

STUDIES IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Volume I

Theology Proper

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PREFACE

The following study was compiled as a result of the need for a class-room handbook in Biblical Theology. It was compiled by Stanton W. Richardson, M A. while teaching at the St. Paul Bible College.

Dr. Richardson recognized the fact that many good works had been written on Christian Doctrine. Yet, some were not suited for Bible College use because of their complexity and depth. Still others did not seem to come up to the level demanded by Bible College students.

Dr. Richardson also recognized the impossibility of covering such material thoroughly and completely within the given time restraints. However, this text should serve as a guide in the various studies in Biblical Theology and that the guidance will always be directed to the Holy Scriptures.

Dr. Richardson noted that these studies did not necessarily constitute the official statement or theology of the then St. Paul Bible College. They were merely compiled by him for class-room use.

The American Standard Version of the Bible was the original reference throughout these Studies. It was Dr. Richardson's desire that The New American Standard Version replaces the ASV in these studies.

It was Dr. Richardson's prayer that "every student who uses these Studies will always endeavor to permit the Word of God to be the final authority, and that the convictions of this writer will not be adopted unless such adoption comes as the result of a study of the Word of God for himself."

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SURVEY OF WORK

This text is compiled so as to cover one unit's work. The study given is not intended to be exhaustive. At best a text like this will serve as a guide to further study of the Bible and other writings on theology.

Theology Proper is the doctrine of God.

While God cannot be defined, we can study His attributes so as to know who He is, what He does, and what His purposes are in this world.

We may also study the work of God. We will do this under the topics of: Creation, Preservation, and Providence. We will look into the matter of creation together with the various interpretations of the creation account.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THEOLOGY.

A. THEOLOGY PROPER IS THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.

1. The importance of correct views concerning God can scarcely be overestimated.

a. Orr says, "It is not too strong to say that, in principle, every question of importance which arises in theology is already practically importance settled in the doctrine of God and His attributes" (Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 8).

b. This is true not only of the academic questions of doctrine, but also of the practical questions of human conduct.

2. It is, therefore, very important that this doctrine receive the most thoughtful consideration of everybody.

B. DIVISION OF WORK. The work under this doctrine will include:

The Definition of God.

Theories Concerning God.

The Existence of God.

The Nature of God.

The Trinity of God.

The Works of God.

II. DEFINITION OF GOD.

Actually we cannot confine God to a definition any more than we could confine God to this world. However the human mind somehow demands that we understand God in human terms so we make an endeavor to describe His essential attributes and works without circumscribing Him. At best, a definition of God will not rightly describe Him.

A. As indicated by the Bible names of God.

In ancient times, names were invested with peculiar significance. The names of people, places, events, in the Bible likewise bear significant meaning. This is particularly true with the names given to God. In His names God reveals His character and his manifold relations to His creatures.

Pardington lists nine principal names of God, falling into three classes of three names each (which may or may not suggest the trinity) Outlines of Christian Doctrine pp.86-92.

1. Three primary names: God, LORD, and Lord.

a. God. The name God is taken from three Hebrew words, namely,

(1) El, meaning strength or the Strong One;

(2) Elah, means to bind oneself to an oath;

(3) Elohim, the plural noun with singular meaning with the same root meaning as Elah. See Gen. 1:26,27; 3:22.

b. LORD. The Hebrew Yahwe, English form is Jehovah, meaning the self-existent one. Elohim is the creation name of God, and Yahwe the covenant-keeping or redemptive name; the former occurs in Gen. 1 and the latter in Gen 2:4 4:16; Ex 3:13-17.

c. Lord. The Hebrew is Adon or Adonai, meaning master or husband. When the word is applied to man it is written with a small letter. See Gen 15:2.; 24:9,10,12; 18; 12; Hos 2:16,20 John 13:13

2. Three names compounded with El. Almighty God, Most High, and Everlasting God.

a. Almighty God. The Hebrew is El Shaddai, the God who is enough, the all-sufficient One. Pardington suggests that Shaddai coming from shad - meaning breast - may therefore mean God the nourisher, the strength giver; this follows the analogy of a mother feeding and giving strength to her child. See Gen 17:1; 49:25 Job 3:12; Psa 22:9; S of S 1:13; 4,5; 7:3,7,8; 8:1,8,10; Isa 28:9; Ezek 16:7.

b. Most High, or Most High God. Gen 14:17-24. The Hebrew is El Elyon signifying highest. The Most High God' seems to be the name of God known by the Gentile nations. See Deut. 32:8; Dan 3;26; 4:17,24,25,32; 5:18,21. Also Mk. 5:7; 2 Sam 22:14,15; Psalm. 9:2-5: 21:7; 47:2-4 57:2,3; 82:6; 83:18; 91:1,2.

c. Everlasting God. The Hebrew is El Olam. Olam expresses eternal duration it also expresses the idea of secrecy or hiding it is the equivalent to the Greek aion, signifying age or dispensation. This may suggest the meaning that God is the God of all ages and God over everlasting things. See Gen 21:33 Psalm 90:2; Eph 1:9,10; 3:3-6.

3. The names compounded with Yahwe: LORD God, Lord LORD, and LORD of Hosts.

a. LORD God. The Hebrew is Yahwe Elohim indicates God's relationship to man as creator, (Gen. 2:7-15); Master, (Gen 2:16,17); Ruler, (Gen 2:18-24 3:14-19); and as Redeemer, (Gen 3:8-13, 21). Yahwe Elohim also indicates God's relationship to Israel (Gen 24:7; Ex. 3:15; Deut 12:10).

b. Lord LORD. The Hebrew is Adonai Yahwe emphasizes the thought of God as Master (Gen 15:1,8 Deut 3:24; Josh 7:7).

c. LORD of Hosts. The Hebrew is Yahwe Sabaoth. Sabaoth means host or hosts. The word occurs with special reference to warfare or service. It is used of Jehovah as manifesting His power and glory, (Psalm. 24:10). It occurs in the Old Testament mostly in times of Israel's need: "The Lord of Hosts is with us; (Psalm.46:7). Yahwe is compounded with seven names or words:

(1) Jehovah-jireh, "the LORD will provide" (Gen 22:13,14).

(2) Jehovah-rapha, "the LORD that healeth" (Ex. 15:26).

(3) Jehovah-nissi, "the LORD our banner" (Ex 17:8-15).

(4) Jehovah-shalom, "the LORD our peace" (Judges 6:24).

- (5) Jehovah-ro'i, "the LORD my shepherd" (Psalm. 23).
- (6) Jehovah-tsidkenu, "the LORD our righteousness" (Jer.23:6).
- (7) Jehovah-shammah, "the LORD is present" (Ezek. 48:35).

B. As indicated in the Bible definitions of God. The Bible is very limited in giving direct and definite descriptions of God but the following are given:

1. God is a Spirit (John 4:24):
2. God is love (1 John 4:16).
3. God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29).
4. God is light (1 John 1:5).

C. The Westminster Shorter Catechism definition.

"God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." (Answer to question # 4).

A thorough discussion of all these elements is presented in Dr. J. O. Buswell's book, What is God? Following is a synopsis of this definition.

1. First: "God is a Spirit" connotes a personal being, as clearly shown in John 4:24. Therefore, the definition implies that God is characterized by self-consciousness and self-determination. This does away with any idea denying personality. For example, it makes impossible every contention for the views of God as a "cosmic flux," "social Consciousness," "world soul," "personification"

2. Second: The word: "infinite" implies that God is absolutely free from all limitations outside of his own nature and being. This means He is Omnipresent.

3. Third: God's "eternity", the fact that God was never nonexistent, and that He was eternally self-existent is set forth.

4. Fourth: The “unchangeableness” of God infers that God’s immutability consists in his perfectly unified plea in dealing with the world, which He Created. God’s absoluteness is in His perfectly Consistent relatedness to His creation.

5. Fifth: “Being” sets forth the idea of the inner existence of God which substantiates all outward manifestations and attributes. It therefore excludes any idea of physical substance. He is not an evolutionary being, He is unchangeable in His being,

6. Sixth: “Wisdom” includes all those excellencies of God which are commonly grouped under the word “intelligence.” This wisdom is “infinite”, “eternal,” and “unchangeable”. It means God is omniscient.

7. Seventh: “Power”, discloses the omnipotence and majesty of God.

8. Eighth: “Holiness” speaks of that essential moral excellence of God’s nature according to which he cannot make right wrong, cannot contradict Himself by doing the absurd. His standard of holiness wavers not. He is unchangeable in His holiness.

9. Ninth: “Justice” is indicative of God’s administration of punishment as vindication of His holiness. This includes the doctrine of judgment and chastisement.

10. Tenth: “Goodness” teaches the manifestation of God’s benevolence, clemency, grace and mercy. This brings to light the doctrine of God’s common and special grace.

11. Eleventh: “Truth” seals the veracity and faithfulness of God in His relations to creation.

We have but glimpsed at what a definition of God can cover, if adequately treated. We have seen all the positive elements which included a substantial portion of Scriptural teaching on the doctrine of God. We have also seen in a few instances how the positive elements expressly disclose and discard fallacious views of God. Such elements may be called negative elements.

III. THEORIES CONCERNING GOD

The following brief definitions will serve merely to give the difference between the various theories with regard to God. It is not intended that these brief statements state fully that which pertains to each of the theories.

- A. THEISM: “Theism means the existence of a personal God, Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things.” (Miley, p.57).
- B. MONOTHEISM: The doctrine that there is but one God.
- C. DEISM: Deism is distinguished from theism inasmuch as it regards God as entirely outside of the universe.
- D. PANTHEISM: Pantheism regards God impersonally and as identical with the universe:
- E. POLYTHEISM: Polytheism exalts many divine beings, none of which correspond to the Christian idea of God.
- F. MONOLATRY: The worship of one god among several gods. The ancient Roman and Grecian mythology gives us examples of this type of worship.
- G. AGNOSTICISM: Agnosticism denies man’s ability to know whether or not there is a God. Furthermore, if there is a God, man cannot know for certain that this God is interested in him.
- H. ATHEISM: Atheism denies the existence of God.
- I. NATURALISM: Takes nature as the whole of reality.

IV. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The existence of God is a first truth and really does not have to be proved. However, certain logical arguments as well as good evidence present themselves to support the existence of God. This proof is at least four-fold and is presented as follows:

A. INTUITIVELY BELIEVED.

Strong says that, “The knowledge of God’s existence is a rational intuition:” (op.cit., p.52).

An intuition is not something written on the soul prior to consciousness or an idea in an infant that has the power of self-development apart from observation and experience; but a knowledge apart from observation and experience. In other words, intuitive belief is that which is innate, inherent in the very being of the person. Hence, we contend that the belief in the existence of God is intuitively believed.

The proof that the existence of God is intuitively believed is seen both in (1) the Scriptures and (2) in the experience of mankind.

1. Scriptural Proof of Intuitive Belief.

a. Romans 1:19-21 “because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse; because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.”

b. Paul also says that even the most depraved know that those who live in sin are “worthy of death,” Romans 1:32.

c. Later this same writer states that the Gentiles have “the work of the law written in their hearts” Roman 2:15. See also Eccles. 3:11.

d. It would seem according to the Scripture, the heathen perceive the glory of God, the power of God, the divinity of God, and the moral character of God. (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:19,20,32; 2:14,15; Acts 14:15-17; 17:23-29).

2. Experience of Mankind.

a. Missionaries have found uncivilized people all over the world who believe in God. They have never had Bibles, have not been able to read or write, have not had contact with the outside world, and yet they believe in God.

b. Where did this belief in God come from? All that we can say is that all men everywhere know by intuition that there is some great Being on Whom they are dependent and to Whom they are accountable.

c. Shedd says: "The missionary, contrary to the view of those who assert that civilization must precede evangelization, finds that he can elicit the ideas of God, the soul, of sin and guilt, soon and easier than he can the ideas of mathematics and philosophy." (Dogmatic Theology, vol I. p.207).

B. ASSUMED BY THE SCRIPTURES.

We have already shown that the Bible regards all men as believing in the existence of God. Because of this fact it does not attempt to prove His existence. Evans says: "It does not seem to have occurred to any of the writers of either the Old or New Testaments to attempt to prove or argue for the existence of God. Everywhere and at all times it is a fact taken for granted." (Great Doctrines, p.13).

C. NECESSITATED BY THE CHRISTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

Without the existence of God how would we account for the following?

1. The Bible itself.
2. Fulfillment of prophecy.
3. Miracles such as the flood, parting of Red Sea, etc.
4. Supernatural character and divine mission of Christ.
5. Influence of Christianity.
6. Conversion and changed lives of believers.

The existence of God gives an adequate accounting to all of these phenomena.

D. CORROBORATED BY ARGUMENTS.

We have just said that the belief in God can never be the result of logical argument, and that is true. But that is not the same as saying that there are no valid arguments for His existence; only we must assign the proper place to such arguments and accept them at their true value. They must not be regarded as sufficient in themselves to demonstrate the existence of God, but merely as corroborating our intuitive belief in His existence. And no argument must be accepted as proving more than it really does prove.

1. The Cosmological Argument, the Argument from Cause.
 - a. The logic of this argument is simply this: Every effect must have a cause; the universe is an effect, thus must have a cause.
 - b. As stated in Heb. 3:4, “Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God.” We do not need to argue with those who would say that the universe is eternal as modern geological science has proved without doubt that the universe is of comparatively recent origin.
 - c. The value of such an argument is found in the fact that it helps to prove that there is an eternal, self-existing Being, outside of the universe.

2. The Teleological Argument, or the Argument from Design.
 - a. The logic of this argument is stated as follows: Order and useful arrangement imply that there must be an intelligent cause. Inasmuch as the universe is characterized by order and useful arrangement, there must have been an intelligent Cause.
 - b. This argument has Scriptural support as found in Ps. 94:9: ““He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?””
 - c. In other words, design implies a Designer. As natural law cannot be regarded as the designer, God, who is back of natural law, must have been the Designer.
 - d. The value of such an argument is found in the fact that it serves to prove that the First Cause possesses an intelligence and will adequate to the production of the universe. This does not mean that the Designer is a part of the design, as taught in pantheism, any more than an author is part of a book.

3. The Anthropological Argument, also called the Moral Argument.

a. The argument runs as follows: Man has an intellectual, volitional, and moral nature; but material and unconscious forces cannot produce such a nature; therefore man's Creator must possess an intellectual, volitional, emotional, and moral nature, in other words, He must be a Person

b. In other words, man could not have created his moral nature which makes him morally obligated to obey any more than the earth and the stars could have created the law of gravitation which they obey. Moral law is not self imposed, it is created by God,

c. The value of this argument is seen in the fact that it serves to prove the personality and righteous Lordship of God. As Patton says: "If there is no God, why do I feel under obligation? Who has a right to command me? If atheism is true, obligatory morals are impossible We must believe in God." (Summary of Christian Doctrine, p. 14).

4. The Ontological Argument, or the Argument from Being.

a. The argument runs thus: We have an idea of an infinite and perfect Being; this idea could not have come from us, since we are finite; therefore, it must have come from God, whose existence is a necessary assumption.

b. This argument does not prove too much except that if God exists, He must be perfect and infinite, We have already shown from other arguments that He does exist, therefore He must be perfect and infinite.

5. The Argument from Congruity, or Argument from the Harmony of Knowledge.

a. This argument is stated as follows: Beliefs are true if all the related facts fit in with them; the belief in a personal God fits in with all the facts of material and immaterial nature; therefore there is a personal God.

b. This argument further proves the self-existence of a personal God out-side of the universe. Even this fact itself fits in with all the other facts of our mental and moral nature as well as all the phenomena of the material world.

V. THE NATURE OF GOD

In the definition of God, as also in the proofs for the existence of God, we have already to a large extent intimated what God is like. This was done casually, however, rather than deliberately. It is necessary now to make a more thorough study of the subject.

A. TERMS USED.

1. Essence: By the essence of God we mean the substance of God (some would say the substratum in God) in which all His qualities inhere.
2. Attribute: By an attribute, in distinction from the substance of God, we mean “any necessary predicate that can be applied to this essence. The term attribute covers all the generic statements that we can make about God, in respect both to what He is and to His mode of working” (Smith, System of Christian Theology, p.12).

In the study of the nature of God we must remember that we can know God only through His attributes. “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Tim. 6:16), must refer to His essence; for the pure in heart have the prospect of some day seeing God (Matt. 5:8). But to know God through His attributes is, nevertheless, to know the Being to Whom these attributes belong; for His attributes are not mere names for human conceptions of God, but objective realities inhering in the divine essence. Yet they must not be considered as separate parts of a composite God; for such a distinction can be applied only to a material organization (Smith, op.cit., p.13).

B. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

1. God’s Attributes as Pure Essence or Being.

These are the attributes that have to do with God as pure being or existence. Smith, to whom we owe this classification, says: “Strictly speaking, perhaps these would not be attributes, but they are generally classed as such. They might have been considered under the heading of the divine nature, because they are different aspects of the divine substance.” (op. cit., p.16). We shall here consider the self-existence, eternity, immensity, spirituality, personality, and unity of God.

a. Self-existence.

(1) Meaning of term. By self-existence we mean that God has the ground of his being in Himself; in other words, He is not dependent for his existence on any other being.

(2) Scriptural teaching.

(a) Ex. 3:14 - "I AM THAT I AM."

(b) Ex. 6:3 - "Jehovah," implied in the name.

©) Gen. 1:1- "In the beginning God . . . "implies an uncaused being,

b. Eternity.

(1) Meaning of term. By eternity we mean that God is without beginning or end; that He is free from all succession of time.

(2) Scriptural teaching.

(a) Ps. 90:2 - "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God."

(b) Isaiah. 44:6 - "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."

©) Rev. 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who is to come, the Almighty."

(d) Also taught in Isa. 57:15; 1 Tim. 1:17.

c. Immensity.

(1) Meaning of the term. By immensity we mean that God is infinite in relation to space. In other words, God is not circumscribed by space; even though he is in space, he is not contained in it.

(2) Scriptural teaching.

(a) I Kgs 8:27 - "The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee"

(b) Jer. 23:24 - "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord"

©) Isa. 66:1 - "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool".

d. Spirituality

(1) Meaning of the term. We believe that God is a Spirit because the Scriptures teach such (John 4:24); although we cannot understand what is meant by it except we understand what is the nature of spirituality, which itself is a mystery.

We know something of the finite spirit through our own self-consciousness, but we know of the nature of the Infinite Spirit only by analogy, and therefore only imperfectly. Several things, however, seem to be clear in the conception that God is a spirit.

(a) He is incorporeal and immaterial.

1] Jesus said, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones," (Luke 24:39), therefore if God is a spirit He must be immaterial.

2] Those expressions in the Scripture that speak of God having bodily parts, such as hands, feet, eyes, ears, etc., must be considered as anthropomorphic and symbolic. In other words, they are simply human expressions to bring an infinite Being within the realm of finite comprehension. By them the various powers and activities of God are indicated in relation to mankind, and not the physical properties possessed by God.

(b) He is invisible.

1] The Israelites saw "no manner of form" when the lord appeared unto them in Horeb, and therefore they were not to make to themselves and image of Him (Deut. 4:15-19).

2] John taught that "no man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18); Paul speaks of Him as "the invisible God" (Col, 1:15); Moses said that "no man could see God and live" (Ex. 33:20).

3] But how then explain the Scriptures that say men saw God? For example: Gen 32:30; Ex. 3:6; 24:9,10; Num. 12:6-8; Deut. 34:10; Isa. 6:1. Torrey answers: "A man may see the reflection of his face in a glass. it would be true for the man to say, 'I saw my face,' and also 'I never saw my face'" (What the Bible Teaches p.15).

©) He is living. Many Scriptures represent God as alive; for example: Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; Ps. 84:2; Jer. 10:10; Dan. 6:20; Matt 16:16; 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 3:12. He is not merely alive, but the source of all life, -- plant, human, spiritual, and eternal life (John 5:26; Ps. 36:9). The idea of spirit excludes not only the idea of material substance, but also of inanimate substance; it implies that God is alive.

(2) Scriptural teaching. The Scriptural teaching of this doctrine has been borne out in the various Scriptures mentioned above under “meaning of the term.”

e. Personality

(1) Meaning of the term.

(a) This attribute might well be classified with “spirituality” as personality is a fundamental predicate of spirit. However, it is being considered separately so as to offset any anti-personal theories concerning God as well as to give positive teaching on the personality of God.

(b) By personality we mean two things: Self-consciousness and self-determination; wherever we have these two characteristics, we have personality.

1] Self-consciousness is more than consciousness. The brute may be supposed to have the latter, since the brute is not an automaton. But man and God are self-conscious as well as conscious. Self-consciousness is the power of making one’s self the object of thought and of knowing that we do so. So far as we know the brute cannot objectify itself and make itself the object of thought even though it may be conscious of other creatures. Man and God can do so because they are self-conscious.

2] Self-determination is more than determination. The brute has determination, but his determination results from influences from without; there is no inner spontaneity. God and man however, determine self in view of motives. They have the feeling of freedom and make their choices from within.

(2) Proof of Personality. The Personality of God may be proved in five ways:

(a) By the fact that he is self-conscious and possesses the power of self-determination.

In proof of the former note: “I AM THAT I AM” (Ex. 3:14); “I am Jehovah and there is none else; beside me there is no God” (Isa. 45:5). In proof of latter note: “What his soul desireth, even that he doeth” (Job 23:13); “who worketh all things after the counsel of his will” (Eph. 1:11); “That the purpose of God according to the election might stand” (Rom. 9:11).

(b) By the three constituent elements of personality possessed by Him.

These three are intellect, sensibility, and volition. For intellect, see Gen. 18:19; Ex. 3:7; Prov. 15:3; Acts 15:18; Heb. 4:13; for sensibility Gen. 6:6; Ps. 103:8-13; Zeph. 3:17; for volition, Gen. 3:15; Ps. 115:3; Isa. 46:10, 11; Dan. 4:35. Many other references might be added to prove each of these points.

©) By the names ascribed to God.

We have already listed the most important names of God (under the definition of God, above), and need not repeat them here. We need merely to call attention to the fact that all His names imply personality.

(d) By the qualities of personality ascribed to Him.

For instance, He speaks, Gen. 1:3; sees, Gen. 11:5; hears, Ps. 94:9; repents, Gen. 6:6; is angry, Deut. 1:37; is jealous, Ex. 20:5; 34:14; is compassionate, Ps. 111:4. All of these imply personality.

(e) By the relations He sustains to the universe.

He upholds it, Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17; He rules in the kingdoms of men, Ps. 75:6,7; Dan. 2:21; 4:32; Rom. 13:1; He provides for His creatures, Ps. 104:27-30; Matt. 6:26, 28-30. All of these things can be performed only by a person.

f. Unity

(1) Meaning of the term. By unity we mean that there is but one God and that the divine nature is undivided and indivisible. This unity is not simple but compound. The same Hebrew word is used to describe the unity of God in Deut. 6:4, et.al., as is employed when speaking of husband and wife as one (Gen. 11:6. The same idea is also expressed when Paul says that he that plants and he that waters are one (1 Cor. 3:6-8), and when Jesus prays for the oneness of His people (John 17:22,23).

(2) Scriptural teaching.

(a) Deut. 6:4 - "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."

(b) Other references: Isa. 44:6; 45:5,6; Mark 12:29-32; John 5:44; 17:3; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5

2. God's Attributes as an Active Being. By the term "active" we mean those attributes which are commonly associated with action. These may be further sub-divided into the non-moral and moral attributes.

a. The non-moral attributes. By this we mean those necessary predicates of the divine essence that do not involve moral qualities. Under the attributes of God as pure being we discussed the self-existence, eternity, immensity, spirituality, personality, and unity of God; here we shall consider the omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and immutability of God.

(1) Omnipresence.

(a) Meaning of term. Because God is immense He is omnipresent. By omni-presence we mean that He is everywhere present in His creation.

(b) Scriptural teaching.

1] Ps. 139:7-12 - "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there," etc.

2] Jer. 23:23,24 - "Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? said Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth?"

3] Other references Acts 17:24-28; Rom. 10:6-8.

(2) Omniscience.

(a) Meaning of term. By omniscience we mean that God knows all things perfectly and from all eternity, whether they be things actual or possible, past, present or future.

How can God know so many things is incomprehensible to our finite minds. Equally mysterious to us is the mode of his knowledge. Of the latter we say that God's knowledge is:

1] immediate, i.e., not due to sense experience nor a process of reasoning.

2] simultaneous, i.e., not successive or partial,

3] complete, i.e., not incomplete, but embracing all objects of knowledge, the actual and possible, the past, present and future.

4] certain, i.e., not uncertain.

(b) Wisdom is a particular aspect of the omniscience of God. It is the intelligence of God displayed in the choice of the highest ends and of the fittest means for the accomplishment of those ends. The highest possible end is not the happiness of God's creature, nor even their perfection in holiness, but the highest end is the glory of God. Scriptural teaching.

1] I John 3:20 - "God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things."

2] John 21:17 - "Lord, thou knowest all things."

3] Acts 15:18 - "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

4] Other references Heb. 4:13; Ps. 139:1-4; Isa. 44:28; etc.

3) Omnipotence

a) Meaning of the term. By this we mean that God is able to do whatever He wills. Since God's will is determined by His nature, and His nature is holy, this means that God can do everything that is in harmony with His perfections. There are some things He cannot do, such as, He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18), look upon iniquity (Hab. 1:13), etc.

b) Scriptural teaching.

1] Genesis. 17:1 - "I am God Almighty."

2] Job. 42:2 - "I know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be restrained."

3] Jer. 32:17 - "There is nothing too hard for thee."

4] Matt 19:26 - "Put with God all things are possible."

5] Other references Luke 1:37; Rev. 19:6.

c) The Omnipotence of God has a very practical bearing on human affairs. The Scriptures repeatedly urge us to trust God in every walk of life on the ground & His creative and preserving power (Isa. 45:11-13; 46:4). To the child of God, therefore, this truth is a source of great comfort. But to the unsaved so mighty a God is ever a warning. He ought to tremble at the remembrance of His name and Word (Ps. 99:1; Isa. 66:5). This the demons do (Jas. 2:19), for they recognize His power over them (Matt. 8:29). The day will come when even the strongest and greatest will seek to hide from Him (Rev. 6:15-17), and every knee will bow at His name (Phil. 2:10).

4) Immutability

a) Meaning of the term. By immutability we mean that in essence, attributes, and will, God is unchangeable. God is absolutely immutable -- He cannot increase nor decrease. He is subject to no process of development, or of self-evolution. His knowledge or power can never be greater nor less. He can never be wiser nor holier; He will never be more righteous or more merciful than He ever has been and ever must be.

b) Scriptural teaching.

1] James 1:17 - "Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

2] Mal 3:6 - "He is the Lord, He changes not."

3] Psalm. 102:27 - "But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

4] See also Isa. 14:24; 2 Cor. 1:20; 1 Kgs 8:56; etc.

c) But on this view of the immutability of God we come up against a difficulty. How are we to understand such references as Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 13:29; Ps. 110:4; Jer. 4:28, which teach that God does not repent, in the light of such other references as Gen 6:6; Ex. 32:14; 2 Sam 24:16; Jer 18:8; Joel 2:13, which teach that He does repent? In this way: "The unchangeableness of God . . . consists not in always acting in the same manner, however cases and circumstances alter, but in always doing what is right, and in adapting his treatment of his intelligent creatures to the variation of their actions and characters" (quoted by Shedd, op.cit., I p.332). In other words, the same God acts differently according as the conditions change, without Himself changing. Consequently God's threats, such as Jonah 3:4,10, must be explained by their manifest conditional character.

b. Moral Attributes. By this we mean those necessary predicates of the divine essence that involve moral qualities. Under this head we shall consider the holiness, righteousness-justice, love, truth faithfulness, and sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God is, however, not an attribute, but a prerogative of God arising out of the perfections of His nature. It will, therefore, be treated as the outgrowth of all His attributes.

(1) Holiness.

(a) Meaning of the term. By the holiness of God we mean that He is absolutely pure, both in nature and conduct. It is that attribute in virtue of which God's being and God's will eternally conform to each other.

1] Holiness occupies the foremost rank among the attributes of God. This is evident from the fact that holiness is the attribute by which God wanted to be especially known in Old Testament times. See Ex.3:5; Lev. 11:44,45; Josh. 5:15; 24:19; 1 Sam 2:2; 6:20; Ps. 22:3; Isa. 40:25; 45:11; Jer. 51:5; Ezek. 39:7; Hab. 1:12. God is called "holy" some thirty times in Isaiah alone.

2] This fact is also brought out in various other ways; for example, by the bounds set about Mount Sinai when God came down upon the mountain (Ex. 19:12,13,21-25), by the division of the tabernacle and temple into the holy and most holy places (Ex. 26:33; 1 Kgs. 6:16), by various laws about meats (Lev. 11), by the set feasts of Israel (Lev.23), and by the isolation of Israel in Palestine (Num. 23:9; Deut 33:28).

(b) Teachings that grow out of the holiness of God.

1] There is a distance between God and the sinner on account of man's sin. God, being holy, cannot look upon or condone man's sin.

2] Another outgrowth is this, that we must approach God through the merits of another, if we are to approach Him at all.

3] The third point follows naturally from the preceding two: viz., that we should approach God "with reverence and godly fear." Heb. 12:28,29.

©) Right views of the holiness of God lead to right views of sin. Humility, contrition and confession flow from a Scriptural view of the holiness of God.

(2) Righteousness-Justice.

(a) Meaning of the term. By the righteousness-justice of God we mean His holiness exercised toward His creatures. It is that attribute which leads him to treat His creatures in conformity with the purity of His nature.

Righteousness is sometimes called legislative holiness; and justice is called punitive justice. In virtue of the former God imposes laws upon man and demands that all moral beings conform to His nature; in virtue of the latter He punishes disobedience and rewards obedience.

(b) Scriptural teaching.

- 1] Gen. 18:25 - "Shall not the judge of the earth do right?"
- 2] Deut. 3:4 - "All his ways are justice; a God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is He."
- 3] Psalm. 7:11 - "God is a righteous judge."
- 4] Other references -Dan. 9:14; Psalm. 119:137; 96:13; Rom. 2:5,6; John 17:23.

(3) Love

(a) Meaning of the word. Love is that attribute in virtue of which He eternally seeks to communicate Himself to others by seeking to share Himself and His gifts to others.

The Scriptures teach that God is love (1 John 4:8,16) although one cannot adequately describe such an attribute. We know that such love must be infinite; it must be perfect; it must be impartial; it must be eternal.

(b) Scriptural teaching.

- 1] 1 John 4:8,16 - "God is love."
- 2] 2 Cor. 13:11 - "the God of love."
- 3] Jer. 31:3 - "He loves with an everlasting love."
- 4] Other references teach mainly the objects of His love such as John 3:35; 5:20; Deut. 7:6-8; John 14:23; 3:16 and many others.

©) God's love is not mere theory but actual fact. He has manifested His love, and that in various ways; as, in choosing the ungodly. Israel (Deut. 4:37; 7:7) and the Church (John 15:16; Eph. 1:4) were alike chosen apart from any merit in them, - simply because of His love. Again, in giving His Son for our salvation (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9,10). Thirdly, in drawing sinners to Himself (Jer.31:3; Hos. 11:4). Fourthly, in forgiving the sins of the penitent (Isa.38:17). Further, in making us children of God (1 John 3:1). Again, in quickening, raising, and seating us with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph.2:4-6).

Again, in bestowing earthly blessings upon His people (Deut. 7:13). And again, in chastening His children (Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:6; Rev.3:19). And finally, in holding out the blessed hope for the future (2 Thess. 2:16; of. 1 John 3:2,3).

(4) Benevolence, Mercy and Grace.

(a) Meaning of the term. By benevolence, mercy and grace we mean His love in relation to His creatures.

(b) Benevolence. Benevolence is the love of God as it is displayed toward all creatures. God makes the sun to shine upon the just and unjust alike; he feeds the animals and birds; He gives fruitful seasons to all.

The Scriptures teach the benevolence of God in a number of places as indicated above. “Thou art good, and doest good” Psalm 119:68; He gives rain, sunshine and fruitful seasons (Acts 14:17; Matt. 5:45; Psalm. 65:11).

©) Mercy. Mercy is the love of God exercised toward the miseries of His creatures. It is His loving kindness, his goodness, pity, compassion, patience, and longsuffering. Mercy is the means by which God deals with man.

The Scriptures teach the mercy of God. He is “rich in mercy” (Eph.2:4); He is “full of pity and merciful” (Jas. 5:11); He is merciful toward Israel (Psalm. 102:13); toward the Gentiles (Rom. 11:30); toward all that fear Him (Luke 1:50).

(d) Grace. Grace is the love of God exercised toward sinful man as guilty and undeserving. It is displayed in His work of redemption as He made a way for man to be saved. Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10; Titus 3:5.

The Scriptures teach the grace of God in a number of places. Grace redeems us (Eph 1:7,8); enables us to believe (Acts 18:27); justifies us (Rom 3:24); enables us to serve God acceptably (Heb. 12:28); established our hearts in the truth (Heb. 13:9).

(5) Truth

(a) Meaning of the term. By the truth of God we mean that God’s knowledge, declarations, and representations eternally conform to reality.

Hodge well analyzes this idea. He says, the truth is” (a) that which is real, as opposed to that which is fictitious or imaginary. Jehovah is the true God, because He is really God, while the gods of the heathen are vanity and nothing . . . , (b) that which completely comes up to its idea, or what it purports to be The true God is He in whom is found all that Godhead imports; ©) that in which the reality exactly corresponds to the manifestation. God is true because He really is what He declares Himself to be; because He is what He commands us to believe Him

to be; and because all His declarations correspond to what really is; (d) that which can be depended upon, which does not fail, or change, or disappoint. In this sense also God is true as He is immutable and faithful. His promise cannot fail; His word never disappoints" (op.cit., I p.436 f.).

(b) Scriptural teaching.

1] John 17:3 - "The only true God."

2] 1 John 5:20 - "We know Him that is true."

3] John 6:32 - "The true bread . . ."

4] See also Jer. 10:10; John 3:33; 7:28; Rom. 3:4; 2 Cor.

1:18; 1 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 6:10.

(6) Veracity and Faithfulness

(a) Meaning of the term. By veracity and faithfulness we mean His truth exercised toward His creatures.

(b) Veracity

1] His veracity relates to what He reveals of Himself and to what He says. His revelation of Himself in nature, consciousness, and the Scriptures are true and can be depended upon.

2] The Scriptures teach His veracity.

a] Psalm. 108:4 - "Thy truth reacheth unto the skies."

b] Psalm. 11:7,8 - "all His precepts are sure."

c] Psalm. 117:2 - "The truth of Jehovah endureth

forever."

©) Faithfulness

1] God's faithfulness leads Him to fulfill all His promises, whether expressed in words or implied in the constitution He has given man.

2] The Scriptures also teach God's faithfulness.

a] Lam. 3:23 - "Great is thy faithfulness."

b] Isa. 25:1 - "His promises are said to be faithful and

true."

c] Deut. 7:9 - "The faithful God."

(7) Sovereignty

(a) Meaning of the term. Strictly speaking, sovereignty is not an attribute but a prerogative arising out of His perfections.

We may define God's sovereignty as His absolute right to govern all His creatures according to His own good pleasure; God keeps the reins of government in His own hands.

(b) Scriptural teaching. The Scriptures abundantly teach that God is sovereign in the universe.

1] Psalm. 115:3 - "But our God is in the heavens, He hath done whatsoever He pleased."

2] Eph. 1:11 - "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

3] Dan. 4:35 - "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?"

4] See also Pa. 24:1; Isa. 45:9; Ezek 18:4; Rom. 9:14-24; 11:36; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 4:11.

(c) From these Scriptures we conclude that His sovereignty is universal, extending to all His creatures; absolute, i.e., not divided between Himself and someone or something else; and immutable, i.e., unchangeable and final. In His sovereignty He establishes the laws, both physical and moral, by which His creatures are to be governed; determines the nature and powers of the different orders of created beings and assigns each its appropriate sphere; appoints to each individual and nation their position and lot; and distributes His favors (Hodge, op.cit., p. 440 f.). It must be remembered, however, that His sovereignty is exercised in conformity with His character as a holy, wise and loving God.

VI. THE TRINITY OF GOD.

The word “trinity” does not occur in the Bible. Lord claims that in its Greek form trias, it was first used by Theophilus of Antioch, and in its Latin form trinitas, by Tertullian. However, the belief in the trinity is much older than that.

A. MEANING OF THE TERM.

1. By the trinity of God we mean that there are three eternal personal distinctions in the one divine essence, known respectively as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. These three distinctions are three persons, so we may speak of the tripersonality of God. We have already proved the personality of God; but it is evident that God cannot in the same sense be one person and three persons. He can, however, “be at once three persons and one personal Being.” (Shedd, op.cit., I. p.194).

3. As three persons, the consciousness is trinal; as one personal being, it is single. The so-called Athanasian Creed expresses the trinitarian belief in these words:

“We worship one God in trinity, the trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons, nor separating the substance.”

B. PROOF OF THE DOCTRINE.

1. The Trinity intimated in the Old Testament. Although as we have already said, the burden of the Old Testament is the unity of God, yet there are many intimations of a plurality in the Godhead and some indications that this plurality is a trinity.

- a. The plural nouns and pronouns applied to God intimate a trinity.
 - (1) Gen. 1:26 - “Let us make man in our image.”
 - (2) Gen. 11:7 - “Let us go down and confound their language.”
 - (3) Gen. 3:22 - “Behold the man is become as one of us.”
 - (4) Isa. 6:8 - “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”

- b. The fact that Jehovah is distinguished from Jehovah intimates a trinity.
- (1) Gen. 19:24 “Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven.”
 - (2) Hos. 1:6,7 “And Jehovah said . . . But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God . . .
- c. The fact that Jehovah has a son together with the Spirit being distinguished from God intimates a trinity.
- (1) Gen. 1:1,2 - “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters.”
 - (2) Psa. 2:7 - “Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son
 - (3) Isa. 48:16 - “. . . And now the Lord Jehovah hath sent me, and his Spirit.”
 - (4) Isa. 63:10 - “But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy.”
- d. The Trisagion intimates a trinity.
- (1) Isa. 6:3 - “And one cried unto another, Holy, holy, holy is the Jehovah of hosts.”
 - (2) cf Rev. 4:8 - “Saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.”
- e. The Priestly benediction intimates a trinity.
- (1) Num. 6:24 - “Jehovah bless and keep thee . . .”
 - (2) Num. 6:25 - “Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee . . .”
 - (3) Num. 6:26 - “Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee . . .”
- f. The presence of the Theophanies (such as “The angel of Jehovah) intimates a trinity.
- (1) Gen 22:11 - “And the angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven .
 - (2) Gen. 31:11 - “And the angel of God said unto me in a dream .
 - (3) Judges 13:21 - “But the angel of Jehovah did no more appear to Manoah or to his wife.”

2. The Trinity is Taught in the New Testament.

a. By this we do not mean that the doctrine is definitely formulated in the New Testament, but that it is there in solution, as it were. (Strong, op.cit., p.304).

b. The trinity is taught by the following general statements and allusions in the New Testament:

(1) When Jesus was baptized, He was there, the voice spoke from heaven, and the Spirit descended upon Him (Matt. 3:16,17).

(2) The baptismal formula required that the disciples baptize in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19).

(3) Jesus said he would pray the Father and the Father would give them another Comforter (John 14:6,17; 15:26).

(4) The way in which the Father, Son and the Spirit are associated in their work indicates a trinity (1 Cor 12:4-6; 1 Pet. 1:2).

3. Trinitarianism distinguished from other teachings. There are some errors with regard to the triune God that have been made as various men have endeavored to explain the trinity.

a. Sabellianism. Sabellianism teaches a modal trinity, i.e., that the one God at one time exists as Father, at another as Son, and at still another as the Holy Spirit.

b. Tritheism. Tritheism holds that there are three distinct Gods, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

c. Swedenborgianism. This theory holds that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three essentials of one God, which make one, just as the soul, body, and spirit make one in man. According to this theory any one of the trinity is not complete without the other two.

d. Arianism. Arianism teaches that Jesus was the highest of created beings hence, the Son is not actually God. If Jesus Christ is created He cannot be God.

e. Unitarianism. Unitarianism denies the doctrine of the trinity and holds that God is unipersonal, i.e., that God exists only in one person.

The orthodox formula is “Three in One, and One in Three.”

VII. THE WORKS OF GOD. Our study of the decrees of God leads us naturally to the study of the execution of the decrees. This department of theology is known as the Works of God. It embraces creation, preservation, providence, redemption, and consummation. But since the last two doctrines are so supremely important they will be treated under other heads. We confine ourselves here to a discussion of the doctrines of creation, preservation and providence.

A. CREATION. Shedd says: "Creation, in the proper sense of origination ex nihilo, is the very first work that God does ad extra Hence creation is called 'the beginning of God's way,' Prov. 8:22; and God is said to have created the heaven and earth 'in the beginning,' Gen 1:1" (op.cit., I. P.464). We treat the doctrine briefly under five heads.

1. Definition of Creation.

a. Immediate Creation.

(1) By immediate creation we mean that free act of the triune God whereby in the beginning and for His own glory, without the use of pre-existing materials, or secondary causes, He brought into being, immediately and instantaneously, the whole visible and invisible universe.

(2) This definition conceives of creation as the free act of God, and so is opposed to all pantheistic notions of necessary creation. It holds that the whole Trinity had a part in creation, and so recognizes the equality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit from the beginning. It considers creation the first work of God ad extra, as we have already asserted above. It recognizes God not only as the efficient cause, but also as the final cause of creation. It repudiates the view that creation is simply a re-shaping of materials already in existence and the cooperation of second causes in the original act of God. It limits this use of the term "creation" to the immediate act of God and the instantaneous results that sprang therefrom, and in so doing it rejects the doctrine of emanation, spontaneous generation, and evolution. It embraces in its scope the whole visible and invisible universe, and so includes not only material existence, but also immaterial

b. Mediate Creation.

(1) By mediate creation we mean those acts of God which are in the Scripture denominated "creation", in which He shapes and adapts existing materials or employs secondary causes in bringing things into being.

(2) Particularly we note that man is said to have been “created” (Gen. 1:27) and also to have been “formed” of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). Thus also God is the Creator of every human being since the days of Adam (Ps. 139:16; Isa. 43:1,7; 54:16; Ezek. 21:30). And finally, as Hodge says: “The Bible constantly speaks of God as causing the grass to grow, and as being the real author or maker of all that the earth, air, or water produces” (op.cit.,I p.557).

2. Proof of the Biblical Doctrine of Creation. From ancient times man has been trying to solve the “riddle” of the universe. He has asked, Did it always exist or did it have a beginning? Mere science or reason cannot fully solve the problem. Science, not knowing how to investigate the “riddle”, has given up the inquiry about origins and now contents itself with the study of structure, function, and development. Philosophy has given no adequate solution to the problem; we shall consider its proposed solutions in the next section. We are shut up to the Scriptures for the full proof of the doctrine of creation, and to them we now turn.

a. The Mosaic account of Creation.

(1) Concerning Genesis 1:1. Three times in Gen. 1 we have the Hebrew word bara (1:1,21,27), that is translated “created.” in Gen. 2:3,4 the same word is used. According to these references the heavens and the earth, the great sea-monsters, and the man were created.” Does this mean that they were brought into being without the use of pre-existing materials? God is said to have “created” and “made” the world, and the same thing is true of plants and animals. But that Gen. 1:1 and 2:3,4 do teach this doctrine is clear from a number of things.

(2) Interpretations of the Creation Account.

(a) The Mythical or Allegorical theory.

1] There have been various forms of this particular interpretation, the oldest being used by liberals of a past generation who regarded the creation account as embodying the poetic speculations of an early race. Liberal theologians following after Eichhorn and Baur accepted such a theory.

2] More recently, neo-orthodox theologians have avowed that the Genesis account of creation is non-historical, that is, the historical element as we understand history has been removed. The Genesis account belongs to a “super-history”. The events described in Genesis did not actually happen, nevertheless, science has made it possible for us to see the real meaning of such events, and in this respect the Genesis record is true myth.

3] Suffice to say that if the creation account in Genesis does not belong to history, we would have to say that the creation is incomprehensible and each man would be left to his own “demythologizing”, that is, the finding out the true meaning of events recorded in Genesis.

(b) The Theistic-evolutionary theory.

1] This theory holds that following the original creation ex nihilo (without the use of pre-existing materials) in Gen. 1:1, God, during a period running probably into millions of years, used evolution as a method to develop the lowest form into the higher and the higher into the highest. in other words, God used evolution as a method to bring into being the present order of things

2] Strong who was one of the earliest advocates of this view admits God created matter, animal life, and the life of man, the word “create” occurring in each case; but between these breaks there was development.

3] This theory has not had much support and it is said that Strong himself repudiated such a theory before his death.

(c) The Geologico-Progressive theory.

1] This theory regards the six days of creation as six geological ages during which God completed the creation which was stated in general terms in Gen. 1:1.

2] W.G.T. Shedd held to this view as did Charles Hodge, William Miley and others. On this view we have in vs. 1 and introductory statement covering the entire creative work of God, and then in the following verses we have a detailed in regard to the process in creation.

3] In favor of this view may be cited Ex. 20:11, “For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.” This statement covers the work of all the six days. It would seem that the word day is sometimes used for a season or period of time. The same term occurs in each of the following references, such references indicating that the term may refer to a long period of time: Gen. 26:8; 38:12; Num.13:20b; Deut, 19:6; Josh.3:15; in all of which it is rendered “time.” The same term is used of the “day of Jehovah”, in such references as Amos 5:18,20; Isa. 13:6; Zech. 1:7.

(d) The Literal View.

1] This view holds that the six days are to be interpreted as six literal days. There are two varieties to this view, the one holding that creation was completed in six literal days; the other maintains that the original creation is vs. 1 became a “desolation and a waste” through some great catastrophe, and that

in six literal days God reformed the ruined mess, caused the light to shine, vegetation to spring forth, the luminaries to take their place in the heavens, and animal life and man to come into being.

2] The first type of this view is similar to the preceding theory, that is, it holds that vs. 1 is a general statement of which the details are given in the rest of the chapter. It differs from it in holding that the six days are literal days of 24 hours and not long periods of epochs.

3] The second type of the literal view is sometimes called the “hypothesis of restitution” or “gap” theory. G. Campbell Morgan held strongly to this view as is seen in his comment on vs. 2:

“It is not possible that these words describe the condition of the heaven and the earth as they were created by God. Between the original creation and the conditions herein described there had been a cataclysm. Of that, revelation has given us no account (Analyzed Bible, Introduction, Vol 1, p.11).”

4] Isaiah 45:18 seems to support this view:

“For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste [the same word as in Gen. 1:27,] that formed it to be inhabited.”

5] Those who hold to this view believe that practically all the events of which geology speaks occurred during this period. On this interpretation the original creation in vs. 1 includes the creation of angels, and was absolutely perfect.

(e) The Pictorial or Revelatory Day Theory.

1] This theory of interpretation states that the six days refer to the periods during which Moses received the revelation or record of creation from God. In other words, creation was revealed to Moses in six days. The six days might be topically or logically ordered but not necessarily chronologically.

2] The question is asked, what was revealed in this “pictorial day”? A progressive creation by God is the answer, that is, nature is permeated with divine activity. insofar as it is a revelation, the unknown past is revealed the same way as the unknown future - pictorially, visually, optically.

3] There is much to be said in favor of this theory although Moses himself heard the word of the Lord on the mount say, “in six days Jehovah made the heaven and earth . . . and rested the seventh day” (Ex. 20:11) which gives the idea of cosmic days if we are to understand the hall owing of the

Sabbath day to be a 24 hour cosmic day.

(f) Eden-Only Theory. This theory of the Genesis account of creation says that the creation mentioned here refers to Eden only and has no reference whatsoever to the rest of the earth or universe. The rest of the universe was created at intervals long before Eden - the latter being a creation of God only a few thousand years ago.

(g) Alternate Day-Age Theory. This interpretation of the Genesis account says that the days were actually cosmic days but were separated by vast geological ages during which there was development and adaptation. The command of God to “multiply and cover the earth” or its equivalent after each creation implies a gap after each day.

(h) Concurrent (Overlapping) Ages Theory. God as the Creator is not concerned with time as is man but is an eternal God. He could have used “six literal days, or six seconds, or six minutes, or six billion years, as he chose. Time does not limit him. “ (Evolution and Christian Thought Today, edited by Mixer, p. 31). Hence the days of Genesis might refer to creative acts that may be overlapping in occurrence without reference to time, rather than consecutive events.

(i) The Split-Week Theory. This theory is similar to the “Concurrent Ages Theory” in that the word “day” in Genesis does not necessarily refer to a 24 hour day. We have no way of knowing how long each of these “days” were but simply that they were long enough for the Creator’s purpose, whether they referred to a time taking an instant (“let there be light”) or millions of years for the creation of animals and plants.

(j) Interpretation of Genesis Account in Creation.

1] Creation - Catastrophism Theory. This theory holds that God created all things as’ given in chapters one and two of Genesis. Chapters 6-10 of Genesis give the record of a world-wide cataclysmic flood during which time the earth’s crust was broken causing great geological changes.

2] This universal intervention of God, the Flood, is called in geological language a catastrophism (the doctrine that changes in the earth’s crust have generally been effected suddenly by physical forces). Morris says that biblical catastrophism is:

The doctrine that at least on occasions mentioned in Scripture, God has directly intervened in the normal physical processes of the universe, causing significant changes therein for a time. (Henry Morris, The Genesis Flood, p. XXI.)

3] Comments: According to this interpretation the earth, as well as man, is only a few thousand years old. Morris contends that instead of speaking of long geologic ages, we should refer to only one former age - the age between creation and the flood. Assuming that Adam was created the same time as the earth, we might otherwise state that this former age extended from Adam to Noah - a period of only a few thousand years.

This theory might also be called the “late Earth” or “Young Earth” theory. That is the earth is relatively late or young.

b. Other Biblical proofs of Creation.

(1) Old Testament Scriptures.

(a) Psa. 104:30-”Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground.”

(b) Psa 148:5 -”Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for he commanded, and they were created.”

(c) Isa. 40:26 - Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these that bringeth out their host by number”.

(d) Isa. 42:5 - “Thus saith God Jehovah, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; he that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein”

(2) New Testament Scriptures.

(a) John 1:3 - “All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made”

(b) Acts 17:24 - “the God that made the world and all things therein.”

(c) Col. 1:16 - “for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him.”

(d) Rev. 4:11 “worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.” (cf. Rev. 10:6).

c. The End of God in Creation.

(1) The glory of God. is the supreme end in creation. By the glory of God we mean the manifestation of His inherent excellency, the fullest revelation of His divine perfections. In other words, God created the universe in

order to manifest His divine character and perfection in the most complete way. God did not create in order to receive glory but to make his glory manifest.

(2) The following Scriptures prove that the end is in God in Creation:

- (a) "Jehovah hath made everything for his own purposes." Prov.16:4 (Marg)
- (b) "For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things." (Rom 11:36)
- (c) ". . . All things have been created through him and unto him." (Col. 1:16).

d. Some conclusions regarding the Biblical Doctrine of Creation.

(1) Most of the above theories are creationist concepts which have come in subsequent to Darwin.

(2) Ultimate answers in the matter of creation cannot be attained by research (science).

(3) Ultimate answers cannot be attained by reason (philosophy).

(4) If God exists (and He does) and He has chosen to reveal information to mankind concerning the origin of the universe, then the Scriptures have the only ultimate answers.

(5) The Genesis account (1:1-23) is a record of the revelation made to Moses regarding creation.

(6) The revelation of Moses pertains mainly to the creation of the heavens and earth, not necessarily to the creation of man; the revelation indicates that upon the earth that God created (immediate creation), man was created from it (mediate creation) and placed in it to live upon it.

(7) The revelation of the *unknown past was made to him apocalyptically (a disclosure or unveiling of truth) in the same sense that much of the unknown future was made known to the Bible writers apocalyptically, e.g., the book of Revelation.

(8) The *known past was revealed to Bible writers historically in the same sense that the known future is revealed prophetically.

The above may be diagrammed as ff:

- | Past | Future |
|---|---|
| 1. <u>known</u> revealed historically. | 1. <u>Known</u> revealed prophetically. |
| 2. <u>Unknown</u> revealed apocalyptically. | 2. <u>Unknown</u> revealed apocalyptically. |

*Unknown = not revealed to Bible writer in a grammatical, historical or literal manner.

*Known = revealed to Bible writer in a grammatical, historical or literal manner.

B. PRESERVATION.

1. Meaning of Preservation.

a. Strong says that preservation is “that continuous agency of God by which He maintains in existence the things He has created, together with the properties and powers with which He has endowed them.” (op. cit., p. 410).

b. According to this view, preservation is not creation, for it presupposes creation; nor is it a refraining from destroying what has been created. It is, as the definition states, a ‘continuous agency of God’ by which he maintains in existence all that He has created.

2. Proof of the doctrine.

a. The Scriptures teach that even though God rested after he completed the work of creation, He yet continues his activities in upholding the universe and its powers.

b. The following Scriptures bear this out:

(1) Neh. 9:6 - “Thou art Jehovah, even thou alone thou has made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and thou preservest them all.”

(2) Col. 1:17 - “and he is before all things, and in him all things consist.”

(3) Heb. 1:3 - “who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power.”

3. The method of Preservation. There are several theories as to the method that God uses to preserve that which he has created.

a. Deism.

(1) Deism holds that God created the universe and endowed it with powers sufficient to keep itself in existence. Hence when God had finished the work of creation He withdrew and left the universe to the self-sustaining powers with which He had endowed it.

(2) To this we reply that it rests upon a false analogy. Man is able to construct a self-moving watch because he uses pre-existing materials already endowed with the powers of elasticity, cohesion, etc., but God originated these powers and also sustains them. And further, God has not withdrawn from His universe, for He answers prayer, He has sent His Son, and He has performed the teaching of Scripture that He continues to uphold all that He has created

b. Continuous Creation Theory.

(1) Continuous creation holds that from moment to moment God creates the universe with all that is in it. This view is based on the conception that all force is divine will, and that in direct exercise, whereas there is also human will and the indirect exercise of the divine will, namely, in the form of natural law.

(2) To this view we object, first, that our consciousness testifies that the regular activity in nature is not the repetition of creation, but the indirect exercise of His power; secondly, that it impugns the truth and holiness of God, in that continuous creation merely makes us seem to be the same personalities from moment to moment when we are not; and in making all will God's will, it makes Him the author of sin.

c. Divine Concurrence.

(1) This is the true view. It holds that God concurs in all the operations, both of matter and of mind. Though God's will is not the only force in the universe, yet without His concurrence no force or person can continue to exist or act.

(a) Romans 11:36 - "For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things."

(b) Col. 1:17 - "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."

(c) Acts 17:28 - "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

(d) Psa. 36:6 - "O Jehovah, thou preservest man and beast."

(2) We note that this divine concurrence of Cod is mediated by His Son, Jesus Christ, who was not only the agent in Creation but also in preservation.

C. PROVIDENCE.

1. Meaning of the term.

a. This doctrine, too, may be treated briefly. The word "providence" means etymologically "foreseeing," and then "providing for the future."

b. There is a difference between preservation and providence; for while preservation is a maintenance of things created, providence is the actual control over them. In His providential dealings God may employ the regular laws of nature or miracle, both physical and spiritual, to bring about His purposes. He may do things in answer to prayer or without prayer. Spiritually He works in believers to "will and to do of His good pleasure," and therefore we ought to "work out" our own salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2:12,13.

2. The method of Providence.

a. The method that God uses in controlling the affairs of men and the universe is not always seen. We must believe that God is sovereign, that He does have a purpose for all things, and that He will exercise His control. More specifically, we see his providential workings as they relate to His own purpose (Rom. 8:28,29), and for His own people.

b. We read, "Yet there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him." 1 Cor. 8:6. Note that God works all things Himself, through His Son, Jesus Christ, and in turn His purpose in us is carried out in the Son

c. Note some of the significant factors in the providence of God.

(1) Providence is preventative. Gen. 20:6; Psa. 19:13.

(2) Providence is permissive. 2 Chron. 32:31, Rom. 3:25.

(3) Providence is directive. Gen. 50:20; Acts 4:27,28.

(4) Providence is determinative. 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Cor. 10:13.

d. In addition to the above we make the following observations concerning the providence of God.

(1) Providence has as its goal the carrying out of the divine purpose. See Heb. 2:10.

(2) God is working out all things so that His spiritual kingdom will ultimately and finally be established. 1 Cor 15:23-26.

(3) The providence of God usually works in accord with moral and physical laws. See Matt. 5:45.

(4) The providence of God extends to individuals as well as to the universe as a whole. Rom. 8:28.

3. Proof of the doctrine of Providence. The Scriptures teach that God exercises a providential control over the world in general but more specifically as follows:

a. Over the universe at large: “His kingdom ruleth over all” (Ps. 103:19), “He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth” (Dan 4:35).

b. Over the world of nature:

(1) “he causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man.” (Ps. 104:14).

(2) “that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust” (Matt. 5:45)

c. Over the brute creation:

(1) “The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God . . . Thou givest unto them, they gather; thou openest thy hand, they are satisfied with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.” (Ps. 104:2,28,29).

(2) “are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father.” (Matt. 10:29).

d. Over the affairs of nations:

(1) “for the kingdom is Jehovah’s; and he is the ruler over the nations.” (Ps. 22:28).

(2) “till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” (Dan. 4:25)

- e. Over man's birth and lot in life:
 - (1) "before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee . . . sanctified thee; I have appointed thee" (Jer. 1:5)
 - (2) "God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles " (Gal. 1:15,16).
- f. Over the successes and failures:
 - (1) "But God is the judge; he putteth down one, and lifteth up another." (Ps. 75:6,7).
 - (2) "He hath put down princes from their thrones, and hath exalted them of low degree" (Luke 1:52).
- g. Over the seemingly accidental or insignificant:
 - (1) "If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee." (Ex. 21:13).
 - (2) "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matt. 10:30).
- h. Over the needs of His people:
 - (1) "in peace will I both lay down and sleep; for thou, Jehovah, alone makest me dwell in safety (Ps. 4:8).
 - (2) "to them that love God all things work together for good." (Rom.8:28).
 - (3) "my God shall supply every need of yours." (Phil 4:19).
- i. Over the destinies of the saved and the unsaved:
 - (1) "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps. 73:24).
 - (2) "a man's goings are established of Jehovah; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for Jehovah upholdeth him with his hand" (Ps. 37:23,24).
 - (3) "Upon the wicked he will rain snares; fire and brimstone and burning wind shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps. 11:6).

3. Theories opposed to the doctrine of Providence.

a. Naturalism. We have already seen that this system takes nature as the whole of reality (under the Existence of God). Strictly speaking it has no doctrine of origins; it confines itself to speculation concerning the perpetuation and development of that which exists. Now while the Scriptures recognize the operation of natural laws, they do not conceive of them as the whole explanation of reality. History testifies to the same thing. Naturalism cannot explain miracles, especially the miracles of the incarnation and the resurrection of Christ; nor can it explain the course of history.

b. Fatalism.

(1) “Fatalism is the doctrine that the course of events is so determined that what an individual wills can have no effect upon that course.” (New Standard Encyclopedia).

(2) Fatalism therefore leaves no room for the providential workings of God. Instead it conceives of God or some other inscrutable power as decreeing the end, and then waiting till the appointed time to bring it about. The predestined victim is predestined not to thwart the use of predestined means.

c. Determinism.

(1) “Determinism asserts that events are so determined by some of the events that immediately precede them, that if the latter were different the former would be different.” (New Standard Encyclopedia).

(2) In other words, determinism is simply the natural development of situations. Because certain situations are true, they in turn determine the course of action or result in the ultimate development. Determinism assume no decree, whether of God, or of fate, it simply says that “what happens now, determines what will happen next.”

(3) Of course, determinism in common with fatalism, rules out a providential God and is thus opposed to the doctrine of providence.

d. Pantheism.

(1) As explained earlier in the text, pantheism regards God and the universe as one and the same. Hence, pantheism makes God the only cause in the universe. It follows logically that God is thus the author of sin, destroying man’s true responsibility to God.

(2) Pantheism thus opposes the doctrine of providence as it impugns the personality of God. Like naturalism ‘it cannot explain miracles nor the intervention of God in the universe in any given situation.