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## “HOW OLD IS MAN?”

The antiquity of man is discussed in an article recently contributed by Theodore Roosevelt to the *National Geographic Magazine*.<sup>1)</sup> The article purports to give a brief summary of that which has been ascertained by anthropological science in answer to the question, “How old is man?” and by reason of the distinguished name of its author has received wide attention. Mr. Roosevelt intends to trace the prehistory of man, “the history of his development from an apelike creature struggling with his fellow-brutes.” He refers to a past geologic age, when “man was slowly developing from the half-human to the wholly human,” “from a strong and cunning brute into a man having dominion over all brutes, and kinship with worlds lying outside and beyond our own,” and intends to summarize “all that has been discovered and soundly determined” since Darwin wrote his *Descent of Man*. Mr. Roosevelt refers with undisguised disdain to those who once “disbelieved in the antiquity of man,” and his article leaves no doubt in the reader’s mind that in the opinion of Mr. Roosevelt this disbelief in the evolutionistic thesis concerning the origin and ancestry of man has been amply proven unfounded by the facts. His assertions are made with a calm emphasis, which cannot fail to impress the unsophisticated reader. We are invited to consider “man as he was up to the end of palcolithic times.” “*The records show that man has lived in France for at least 100,000 years.*”

The illustrations which accompany the article add to the

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1) February, 1916: “How Old Is Man?”

# THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM WITH A PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

## THE THIRD ARTICLE.

(Continued.)

### OF ETERNAL LIFE.

John 17, 24: *Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.*

John 17 comprises the high-priestly prayer of Christ. It was uttered previous to the journey to the Garden of Gethsemane, in the presence of the eleven disciples, Judas having left the company to carry out his dark design of betraying his Master. In this intercessory prayer Christ views His work of redemption as an accomplished fact. "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," He says v. 4. On the basis of this finished work He prays.

An analysis of the prayer reveals three distinct parts: Christ prays for Himself (vv. 1—5); for His disciples (vv. 6—19); for all who through the apostles' word—His Word—shall believe on Him (vv. 20—26).

In v. 24—the intercession reaches its culmination point. "*Father, Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world,*" v. 24. Thou art a "righteous Father" (v. 25); I am Thy beloved Son, and as Thy Son, to whom Thou hast made promises, I express My just demands: "*Father, I will,*" *θέλω*, I demand. What is it that He wills? "*That they be with Me where I am,*" in life eternal. Who are they that are to participate in this blessedness? "*They whom Thou hast given Me.*" "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world. Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word" (v. 6). These "*I will that they be with Me where I am*"; they have received Thy words, "and have known surely that I came out from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me"

(v. 8). These, and all these that believe on Me, the entire body of believers, the Holy Christian Church on earth, with regard to these "*I will that they be with Me where I am.*" In the decree of foreordination Thou hast given them to Me as the fruit of My labors; Thou hast promised that I "shall see of the travail of My soul, and shall be satisfied" (Is. 53, 11); Thou hast said: "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance" (Ps. 2, 8); and now with regard to these, and *all* these that believe on Me through Thy Word, "*I will that they be with Me where I am,*" and, being with Me, "*that they may behold My glory,*" the glory that belongs to Me, "*which Thou hast given Me.*" "My glory," My divine majesty, communicated to My human nature, the fulness of the Godhead that dwells in Me bodily, and glimpses of which I now and then vouchsafed My disciples to behold (John 1, 14) in My state of humiliation, — I will *that they shall behold* uninterruptedly, wonderingly, and admiringly. —

Being with the Lord (2 Cor. 5, 8), enjoying His presence, beholding His glory, seeing Him "as He is," — this is the principal constituent part of heavenly glory.

But what a consoling "I will" this is! The Christian in death's last struggle looks up to his Savior in faith, knowing that this "I will" of the Savior's intercessory prayer embraces him also, and that he, the servant, will be where the Master is, according to His promise: "Where I am, there shall also My servant be." (John 12, 26.)

Rom. 8, 18: *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

In the preceding section Paul had spoken of the afflictions that befall Christians. He had shown the necessity of conformity to Christ in suffering. Christians must undergo the refining process of tribulation. (1 Pet. 1, 6. 7.) "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glori-

fied," so says the apostle v. 17. Christians should suffer willingly, gladly, with Christ; it is a mark of their Christianity, not a ground for their participation of Christ's glory. But it is a hard lesson to learn; hence Christians need encouragement, consolation, under the cross. The passage before us is one for cross-bearers.

"I reckon," λογίζομαι, I conclude, says Paul. He has made calculations, has weighed certain things in the balance, and now renders his judgment. He has placed "*the sufferings of this present time*" on the one scale, and on the other "*the glory which shall be revealed in us,*" and his verdict is: no comparison possible between the two. And Paul, let us remember, knows by experience whereof he speaks. (Read 2 Cor. 11, 16 ff.) Christians must suffer; true, that is the *via dolorosa* along which they must wander. Like master, like subject. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." (Matt. 16, 24.) But though they are "*sufferings*" that smart and burn, they are but temporary, sufferings "*of this present time.*" Καρπός is a fixed time, or season, and but of short duration; hence the sufferings of *this time* are comparatively insignificant, they last but for a season. That is one consolation. (1 Pet. 1, 6.) But the principal consolation is this: "*the glory to be revealed in us,* which is certain and near, is eternal. Set over against the coming glory, the sufferings of this time, this short life, dwindle into insignificance. The sufferings of this present time are "*not worthy of,*" οὐκ ἄξια, are not of like weight with, the coming glory, are not weighty in comparison with the glory to be revealed. "As the glory so outweighs the suffering, the idea of merit, whether of condignity or of congruity, is of necessity excluded. It is altogether foreign to the context. For it is not the ground on which eternal life is bestowed, but the greatness of the glory that the saints are to inherit, which the apostle designs to illustrate." (Hodge.)

This glory is ours now already by faith; as yet it is hidden (1 John 3, 2); but one day, the last day, it shall be

*revealed in us; we Christians shall be glorified with Christ. Sursum corda!*

John 3, 16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

This text has been fitly called "the Gospel in a nutshell." It is needless to give its setting. Everybody knows that these words were spoken by Christ to Nicodemus, who needed instruction on the way to life.

*Ὡςτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον* = "For so loved God the world," the original Greek reads, throwing emphasis on every word, and thus manifesting the profundity of God's love to the world. *Ὡςτως* = So greatly, so deeply, so intensely God loved. The fact that God at all loved the world is remarkable. This thought is brought out by the position of the verb "loved," it being placed before the subject: so loved God. Remarkable, indeed, this love; for what is the object of God's love? "So loved God *the world*," τὸν κόσμον, i. e., fallen, sinful mankind. What a contrast! God and the world! The holy God loved this unholy world! Love longs for union and communion with the object of its love. God loved the world! He hates sin, but He loves the sinner. This world, sinful mankind, had rebelled and deserved to die, "to perish." (John 6, 33.) But God willed not its death. "Not perish, but have everlasting life"—this was and is His earnest, sincere, gracious will towards the rebelling world. To carry it out, the world must be redeemed from sin, and so "He gave His only-begotten Son" into suffering and death. The Son "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2, 9); He "died for all" (2 Cor. 5, 15); "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2, 2). Thus God manifested His love towards the world, and the fact that it was His *only-begotten* Son (John 1, 14) shows the depth of the love of God still more. This was a free and unmerited gift; nothing impelled God to do it but His great love. Sin being atoned for, God's love and justice could be reconciled. God's justice demanded: "The world" must "perish"; His love

said: The world shall have "everlasting life," and so He gave His Son. Now there is a way of escape from perdition. Which? "*Whosoever believeth in Him shall have everlasting life.*"

John 3, 36: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

"*The wrath of God abideth on him*" that believeth not the Son. Man, as he is by nature, is under the wrath of God (Eph. 2, 3), and this wrath *abideth*, continues to remain, on him so long as he is without Christ. Oh, miserable condition of him who believeth not the Son! There is but one way of escaping this wrath, but one way of obtaining everlasting life,—by believing the Son. This truth, all-important, is set forth both positively and negatively.

Now, what does "*to believe on the Son*" say and imply? It implies that you are unable to appease God, that so far as you are concerned the wrath of God for sin must abide on you forever; it furthermore implies that the Son has effected a removal of God's wrath, has brought about a reconciliation with God for man, so that now there is an open sesame to everlasting life; to believe on the Son says that you rest your heart's confidence in Him, on what He has done for you, as upon an impregnable rock, where you are safe from the wrath of God. To believe on the Son says that your faith has a firm foundation to stand on, forgiveness of sin is yours; and where there is forgiveness of sin, there is life everlasting; and of this life eternal you *now* already have a foretaste, for "he that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life," the full fruition thereof to come in the life hereafter.

The passage before us says emphatically: There is salvation in one name, one name, and one alone—the Son, Jesus, the Savior.

The second part of the text enforces the truth of the first. "*He that believeth not the Son,*" *i. e.*, he that does not believe what the Son says, what He teaches in reference to His redemptive work, "*shall not see life.*" No other faith can save. One

may, for instance, loudly proclaim that Christ is the Great Teacher, or that He is the highest moral example to follow, etc., — all such faith cannot save. But one faith saves, faith in Christ, the Savior from sin. Where this faith is wanting, man is under God's wrath, "*the wrath of God abideth on him.*" (Eph. 2, 3.)

*(To be continued.)*

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