

"Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion; but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told, as earthly notions can receive."

The representation we are now considering of the manner in which God proceeded to the creation of man, is not to be understood as real, but employed to tell us how different, in point of superiority, God regarded our creation, compared with that of any other earthly creatures. But further, there is a striking particularity in this description which we must not overlook. It is stated, "and God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here the plural number is used respecting the only one and true God. Is not this, then, to be regarded as a plain proof, stamped on the very first page of the Bible, of the Divine Trinity—of a plurality of personal subsistences in the unity of the incomprehensible Deity? In vain do the audacious opponents of this sublime doctrine, try to explain away the phraseology by saying, that it either refers to the angels being associated with God in the creation, or that God is here described as speaking like a king, just as an earthly potentate distinguishes himself by saying *we*, instead of *I*, in his announcements.—For there is not the least evidence from Scripture, or sound reason, that the angels had, or could have, any part in the God-like work of creation. Besides, how utterly absurd is it to suppose God saying, "let us make man in our image," as if He and they were one, or at all equal.—And it is likewise derogatory to God to represent Him as using the form of speech which kings employ in mere pride and pompous dignity. Indeed, at the time when Moses wrote, the state of society was so simple, that most probably, such swelling language was unemployed, even by regal lips. At any rate, we cannot rationally account for the remarkable mode of expression in question, otherwise, than as referring to a Divine Trinity. And how fully is this corroborated by the most express declarations in other parts of Scripture, concerning the share which the Divine Son and the Holy Spirit had with the Father in creation. With respect to the Holy Spirit, even the second sentence in chap. i., furnishes a sufficient testimony, saying, "and the Spirit of God moved, or brooded, upon the face of the waters." The reference seems to be to a fowl in hatching, imparting vitality to the mass on which it sits. And in order to be amply satisfied as to the participation of the Son in creation, we have only to consult such passages as John i. 3; Colos. i. 15-17 Heb. i. 2, and many others.

Let us now proceed with the account of Man's creation, and here let us observe, that he was formed of two great component parts—body and soul—matter and spirit. We are told (chap. ii. 7) "and the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The first part of this description is easily enough understood. It obviously relates to those bodies of ours, which consist of bone, flesh, blood, &c.; and informs us that God originally produced the human body from the mere earth—from the same material as the brute creation. And as to the latter part of the description, it certainly means something more than the mere animal life of man. It means the additional communication to him of a spiritual nature—his endowment with an immaterial, intelligent, and immortal soul. To understand what is here said as referring only to the act of animating his outward frame with life, would be a very low view of it indeed. No such manner of expression is employed respecting the beasts, fowls, or fishes, although they also became instinct with vital energy. The language in question, therefore, must signify that man was distinguished altogether above them by the reception of a rational mind—of that high mysterious part of our being which is called *soul*, and which is capable of thought, judgment, will, feelings and affections. The display of these exercises by man, abundantly shows that he became possessed of an intelligent spirit, distinct from his body; for it is utterly impossible that they could be performed by mere matter, however arranged and organized. It is true that the lower animals also exhibit some evidences of spiritual operation—of a species of thought, memory, and emotion. But what of this? It cannot be denied, and Scripture explicitly affirms, that they have a spirit, although a spirit totally dissimilar, and inferior in nature and powers to that of man. In the book of Eccles. iii. 21, we read of the spirit of a man and the spirit of a beast, the wide and essential difference is, that the former is said to "go upward," and the latter to "go downward to the earth." A description which seems to point out their entirely opposite nature and fate—the one being rational and capable of elevated occupations, the other being only conversant with objects of earth and sense, and perishable in the end.

It appears, then, that in the creation of man, there were two acts of his Divine creation; first the formation of his body from the ground, and secondly, the addition of his nobler and best part, the immortal soul.—Hence the Scripture calls God "the former of our bodies and the father of our spirits." Thus man was formed of two great extremes, *matter* and *mind*. In him Divine Omnipotence had effected a wondrous union between material and immaterial. He thus became the great connecting link between animal and intellectual life—between the world of matter and the world of pure spirituality; a kind of link between earth and heaven. What high ideas is the constitution of man fitted to give us of the power and wisdom of God! What a striking illustration is it of the truth, that "he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

Connected with this part of the subject, a question might be started, which has given rise to much abstract discussion, viz: How do the souls of all the successive generations of mankind receive their existence and become united to their bodies? Whether there was at first a great cre-

ation of souls, to be united to bodies as they were formed? Or whether there is a continued creating of them as they are required, and that is constantly? Or whether they are brought into existence by some mysterious propagation, along with their bodies? Now these are enquiries respecting which nothing has been revealed to us, and therefore there is but little room for our speculations. Suffice it for us to be told, that God is the Father of our spirits—the God of the spirits of all flesh—that he knows the way which he takes in making spirits a part of human nature—that he gives unto every human being an undying spirit which, at the dissolution of the body, returns unto him, to be dealt with according to the deeds which have been done in the body, good or bad.

The next thing relative to man, which is revealed, and which we shall now go on to consider is, that *God created man in his own image, and after his own likeness*. Now, it is at once evident, that the divine image was not impressed on the body of man, for God is a spirit, and has no bodily form. It must therefore have been the soul of man that was made after his image, or with some, though necessarily a very distant resemblance, to the divine nature.

The basis of this likeness of man to his Creator, consisted in his possessing a spiritual existence, a rational nature, an intelligent soul. In this respect he completely differed from, and was far superior to all the other creatures on earth that God made. The Father of lights, and the God of spirits communicated to him an intellectual being, a principle of rationality, a mind, and it was this likeness to himself that God was pleased to call his own image—at least this was part of that image; for we remark further—

That it likewise consisted in a *moral resemblance*. It is the moral perfections of God that constitute his highest excellence. Mere intellectual energy, without moral goodness, forms a character immensely defective and fearfully dangerous. For instance, Satan, once an exalted and holy angel, but now fallen very low, retains great mental power, but all his pristine moral goodness is entirely gone, and therefore he is well-spoken of in scripture as a roaring lion, (terrible for his strength and ferocity) who walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. It is the possession of moral excellence in an infinite degree that is the chief distinction and ornament of the living God. Accordingly, the scriptures declare, that it is in his holiness he is glorious, while he is fearful in praises, doing wonders; and they speak much more about his character than his essence—much more respecting his moral than what have been called his natural attributes. It was therefore in being morally like God—in having the operations and affections of his mind entirely under the government of right and good principles, that man's exhibition of the divine image principally lay. There was man's brightest glory, and his finest perfection.

(To be continued.)

REPORT OF A MISSIONARY TOUR TO THE OWEN SOUND DISTRICT, IN JULY.

Leaving Guelph by stage early on the Wednesday morning, we soon reached Elora, where I met with my brother and co-pastor, Mr. Duff, and shortly arrived after in Fergus, where I called upon Dr. Marr, and remained with him till the stage was again ready to proceed. About three miles from Arthur, one of the wheels of our conveyance went to pieces, and we were left upon the road, under a broiling sun, till the driver went back about a mile and procured another waggon.

Having reached Arthur, I called upon the postmaster, who was anxious that I would consent to preach on my way home again, but this I was unable to do, as it was uncertain at what hour the stage might pass, or whether it would remain so long as to allow of my appearing at a public meeting. At a tavern by the way I learned, that a young man, son of the landlord, was, to all appearance, near death from inflammation, and having addressed a few words of exhortation and comfort to the mother, and endeavoured to prepare her for the bereavement that was approaching, we proceeded on our journey. As the shades of evening gathered in, we could see that a great storm of thunder and lightning was raging to the north of us, and we anticipated a thorough drenching. Fortunately, however, the clouds divided, and passed along the horizon on the right and left.

Some time after nightfall we stopped, having travelled that day a distance of forty-three miles. While supper was preparing, I called upon a Free Church elder, who lived near, and in whose house I had preached on my former visit in winter. He pressed me to accept of his hospitality for the night, and was desirous that I should give a discourse on my way back, but as a Free Church student had been appointed to this neighbourhood for the summer, and public religious services were thus frequently enjoyed, I deemed it proper to decline.

Starting next morning, after an early breakfast, we arrived in the forenoon at Durham village. Here I had to leave the stage, as my road struck off to the left through the township of Bentinck into Brant. Having rested for a little, I took my carpet bag in hand, which, among other articles, contained several dozens of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, given me by T. Sandilands, Esq., of Guelph, for distribution, and started for Mr. Lamont's, expecting to reach his house before dark. During the greater part of the afternoon the heat was excessive. A thunder storm came on in the evening, and a very heavy rain by which I was soon drenched. The road became soft and soaked, and in some places I sank so deep in the mud, that the water came in by my boot tops.