixed and arrested in motion as might be the elements in an icon. I saw that God is living Being and living Action, and so are His People, His Temple and His City.

Through the City ran the river of life, and on its banks was—and is—the tree of life. God is the fountain of living water, and Messiah flows this life out to the nations, whilst at the same time the Spirit himself is the source of all living waters. Only a vision with its beautiful and powerful symbols

can portray and convey these great matters.

I saw that the waters are healing, and the tree of life yields fruits every month so that nothing is ever lacking, whilst the leaves of the tree were—and are—for the healing of the nations. I knew then, as I looked, that all these things are not reserved for the future, but they are operative and active in the now time, for this is the time that the nations need true healing. This is the time when life and immortality must come to sinful and shattered mankind.

Then I knew, in that dreaming, that there is nothing in all the universe which is not good, and—ultimately—which is not from God. I saw then that true men and women need not fear Him, but that they ought to surrender to His love, and be healed by it, and be kept in it. This, I saw, was what God had planned from before time, and this was what He had intended would be fulfilled at the end of time, the end of the days of the human race.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The prophet is not given a vision of eternity, of the elect of God as they worship and serve Him. He sees their full identity as a 'Kingdom of priests,' and he revels in the truth of their new worship. The ultimate for the human race—that we should see God—stirs him deeply, and he is satisfied

I was certain that nothing in all eternity would be static. Everything would be living and palpable. All actions and exercises would be joyful because nothing had to be earned, and the curse which had once been across the creation was now no more. This is what has been called 'the glorious liberty of the children of God,' or, 'the liberty of the glory of the children of God.'

I saw then that as the human race waited its denouement in the Marriage of the Bride and the Lamb, so creation awaited its emancipation from being subjected to futility and the bondage of corruption, which would come to it at the event of the unveiling of the sons of God. When man's glory

would be revealed, then the glory of the creation would be fully effected, and all creation—including the elect human race—would burst into peerless adoration and worship. From one ‘end’ of creation to the other there would be praise and only praise, high praise in worship to the Most High, and all of it involuntary, authentic and true,

As I watched in my dream, the comprehension came to me that the sons of God would not be unveiled in all their glory until they had seen God, face to Face. He who once said, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,’ knew that this seeing would be only for the holy ones, the saints of the Most High. He knew, too, that when they would see Him as He is, then they would be totally transformed into His likeness, so that it could be said of them, ‘They are in the image and likeness of God!’, and even, ‘Each is the brightness of glory and the express image of His person!’, for through the ages, by Grace and by suffering, the Father had been conforming each of these into the likeness of His Son, that His Son might be the firstborn among many brethren.

To be in the likeness of the Son was to reflect his glory, as the Son reflected the glory of the Father because it was a matter of ‘the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.’ So in that day, in the Holy City where all is pure, and the river of life flows, and the nations are healed by the leaves of the

tree, I saw the sons of God look upon Him, face to Face.

To look upon the Eternal is not only the highest dream and aspiration of true humanity, but it is also the fulfilment of their highest need. Looking upon Him is that which brings a person to total glorification. A wise follower of the Son had said, of a life which to him was brilliant beyond all he had known, and filled with inestimable wisdom and great adventure, ‘Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to Face.’ The incomprehensible beatific vision was wonderfully inevitable at the end of the long journey. He added, ‘Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.’

That is why they cried in that hour, ‘We have no need of any light, for the Lord our God is our light, and in that light shall we live and move and have our being.’ One in the Temple with the Father and the Lamb, they had reached their ultimate dependency, and this in total union with the Most High Himself. I knew then what was meant by the words, ‘An him was life, and the life was the light of men.’

Now all things had been brought to their climax, and—to coin a word—all had been Corruption had been banished forever, and in these ‘ages to come’ God was showing ‘the immeasurable riches of His Grace in kindness towards

us in Christ Jesus,' so much so that the redeemed were not only 'to the praise of the glory of His Grace,' but also 'to the praise of His glory' by being utterly in His likeness.

I had then no need to wonder what these holy ones would do in all eternity. By seeing God, by becoming wholly glorified, they had shared with the Most High in the liberation of creation. The destiny of 'the saints of the Most High' was to be a kingdom of priests, and lead the worship and service to God of the entire creation.

At the beginning they had been given lordship over the creation, but they had defaulted. They had abdicated their high authority, and become the slaves of sin, of evil powers, and of the dumb and foolish idols. Now they had been 'loosed from their sins, and made a kingdom, priests unto their God.' What, then, did this mean?

I saw in this vision that the emancipated community of the Most High had taken on great and regal stature. They were the highest order in all the creation, excepting, of course, God Himself. All things had been put under their feet, and they were to reign upon the earth, and they were to reign for ever. However, their reigning had to be in holy meekness, for only the meek could inherit and rule the earth.

This is why they were priestly. They were not a collection of individual priests, but they were the

priestly Kingdom: their task—if that word can be used—to serve God. What service this Living God—the God Who acts—would demand of them, I could not fully tell. Only when I, too, would see Him face to Face would I know. To be a spectator of that event was wonderful enough, but to share in it, at the End-time—that would help me to know even as I am known. Then I would understand the utmost in service.

I had already learned, because I also was part of the long vision, that man's worship is a compulsive thing. Worship he must, day and night, for he can never cease giving worth to things or persons or idols, if not to God. His worship may be holy or hellish, but he will worship. He will cleave to his gods, desperately expecting the richest and most wonderful from them until his own worship turns to dust and ashes in his mouth, and his deluded heart is sickened and appalled.

To worship God for eternity would be to fulfil the vocation for which Man was created, that is, 'to be to the praise of His glory.' With God there is no worship which is not service, and no service which is not worship. This great and priestly Kingdom, then, will minister to the creation about it, and thus serve God. It will worship Him in honouring Him, and in giving praise and thanksgiving to Him, for these are the true elements of worship.

I remembered there, in this dream, that Messiah

had once said, 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.'

I knew then that in this new Temple the authentic worship of God must take place. As to His being their Father, His children would adore Him. As to His being the true God, they would worship Him truly, and I saw that He was the One Who had ever sought them to worship Him. He had taken the initiative. He had loved and redeemed them. He had set love in their hearts, and truth in their minds, and understanding in their beings, so that now they could serve and worship Him in the truth.

I also remembered something from the ancient law of the children of the first Covenant. 'And now, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I command you this day for your good?' I knew then that the priestly ministry of the people of God throughout eternity would call them to do the loving will of the living God.

At this point there came to me in my dream the glorious and unending worship of all the creation,

for in thunderous applause and joy and adoration, all creatures created as celestial and terrestrial but now one in this eternal heaven and earth, gave vent to their joy and their high praise. I saw then that 'this is the true end of Man, to serve God and enjoy Him for ever.' I also saw that it is not only the end and purpose of Man, but indeed the end and purpose for which the whole creation was brought into being, and I marvelled at Him Who is well called 'a faithful Creator.'

I knew then that in the service of the Most High Who serves all His creation continually, Man finds his fullness, and lives in joy for ever. And not only Man, but all the creation, in all its orders, and in all its being.