

STRUCTURAL HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS 1921

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STRUCTURAL HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS DE CHARMS 1921

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"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we Beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." (John 1: 1, 2, 14.)

In these opening verses of the Gospel according to John, the Divine quality of the Word, and its essential unity, are openly portrayed. The Word is the Infinite love of God going forth into creation. It is the Lord manifesting Himself in heaven and on earth. It is God-Man, eternally the same, standing forth before the eyes of angels and of men.

The progression of the Infinite to the finite is not effected by an actual movement through space. God is omnipresent. He is in all space without space. He is without and around us in every hand, and He is within us as the life or soul from which we have our being. For Him to reveal Himself to men, He has no need to come from afar off. He needs only to build a temple of human thought and human love, whereby we may become conscious of His presence, that He may openly and perceptibly abide with us.

When a little child is born into the world, we say that a new soul has come to us. Whence has it come? Not from some distant world by a long journey, but from the very heart of nature all about us. The secret of its coming is to be sought in the marvelous organization of the substances and matters which, in their primitive state, are the very dust of the ground, but which, under the touch of the Divine hand, are formed into a human body, fearfully and wonderfully made, capable of coming into conscious touch with the myriad forms of the universe through the living activity of the five corporeal senses.

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When, by this wondrous ordering and arrangement, the dead matters of the earth become sentient vessels, receptive of life from God, we say that a child has come into the world. It might as truly be said that the world has come to a child.

Even thus it is that the Lord comes to man. His coming is the result of a spiritual creation. It is effected by the bringing together of spiritual substances, the formation of organs of internal sensation, through the activity of which we may perceive and know what is Divine. "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." It is this birth into a world of spiritual life that constitutes the Revelation of God.

Just as the production of a natural body must progress in a specific order and series, unalterable from age to age, so that spiritual organization, which alone is able to see and know the Lord, to sense and enjoy the living delights of heaven, must likewise be produced in an unchanging series, sequence, and order. This sequence is none other than that constant law whereby, out of the darkness of utter ignorance, the chaos of the human mind may be molded into a truly human form, impressed with the finite image of the Infinite Creator. It is the unfolding of this order that opens the spiritual eyes of man that he may behold his God. It is as this order is impressed upon the mind that the Lord can make His advent into the world of conscious human life. In this impression and unfolding lies the secret of Divine Revelation, the Everlasting Word.

INMOST UNITY OF THE WORD.

Because there is one only God, whose Divine Form is thus set forth to human comprehension, there is and can be only one such order. It is this eternal order which is called by John "the Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God." And because all the universe of creation was brought into being for the purpose of producing this order in the human mind, therefore all progression from the Infinite to the finite is according to this order. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

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By this eternal order, according to which alone there can be Revelation to the human mind, was the world created, both spiritual and natural, whence all things in it refer themselves to the human form. By this same order is man created,-as to his body, that he may consciously perceive the material forms of nature; as to his mind, that he may likewise perceive the living forms of spiritual creation, and receive upon his forehead the Seal of God, that he may in truth be called man, the image of his Maker. By this order are the nations of the earth brought forth as units of human organization, to appear before the Lord as greater men. By this same order did the Lord Himself take on a body and a mind, that in personal presence He might walk with men, to glorify His Human. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, (the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

The eternal purpose of the Lord's creative Word is to provide forms representative of what is Divine, to provide a living mind, into which these forms may be consciously received, and so to arrange the things thus entering by instruction that all the love of man, and all his thought, may be centered in the idea of God, the true idea of Him as a Divine Man; and that round about this single idea of God, as the living soul, all the concepts of the mind may be organized into a responsive body. It is because they produce this revealing order in the mind, creating thus in him a body receptive of life, love, and wisdom from the Lord, that the Scriptures are rightly called the Word of God. And because this order of Divine Revelation is eternally the same, there is a spiritual harmony of all the sacred writings in every age and with every people. The Ancient Word, now lost, the Law and the Prophets, the New Testament Scriptures, and the Revelation of the Second Advent, utterly different as they are in outward aspect, are inmost one,-the same immutable Word which was in the beginning with God, by which all things were made, and which became flesh to dwell with men. Viewed all together, they present the internal history of the world, revealing before the angels the eternal presence of God in His Creation. In one unbroken series, they relate the story of the

human race, out of which there has been slowly building in the womb of time that greatest form receptive of the Infinite life of God, the Gorand Man of Heaven.

In this most wondrous of all creations, each written Word has played its part, nor will it ever cease its operation.

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"Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Each set forth, in language and in imagery accommodated to the people of some specific age, the same story of man's spiritual creation, the series and order by which alone there could be formed in him the image of the Lord, that through that image he might truly see and worship God. So must it inevitably be, that, looked upon in heaven's light, they all are one, inseparable, perfectly harmonious Word, whether written in the flowing language of most ancient times, or inscribed in alphabetic Hebrew characters by the Jewish Prophets of a later day; whether laboriously produced by scribes at the dictation of the inspired Evangelists, or scattered broadcast through the world in the printed pages of the Latin Writings. In all of these we see the hand of the inscrutable Divine, deftly molding out of human clay, eyes to see the face of God, ears to hear and understand His holy Word, spiritual organs to perceive the delight and joy of heavenly life eternal. And if there is thus one purpose, one unchanging end, as the soul by which each Revelation was brought into being, then also must there exist a structural relation between them. For the soul, in forming the body in which it is to dwell, does but create an image of itself.

The fact of this spiritual and structural unity of the entire Word admits not the slightest possibility of doubt. To the mind enlightened from the Heavenly Doctrine, it is axiomatic. Yet its consequents are so stupendous, the image that it conjures in the thought so all-embracing, the ocean of heavenly wisdom to which it opens out so vast, that the eye of him who stands upon this shore is lost in the awed contemplation of a vague horizon, where mists obscure the view. Helpless indeed he feels in the presence of this Infinite Power, as the voice of the deep calls his longing soul to the exploration of distant lands, where heavenly wealth and fortune wait. It is one thing to hold in reason's grasp the sure perception that there is such universal harmony between the several Revelations; it is quite another to demonstrate that harmony by practical investigation and comparison. This latter is far beyond the possibilities of the present generation. It must come slowly, as a matter of gradual accretion, the result of wide, intensive study, to which each passing age gives but a little portion. And yet the Lord, in this, His Second Advent, has turned the eyes of men toward that sea of spiritual knowledge.

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Out of the eastern waters, the Sun of Divine Wisdom is rising in its glory. Slowly, with the growing heat of love Divine, the mists are lifting, revealing to the view the outlines of a distant shore. And he who enters the vessel of the New Church Doctrine, accepting as his Pilot none but the Lord alone, may venture forth with courage, under the Divine protection, to seek safe harbor there.

THE TWO TESTAMENTS.

It is to the partial demonstration of such structural unity, as it exists between the Old and New Testaments, that we would specifically direct attention. Deeply is it hidden behind a veil of apparent discrepancies, of seeming breaks, of unfilled gaps, which, to human eyes, separate not only the two Testaments, but also the various parts of each.

We are all familiar with the prime importance of noting the immediate series in the exposition of any given text. It forms, indeed, the very center of exegetical analysis. It forms the urim and the thummim, out of which, through correspondences and the doctrine of genuine truth, there comes the answering light of illustration from the Lord to illuminate the mind of the inquiring student. So closely knit are all the adjacent parts of the Sacred Scripture, that the internal sense flows through them in an unbroken chain. Only as we take careful cognizance of what goes before, and of what comes after, any particular passage, perceiving thus its appointed place in a more extended series, can we understand its full significance. So universally is this the case that no expository sermon can be written on any text of Scripture, except this law of sequence be faithfully observed. But when applied, according to the teaching of the Writings, most notable results ensue. Out of the dark sayings of the Prophets,-chaotic in external order, inscrutable to the unenlightened mind,-there arises a sequence of spiritual ideas, in closely connected series, whereby the Divine Love and Wisdom of God are presented in all the beauty of holiness.

In those parts of the Writings which give a serial exposition of the Sacred Scriptures, it is shown that seemingly disconnected chapters maintain the steady flow of meaning, without a break in the internal sense. Separate books do but form parts of a larger whole, their spiritual story being closely knit together as a unit, as so distinctly demonstrated in the case of Genesis and Exodus.

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And even the Psalms of David,-so various in the form and subject of the letter,-are said to present before the angels a most perfect series, to which the various societies of heaven joyously respond, each answering in turn that ultimate which peculiarly expresses the quality of its individual love and worship of the Lord. Herein lies the wisdom of the angels, that they are given to perceive the parts in their true relation to the whole. Any single truth,-emphasized beyond its due proportion, taken from its place and viewed alone as a thing apart, unmodified by other truths, to which it stands in close connection,-becomes a fallacy, and, if confirmed, a falsity. The wider our vision, the more extended our spiritual horizon, the more perfectly we grasp the universal principles of truth, the more distinctly may we understand particulars. Of nothing is this more true than of the Word of God.

Nor can we conceive that this structural relation is confined to a single Testament. The entire Word is in the human form, the Form of God-Man, Divinely One. Quoting from the Heavenly Doctrine, we learn that, while "in the literal sense scarcely anything appears but a something without order; nevertheless, when the Word is read by man, and particularly by a little boy or girl, it becomes more beautiful and delightful by degrees as it ascends, and at length is presented before the Lord as the image of a man, in which and by which heaven is represented in its complex, not such as it is, but such as the Lord wills it to be, namely, a likeness of Himself." (A. C. 1871.) This is not said of any single Testament, but of the universal Word, which could not present this harmonious whole if any part were unconnected. Nor is this harmony confined to the internal sense, but involves a structural relation in the Letter, even as that existing between the various parts of the human body. This is explicitly taught in the following from the Arcana: "Inwardly in the things of the Word

there is a spiritual sense which treats of the Lord's kingdom, and within that sense is the Divine, for the Word in its inmost sense treats of the Lord alone; hence is the holiness and life of the Word, and not from any other source. The Word is as a Divine Man; the literal sense is, as it were, His body; but the internal sense is as it were His soul; hence it is evident that the literal sense lives by the internal sense." (A. C. 8943.)

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That which unifies the Word, wonderfully harmonizing all its parts, is the universal subject of its inmost sense, which is the Lord alone. What do we find that inmost sense to be, as it is specifically expounded in the Revelation of the Second Advent? It is the story of how the Infinite Soul of God, bowing the heavens to come down, formed within the womb of Mary a perfect, finite body from the things of earth. It is the story of how, within that body, there was formed a mind, made of the spiritual substances of the other world, perfectly responsive to the Soul, consciously receptive of the Wisdom and the Love of God. It is the story of how, in the human thus assumed, He overcame the hells and ordered all the heavens, reducing the Gorand Man into fullest correspondence with Himself. It is the story of how, this Infinite work having been achieved, He fully glorified His Human, and made it absolutely one with His Divine, that the Lord God Jesus Christ might receive all power in heaven and on earth, to reign supreme forever. The series and order by which this was Divinely accomplished in the Lord Himself must, in finite measure, be repeated in every individual man, that he may become a temple of the Lord's indwelling, a truly human vessel, responsive to the life inflowing from his Divine Creator. It is this order, as presented in the Word, and thence impressed upon the mind of man, which alone can build the body of his spiritual life, and lift him up to heaven, there to dwell in the eternal presence of his God.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

In the Old Testament, this single theme of the Lord's life and glorification is the universal subject, unfolded in a continuous, unbroken series from first to last. Especially is this true of the untranslated Hebrew, which, for this reason, has been so wonderfully preserved. "In the original tongue, one series is not distinguished from another by interstitial signs, as in other tongues, but there appears, as it were, what is continuous from beginning to end. The things which are in the internal sense are in like manner continuous, flowing from one state to another." (A. C. 4987.) Again, it is said that "the Word has this peculiarity beyond the writings of the ancients, that the single things, in a continuous series, represent the celestial and spiritual things of the Lord's kingdom, and, in the supreme sense, the Lord Himself." (A. C. 4442.)

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Such continuity was essential, because of the consecutive character of the actual process of glorification as effected by the Lord. "The union of the Lord's Human with His Divine was not effected at once, but through the whole course of His life, from infancy to the last of His life in the world; thus He ascended continually to glorification, that is, to union." (A. C. 2033.) "The Lord suffered temptations from His boyhood, even to the last age of His life, and thus successively subjugated the hells, and successively glorified His Human." (Cartons Red.

vii:6.)

This inmost signification of the Hebrew Scriptures rests upon a unity which can be traced in the literal sense itself. There is but one subject treated of in the letter of the Word from Genesis to Malachi. The thread that runs from first to last, and unifies the whole, is the story of the Jewish Nation. In a remnant from the Ancient Word, comprising the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis, preserved in the pure correspondences of most ancient times, we find the fabled story of Abram's descent from the first man. With Abram begins the actual history of the Jewish people, running in unbroken series through the patriarchal age to the increase of the sons of Israel in the land of Egypt. Exodus takes up the story at this point, and throughout the rest of the Pentateuch we find described the giving of the Law of Moses and the welding of the tribes into a national unit. Then comes the day of conquest. Under Joshua, the inhabitants of Canaan are driven out, and the tribes receive their promised inheritance. By the Judges, their hold upon the land is strengthened. Then three kings,-Saul, David, and Solomon,-extend the conquests to their farthest bounds, and lift the nation to the height of its wealth and glory. There follows the division of the kingdom; and as we trace its history through the long line of succeeding kings, we see it slowly crumbling to its fall, until its people are carried captive into Babylon, its government is destroyed, its capitol in ruins. Here the thread of history ends. The Psalms of David and the four major and twelve minor Prophets retell the incidents of the closing years of national life, though in an altered form, affording a glimpse of the conditions of the captivity. They foretell the Restoration, and with increasing clearness prophesy the Coming of the Messiah, ending with the direct and unmistakable promise of the last chapter of Malachi.

Here we find the life story of a nation as the story of a single man, and that Man none other than the Lord Himself.

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It is specifically taught that Abram, the father of the Jewish people, represents the Lord in earliest infancy and childhood. The preceding chapters of Genesis, then, containing the account of the descent of Abram from the first creation, must represent the process of the Incarnation, the successive clothing of the Infinite Life of God, as the Creator of the world descended through the heavens, to cover Himself at last with the material flesh and blood of finite man. Then begins the story of how, within that body, the marvelous structure of the mind was formed, as, step by step, through education and experience, the "child grew in stature, and in favor with God and man." From the simple beginnings of the patriarchal period, there arose the twelve tribes, and these, welded by the Law of Moses, became a mighty nation. Even so, from the Infant born in Bethlehem, came the child of Nazareth, and at last the Man, full grown in strength and wisdom, armed with the sword of Truth Divine, ready for the mighty conflict against the hosts of hell. This spiritual warfare is described by the conquest of the Land by Joshua, the Judges and the Kings to Solomon, when the work assigned the Lord on earth neared completion, and the time approached when the material body might be laid aside, and the Human rise in glory. So, its representative work accomplished, the national body of the Jewish people slowly lost its power, until destroyed by the Babylonian conquerors, that in its tragic fall it might portray the Passion of the Cross. But if there was death, there was also resurrection. Through all the books of Prophecy, we find the promise of a restoration through the coming of the Christ, and inmost described, in wondrous series; the secret operation of the Human Glorified through all the ages of the Christian Church, leading the scattered remnant of the race to the final day of Judgment and the Second Advent of the Lord.

Such must be the inmost structure of the Hebrew Scriptures, if the Jewish Nation represented the Human assumed by the Lord in the world. Then must the steps and stages of that Nation's life, as the inspired Authors set them forth, depict the ordered progress of the Human toward the Divine, and thus minutely prophesy the whole course of life through which it was the eternal purpose of the Lord to pass. And this, indeed, the Lord Himself declared. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

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Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:17.) And again, speaking to the disciples after His resurrection, He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." (Luke 24:44.) That this fulfilment was to be in continuous series, from the beginning to the end, He indicated on the walk to Emmaus, when, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:27.)

THE GOSPELS.

If it is true that the complete story of the Lord's life in the world, not as to the external events by which that life was known to men on earth, but as to the spiritual states through which He passed, from infancy to the crucifixion, is told in chronological sequence in the books of the Old Testament, when unfolded as to their inmost or highest sense, what relation does this sacred history bear to the Gospel narrative?

It might seem strange, at first, that the fulfilment of this ancient prophecy was not described in a single, perfectly connected biography, setting forth, in the same order and sequence as is characteristic of the Old Testament, all the acts and sayings of the Lord, within which could be seen a spiritual story that would coincide in all particulars with the inmost sense of the previous Revelation. Such, indeed, the Lord's life must have been, if its truly and spiritually chronological series could be known. But the New Testament Scriptures do not unfold this series. We find them divided into four distinctly separate Gospels, each describing in an individual way the story of the Savior's life, with the prophecy of the Book of Revelation added. Between these four accounts, we find a general harmony; yet so great is their divergence in the order of particular events that all attempts to reconcile them have been unavailing.

Through all the ages of the Christian Church, beginning even in the second century, the minds of learned scholars have been turned to the discovery of a completely ordered history of the Lord.

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Minutely have the Gospels been compared, and each individual record diligently studied. All the evidence available from ancient manuscripts, the works of contemporaneous authors, and the earliest traditions, have been brought to bear upon the problem. But in nearly every

case, acting on some theory of historic proof, the Scriptures have been torn asunder, broken into little pieces, and rearranged into a new order, utterly alien to that of the original. In this rearrangement there is no universal basis of agreement. It is arbitrary, dependent upon the particular knowledge, the personal theory of the individual scholar who undertakes the work. Each maintains his own order as the correct one, and attempts to disprove the arrangement advocated by all others. Endless controversies result in hairsplitting arguments, whereby the learned doctors are divided into irreconcilable schools of thought. The mind of the impartial observer is impressed with the fact, as evidenced by this mutual contradiction, that the material necessary to the reconstruction of a thoroughly convincing account, historically accurate, is not available.

As an exception, however, we may mention that, among all the harmonies of the Gospels that have been produced, one stands out Basel in 1537. It is based upon the belief that the Divine order of Andreas Ossiander, a native of Nuremberg, and was published at Basel in 1537. It is based upon the belief that the Divine order of the Gospels may not with impunity be disturbed; that the stories related by the several Evangelists were equally correct; that incidents related in a different order, however similar, were actual historical repetitions. This view was ridiculed by the scholars, who considered it so absurd as to be unworthy of refutation. So palpable were the errors, so ineffective was the result in producing a connected biographical account of the Lord's life, that it excited comment merely because of its brazen disregard of the commonly accepted tradition. But we believe that this work, owing to the principles upon which it was based, came much nearer to the truth than all those which held it up to ridicule.

With the knowledge we possess, it is possible to do no more than advance some tentative theory, offering a plausible solution of the many difficulties on the basis of an admittedly ill-grounded hypothesis.

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The works of the harmonists do not inspire us with confidence in the reliability of their conclusions, while their efforts to refute the arguments of their opponents tend to cast grave doubts upon the authenticity of the inspired Evangelists. What they have done has undoubtedly served some external use to the Church, and certainly, in the gathering together of historical data, their labors have been invaluable. But having destroyed the Divinely given order in which the Word was written, having broken the beauty and series of its internal sense, they have deprived it of its soul and saving power. In the language of the Heavenly Doctrine, "the Word is so written, that the expressions therein involve series of spiritual things, which do not appear to man unless he is acquainted with correspondences; herein lies concealed the Divine in the Word." (A. C. 10633.) That is to say, the Divinity of the Word depends upon the order and series in which it is written. Remove this order, destroy this series, and the Divine is taken from it. It becomes a merely human work, unable to reveal the Glorified Human of the Lord, or to bring about thereby the spiritual conjunction between God and man. And so the type of scholarship which is represented by the harmonists, as a means to the fuller exposition of the Scriptures, has been totally rejected in the Church, lest the perfect work of God be injured by the sacrilegious hand of man.

Yet we cannot wholly separate the Gospels. In seeking to obtain a full and perfect knowledge of the Lord, the portrayal of whose life is the common purpose of them all, the mind experiences a natural longing to place them side by side, and to see them in their true relation. The effort to do this cannot wholly be avoided. When reading one Gospel, the

student who is familiar with them all cannot fail to note the likeness or the difference that exists between them. When one event is conjured up in thought, the same account as variously related in the other Evangelists comes to mind. Indeed, such harmonizing of the Gospels, by the comparison of similar events, receives undoubted sanction from the Writings, where we repeatedly find them placed together, expounded as to their spiritual content, in terms which are identical, although there is revealed no key whereby this may be systematically done throughout. And so we find our thought impaled upon the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, the harmonizing of the Gospels appears as a necessity, from which the mind finds no escape, as witness the exhaustive efforts of the Christian scholars and the inherent tendencies apparent in our own psychological experience.

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On the other hand, such harmonizing appears to be impossible, in view of the universal failure to obtain results that are convincing.

THE KEY TO A HARMONY.

But it cannot be conceived that the Lord, in His infinite wisdom and love, should make a thing necessary, to the achievement of which He has not prepared a way. He must have revealed the guiding principles, by which the questioning mind of man may be safely led through all the labyrinthine paths of fallible, imperfect human thought, even to the inmost vision of Himself. And where may these be found, if not in the pages of that final Revelation, the crowning glory of His written Word, in which must be contained the seed of genuine progress toward an ever fuller and more perfect perception of the Divine character and quality of His Human Glorified, through all the endless ages of the future?

Approaching our subject, then, from the spiritual thought to which the Writings lead us, it becomes apparent that we cannot hope to find the answer to our question by a mere mechanical arrangement, humanly conceived. Had this afforded a true solution, then had the answer been discovered long ago. We must think of the Word as a living human form; the relation of its parts as the relation existing between vital things, of which that form consists. It is by the study of the human form, in the light of the Revelation rationally given in the Second Advent, that the only key to the internal harmony of the Old and New Testaments may be found.

The mind of man is the most complex of all the organisms of creation. It is formed, as has been shown above, by a continuous process of spiritual building, effected by the constant working of the Divine Providence, from first conception, even unto death. Yet it is composed of four discrete degrees, each wholly separate from the others. Each passes through its own series of development, possesses its own individual characteristics, pet-forms its own distinctive function to the whole. Yet they are mutually interdependent. Their development proceeds in both successive and simultaneous order. In general, one succeeds the other.

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The earliest life of infancy forms the sensual plane. In childhood the imagination grows. In youth and manhood the rational is developed. And at last, from the wisdom of experience, there comes the ripened fruit of celestial perception. Yet even the first sound that strikes the

ear, the first light that enters through the eye, effect the storing of remains, in which the highest angels are, and into which the man returns if he achieve his truest destiny, and find his everlasting home in the celestial heaven. In the child's imagination lies the germ of truest rationality; and unless the faculty then formed be used in later life, the spiritual teachings of the Word cannot be understood. Indeed, we find that through the entire life of man these separate threads are intimately interwoven. Now his thought is centered on the lowest plane; again, his spiritual mind is active; at other times he enjoys brief flashes of perception, only to descend once more to external thought and love. It is by such alternations, indeed, from the life of the external to that of the internal man and back again, that he progresses in his regeneration. It is thus that the story of his life, when spiritually viewed, is circumstanced. Such is the universal testimony of the Writings. And it is further clearly taught, that, in order to understand fully the intrinsic character of man, these four degrees must be clearly distinguished. The peculiar quality of each must be defined. Its function in the process of regeneration must be known. And for this reason, we find much instruction given in the Heavenly Doctrine concerning the quality of each degree.

That these four degrees existed in the mind of the Lord on earth, and that they developed with Him, even as they do with every regenerating man, is the specific teaching of the Writings. And the Old Testament, containing, as we have shown, a chronological record of the spiritual states through which the Lord was to pass on earth, must be made up of these four threads, each in itself distinct, yet all so closely interwoven as to form a single strand.

Now it is a universal law of Divine operation that the Lord does not repeat Himself. What He does is done forever, and remains in full potency to all eternity. Having set forth, under the hand of Moses and the Prophets, this spiritual story of His Glorification, in a single, complex, chronological sequence, it was not necessary that it should be done again. There was another end in view in the giving of the Gospels, namely, that the four threads, before combined, should be unraveled, and presented separately, each in its own peculiar order and series.

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Nor could the complete life of the Lord, in all the sequence of His outward acts, be presented in a single narrative, lest men, directing all their thought to the literal sense, and finding this complete, should fail to look for the spiritual meaning concealed within it. One of the strongest proofs that the New Testament was not written to portray the external life of the Lord, as such, but rather to describe the spiritual story of His Glorification, is the fact that the record of actual history has been completely lost. Men know not even the month or the year in which the Christ was born. They know not how many years He ministered on earth. The whole of His childhood is a blank, save for a passing reference in the Gospels. Nor has the profoundest scholarship succeeded in supplying these deficiencies with any degree of certainty. If the Divine end in the inspiration of the Evangelists was to impart to the world a perfect knowledge of the Lord's external life, then must we admit that this end has failed of fulfilment. But he who believes that Divine Wisdom was the source of inspiration will seek to find another purpose there.

Such a purpose is disclosed, if the hypothesis advanced above be true. We see a reason why the New Testament should have been written as it is. We perceive the cause of all the apparent discrepancies within it. We are able thence to understand the relation between the New Covenant and the Old, how each is complementary to the other, how one enriches the understanding of the other, how both are necessary for the full revelation of the Lord.

If, by a profound and careful study of the inmost sense of each Testament, as revealed in the Writings of the Second Advent, the Gospels are thus brought into structural relation with the Hebrew Scriptures, there will result a harmony between them, which, while it weaves them into a single story, will not disturb in any least particular the order impressed upon each narrative by its inspired Author. Such a harmony between the Gospels will not produce a new Gospel, the result of human manufacture; nor will it provide the missing data which the Christian scholars so long have sought. But it will be the means of entering more deeply into the inmost sense of the Old Testament throwing new light upon the spiritual story of the Lord's life, as therein foretold, by fitting it into the framework of external representative acts, as related in the New Testament. In the Hebrew Scriptures, as thus interpreted, we will find the Lord's infancy and childhood most minutely described, with every step and stage of spiritual progress duly noted.

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There will we find the key, directly given in the Writings, to many passages in the Evangelists, left without specific exposition. And a similar service will be performed by parts of the Gospels whose signification is clear, for parts of the Hebrew Writings, now obscure, of which they mark the ultimate fulfilment. Such a comparison between the Testaments is but a sequent, and a systematic doing, of what is done in many places by the Lord Himself, both at His First and Second Advents.

Such is the rational deduction we have drawn from the teaching of the Writings and the testimony of the Sacred Scripture. We acknowledge it to be no more than a hypothesis, liable to all the errors of human reasoning. Whether it will stand the test of scholarly analysis, time alone can demonstrate. We have accorded it a tentative acceptance as a working basis for further study and investigation, in an effort to find the answer of Revelation to what has seemed to us an unsolved problem. It appears at first remote, idealistic. Profound indeed must be the study of the Word, before this inmost sense can be disclosed to view. Wise must be that distant generation of the Church, before whose wondering eyes such a surpassing vision of the Lord in His Glorified Human may stand forth in living image from the pages of His Word. Between us and this Divine fulfilment of His glorious promise to the race there lies a long and dangerous journey. Round about this inmost temple of angelic wisdom, there lies an undiscovered wilderness, where the foot of man hath never trod. New trails must here be blazed, through a dense, dark forest of external appearances, of human fallacies, of traditional errors. Wild beasts of selfish loves, of personal ambitions, lurk in caves to intercept the traveler. False trails lead aside to marshy bogs, where stagnant pools exude effluvia of death. Thus is the Divine Human of the Lord effectively protected against all who would do it violence.

But through this land of spiritual danger the New Church must pass. For it has been called to the most perfect perception of the Lord yet known to man. The journey will continue, by slow and gradual stages, through many generations.

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The Lord will send the angel of His Presence, in the teachings of the Heavenly Doctrine, to guide and guard the faithful on their way. He will open their eyes to see the circling rows of

olive trees, to which there cling fruit-laden vines, that mark the safe road of internal perception toward the inmost sanctuary of the Word. What alone will bring His Divine Protection, with the encompassing sphere of Heaven, is that deep and heartfelt love of truth, which gives the impulse and the inspiration to seek, above all else, the knowledge and the vision of the Lord, that we may worship Him in spirit and in truth. However slight the advance we make, it is only by this searching for the Lord that the Church can spiritually grow. It is only in our love to Him that He can come to dwell with us. As, walking through the wilderness of our natural life, we see the miracle of God Incarnate, His Infinite Life apparently enclosed within the finite compass of the Written Word,-even as Moses saw Him in the burning bush, and we turn aside, as Moses did, with earnest longing to "see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt," may we not hope that He will likewise call to us? And if, at His command, we take our shoes from off our feet, because the ground on which we stand is holy, will He not reveal to us His name, make known His will, and lead us in the way of heavenly love and wisdom? It is with this humble faith and trust that we set out upon the holy quest, that we may see, so far as He may give us vision, the wondrous structure of His Holy Word, and seek therein the revelation of His Human Glorified.

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