

in their hearts by the finger of God? (b) "*Their conscience also bearing witness.*" They have a conscience, a moral sense, determining with more or less accuracy questions of right and wrong. And this inward sense bears witness with their outward conduct; so they give both inward and outward manifestation of the law written in their hearts. (c) "*And their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.*" The heathen judge one another in matters of right and wrong from their stand-point, approving the one and condemning the other. However inaccurate their judgments may be, the disposition to pass them upon one another proves that they have still in their nature something of the law originally written therein. Hence they "are a law unto themselves." So we find the works of God, in the moral nature of the heathen, declaring Him unto them as God, along with those in creation and in providence, and claiming for Him their worship and service. Failing to render these, "they are without excuse."

II. *This is a clear and definite revelation.* "For the invisible things of him are clearly seen." (v. 20.) It is not a vague and indefinite manifestation of God, one which is of no real value. It appeals to the heathen with a voice that is loud and unmistakable. So the Psalmist teaches (xix: 5). "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." The works of God, in creation, in providence, and in man's moral nature, speak too distinctly not to be heard. Their voice is insufficient only when men will not hear. God did not mean to trifle with the sons of men when He gave them this revelation; nor did He do so. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Nor is it a sufficient justification of the heathen to say that sin has so deafened them that they cannot hear and understand the voice of God as He spoke through this revelation of Himself. That is rather their misfortune. The revelation is clear and definite, though they may be unable, by reason of sin, to appreciate it; and by this revelation they are to be judged.

III. *It is a universal revelation.* It is given to men in every part of the world, being "understood by the things that are made." The things that are made fill the world, and so does the revelation which they furnish. So we are taught in Ps. xix: 4: "Their line," or *sound*, as it is quoted in Rom. x: 18, "is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." And wheresoever it goes it declares "the eternal power and Godhead" of their Creator. The voice of God in creation is universal, and so is that in providence. God not only made all, but He cares for all, as we are taught. (Ps. cxlv: 15, 16): "The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." And the divine voice in man's moral nature is co-extensive with that in creation and in providence. The moral nature of man is essentially the same everywhere. He has been characterized by the philosophers as "the religious animal," because of his proneness, even in a barbarous condition, to recognize and worship some supreme being. Hence the heathen in every part of the world are "without excuse."

IV. *And it is a perpetual revelation.* The apostle declares that the invisible things of God are clearly seen "from the creation of the world." Creation and providence and man's moral nature have been giving forth the same witness for God in all the ages. There has been no material change in this revelation. It is the constant testimony of all His works to His "eternal power and godhead." This testimony is as unchangeable as Himself. Hence the heathen, in every age of the world, have been "without excuse." They have had opportunities of knowing enough of God to condemn them for their wicked idolatry; and God has been holding them to a just responsibility. He so holds the heathen now. In the light of this clear and universal and perpetual revelation in nature, they are "without excuse." Their condem-

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