

tion and sufferings, His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God, the plan of salvation, through faith in Christ, and the true method of worshipping God through the Spirit—these they cannot know. But there is still much that they may understand without a written revelation. "For God hath shewed it unto them." He has given them an unwritten revelation in nature, through which they may learn much about Himself: "For the invisible things of him are clearly seen." (v. 20.) And he tells us what these invisible things are, "even his eternal power and Godhead," or the perfections of his being. The heathen may learn these, they "being understood," or proved, "by the things that are made." By "the things that are made" we may understand God's works.

1. *In Creation.* These do reveal Him, as we are taught (Ps. xix: 1-3), "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." The works of creation clearly demonstrate their Creator, the "Great First Cause, least understood." And these works speak to the heathen, as they do to everybody else, and tell them of God.

2. *In Providence.* This bears witness for God, as Paul teaches (Acts xiv: 16, 17): "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He argues that these acts of providence were a witness for God. These heathen nations, walking in their own ways, had in these providences an unwritten revelation of God, by which they ought to have learned to worship Him rather than idols. He had done that for them which their idols never did. He gave them rain from heaven, which their idols could not do. That question was settled long ago. It was asked in the times of

Jeremiah (xiv: 22), "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain?" Besides, God had given them fruitful seasons, when He made the fruits of the earth to appear. In these ways His providence had blessed them, "filling their hearts with food and gladness." And in all these manifestations of a kindly providence for their constantly recurring wants, these heathen nations ought to have learned much of God.

3. And *within themselves.* The moral notion within them was made to answer to the moral world without them. They had the means of reasoning "from nature up to nature's God." They had faculties by which they might perceive God in nature and in providence. We are taught this (Rom. ii: 14, 15): "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Though the heathen have not the law of God written in a book, they have much of it written in their moral nature. The moral law was written in the heart of Adam in its purity and perfection. And although sin has sadly marred the divine inscription, there is much of it remaining in the hearts of his race. In the passage quoted, the apostle argues it as being manifested in three things:

(a) They "*do by nature the things contained in the law.*" Its presence is proved by their actions. It comes to them, as if by instinct, to do some things required in the law. Now the practice of any virtues, or the performance of any moral actions, proves that the remains of the law are in them still. If they were wholly destitute of this law in their hearts they could not practice any virtues at all. But we know that the heathen are capable of many moral acts. And whence do they derive this disposition and power but from the lingering trace of the law once written