

Crumbs – Good News for the Diaspora!

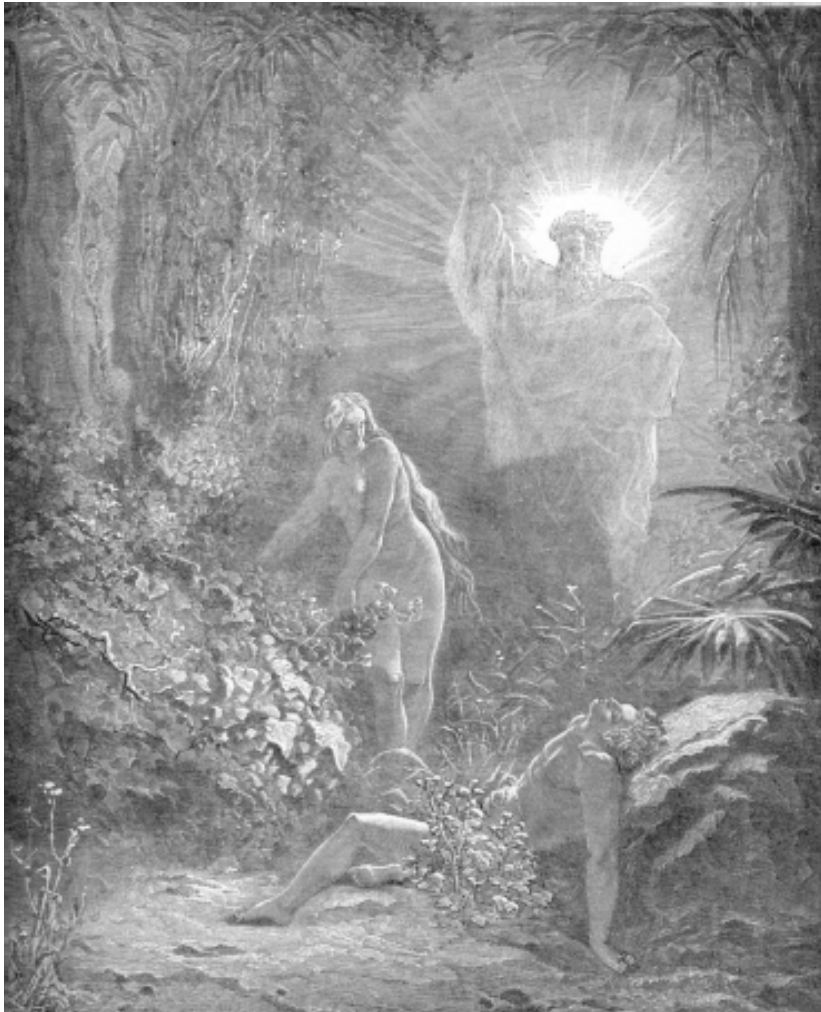


Illustration: The Creation of Eve

A Devotional for the
Week of Trinity Sunday.

SUNDAY.

To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that I may be like? – Isaiah 46:5.

It is an extremely foolish and idolatrous undertaking when men want to fashion or measure God according to human standards, as if He could be compared with man, or were like man, He, the Most High. No, God is as He is. And you must know, believe, and worship Him according as He reveals Himself in His Word. And do not allow your faith to suffer shipwreck when you find that this exceeds your faculties of comprehension and understanding. God were small and inconsiderable indeed if He could be comprehended and understood by you or any man.

– And now listen. There is but *one God*, but one Divine Being. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God, is *one Lord*." (Deuteronomy 6:9.) But in this one God, in this one Divine Being, there are *three distinct Persons*: FATHER, SON, HOLY GHOST. God is the Triune God. God is three persons in one and the same divine being or essence. These three Persons are not three Gods and Lords, but only *one God and Lord*. These three Persons are not parts and particles of the Divine Being, but each Person is and possesses the whole and undivided Divine Being. The Father is the Lord, the Son is the Lord, the Holy Ghost is the Lord. Father and Son and Holy Ghost are alike great, alike eternal, altogether alike, *one* in every way; for they are the *one God*.

So you have been baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." God is the *one God* in three Persons, three Persons in *one God*. This is the testimony of Scripture. True, one man is but *one person*. And it is utterly beyond our comprehension how *one God* can be three Persons. But "to whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that I may be like?" says God. God is as He is, and as He reveals Himself to us in Scripture.

PRAYER. – Almighty, eternal God, who has taught us to know and confess in true faith that You are one eternal God in three

Persons, all three alike in power and majesty, and to worship You as such. I pray You, keep Your Christendom steadfast in such faith at all times against all adversities: You who lives and reigns from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

Hymn 266.

THOU who art Three in unity,
True God from all eternity,
The sun is fading from our sight,
Shine Thou on us with heavenly light.

We praise Thee with the dawning day,
To Thee at even also pray;
With our poor song we worship Thee
Now, ever, and eternally.

Let God the Father be adored,
And God the Son, the only Lord,
And God the Holy Spirit be
Adored throughout eternity!

MONDAY.

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. – The Spirit of Truth that proceedeth from the Father. – The Spirit of His Son.
– *Psalm 2:7 – John 15:26 – Galatians 4:6*

Shall we feebly lisp a little more about the unsearchable mystery of the Trinity as revealed to us in the Scriptures? -The Father has from eternity begotten the Son from His essence. The Father says to the Son: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee." "This day" – here is the incomprehensible divine eternity, where there is neither *before* nor *after*, but an everlasting *now* and *to-day*.

Hence, the Son has been begotten or born of the Father, out of His essence, from eternity. The Son is "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person." (Hebrews 1:3.) But He is the

living and personal Brightness of His glory and the living and personal Image of His Person. From everlasting to everlasting the Father is imaged and reflected in the Son. And the Holy Ghost is the living and personal breath which from eternity "proceedeth from the Father," and from the Son as well, for He is also the Breath, the "Spirit of the Son."

What more shall we say? The mystery is too profound. There is a great and complete unity in the divine Trinity. From everlasting to everlasting, in an eternal to-day, the Father begets the Son from His being; from everlasting to everlasting, in an eternal to-day, the Son is the living and personal Brightness of the Father, begotten of Him, and the express Image of His Person; from everlasting to everlasting, in an eternal to-day, the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, personal and living, completing the perfect unity of the Holy Trinity. This is the true God as He reveals Himself: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three distinct Persons in one and the same eternal divine essence.

– And now we will be still and worship. But do you know the Son? It is Jesus Christ.

PRAYER. – O almighty and eternal God, who has given us, Your servants, grace to know and to confess in true faith the glory of the eternal Trinity and to worship the unity of equal power and majesty: grant, I beg You, that Your Church may at all times be fortified against the attacks of all adversaries by steadfastly adhering to such faith, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, the Father, in unity with the Holy Ghost, true God, world without end. Amen.

Hymn 264, 3.

The Father hath the Son begot,
First-born of every creature;
The Son took our weak flesh, but not
Our sinfulness of nature;
Both from the Father and the Son
The Holy Ghost proceedeth

From all eternity; yet none
In might and power exceedeth;
All equal, co-eternal.

TUESDAY.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said: Let there be light! – Genesis 1:1-3.

These are the very first words in the Bible, the revealed Word of God. They treat of the very first things that happened. And these words contain the very first revelation of the Holy Trinity. -" In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is the *Father*. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," upon the dark, watery, and still unformed mass of the earth. This is the *Holy Ghost*. "And God said." This is the *Son*. This is not a mere speaking of God, but a Speaker distinct from the Father, the Son. This is not a mere word of God, but the essential, personal Word, the Son. He spoke.

Does this seem to you a forced interpretation of Scripture? thrusting as it were, a foreign sense into it? Take the first words of the Gospel of St. John: 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." (John 1:1-3.)

Do you see? The Word by which in the beginning all things were made, is not merely a word of the almighty God, but it was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God. This Word that was God was with God. Do you see here two persons in God? And you have already seen the third Person. Who was this personal Word that was God? John writes: "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 1:14.) This Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God, through whom all things were made, is the Son, the only-begotten

Son of the Father, who in the fullness of time became man and our Savior. He is called the "Word," because God in Him reveals Himself outwardly, to us, just as through Him He also created the world. – O yes, Scripture, from the beginning and everywhere, teaches the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Do but open your eyes and see.

PRAYER. – Almighty eternal God. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I thank You from my inmost heart that through Jesus Christ You have, as a loving Father, revealed Your being and Your will. Bestow Your grace upon me, I implore You, that with all Christendom I may know, honor, and praise You as my Creator, Redeemer, and Savior: who lives and reigns from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

Hymn 579.

To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Be glory in the highest given
By all on earth and all in heaven,
As was through ages heretofore,
Is now, and shall be evermore.

WEDNESDAY.

Building up yourselves upon your most holy faith. – Jude 20.

The First Article of the holy Christian Creed reads thus : "*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*" But woe is me! What a gulf yawns between me and God! I am a sinner, a lost and damned sinner! God is the Father of His only-begotten Son, but not my Father!

- The Second Article reads thus: "*And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the*

Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Father, has bridged the chasm. Blessed be His name! He has reconciled me and all the world with God, has conquered hell, and opened heaven. Only he that rejects Him shall be judged. He that believeth in Him shall be saved. Praise God!

The Third Article reads thus: *"I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."* The Holy Ghost, eternal God with the Father and the Son, has through the Gospel brought me, dead in sin, to faith in Christ and to the blessed communion, the blessed multitude of those who are sanctified through the blood of Christ. There I daily have forgiveness of sins, and with the entire multitude of believers I shall rise from the dead and live forever. This is most certainly true.

– This is the holy Christian faith. Upon this faith we want to build ourselves up. Then with new lips we, every one of us, will be able to say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty. Maker of heaven and earth." In Jesus' name, through the gracious working of the Holy Ghost, we believe with a confidence that is invincible that the almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is also our Father. Thus Christ said after He had finished the work of redemption: "I ascend unto my Father and your Father." (John 20:17.)

PRAYER. – Praise, glory, blessing, and thanks be to You, Almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that You so mercifully did take compassion on us, and did not spare Your own Son, but did deliver Him up for us all. Praise, glory, blessing, and thanks be also to You, Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of the Father, that with Your blood You did fully redeem us and reconcile us unto God. And praise, glory, blessing, and thanks be to You, God the

Holy Ghost, that You did adorn Your Christendom with faith, and did make them a family of God's beloved children. Triune God, bestow upon me, too, the greatness of Your mercy in time and eternity. Amen.

Hymn 264, 4.

Be glad, my heart, thy Portion see,
Thy priceless Pearl and Treasure!
He is thy Friend, supply will He
Thy needs with bounteous measure;
He made thee in His image, was
For thy offences smitten,
With true faith fill thee, through His grace
Doth all thy crosses sweeten
With His dear word of promise.

THURSDAY.

Grace be unto you and peace. – Revelation 1:4.

This is a salutation of our God, written in the Holy Book by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This greeting is sent to the churches, to the multitudes of those on earth who believe in Christ, to the Christians, – to you, O Christian! A truly valid, mighty, blessed salutation of God! This nullifies every curse. It brings you God's grace and the peace of God in time and eternity. So does He greet you "who is, and who was, and who is to come," Jehovah, the most high, the eternal God, God the Father, almighty Creator of heaven and earth.

This salutation comes to you "from the seven Spirits that are before His throne," from God the Holy Ghost, who with gifts manifold proceeds from the Father and descends upon the Christians. And this salutation comes "from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the First-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins

in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." For He, Jesus Christ, is equal with the Father. He says: "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty," just as the Father.

"Grace be unto you and peace! " So does the Holy Trinity greet you – you. So does the eternal Father greet you. His heart burns for you. This greeting the eternal Spirit brings you through His Word as it is recorded in the Bible, and implants it in your heart With this salutation does the eternal Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, greet you, who at so great a price procured grace and peace for you, and who exalts you to the most sublime heights, to His heart and into His glory. How will you respond to this salutation of God?

PRAYER. – Thus will I respond, most good and gracious God: Give, O give to me Your grace and Your peace! Shall I stand back when You meet me so kindly? Full well do You know my most miserable condition, and still You do greet me thus. Yes, give me Your grace, give me Your peace, O Triune – O eternal God! I will bask in Your grace, in Your peace will I exult in all eternity. Amen.

Hymn 261, 1.

ALL glory be to God on high,
Who hath our race befriended!
To us no harm shall now come nigh,
The strife at last is ended;
God showeth His good will to men,
And peace shall reign on earth again;
O thank Him for His goodness.

FRIDAY.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. – Psalm 145:3.

"God is a *Spirit*." (John 4:24.) He is not bound by any limits as is a material body. But let no one be given to foolish and childish notions. God is not a spirit in the sense of a phantom or "spirit," or "ghost," such as the disciples imagined to behold. (Luke 24:37 & Matthew 14:26.) Nor is He a spirit like the created spirits, the angels. God is a Spirit who is actively and powerfully immanent in all creation, and is infinitely above and beyond every creature.

And God is a living and personal Spirit having intelligence and will, and He has created whatever there is of life, of personality, of intelligence, of will in all creation. God is a Spirit "*from everlasting to everlasting*" (Psalm 90:2.) without beginning and without end, and immutable. And so God is *omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient*. (Jeremiah. 23:23-24; Luke 1:37; Psalm 139:1-13.) And God is *holy*. (Isaiah 6:3.) He is Holiness itself. His is a spotless holiness, yes, it is impossible that any blemish should be found in it. And therefore He is just. (Daniel 9:7.)

Everything that He does is good and right-everything. And He is faithful. (Psalm 33:4.) His Word does not fail, His faithfulness is immovable. And He is benevolent, merciful, gracious. (Psalm 145:9; Exodus 34:6-7.) "God is Love." (1 John 4:8.) He delights in doing good to His creatures, in showing mercy and grace; He is Love, Love itself, that Love whereof all love in heaven and in earth is but an emanation, a reflection, a faint shadow.

Yes, great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable! – And this God, this Lord, this Spirit, this eternal Spirit, this Omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, holy, just, faithful, benevolent, merciful, gracious God, who is Love, He, from everlasting to everlasting, subsists in three Persons. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, these three distinct Persons, are in one and the same eternal, altogether indivisible and undivided divine essence. So God is sufficient in Himself, and surely has need of no creature. But He has made creatures. And He is Love. Such is our God. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable!

PRAYER. – O great, ineffably great God, help me to know You and to worship You in spirit and in truth! God, who is Love,

and who in Your love bestows grace on me in Christ Jesus, my Savior, grant to me Your Holy Spirit, that through Jesus Christ I may rest my soul in Your love and grace revealed to me in Your Word, and thus unfailingly obtain salvation. Amen.

Hymn 264, 5.

Rise, then, to Him, the Ever-blest,
And learn to know Him rightly;
Such knowledge can alone bring rest,
And make thy soul burn brightly
With the pure flame of holy love,
Which cheers thy course to heaven;
For God will show thee things above,
Which here 'tis only given
To hear of, and see darkly.

SATURDAY.

I saw the Lord. – Isaiah 6:1.

In the year that King Uzziah died, the Prophet Isaiah, in a vision in the Temple, saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. And one cried unto another and said: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

– The Lord, the invisible Spirit, in this vision assumed a human form. He likewise gave form and voice to the seraphim, the exalted spirits, the angels. With God, who works all things, this is not wonderful. -But what does the Apostle John say through the Holy Spirit? John says that Isaiah "saw His glory and spake of Him." (John 12:41.) Whose glory did Isaiah see, and of whom did he speak? Isaiah saw Jesus' glory and spoke of Jesus, the eternal Son of the Father, who at that time had not yet become man.

Learn here, O Christian, that Jesus, the Son of the Father, came

forth from out of the Holy Trinity to "declare" that God to you. In Jesus God reveals Himself to you. In Jesus you must know God. You must form no thoughts about the will of God toward you beyond what you see in Jesus and hear from Him. If you know Jesus aright from His Word, you know God aright. On this blessed knowledge you may rest your faith in life and in the hour of death. The knowledge of Jesus, and hence the knowledge of God in Jesus, is a saving knowledge. Jesus, God, is your Savior. So shall you behold the Lord!

PRAYER. – Lord, great and unsearchable God, with all my heart I thank You that in Jesus You did reveal Yourself to me, and would have us know and embrace You in Jesus, and firmly believe that You are like Jesus. Jesus, is my dear, merciful Redeemer and Savior, in whom I have placed all my confidence. And so I trust in You, O great and most gracious God, Savior, Redeemer! Keep me in such faith and trust! Amen.

Hymn 263, 1. 2.

HOLY, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early I the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

These devotions are adapted from *Crumbs* by C. M. Zorn (1914).
The hymn stanzas are from *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (1918).
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