



Morgan Llwyd
A Book of Three Birds



Cockatrice Books
Y diawl a'm llaw chwith

Translated with an introduction by Rob Mimpriss

A BOOK OF THREE BIRDS

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The Welsh-language text was first published with Morgan Llwyd's many Biblical references presented in marginal notes. For technical reasons, these are presented as footnotes, along with my own additional explanations of the text.

Rob Mimpriss

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'Nid hunan sydd yma yn dy gymmell'
Morgan Llwyd

INTRODUCTION

An eagle, a raven and a dove meet and debate in Morgan Llwyd's seminal masterpiece of Welsh prose style,¹ *A Book of Three Birds*. The year is 1653 A.D., the year in which *A Book of Three Birds* was published, and on whose events the three birds reflect: the civil war which brought Oliver Cromwell to power (p. 35); more recent, demoralising wars in Ireland and Scotland (pp. 38, 43); and the abolition of Parliament (p. 35). The book is written in expectation of the year 1656, an omen of the Second Coming (p. 66), for the world waits in suspense between two disasters: the fires of the Day of Judgement, which is imminent, and of which the Civil War is a foretaste, and the waters of the flood which drowned the world in the time of Noah, and which symbolically have not yet receded (p. 71). The reality of this coming judgement underlies all human politics (p. 42), all industry and learning (p. 53), just as the reality of the coming flood underlay the eating and drinking, courtship and marriage of the antedeluvian world (p. 73). These two judgements, and the uneasy rest between them, are symbolised in the shape of the rainbow, and in the red and blue with which it is fringed (p. 79).

Authority is held by the Eagle, despite his indifferent religious accomplishment, who has been chosen by God to be king of the birds (pp. 102, 25), and to choose between the

contesting opinions of the Raven and the Dove. The moral and spiritual contrast between these two birds, and the symbolic exploration of Noah's Ark, are informed by the *Mysterium Magnum* of the theologian and mystic, Jakob Böhme (1575-1624),² translated in part in the *Mercurius Teutonicus* of 1649,³ and are developed imaginatively, and brought dramatically to life, in Morgan Llwyd's dialogue. The Raven claims loyalty to religious tradition, to reason and conscience (p. 33), and to the losing side in this civil war (p. 35), while the Dove represents the new politics and religious beliefs, still being revealed by the intervention of God (p. 127). The discussion is not even-handed. For the Raven, with his taste for carrion and prey (pp. 24, 28), is considered 'evil' by the Eagle, who has abandoned such dainties in favour of respect for life and freedom of conscience (pp. 27, 31, 44, 30), and who directs him to follow the example of the Dove, whose authority comes from good conduct and knowledge, and whose vulnerability to violence is stressed (pp. 26, 71, 38, 44).

The opening words of the Raven establish his nature as an exile and wanderer, and echo the opening words of Satan in the Book of Job (p. 23). He is also a renegade, for this is the same raven whom Noah sent out from the Ark in search of dry land, and who never returned. By contrast, the Dove, who returned to the Ark with an olive branch as proof that the flood had receded, is identified with the dove which rested on Jesus at the time of his baptism, and represents divine influence in every age (p. 135). Noah symbolises God in his righteousness, in his triune nature as the father of three sons, and in his provision of the Ark, whereby he saves sinful human beings from the consequences of divine wrath

(p. 66). Yet the branches on which these birds sit are upheld and sustained by an unseen root (p. 134), just as the many branches of human knowledge are the confused and shattered fragments of a single wisdom (pp. 67, 123). And the God of Morgan Llwyd is at times less like the peevish tyrant whom William Empson finds portrayed in *Paradise Lost*,⁴ than like the God of Jakob Böhme, which comprises will and being, darkness and non-being, motion and becoming, and which gives rise to evil, outrage and pain at the junction between being and non-being within itself (p. 40). It is the 'eternal Nothing' which transcends 'Joy [and] Sorrow... Sensibility [and] Perception,' the 'Eternal Chaos, wherein all... are contained.'⁵ This is not a supreme being, from which the Raven might justly flee as a threat to his own autonomy, but is rather what Paul Tillich calls 'being itself,' transcending personhood, in which all being is empowered and affirmed.⁶

So the Raven is no existential hero in revolt against absurdity, any more than he is a rebel aristocrat opposing the powers of an upstart king.⁷ He is fearful for his property, resentful of his taxes (pp. 44, 33), and less politically astute than he thinks (p. 44). He is argumentative, yet suspicious of reason (pp. 37, 53), and like Thomas Hobbes, dismissive of what cannot be quantified or put to use (pp. 28, 62).⁸

The Raven prefers to eat the flesh of the dead than to live under the hand of Noah and his sons (pp. 23, 62). For this he blames the force of his nature, which can be reconciled neither with others nor with itself (pp. 39, 28).⁹ Crushed by his finitude, resentful of all that transcends his finitude, he chooses the carrion of non-being, expressed not only in his coming death, which he pushes to the back of his mind (p.

62), but in the qualities of which death is the fulfilment:¹⁰ in vindictiveness, defiance and despair.¹¹

After the departure of the Raven, during the Eagle's slow and painful journey from doubt to self-affirmation, the Dove refers him to those images of things he has seen or imagined, which are stored within his mind. Such images are permanent, remaining until death, and only the death of Jesus, who is the image of God, is capable of effacing these idols (pp. 96-98). A mere thought, says the Dove, is of more consequence than the world, because the world is passing, and thought is eternal (p. 98). Moreover, in advance of the coming Final Judgement, a special judgement is reserved for the people of Wales. Unless they produce spiritual fruit in keeping with their heritage, the Welsh will forfeit their identity as a nation (pp. 51, 111).

For Morgan Llwyd, as for Marcus Aurelius,¹² man is merely a 'sup of poison,' a 'nest of vipers' (pp. 89, 57), bestial (pp. 48, 92, 113, 132), ashamed of his thoughts, yet unable to control them, or account for all he has said (pp. 107, 106, 96). Moreover, Heaven and Hell are made manifest in the thoughts of the mind in this life, revealing both its true nature and its eternal destiny (pp. 83, 133), so for this reason the Eagle is urged to control his speech and to purify his mind (pp. 94-95).

For Iris Murdoch, it is foolish to dismiss of the life of the mind as unreal because it is merely individual and subjective, for a charitable thought which leads neither to speech nor to action is still greatly preferable to an uncharitable thought which results in no outward change.¹³ For Arthur Schopenhauer, the 'I' which so needily yearns to live is the

least unique and most extrinsic part of our personhood; the consciousness is a survival mechanism which guides the body in its search for food. Death, for Schopenhauer, ends this consciousness, but without destroying the personhood of which the consciousness is a function, because it cannot efface the time in which the person lived, and in which his thoughts and deeds are preserved forever.¹⁴

Christopher Lasch describes the people of our time as infantilised by pervasive consumerism, by the impossibility of self reliance in a technical society, and by the overwhelming threat of environmental destruction:¹⁵ threats which are as urgent for our time as the Second Coming was for Morgan Llwyd. And so we retreat from what we cannot change into a narcissistic 'minimal self:' unreflective and emotionally numbed, ironic and self-detached, or absorbed in escapist fantasies.¹⁶

Lasch places his hope in a 'guilty conscience,' a cultural revolution from which an ethic of social responsibility and environmental care might emerge:¹⁷ he has faith that the human race can survive. For Clive Betts, reviewing the crisis in which Welsh culture finds itself, hope is to be found in concerted local action, consolidating the language in areas where it is strong as a prelude to a wider linguistic revival.¹⁸ Rather than this, Paul Tillich proposes an 'absolute faith,' an affirmation of being which includes non-being, of 'life and the death which belongs to life,' by means of which the power of non-being is refuted.¹⁹ Hence a woman dying in a concentration camp in Viktor Frankl's memoir of the Holocaust sees the tree outside her window, and hears it speaking to her of 'life, eternal life,'²⁰ and even the Raven in his despair is offered the grounds of an absolute faith,

because being gives him the power to despair, and thereby transcends it. Absolute faith looks forward to nothing; instead, it affirms what is. But being, after all, is the point.

We find ourselves faced with the continuing threat of global destruction, torn between an inner life which is puerile and shameful, and an outer life which is hard to endure. We contemplate the imminent loss of half the species on earth,²¹ and account it bearable, and a similar loss to our cultural and linguistic diversity.²² The language in which Morgan Llwyd wrote, motivated by his love for his God and his people (p. 140), still faces an uncertain future.²³ Moreover we live in a union threatened, it seems, by extremists and separatists who would seek to divide us,²⁴ as recidivists, like the Raven, on the defeated side of a civil war.

Like the Raven, I belong on the defeated side of a civil war.²⁵ For on 23rd June 2016 I expressed the wishes of perhaps more than half the population of Wales and the U.K.²⁶ in voting to maintain my European citizenship in the E.U. referendum, acting on the advice of the British Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the former Deputy Prime Minister, the leader of the opposition, the First Minister of Scotland, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, the First Minister of Wales, the Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, the leader of the opposition in Wales, the President of the U.S.A., and the overwhelming majority of disinterested economists in the U.K.²⁷ For this act, supporters of Brexit, and of things more loathsome that hid beneath Brexit, branded me and those like me as libtards, as libturds, as snowflakes, as remoaners, as remoaniacs, as bedwetters, as saboteurs,²⁸ as appeasers, as

citizens of nowhere²⁹ and as enemies of the people,³⁰ demanding that we be silenced,³¹ be crushed, be tried for treason,³² kill ourselves,³³ be killed,³⁴ be hanged,³⁵ be shot as Jo Cox was shot,³⁶ be burnt to death, be murdered by hit men,³⁷ or be sent to the gas chambers:³⁸ events in which it is hard not to see the seeds of dictatorship.³⁹

For the people who call for our execution or murder, liberals and internationalists like myself are a threat to the unity and greatness of the British nation, to be silenced not only for the damage we might cause, but so that the memories of that civil war, and the ugliness by which it was won, can be effaced.⁴⁰ On the other hand, to people like myself, the threats and abuse to which they subject us speak less of jubilation at a battle nobly won, than of the emptiness of a victory which is actually a defeat,⁴¹ expressed in the bitterness and vindictiveness (pp. 31, 33, 35, 48), the paranoia and self-pity (pp. 30, 39, 62), the pride in ignorance and rejection of reason (pp. 37, 37), and the bile and resentment with which, as the Eagle warns him, the Raven has poisoned his mind (pp. 37, 49). And the British nationalism in whose name they act highlights the fragility of the union they claim to love.⁴²

Language groups were among those to warn against the consequences of Brexit. Cymdeithas yr Iaith joined Conradh na Gaeilge, the Gaelic Language Society, the Cornish Academy, and the Cornish Language Board in a joint statement warning of 'an insecure future for our communities' under a British government which 'has shown no desire to protect and promote the rights of speakers of our nations' languages, and have throughout much of our shared history conducted aggressive language policies

designed to eradicate our languages'⁴³ – a phrase which in Wales recalls the request in parliament for the deliberate extermination of the Welsh language, the imposition of English as the language of schools, and the violence perpetrated upon Welsh-speaking children under the Welsh Not.⁴⁴ To observers in Cymdeithas yr Iaith and its fellows, to speak of threats to a nation which has driven its neighbours to the point of cultural extinction, while stamping its language and culture on vast tracts of the globe, is both intellectually vapid and morally reprehensible, the self-pity of a society which complains of foreign oppression because it has never experienced any, which has never examined its past.⁴⁵ But neither is that division felt on one side alone. For support for Brexit in England predicts a sense that England has somehow been cheated by its weaker Celtic partners, weakened by the devolution which the British government undermines,⁴⁶ and which Brexit potentially undermines,⁴⁷ along with a growing English separatism.⁴⁸

In a time of public optimism, such tendencies might lead to a more graciously federal United Kingdom, or even a velvet divorce.⁴⁹ In a time of economic hardship, English secession will seem less attractive, and a brutishly Anglo-British nationalism, a hatred of the Welsh language,⁵⁰ and a hatred of the Welsh and Scots,⁵¹ will take its place. And so I find myself in a time which echoes Morgan Llwyd's, with its global upheaval, its divided kingdom, its fear of extinction, and its slumbering Wales.

Rob Mimpriss
Bangor, 2017

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A BOOK OF THREE BIRDS

*A mystery for some to understand and others to mock,
namely three birds in conversation, the Eagle, the Dove,
and the Raven, or a token of friendship to the people of
Wales in the year 1653 before the coming of 666*

Eagle. Where are you flying from, oh black-winged raven?

Raven. From going to and fro on the earth, and circling its meadows to find food.¹

Eagle. But are you not the bird that Noah sent out from the Ark, and that never returned to him again?

Raven. Indeed I am that bird, and I am afraid of you, King of the Birds.

Eagle. Why do you not go back to the one who sent you?

Raven. Because I would sooner eat the carcasses of the dead than be under the hand of Noah and his sons.

Eagle. You know, Raven, that the dove went back, with a green leaf in her beak?²

¹ The Eagle's question and the Raven's reply echo God's question and Satan's reply in Job 1.7. (Rob Mimirriss.)

² Noah's use of a raven and dove to scout for dry land is described in Gen 8.6-13. (Rob Mimirriss.)

Raven. What of that? She is only a feeble thing among the birds of the air. I myself am the stronger, and by far the more cunning.

Eagle. But still you eat the flesh of the dead, and feast on unnatural filth.

Raven. So do you at times, oh Eagle, for all your pride and kingship.

Eagle. That is true. But I will summon the dove, and hear what she has to say of herself and us.

Raven. She will not keep us company out of fear, or speak her mind where I am.

Eagle. No. We must have the dove's counsel. We must listen to all, and choose the best. Where are you, oh Dove, in the hiding places of the steps? Let us hear your voice.¹

Dove. If I have leave, and if I do not, I have a will to reveal the mystery of the floodwaters and the old world and the new; I delight to bear the green leaf and the good news to those who are saved. And it is fitting that I should have leave to tell the truth about myself undisturbed, and about every other bird.

Eagle. Then do so. No one will hinder you. You have permission to proceed.

Dove. I have much to reveal concerning the scriptures and the souls of men, concerning kingdoms and wars, the Ark of the Covenant, and the rising of the day-star, the Sun of Righteousness, and the Day of Judgement, the end of this world, and the start of the next, the nature of God, and

¹ The Eagle quotes Song 2.14. (Rob Mimpriss.)

the nature of men, Heaven and Hell, and many other matters. But the raven is intractable, and will not willingly hear any good thing.

Eagle. But Noah commissioned me, the eagle, to pacify the raven, and keep peace among the birds. And just as we eagles are stronger than ravens, so good is stronger than ill.

Dove. What does the eagle wish to know? And what news is he minded to ask?

Eagle. I would learn from you the mysteries of Noah's Ark, and would behold the fear, and the flood, and the war, and the woe, and the pride, and the peril, and the vanity, and the iniquity that persist throughout the earth. When will they come to an end?

Dove. Noah's Ark is a mystery revealed only to a few, for evil birds are neither worthy nor willing to hear it. But as for the green leaf, and the good news, the floodwaters will recede when the eternal gospel is preached throughout the earth.

Eagle. But do the preachers not preach it in every parish already, and tell parables and read the word to us as we stand?

Dove. Not for the most part. They do not know God, any more than the mole knows the sunlight, any more than the children of Eli know their creator.¹

Eagle. And yet they claim that all of them preach the gospel.

¹ Eli's children are corrupt priests, and the subject of Samuel's first prophecy. (1 Sam 2.12-17, 3.1-18). (Rob Mimpriss.)

Dove. Yes, if the dove and the raven speak with one voice, or if the barking of dogs and the utterances of angels are one. And the one who does not know shepherd from wolf, or wolf from shepherd, is not in the flock of the Heavenly Lamb.

Eagle. Then what do you say of the green leaf and the eternal gospel?

Dove. They are a sign that the wrath of God has passed by, and the six thousand are passing, and the great Sabbath on Mount Ararat is at hand.

Eagle. And will there be peace on earth, and light, in the place of the tempests and stormy darkness of these days?

Dove. Yes, for many years.

Eagle. How do you prove this? If you can, I will be more pleased with you than with the raven or any other bird.

Dove. Listen, oh Eagle, and understand: I speak the truth. The world was created in six days, and on the seventh there was rest, says Moses. One day is like a thousand years for the one who dwells in eternity, and a thousand years are like a day, says Peter.¹ Understand what I say, Eagle, for few will discern him before he comes.

Raven. Croak. What this fool of a dove says before you even she does not know, oh noble Eagle.

Eagle. Hush! She did the world a service in the Ark. Every bird must needs use its voice.

Dove. The raven will have none of me, although I have never wronged him.

¹ Gen 2; 2 Pet 3.

Eagle. The evil will never endure the good, but drive them from wood to castle.

Raven. And is it an evil bird you call me? Is it so easy to dismiss me as evil?

Eagle. Your rage will end in Hell, and there you will stay. Yet you refuse to be known by the name of that land, or judged by your works.

Raven. I will not be addressed thus.

Eagle. Look, and learn from this dove. It makes no difference to her how she is addressed, for she is humble and patient.

Raven. I am no dove, but a raven. And every bird was ordained its form, and its voice, and its hue. And if you ask me, 'Why?' I will ask you, oh Eagle, 'Why are you not as small as the wren or the swallow?'

Eagle. But listen, Raven. What news do you bear after all your roaming throughout the world?

Raven. I have seen that cunning is good, wherever I go.

Dove. Your cunning is nothing but folly, since you cannot and will not return to Noah.

Raven. See, King Eagle, how the dove before you sits in judgement over me.

Dove. I only speak the truth about you, and the truth must have its place in the end.

Eagle. But tell us, oh dark-winged bird, to justify yourself: in what way are you more cunning than any other bird?

Raven. I can turn with every wind, and scent my food from

afar, and evade the bowmen. I land near no man without my eyes in my head. Whatever the opinions of the high-born, I swallow them, and so I have peace in my nest.

Eagle. But can the dove not also do these things?

Raven. Croak. Some of these new confessors are as rapacious as myself, and as wise to the world as the blackest raven. But if you turn the page, and read the other side closely, many of these new men have forsaken the world, and themselves, and all else, to be with Noah in the Ark, in the spiritual company of the second Adam,¹ and not one of us ravens understands their thinking.

Dove. The raven speaks the truth in this, for many have the plumage of doves about them, and too much of the nature of ravens within.²

Eagle. But listen, subtle raven, do you not have free will? Could you not choose to spare the new lambs, and find some other way to live?

Raven. If I had the will I could do so. If the worst could choose to be best, he would be so – but the will of all is imprisoned in their nature.

Eagle. But can you not forsake your will, and deny yourself?

Raven. No. Nature is stronger than anything, and few that I see swim against its current. No, none can oppose it for long except those who have a new nature.

¹ See Rom 5.12-21 and 1 Cor 15.20-22. That Jesus is a second Adam because his resurrection nullifies the curse of death brought about by the first is central to Pauline theology, and recurs in Morgan Llwyd's writings. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Titus 1.16.

Eagle. But what is the relationship between will and nature?

Raven. The will of the creature is like the bridle of a horse, or the rudder of a ship, or the lord of a country. And if the will is evil, then every feather of the bird will be evil also.

Eagle. You explain your reasoning well, but your acts are evil. Where did you get the sense to argue like this?

Raven. Where, but in the schools of the kingdom? But as a blackbird I went to school, and as the raven you see I came home.

Eagle. Well, then. You would have done no worse to stay there.

Raven. Oh, for nothing would I have stayed at home: for I learned the craft to deceive the birds, and if you allowed it, I would deceive you as well, just as the Pharisees tricked Pontius Pilate.¹ But your eye is keen, and I will say no more.

Eagle. But were there no doves in the schools you attended?

Raven. I saw a few. But I did not speak their language, and they could not understand my thinking. But why, oh Eagle, do you side with the dove against me?

Eagle. Noah thought better of her than of you.

Raven. Then remember that although the first and second dove returned to the Ark, the third did not come back to concern herself with it further.

Eagle. Perhaps the third was the Antichrist in the form of a dove, or perhaps she took the freedom to roam because

¹ Jesus is found guilty by the Sanhedrin on religious, and presented to the Roman governor on political, charges in Lk 22.66-23.5. (Rob Mimpriss.)

her intercession and ministry on the Ark were complete.

Raven. Yet all are like the worst if you but knew it.

Eagle. No indeed. For these are wise, innocent, amiable, sober, harmless birds, and in every nation there are others like them, for all that you croak against them. It would be better for you to stay with us in innocence. Noah knew you for an evil bird, and his bow reaches from the heights of Heaven to the depths of the earth, and his arrow is on the string against every evil bird who has left him and has not returned.

Raven. I have told you twice before: I can no more change my nature than I can change my hue. I have much to tell you, by your leave and welcome.

Eagle. Why will you not speak your mind plainly, since I have already given my leave?

Raven. But those of sense speak only in proverbs, for you are now a king. And if I say anything against your opinion, you will destroy me.

Eagle. Indeed I will not. Rulers should give leave to all to speak their mind. Speak boldly, and I will listen.

Raven. But it is dangerous to speak the truth now: soldiers and counsellors spy on the public, to catch us out and destroy us.

Eagle. Not at all. So you long as you are peaceful, and speak only the truth, you will be listened to.

Raven. Pay no heed to the dove. She can do nothing but murmur absurdities. After all, I say, it is sweet to feed on the lusts of the flesh while they last. And if I could, I

would joyfully tear the little ones after their second birth, and terrify the others with my croaking.

Eagle. The tearing and the terror are both wrong. But do you not know that it is better to be at peace with all than to be discontented? Learn from the simplicity of the doves, and you will be content.

Raven. Neither preacher reads his sermon better.

Eagle. The dove could reply that St. Paul was only a wretch and a fool in the eyes of the Corinthians.¹ But disposition, and depth of thought, are all that matters in a preacher.

Raven. But who is like the apostles now?

Eagle. Be that as it may, an eagle's eye can easily discern that the same sea is breaking out now as did in their time. But these wellsprings have yet to become lakes; they need lowly hearts to receive them.

Raven. Oh Eagle, do not believe false prophets, but punish them at once.

Eagle. They are not false prophets who declare the gospel, and live by its teachings: envy is wrong. You mentioned the good cheer you have enjoyed on the corpses of the dead. If you have had it, keep it if you can. I have had many such feasts, but I am done with them.

Raven. But do you not see the dove chicks fluttering to the pulpits to preach with their caul still on their heads? How can youth teach old age?

Eagle. The dove could tell you that the young lad, Joseph, and

¹ The Apostle acknowledges his shortcomings as a public speaker in 2 Cor 10.10. (Rob Mimpriss.)

Elihu as well, were more learned than their elders,¹ that some are learned in youth, and many are fools in old age. And that it is not the depth of the natural wells that waters the soul of a man, but showers from above, and that the learned Nicodemus knew no more of the second birth than an unborn child,² and less than a newborn baby. You will see a small child who understands more than a full-grown ox, and as the day dawns, so a man sees. So John the Evangelist saw more at midday than John the Baptist at dawn: therefore the least in the kingdom of Heaven was greater than he.³

Raven. Yet this hypocritical generation judges its forebears and condemns them to Hell, and even so they talk of perfect love.

Eagle. I know their purpose in speaking thus; you misunderstand their words. Paradise is high, and Hell is deep; not many in this world between yet see clearly who is in the other two. And as for their forebears, they hope that as many as acted in accordance with their knowledge have returned to the shelter of the Ark, but it is not enough for this generation to be like them. Much is to be expected from those who have received much.⁴

Raven. But there are many new opinions and destructive

¹ Joseph the imprisoned slave is summoned before Pharaoh because of his skill in interpreting dreams (Gen 41; Ps 105.22), while Elihu, the youngest of Job's comforters, ventures to speak because youth is not an impediment to divinely-given understanding (Job 32.1-10). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Zech 10.1; Jn 3.

³ See Mt 11.11. (Rob Mimpriss.)

⁴ Zech 1.4; Lk 12.48.

heresies among these unlearned birds.

Eagle. What heresies are they? I do not believe every tale. Let me see with my own eyes, and then I will judge.¹

Raven. But surely you believe the learned divines? And if they call you to vengeance, obey them at once.

Eagle. Not so. I saw in the time of Mary, Elizabeth, James and Charles of late, and even to this day, only the worst of violence, and much innocent blood was shed in trying to bend their consciences. But the drill of teaching must precede the hammer of government, or the wood will split or bend the nail.

Raven. Listen, oh princely Eagle. Why do you prohibit the ravens from obeying our reason and conscience? You take our prayer books from us, and you burden us with heavy taxes at your pleasure, and you do worse than threaten us if we do not pay them in full.

Eagle. As for the taxes, since the ravens know less than the eagles what must be done to maintain the army and navy that keep the peace, you must still pay tribute, and submit to the authority that is over you, and if the ravens were not still rebellious, there would be no need for soldiers, or taxes to maintain them. When you learn to live in peace, the taxes will be lightened. But as for the book of service, I will speak to the dove presently, and see what she has to say on this matter.

Raven. I am an unhappy raven. My forebears kept the peace, and the eagles and rulers of old ensured their comfort, but now you are more full of reason and less full of might

¹ Isa 11.3; Mt 15.14.

than the princes of old.

Eagle. That is enough of your flattery and hypocrisy. A while ago you spoke of destructive heresies among the doves. Name one of these heresies, and I will consider it, and if not – &c.

Raven. They maintain that there is only one king, and claim that he is present everywhere, although contained nowhere. I recognise no such king. And they intend to reject you, oh Eagle, as magistrate over them, and therefore my counsel to you is to look about you while there is still time.

Eagle. I have nothing to fear from these innocent doves. They will do only what Noah requires, for although he remains in physical form in the Ark, his Lordship extends over all the earth.

Raven. Yet they insist that they are the purest people. Did you not hear the dove earlier praising herself?

Eagle. She is far more placable than you. And I recall that righteous men of old claimed that they were children of the Ark, and that the whole world wallowed in sin, and that they had a secret seal known only to themselves.¹

Raven. But a man's opinion of himself cannot save him without good works.

Eagle. I know that the dove does not judge the wood pigeon, or any other kind of bird. But as for evil birds, their own deeds condemn them.

Raven. But where are their good works, for all their moaning

¹ 1 Jn 5.19; Rev 2.17.

and twittering?

Eagle. If they cannot do all the good they would wish, at least they do harm to none. And you, who have no desire to do good, have the will and the power to do evil.

Raven. But they do harm when they fly to their neighbours' fields and destroy their crops, in condemning them to Hell, as though all were damned.

Eagle. In this they are at fault, and I will not deny it. And none but Noah can judge the heart of every bird. But you judge the heart of the dove to be evil, when all men see from your plumage, and your words, and your deeds, that you are evil yourself.

Raven. I cannot sit and listen to this song. Please give me leave to go about my business.

Eagle. Oh, wicked, cunning bird, it is better to listen than to be killed, for many are killed who had been warned. I myself would rather be taught, but although I know little, I am obliged to give you counsel, and you are compelled to listen to my voice.

Raven. Do not criticise me too much. What warrant had you, if I might ask, to behead the king, and dissolve Parliament at your pleasure, so that few now know whom to obey and to whom to pay tribute? And I see the kingdom without ruler, like a body without a head, and every man does as he pleases.

Eagle. The words of the raven are bitter. But listen to reason even so. The spirit of government still endures, and whoever who will not bend to it will be shattered. Noah gives authority to whoever he pleases. Some he casts

down, and others he raises from the gutter to the throne. Neither Gideon nor Saul nor David were of any account in the world at first.¹ And on the other hand, he blows the princes of the world like dust on the threshing floor to the dungheap. For he does not judge men by appearances. The whole world is merely a footstool to him. He measures the firmament with a span, and holds the great sea in the palm of his hand, and weighs the mountains in scales.² If one great man is too light, he puts him aside, but he looks upon the lowly, and sustains the broken-hearted.

Raven. I see the kingdoms boiling like cauldrons on a fire. But what do you suppose will happen after this, oh Eagle?

Eagle. I myself do not know; my knowledge comes from the dove. But I suppose we will have a better world than before, for in the heavens and the new earth righteousness and justice will abide.

Raven. But can you not see for yourself that the world is going from bad to worse, and perfect love is ebbing away?

Eagle. Do not speak of perfect love, oh imperfect Raven. Judge your own faults first, and then there is hope for you.³ But do you not see how the sun hardens the clay? And as the sunlight warms the dungheap, its stench will be made plain: the good improve in every age, and the evil go from

¹ Gideon is the youngest member of the poorest family of his tribe when God calls him to lead his people (Judg 6.15); Saul is anointed as King of Israel while looking for his father's lost donkeys (1 Sam 9.3), and David, the youngest son of Jesse, is called from tending the sheep to be anointed as Saul's successor (1 Sam 16.1-14). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Dan 4; Dan 2.35; Isa 40; Dan 5.27.

³ Rom 2.21.

bad to worse.

Raven. I can see that you will always take the side of the doves. But do you not see how they drag themselves to their meetings, and do each other evil?

Eagle. And were you ever amongst them to see what they do?

Raven. No. And I am not such a fool as to go near them or their meetings.

Eagle. If not, then why do you accuse them?

Raven. I have heard many say that no good comes of mixing with them.

Eagle. I warrant it is other ravens who tell you this tale about them.

Raven. What if it is? I believe the sense of one raven over a hundred doves. But they deny the scriptures and every good.

Eagle. In that case, why do they read them so assiduously? But you yourself hardly ever deny the scriptures. Except that you glance at them not once in four seasons; neither do you take them to heart, to show in outward good works.

Raven. But can you not see their hypocrisy? They speak fair, and they pray long prayers that do no good in the end.

Eagle. We will ask the dove what she has to say for herself. What do you say to this?

Dove. It is better to say nothing to those without reason. But it is true that we meet frequently, speak fairly, seek to do good to all, and wish we could do better. But if it can be

proved that we wilfully harm anyone, then take your revenge on us, oh Eagle. But the raven should not have his way. There is no weight to his promise or his oath, any more than to the belch of a dog. He can take a hundred oaths as easily as he can break others. And as for those long prayers, which weigh upon his stomach: we have to persist in prayer until Noah gives us his ear. Indeed, you can see for yourself that we receive nearly all that we ask for: we beat on the flank of the Ark, and it is opened to us.¹

Eagle. Name one thing the doves have been given.

Dove. We prayed that we doves would gain the upper hand in the war, and for many other things that we have been granted.

Raven. And were you really such doves in the war? You acted much more like devils.

Dove. It is true that some unruly birds have damaged our cause, and that they did wrong in their plunder of other countries.

Raven. Croak. How my heart longs to kill this smooth-talking bird.

Eagle. Enough! I see you would start another war if you could. There has been enough of killing – you were defeated many times.

Raven. Let it pass. My time will come again.

Eagle. Yet again? You have spoken repeatedly of getting the upper hand. Be sensible at last, and remember that the

¹ Acts 25.11; 1 Jn 3.22.

ease of the fool is his death.¹ So do not feel at ease in your security.

Raven. At ease, you say? I wish you knew how little ease I feel!

Eagle. If you were at ease in your heart you would have every good thing. Beware of being like Cain the murderer, or Balaam the deceiver, or Absalom the conspirator, or Achitophel the conniver, or like Judas the traitor,² or like any dangerous beast, or unruly like the sea. Have you still not come to your senses? Beware of falling from the frying pan into the fire. I have warned you before: the net your own malice has spun will ensnare you.

Raven. But why do you call me a raven?

Eagle. For as long as you are a raven, you must be called as such.

Dove. If only the raven would give up his cruelty. He would be loved like any other bird. I feel neither bitterness nor malice against him – rather, I pity him.

Eagle. Perhaps he can be changed in spite of all this.

Raven. Noah has rejected me, and it makes no difference what I do if I am rejected.

Eagle. It is not he who rejected you. But you rejected him, and deserted him.³ He is love and good will, and there is no

¹ Prov 1.

² Cain is driven by jealousy to murder his brother (Gen 4.1-8); Achitophel joins Absalom, King David's son, in a rebellion, and subsequently hangs himself (2 Sam 15.12; 2 Sam 17.25) while Absalom is killed in battle (2 Sam 18.15). Judas Iscariot betrays Jesus to the temple authorities (Mt 26.47-50). (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Ezek 33.11.

darkness in him. He is quick to forgive the worst, and slow to anger, and he delights in long suffering.

Raven. But many say that he has rejected the many, and chosen the few before they were born.

Eagle. That is beyond my learning: perhaps the dove understands this mystery. What do you say?

Dove. It is not easy to say, and neither is it easy to comprehend the depth that is in Noah. But I shall read you the A.B.C. as follows. In eternity three are one, namely will, love and power, and each eternally embraces the other, and is nourished there, and conceived there. If it were not the pleasure of eternal love to feed the infinite will, then no man would be saved. And if the impulse of the primordial will were not burning fire, then no man would be damned. And if the three did not work together in this way, there would be neither man, nor angel, not beast, nor anything else which has been made. Some have been born out of eternity through an impulse of the will, which scattered them like sparks out of itself, and was pleased to temper them in the waters of the Ark. The root of the three is nothing but love within the self, hating none. But in that never-resting will, the impulse gives substance that which is in it, and casts aside (like a tree its leaves, or a man his spit) whatever is not united with the spirit of its heart. Behold, these ravens know nothing of the striking of this heavenly string. But understand this, oh Eagle, for the doves understand it more and more: for this is the root of the matter, and the wellspring of all things. This is the tap root of this entire visible world: this is the eternal impulse which gives

motion to every creature. But the birds on the branches of the tree do not consider how the root upholds its nature, and themselves as well. The primordial will is the source of all, just as sparks fly off the rock, and it reaches constantly for the breast of the Son, and calms itself in his love. But for many sparks it is not enough to grow cold, and so they fly with Lucifer away from the light and the eternal stillness, and so they remain ablaze and in motion, never finding tranquillity, though they long to forsake their own natures, and seek it. The will has the power of movement, but does not have the power to return (as the raven said rightly in part before). Therefore many are at war with themselves, and howl their complaint to Noah. And although his breast longs for them, their infernal breasts hold them in their own kingdom. But, oh Eagle, if you remember to ask about this further, when we are alone together, I will show you more of the root of all mysteries. But now continue your discussion with the raven.¹

Eagle. What do you say, oh venerable Raven, to all this?

Raven. The dove's reasoning is deep now. And sometimes your words come close to winning me over. But by my oath, I will never be one of you. Even so, I suspect that if the other ravens heard as much as I have heard, they would come to be of your religion.

Eagle. Call them to listen to us.

Raven. No, I think I will not. Let those who want them call them; call them yourself, if you like.

¹ Prov; 1 Jn 4.8; Mt 3.17.

Eagle. So you want no good for yourself, or for anyone else?

Dove. Leave him alone, oh Eagle: those who are saved are called. And there is good news for some among the ravens, for Noah has the curious art of turning ravens into doves, and there is no doubt he will do so. Then they will no longer be called ravens among the birds. He makes the worst best, and leaves the first to be last.¹

Eagle. But let me converse with the raven a little longer. What news do you have from overseas?

Raven. The doves are on the wing in every kingdom, and that is an omen that the kings will not stand. There are many in Holland, some in France, and a few in Spain, and I am not pleased to see them everywhere flocking to the windows. They are so quick that no hawk can take them.

Eagle. And what do the other ravens say in these countries?

Ravens. The old ones can see that a great change is coming on the world, while the young ones prattle and take their pleasure. I was in Rome the other day, and when I see the Pope quaking on his throne, it is high time for me to look about me.

Eagle. And is the Pope also among the Quakers?² Why does he quake?

Raven. Certain prophesies alarm him. He sends far and wide for help to keep his palace up, and yet it topples: he has the world's most guileful ravens in his nest, and some of

¹ Acts 9.1, 2, 6, 11; Mt 19.30.

² The Eagle echoes the question asked in mockery of King Saul, when he sets out to kill David, and instead succumbs to a religious ecstasy (1 Sam 19.24). (Rob Mimpriss.)

the princes, like pillars, are trying to uphold him. But the greater part are rotten at the core, and their religion is a burden on their shoulders.

Eagle. And have you news of the Turks and the Jews?

Raven. Yes. The Turks are gaping their eyes, for they fear that this generation will be the last. In other countries the rivers and lakes are turning to blood, and terrible wonders are seen in the heavens, as though the end of all things were at hand. What will come of us when the world is engulfed in flames? But as for the Jews, they look for the morning star, in the hope of rising again above the hills, and sitting enthroned over the earth. And I wonder whether they might indeed have some strange revival.

Eagle. What makes you say that?

Raven. Because the least will be greatest, for the earth is turning like a cartwheel.

Eagle. And have you news of Ireland and Scotland?

Raven. Only that there is great uproar among them, and the doves are everywhere on the wing. But I have told you too much news already, and no doubt I should be silent.

Eagle. I am grateful for your news. Please continue. It is good to listen to what every bird has to say.

Raven. I will say only this, that the pillars of the earth are shaking, and there are fires and tempests in every land nearby – if it were not so, we would have some help in England by now. But if I tell you more secrets, the dove will hear them.

Eagle. I warrant she knows more than this. But is there no hope of a better world in your opinion?

Raven. I have already spoken my mind, that everywhere there is only the most brutal oppression, and the weakest of protests. It is not my job to argue like this, except to show you how accursed is this generation of doves that raises its beaks, and I think that you and they should part, and that is my whole message. I would say a word to the dove, were it not that I scorn her, that she should think of her life, and stand apart from you, and not by your side as she does. You are an eagle, and nothing is as cruel as your sharp talons.

Eagle. It is true that my forebears have killed many doves, but I do not swoop before I look; nor do I snatch without knowing who or why.

Raven. If I remained with you for many months, I could bring you news every hour. But I am hungry for carrion, and intruders might be burning my nest. Let me go.

Eagle. No. You will not leave my presence until I know more of your mind.

Raven. What do you want from me but what I have already told you?

Eagle. Were you not in London the other day, pricking your ears for what you might hear?

Raven. Yes. In London there is every kind of bird, as in rich woodland, and every bird giving voice. There are many swift doves there, and also black-winged ravens who have not changed their hue. They were saying that London will burn, but for all their talk it still stands, as other cities

still stand. Too much prediction perplexes men, yet we would not call the prophesy false. For nothing is false, if it pleases us.

Eagle. What did you learn in London?

Raven. I was out on the thoroughfares listening to the chattering at their chatter, but I did not learn much, since there was no reason to their gossip: they prattled over their cups, like the sound of waves, or like terriers yapping; there was an uproar of bickering women among them, and a torrent of words, like a river in flood. Each of them had two ears and one tongue, and the tongue said more than the two ears heard, and more than the two eyes saw. And when I saw them in the dark dungeons of their folly, I passed on, rejoicing to see them thus. They knew no more than animals. For if these men went on all fours, and fur grew over them, and if they could say no more than Balaam's ass,¹ rational men would think them unreasoning beasts, made to be captured and slaughtered.

Eagle. I myself know that there are many cunning foxes, and wild cats, and dangerous beasts in every land, and in London as well. But I am asking you what the wise men of London were saying.

Raven. They spoke in low tones. And although I have an ear like any other bird, I could not make out their words. I landed on their rooftops, and on the eaves of their

¹ Balaam's ass is given the gift of speech, to warn Balaam not to attempt to prophesy against the Israelites, in Num 22.28. Balaam is treated pejoratively in 2 Pet 2.15 and Rev 2.14, and hence by Morgan Llwyd. (Rob Mimpriss.)

houses, yet still I did not hear much.

Eagle. And what is the little you did hear?

Raven. The counsels of state are secret and deep. The ignorant commoners among the birds understand none of them.

Eagle. And do you yourself understand them?

Raven. Not fully. There is no man in either the Kingdom of England or the City of London who understands them entire. Whatever they do today, some spirit undoes tomorrow. I can see nothing coming about according to the expectations of men, for some other wheel is turning, beyond the senses of all. The chaff is swept together, when sudden winds disperse it; the spider patiently weaves her web, and the little children brush it away in an instant. The men I have seen are in a lime kiln, or like children building mud houses on a river bank, and the floods rise without warning, and all is swept away. There is some force among men now that was not there before. Some curious spirit is at work, although men do not see it. I tell you this against my will, and according to my conscience.

Eagle. How is that possible?

Raven. Many speak against their conscience, and according to their will, and some speak against their will, and according to their conscience, as I do now, although it is not my custom.

Eagle. What conflict is this, between the conscience and the will?

Raven. The conscience says, 'You ought to do this,' and the will says, 'I want to do that.' But all too often we follow the will, and forsake the conscience.

Eagle. And what is the conscience, in your opinion?

Raven. The Witness Within, the Light of Birds, the Candle of Men, the Voice Behind us,¹ the Hawk of Noah, the Rapid Scribe, the Secret Counsellor, the Eternal Friend, a constant feast to some, and the undying worm² in others. But I am reluctant to say much about the conscience.

Eagle. Why is that?

Raven. Because I dare not follow it. If I were to follow my conscience, I would try to be like the dove, and I cannot bear that.

Eagle. Indeed! You have said enough, and too much against yourself. I see that the ravens are going against their own conscience, as much as they are going against the doves.

Raven. And do you have the ability to divide me within myself, and set my conscience against my will?

Eagle. Your own words have already done so. But tell me, which will endure the longest, your conscience or your will?

Raven. My conscience, alas. For already, little is going according to my will. And I am afraid it will be even less, when I rise to my judgement.

Eagle. My advice would be that you look to that which endures the longest, and shun that which will come to an

¹ See Isa 30.21. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² See Isa 66.23-24 and Mk 9.47-49. (Rob Mimpriss.)

end. For however sweet it may be, it will profit you nothing, and will fade after a moment.

Raven. If only I could. My will is against it.

Eagle. Your condition is wearisome, and you are weary in your condition. I can do nothing for you, but there is one who can help. Therefore speak the truth; there is no shame in that.

Raven. If I told you the whole truth, the truth is that I would tell you much against myself.

Eagle. Blessed is the one who does so, and yields to the good. You know that the reed that bends is better than the one that breaks for want of moisture or suppleness. Natural law teaches men to follow their own light. Reason and conscience are the two eyes of the natural man, and the man who pulls his own eye out of his soul should be punished by the judge: not because he has gone against the religious opinions of his rulers, but because he has gone against his own reason. And if you go against your lights, you are punishing yourself within, and forcing the magistrates without to punish you also.

Raven. I cannot prevent it. Do as you will, for you are rulers for the present time. But if ever it falls to my hand, I will avenge myself on the doves.

Eagle. That is wrong. Let a man take revenge, and he is no longer as other men are. He is like a wild bull in a net, or a vicious dog on a chain. Forgive all men, for Noah is ready to forgive you, if you return to him. But it is useless to sing to the deaf, they say, or give counsel to the stubborn.

A rod is needed for the back of the fool.¹ But I wonder if you know who made you.

Raven. I do not concern myself much about that, but I know I came out of the Ark. And here is where I am now, wherever I go hereafter. No man knows that.

Eagle. You yourself should be eager to know. For eternity is long; your life is precious. The Ark was made to preserve your life. Stop feeding on the bile of the other ravens, or being deceived by the serpent of the flesh.

Raven. Deceived, you say? If either of us deceives the other, it is I who deceive them, for I am one of the oldest in the world. But let me go at last! How long must this purgatory endure?

Eagle. Stay a little. The best candle is discretion. The best sense is learning. The best cunning is to deny oneself. The best physician is a physician of souls. The best custom is kindness – and also the worst can learn to be best, as the dove has already said. Perhaps you have forgotten the proverbs of old. Plough while you live; plough till you die. Work begun is half done: but do not let the worst night be the last. A debt will not dissipate while you delay. Do not seek wealth in idleness. Do not seek Heaven in bitterness. Do not seek truth in deceptiveness. Seek nothing where you should not. Woe to the one who is idle at harvest. He who does not sow will not reap, and he who does not reap will not eat. Let every man seek water for his ship. And now, oh venerable Raven, do you remember these proverbs.

¹ Prov 26.3.

Raven. Wait a little. I see you are have a taste for proverbs. I would be grieved if you and the doves forgot the proverbs of the old and the wise. But I have heard proverbs before you uttered them, and I will tell you others. Wider acres, worse statutes. Do not forsake the old road for the new. The nearest to church, the furthest from Paradise. Much that is fair is of little use. An angel abroad, a devil at home. A great promise and a paltry gift. A scarlet coat and a scanty cupboard. Good is the rock of the gospel. A mirror to all is a neighbour. Like strives with like. Every bird loves its own voice. A fire is easily lit in a furnace. Bad ground does not hide its thorns. Harm one, harm all. Every man is bad once he is known. Like a man will be his young. The nature of the sow is in the piglet. Too tight will break. Too high will fall. A hearth without faith is a wilderness. A goat in a church will go up to the altar. Those are some of the learned proverbs running through my mind.

Eagle. You yourself could not decipher your proverbs. Your heart understands nothing of what your tongue is saying. I could answer every one of the proverbs you have quoted, but I will answer with other ancient proverbs instead. All wheat has its chaff. It is no disgrace to improve. Argue with a fool, and you are more foolish. Silence is better than an ill word. A log is better than a fault-finding man. A good dog is better than a wicked man. The black bull goes late to his labour. Kneel for the yoke, or kneel for the axe. Learn until death, for it is death not to learn. Learn not, know not. Listen not, learn not. None listen but the sombre wise. Mishear, misspeak. A bitter morsel is not soon swallowed. A dead bee gathers

no honey. The dumb speak only the truth. There was great wisdom among the Britons of old.

Raven. You speak wisely. But what are the Britons, that other nations are not?

Eagle. If bad, the worst. If good, faithful. For this island first received the gospel in the time of Lles ap Coel. Here, say some, St. Helen was born, and her son Constantine.¹ It is Wales, say others, that first discovered America.² Britons have been faithful to the true faith unto death. It is they whom Isaiah speaks of as the ends of the earth (as the old Israelites say),³ and from the island of Britain, say others, will come fire and judgement and hosts through all the earth.

Raven. Oh, the eagle's folly in this. You were expounding your proverbs well, but not one of the new preachers expounds his own text. They scamper like squirrels from branch to branch, with not one wise man among them.

Eagle. As to that, remember that the Saviour of the World often preached while on earth: sometimes on a mountaintop, sometimes in a boat, sometimes in a house and sometimes in a synagogue. But we do not read that he ever took a single text from the Bible, except once,

¹ Lles ap Coel, or St Lucius, is credited with converting the Britons to Christianity during his kingship, in *Liber Pontificalis*. 6th C. Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed that Helena of Constantinople was a daughter of King Coel of Colchester. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd is credited with discovering America in the year 1170 by David Powel in *The Historie of Cambria, now called Wales*. 1584. (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Isa 24.16.

from Isaiah.¹ As long as a preacher preaches only the truth, it matters not whether he follows the letter of a single text. A preacher's sole text is the truth. The whole Bible is the text of a man of God. And there is a book in every man, though many cannot read it. But let no man preach, and no man declare, except what he would willingly sign with his blood.

Raven. Leave that aside. I will not mention again that they do not follow their text. But they speak against the truth, and one thing should make your ears tingle. They say openly that the Trinity dwells and makes its corporeal home in every good man. And if that is not a destructive heresy, I do not know what is.²

Eagle. And what does the dove say? Do you also think this?

Dove. That is one of the deep things. That knot is hard to unravel; that door has been locked and bolted against the ages. But the truth is like this: one holy scripture says that the Father is in us; and another says the Son, and a third says that the Holy Spirit dwells in every pure, bright, lowly, heavenly heart.³ And all the scriptures together show, and I venture to say, that the eternal Trinity is in us, and is making us eternal, and that furthermore, were it not that God indwells other spirits,

¹ Jesus' sermon on Isaiah is so poorly received that his listeners attempt to lynch him (Lk 4.14-30). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² The claim is not unique to Puritanism. Augustine speaks of 'the Holy Spirit, through whom is spread abroad in our hearts the charity of God by which the whole Trinity makes its habitation within us' (*Augustine: Later Works*. Ed. John Burnaby. Westminster: John Knox, 1996. p. 161). (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Eph 4.6; 2 Cor 13.5; Rom 8.9.

they would not endure. But even though he permeates them, they will not let him stay in them. And another evil Trinity rules this world.

Eagle. What is this Trinity of the world?

Dove. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.¹ Or cruel will, base pleasure and evil power.

Eagle. What does the raven say to this?

Raven. Let it pass. I cannot rightly hear what the dove is saying. But this I know: without exception they are the most narrow-minded people in the world. There is only one tune in their heads, and not one of them has a generous heart.

Eagle. What of that? If they understand the one essential, eternal thing,² it does not matter greatly if they are like fools in things that will soon be burnt when the world is consumed by fire. But let every bird learn the tune he will sing for ever in the other world, when this world, and all its crafts, and the sound of all its tillage, have passed away.

Raven. I see you are willing to suffer their claim to have the Trinity within them.

Eagle. Answer me, oh Dove: how can this be? Is it in some spiritual sense, or is it an actual fact?

Dove. Oh Eagle, understand that every spirit is an actual fact, and that the world you see is only a shadow of the world you do not see, which permeates this world. Moreover,

¹ 1 Jn 2.16.

² Lk 10.42.

the body is only a shadow, like a stalking horse for the spirit, or a sheath for the soul that endures forever. But the Trinity dwells in us as silver ore dwells in the earth, or a man sits in his house, or a baby lies in the womb, or a fire burns in a furnace, or the sea laps in a well;¹ or just as the soul gleams in the eye, so the Trinity dwells in the godly. Therefore, as the old proverb advises, do not seek the Trinity except in unity. And it is true that in whatever place, or in whatever man, one finds light, and love, and peace, and purity, and unity, and heavenly strength, there the three in one are found.

Eagle. We will come back to this. I would talk a little more with the raven, for I see he is restless, and ready to fly. Listen, Raven, we would like to be able to persuade you to return with us to the Ark.

Raven. What can you offer me in return?

Eagle. I know that Noah would rather forgive one who repents than destroy a hundred. Remember Rahab of Jericho, and Saul of Tarsus, and the thief on the cross, and the prodigal son.²

Raven. I will hope against hope that He will not break my heart. Let my hope not put me to shame.

Dove. The one who truly hopes in him purifies himself: but

¹ 2 Cor 4.18; Col 1.27; Heb 3.6; Gal 4.19.

² Rahab helps Israelite spies escape from Jericho, and is spared in the Israelite attack on the city (Josh 2.1-13, 6.17-25); Saul of Tarsus persecutes the church before his conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9.1-22); one of the two thieves crucified with Jesus repents, and is promised a place in Paradise (Lk 23.39-43). (Rob Mimpriss.)

false hope, like the breath of a dying man, fades away.¹

Raven. Oh Eagle. Now the dove tries to stop me hoping, and if my faith and hope are destroyed, that is the end of me also.

Eagle. Not so. But she is trying to show you that the hope of some is like a withered hand, that cannot help in times of need, or like a ship's anchor, that does not strike the bottom.

Dove. To win this raven back, I would give my life for him. And I testify that there is glory in the highest, and good will towards men. The Saviour walked the earth, winning publicans with his love, and endured the agony of death at the hands of his enemies. Did anyone ever hear of such great love, that makes a man gouge his heart from his breast, and crush it, and give it to his opponents to eat, to give them life? This is what the Most High did to save the filthiest of men from eternal woe. It is a wonderful thing, if a man can gouge out his eye, and place it in the hand of his friend in trust. But oh, what shall we say of the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of the love of Heaven? Many exhaust the love of their neighbours by their ill deeds. But he, of his own good will, paid the whole debt of his enemies with his very life, and led them out of prison, and dressed them in the robes of his son. He runs after those who flee from him, and kisses those who spit in his face, and lovingly upholds those who would slip from his breast, and bears with those who will not suffer him. He came from highest Heaven to the

¹ 1 Jn 3.3; Job 11.20.

lowest grave,¹ to raise foul sinners from this dungheap of earth to the treetop of Heaven. He took hold of the nature of man, and let angels go with water. Yet one thing prevents this raven from coming home as he is told.

Eagle. What can that be?

Dove. The thing he calls the best: the sense of the world, and the wisdom of the flesh, and the natural reason which, like a writhing serpent, spits its venom in the face of the truth: the corrupted learning that must be unlearned and wholly untied before one learns the knot of true disciples. The senses of man are a thief within, locking the door of every thought against the breeze of the Holy Spirit. It is Achitophel and Judas² who betrayed a man into the hands of the devil. Every man has the cunning to deceive himself. It is the bow of Lucifer and the enemy of Noah, the Mother of Wars, the Wetnurse of Vanity, the Child of Hell, the Diana of this world,³ the Castle of Sin, the Stench of the Pit, the Advocate for Evil, and the cause of every misfortune that can befall a man. For the wisdom of the world, the reason of man, the cunning of Old Adam, is the evil eye, the bloom of the flesh, the cousin of unbelief and corrupted blood. This is the Sceptre of Beelzebub; this is the false mirror of the earth; this is the idol of Babel, and the Queen of Heaven, and the chatter of the fleshly mind, and all the heart's deepest desires, the denier of truth, and the Antichrist's master builder, and the river of man,

¹ Lk 2.14; Eph 4.9.

² See note 2 to p. 39. (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ The people of Ephesus reject Paul and his theism in favour of the goddess Diana, at the instigation of silversmiths whose trade depends on her worship (Acts 19). (Rob Mimpriss.)

the ruler of nature, and the wagon that carries a man in his descent. This is the whore who has given birth to every bastard religion. I say so much against her because she has done so much harm in the world in the guise of sense and understanding. And it is not malice, but this perverse cunning, that will be the death of the raven. This is the wind that turns the mill of a man's thoughts and desires within him.¹

Eagle. What are you saying against wisdom? I fear you have lost your senses.

Dove. I speak in all sobriety. The sense of the flesh is a snare, not for the woodcock, but for the wisest birds on earth. The best of natural men are lost; therefore every man should forsake his own reason. The fleetest of beasts of the field cannot fly, and the natural is not spiritual, no matter how excellent in the judgement of man. Many preachers are reprobate, and are lost.² Their teacher is the sense of the flesh. They write their sermons for the wages of men, and that is all their recompense, yet still they expect to be revered as servants of the gospel. And besides these blind teachers, in every country and town, even the most destitute and unlettered of men has a snake in his breast and the senses of the flesh in his heart.

Eagle. No wonder, then, that so many are lost, if every man is like a nest of vipers, writhing with fleshly thoughts. But what does the raven say to this?

Raven. This strikes at the root of the matter. If the counsellor is evil, the follower will be also. If the light of reason is

¹ Rom 8.7; Acts 13.10; Jer 17.9; Rev 17.5.

² 1 Cor 9.27.

dark, then the whole body is dark, and every word I have ever said was in vain. But for my part, I believe there is reason in all things, and that natural reason is the best light. It is the root of a tree that was deeply planted. Let the dove uproot it if she can.

Dove. I know that this is the Solomon of the world, but the righteous spirit of the doves is greater than Solomon in all his glory and wisdom. But let me show you the earthly wisdom of the raven. His reasoning comes to this: Let every man hoard his property; let every man snatch what he can. Let every man stand on his own two feet. Let no man speak the truth in love, but only in cruelty. Let no man transcend the reason of man. Let him follow the world and its customs. Let him indulge his nature, and his flesh, and his blood, and spend his time in enjoyment. Let him eat and drink and be merry. Let him be politic, and flatter all men. Let him have two faces, and a duplicitous heart. Let him be wise on his own behalf, for otherwise he will die. But this is the folly of the world. This is the vanity of empty heads, for the wise man does not seek to save his own life. If a man has two faces, one is the devil's: whoever speaks fair of men harbours rottenness in his heart. It is pleasant to eat and drink to excess, and fritter away one's time in amusement, dancing in the flesh to the Evil One's piping. The spirit of blood is a fog in the mind. The customs of the world are the broad way to destruction. And the one who will not climb above himself will never sit in Heaven. The man of good humour and good cheer is out of his own wits, and in the wits of the Serpent. A man's time is his inheritance, and woe to him who spends it in vain. One must overcome the

spirit of the flesh, and nurture the spirit of the Most High. A man will drown unless he swims against the currents of this world. The loftiest reason is the basest folly. No man but one can stand alone. No man is his own property. Let every man keep his own heart for God. Let every man give prudent account of his conscience. Let every man bury his own reason. Yet this is a language but few understand. Let no man fear another as much as himself. If you cannot silence others, be silent yourself. When there is most clamour in the world, let there be most stillness in your heart. Do not fear the devil, or love sin, and do not indulge yourself. Do not hold onto your creaturely spirit, but swim to the spirit of your creator. Account the good before you as a pearl, and the good works behind you as dung.¹ The devil's honey is sweet to the flesh; instead, eat the secret Manna.² Lucifer wallows like a pig in the flesh of man. The impure heart is a cauldron boiling on the fire of Hell. The lusts of the flesh are war horses; flee from them, and do not delay. The arguments of man are a brake of thorns; forsake yourself and flee from them. Indulge your lusts, and they will kill you. Where there are men there are angels; but where angels are, men will be. The one who lives for himself lives apart from the breast of the father. If you cannot save others, then flee from yourself. It is better to condemn your own heart in this world than for the heart to be condemned to eternal wrath. Where will you find rest but on the Rock of God? It matters not what fools say,

¹ The Dove echoes the strong language of Paul in Phil 3.8. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Manna is miraculously provided by God to feed his people in the Sinai desert in Ex 16.1-36 and Num 11.1-9. (Rob Mimpriss.)

for their words will not stand.

Eagle. Oh Dove, these are new proverbs. You spoke earlier of winning the raven, but I fear your words will have angered him further.

Dove. Not by my doing. Unless he grasps the truth, he cannot be saved. Many let a wound heal before it is cleaned, but the pus will break out again. There are maggots in the flesh of men, and if they are not killed, they will kill.

Eagle. Help the raven, so he can know this for himself.

Dove. I do not force on others what I have found out for myself. Unless there is testimony within, all the reasoning of the tongue is only a rope of straw. Yet there is an inexpressible wound in my heart to behold the perdition of man, and to see him blind, dumb, deaf, destitute, naked, wounded, crippled, diseased, even dead.¹ The cry, the cry, the deepest cry is silence.

Eagle. Is there no help for the raven in spite of this?

Dove. Oh, that he might see the light of love! But it is still hidden from him. Yet there is sight for the blind, and healing for those without physic.² The narrow gate is not yet shut, and the sinner may still pass through. This is the time; this is the day. It passes away like a dream in the night, like an arrow from the string; and when the cord of life is broken, it will never be tied again.

¹ Rev 3.17.

² Lk 19.42; Jer 30.15, 17.

Eagle. But what if he has committed the sin that is never forgiven, in this life or in the life to come?¹

Dove. No man sins thus, but those so malicious as to make war against their own light, and revolt against the good in others, knowing that it is good, yet raging against it all their lives.² Therefore I exhort all men, and I call out to all men. Do not suppose that the door of mercy is closed to you, while you yet have breath in you, and the will to repent. But still you follow the flesh, and you comfort your lusts with lullabies; you read indecent books, and you poison the pure root, and you are often at taverns, and you sit at gambling tables, and you swear, and curse, and scoff, and sneer, and you love the devil's playhouses, like the bullocks of Hell. And you close your eyes to poverty, and live for selfish vanity, and you mock sobriety, and wallow in iniquity, and slumber in perversity, and in the bed of lechery, in extravagance and gluttony, in drunkenness and mockery, in goatishness and immodesty, in discontent and jealousy, in insolence and perfidy, in woe and deepest agony. Awake! Arise! There is still a welcome for you; a heavenly feast awaits you. There is bread aplenty in your father's house. Why do you seek death, oh children of men? Why should you forfeit your souls in eternal woe?

Eagle. We pay heed to all this, but it is nothing more than the sound of words in the ears of the multitude.

Dove. It is a sound that will last forever, like the roar of

¹ Jesus refers to an unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mt 12.31-32). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Job 24.13; Heb 10.27, 29.

eternal thunder in the conscience of many who now listen carelessly to such things, their hearts in comfort and mirth. That sound will overwhelm you on the day to come. You devilish listeners! I was compelled to speak so that this could be a testimony against you. And whoever you are, if you hold these words in your hand, or hear them in your ear, I charge you against the great day that is coming, to show and declare these things throughout the length and breadth of Wales, and to all your neighbours, not hiding or concealing, at your peril, any of this from your fellow men.

Raven. Ha! All this is nothing more the than threats and dreams of the doves. We should be cheerful while we can. Away with thoughts like these! Put them out of your mind.

Dove. They will only return, though do your worst to keep them at bay. You are no better off for forgetting the truth. But take heed, oh Raven, for others listen, and obey, and are saved, and you are lost.

Eagle. Listen, oh Raven. At last I must ask you a second time. Why will you not return to your master?

Raven. I can see that you are utterly against me. But take Noah and his Ark, you and the dove between you. I know where I can find my supper. I smell carrion on the wind.

Eagle. Your carrion will come to an end, and that will be the end of you.

Raven. That is no matter; I will take it while I can. Farewell to Noah, and his Ark, and you, and the dove. I will not come near you again. *Croak. Croak.* Away, away, far away.

Eagle. Well. The raven has taken wing and fled as far from us as he can. Now we have peace to discuss together those things you hinted at. I see that one cannot tell all things in all company, for the deep things are mere fables to a deaf world.¹ I hope that now the raven has left, you will open to me the mysteries of your kingdom.

Dove. I do not wish to speak my own words, but the words of Another, revealing the depths, and you will not understand them merely because they are spoken. There is no true speaking, and no true listening, unless it is done in the spirit of the Most High. I look on him, I believe in him, that he will display his radiance. Therefore continue.²

Eagle. Why do you carry an olive leaf in your bill, and not the leaf of some other tree?

Dove. The heavenly olive and its balm are my refreshment: I leave the great oaks of Bashan aside. For it is not the most verdant leaves or the most lofty trees that Noah loves.³

Eagle. Why do you come in the afternoon and evening with your good news, and not in the morning?

Dove. Because the eternal gospel, which was hidden from ages, and from the patriarchs and prophets of old, is being preached at the end of the world.⁴

Eagle. The raven, as you heard, spoke ill of the last dove which did not return to Noah.

¹ Mt 13.35.

² Jn 5.30; Jn 16.14.

³ Zech 4.12; 1 Jn 2.20, 27; 1 Cor 1.26.

⁴ Rev 14.6; 1 Tim 6.15.

Dove. That is true. The last church is Laodicea.¹ It is also true, as you said, that there will be no need of preachers when the flood waters of God's wrath recede. And the last days will be the best for some, and the worst for others,² for in the last days, some will be better, and some worse, than they ever were before.

Eagle. And do you know what kind of day the Day of Judgement will be?

Dove. It will not be a day of twenty-four hours, any more than the day of the flood. But it will come to burn this rotten earth, just as the filthy world was cleansed before.³

Eagle. And will the heavens and earth be burnt to ashes at the start of the Day of Judgement?

Dove. No more than the flood brought the world to naught, for all things must be restored before they are destroyed, and creation must have a Sabbath rest as much as man. All the prophets since the start of the world speak of this, and every creature groans for it.⁴

Eagle. What signs will there be before the Day of Judgement comes?

Dove. The portents of the flood will recur. The world will be filled with fleshly corruption, and natural folly, and unbearable wrongs,⁵ and each man groaning under his load, and many following the Trinity of this dark world.

¹ Laodicea is the last of seven church addressed by Christ (Rev 3.14-22), and is rebuked for its half-hearted approach to its faith. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Rev 3; 1 Tim 3.1.

³ 2 Pet 3.6-7.

⁴ Acts 3.21; Rom 8.19, 22.

⁵ Mt 24.37-39.

Eagle. Will all the animals be burnt immediately?

Dove. No more than were drowned in the flood. A few men were saved. Indeed, no man will be wholly saved, for in every man there is flesh that must be burnt.¹ As the day brightens, we will see these things more clearly, and we will better understand what kind of day the last day must be. It is better to seal one's lips than to utter vain and idle words that must be burnt, or swallowed. If you wait for the day in righteousness, you will see its dawn.

Eagle. But how will the remainder of men be saved?

Dove. By rising into the air above the flames, just as Noah rose to the Ark above the waters, by resurrection and ascension above the spirits of the dead, to meet the Lord.²

Eagle. And will there be war among men after they see the first fire?

Dove. The damned will struggle against God in their minds. They soon forgot the flood, and went to build Babel, and to caper after Nimrod. And although there were angels of God in Lot's house,³ the men of Sodom would have raped them if they could. The mind of God is good, perceiving and comprehending all things at once until the end, and beyond the end. But the mind of man is evil, and in a moment lets the mighty deeds of God slip from his hand

¹ 1 Cor 3.

² 1 Thess 4.14, 17.

³ Nimrod, the grandson of Noah's cursed child, Ham, becomes a great warrior and the founder of Babylon and Nineveh (Gen 10.8-12). Lot offers his daughters to the mob to be raped, in place of the angels who are staying in his house (Gen 19.1-8). (Rob Mimpriss.)

and his recollection.¹

Eagle. But do you know when the Day of Judgement will come?

Dove. Noah permits no man to see the hour and day under the sixth seal.² But from the start of the world until the flood, there were 1656 years, so I should advise you, oh Eagle, to expect that it is at hand. Mount Zion is already in labour,³ and the last great wheel has already started turning in the world.

Eagle. What will happen after the first fire?

Dove. As after the flood waters. First there was a new covenant with all creatures; second, a new law was given to prohibit the shedding of blood; third, man was clothed in majesty and authority to build a new world.⁴ I would show you, oh Eagle, much more concerning this, but that is enough for the wise at the present time.

Eagle. But why do you call Noah a likeness of God?

Dove. He is one who engenders three.⁵ He alone was righteous, when all the world was wallowing in lies, and out of love for his sons, chiefly, and for all men, he prepared the Ark to save as many as would come to him,

¹ Gen 11; Gen 19; Ps 106.13; Rev 20.7-8.

² Rev 6, 16.

³ See Isa 66.8: 'Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children' (KJV). (Rob Mimpriss.)

⁴ Gen 9; Heb 2; Isa 11.9.

⁵ Morgan Llwyd draws a comparison between the three persons of the Trinity engendered by the Godhead, and the three sons engendered by Noah. (Rob Mimpriss.)

and those that were elected entered, and were saved.¹

Eagle. But Noah was a sinful man even so. How can he be a symbol of the one who is without sin?²

Dove. Just as Solomon was a sign of the Son. It is not in his sins that he is a symbol, but in his righteousness.³

Eagle. He was three in one, you say. But does any evil come from the Most High, as came from Noah?

Dove. No, for as I have already said, there is only love and light in him, although his wrath and majesty are found wherever he is. And he is everywhere, filling the heavens and the earth. Shun the thought that there is any evil in him, for he bears long with the evils of the world.⁴ Oh Eagle, understand this, for this is the root that underlies all branches of knowledge and nature. Eternal nature is the spring of temporal nature. You know that no good word is evil in itself, for it comes from the lips of one who is good; but as soon as it is spoken, the ear of the wicked man twists it. Thus the spirit of the world has snatched and perverted the spirit of man, although it came pure and perfect out of the one who is good.

Eagle. Was everything born out of him, as well as man?

Dove. No. The Word which was in the beginning caused the earth to bear animals, and the sea to teem with fish, and for nature to bring forth everything that was in it, after its own kind. But when he created man, he did not allow

¹ Gen 6; Jn 3.16; Acts 13.48.

² The Eagle refers to Noah's debauchery after the flood (Gen 9.20-28). (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Ps 45.

⁴ 1 Jn 1.5; Isa 27.4; Job 25.1-2; Rom 11.36.

any created thing to bear him. Rather, he himself said, Let us make man in our own image and likeness.¹ Therefore the spirit of man comes from immortality, and goes to eternity.

Eagle. But how did the birds, and the fish, and the animals, and the men, come to discord and violence with one another, so that not one creature lives in peace in all the world?

Dove. My Lord Eagle, at first there was only one nature in Adam, but it split into four branches: neither was there more than one language, though it was torn apart into many tongues. There was only one religion of old, but it was confused, and became a multitude of creeds concerning a host of gods. And since there are many gods, there is war among all creatures, and they cannot live in peace with one other until they are first reconciled with the one who made them, and return to Noah and the first Ark.²

Eagle. What does the Ark signify in this mystery?

Dove. Emmanuel. The Saviour. In this Ark there were three decks (that is, the sum of all nature), just as there are spirit, and soul, and body. Here there was room for every creature of every kind; thus he is the firstborn of every creature. If he had not established himself in the flesh of man,³ and suffered the flood of wrath, no flesh would be saved, nor man or beast have breath, even for an hour. Out of this Ark of Truth, all evil birds fly, just as the

¹ Gen 1.9, 20, 24, 26.

² Gen 11.1; Isa 11.

³ Col 1.

angels formerly fell into the great sea (that is, the spirit of nature), to feast on dead carcasses – which are the spirits of miserable sinners.

Eagle. And what is the door that was opened in the side of the Ark?

Dove. The wound in the side of the Lamb on the cross, from which flowed water and blood,¹ to revive and cleanse mankind, and this wound is still open for the filthiest of men.

Eagle. But in the Ark there were stores of fodder to keep every animal alive.

Dove. So in Emmanuel there is nourishment, not only for saints and sinners, but also for the angels of Heaven. Indeed, there is the food in him to give every creature life, and if it were not so, no creature would have life. For in him, as Paul says, all things are sustained,² just as all life was sustained in the Ark.

Eagle. How can one be saved in him?

Dove. By rising with him above the waves of lust and the reasonings of the flesh.

Eagle. But many say that a man is saved through baptism, and baptism is much spoken of at present.

Dove. There is the baptism of adversity, which is persecution, and there is the baptism of water, which is the baptism of old, and which faded like the morning star. In addition to this there is the baptism of fire in the spirit of wonders;

¹ Jn 19.34.

² Col 1.17.

but the baptism of Christ is the one great baptism, and that is the heavenly water of the second birth. Without it, woe to a man. The Ark in the floodwaters is a sign of that baptism. And as a part of the Ark was raised above the waters, and a part was sunk below, so the Messiah suffered in the flesh, and was justified in the spirit, and his offspring within him. And just as the Ark was raised above the hills, and in it, the animals and the men who were saved, so those who are saints on earth sit in Paradise in the heavens. As did the spiritual Ephesians.¹

Eagle. But tell me how the wind hushed the waters of the flood, for winds most often raise waves.

Dove. That deed was contrary to the reasoning of many. And therefore, let no man give way to dark thoughts, for when the spirit of Heaven comes within you, he will calm and soothe the flood waters in your heart, and then you will see the tops of the hills, and loving, eternal thoughts will appear from within. Indeed the wind calmed the waters, and the clay and spit gave sight to the blind, and Isaac, though dead, was progenitor of thousands, and the Lamb from the grave bore fruit throughout the world. The Most High calls forth light from darkness, turns the shadow of death into the brightness of morning, makes midnight as bright as noon, uproots a man from himself and plants him in eternity, turns mortal poison into wholesome food,² brings height from depth and depth from height, saves those who are lost, and loses those who seem saved. His deeds run athwart to the thoughts of man, and

¹ Eph 4-5; 1 Pet 3.21; 1 Pet 3.18; Eph 2.6.

² See Mk 16.18. (Rob Mimpriss.)

transcend the wisdom of angels. The course of nature is a sieve in his hand, and he delights in performing wonders.¹

Eagle. Oh gentle Dove. I see that God has authorised you to know more than I, since my eyes are turned to nature, and encompass natural things. And therefore whoever would be assured of his salvation should be like a little baby, not satisfied with himself, but hungry to learn his first letters.² For those whom God teaches and those whom he sends soar above all things and understand nature. Therefore I ask you: do the waters cover the whole of the earth? Do you see no forests, no fells, no citadels with their heights above the floods?

Dove. Not one, in all the four corners of the earth. For all flesh must drown, and nothing can save a man but the Ark which Noah built, namely Jesus, who is Emmanuel, God with us in our flesh.³

Eagle. What is that? Is he indeed in our flesh?

Dove. He is indeed, if we are in his spirit. For the will is in the word, and the word is in the strength, and the strength and the word and the heavenly will, as I have already said, dwell in the heart of every man who is saved.⁴

Eagle. Few men give any thought to this.

Dove. If they knew who dwells within them, neither sin nor lust would enter the palaces of their hearts,⁵ where the

¹ Gen 8.1; Jn 9.6; Heb 11.12; Amos 5.8; Isa 30.28.

² 1 Cor 3.18.

³ Acts 4.12.

⁴ Rom 10.8.

⁵ 1 Cor 6.19.

nobles of Heaven dine.

Eagle. Then who dwells in those who are evil?

Dove. The spirit of disobedience, of Lucifer and the devil, keeps open court for every evil desire, and closes the hall against the good in every darkened mind. And since every corrupted heart is the devil's cauldron on the fires of Hell, he is careful to stoke the flames beneath it.¹

Eagle. But does the sinner not know who dwells within him?

Dove. No more than dead walls know who dwells within them. For no man wishes to see the cut-throats of sin who lurk within him, as you see the newts and tadpoles in a stagnant pond.²

Eagle. Let us leave this aside for now. Where did the waters come from to drown the whole world?

Dove. Out of the treasury of the Most High. He rent the great deep in the heart of creation below, and opened the sluice gates of the element of water above; and when the two waters merged, all flesh between them was drowned, for all its valour. And on the final Day of Judgement, the fire of the spirit will come, and a natural fire to test and probe the world before the Most High, who has in his treasure-house fire, and heat, and wind, and rain and snow and frost. No flesh can endure his heat or his cold. And just as the body of man was compounded of four elements, namely fire and air and water and earth, no physical body can spare any one of the four, nor live on air, without the fruit of the earth, nor on heat, without water, nor on

¹ Eph 2.2; Jas 3.6.

² Ps 14.1, 3; Ps 82.5.

water, without the other three. Therefore all things that had the breath of life in them were drowned, and the spirits of all that were not in the Ark were dragged beneath the bondage of the waters.¹

Eagle. Why did the waters come to drown poor men without forewarning, so that they could be saved?

Dove. All were warned by Noah, the Preacher of Righteousness. But the whole world mocked him, though every blow of the hammer was a sermon, summoning the stubborn world to the Ark.²

Eagle. How long did their mockery last?

Dove. Until they saw that the wells of the deep were broken, and that the sluice gates of Heaven were open,³ and that the Ark had risen out of their grasp. Then the tremors of terror took them, like the agony of a woman in labour, and as they would not have help before, so they could not find help at last.

Eagle. But how had they spent their time before this?

Dove. In eating and drinking, and in sleeping, in courtship and marriage,⁴ denying themselves nothing, but indulging themselves, and jeering at Noah and his household.

Eagle. Could they not be helped in spite of all this?

Dove. Not in the end, since they had allowed the time to pass,

¹ Gen 7.11; 1 Cor 3; 2 Thess 1.8; Job 38.25-26; Ps 147.17; Isa 33.14.

² 2 Pet 2.5.

³ Job 22.16.

⁴ Mt 24.38.

and there is a time for everything under the sun.¹

Eagle. Then were their souls not saved?

Dove. No. They lost the soul with the body, the sword with the sheath, for the spirit of truth says that theirs was a godless age.²

Eagle. Even so, this is a hard teaching. And is it not bitter for you, oh gentle dove, to condemn their souls as damned?

Dove. The spirit of truth says what he knows, and this was recorded by the hand of Peter.³

Eagle. But Peter does not say that their souls were sent to the eternal fire, or that no souls were saved but in the Ark.

Dove. Even so, there is no salvation in any other name but the one without whom none can stand.⁴ But do not ask so much what became of them, but what will become of you, for it is enough for you to save yourself.

Eagle. But how can one know that one is inside the Ark, and secure in the Saviour, since the greater number are not?

Dove. If the spirit of truth rules in you, he will show you that you are saved.⁵ And without him, no promise, no sign, no sacrament or angel can give you any assurance.

Eagle. But how can one know the spirit of truth?

Dove. By his heavenly fruit in the thoughts, and words, and deeds. It is useless to try to express this thing, but he

¹ Eccl 3.

² Gen 6.11.

³ 2 Pet 2.5.

⁴ Acts 4.12; Jn 21.22.

⁵ 1 Jn 5.10.

himself sets his seal on the conscience.¹ And whoever is in the Ark knows that he is in it, and can easily see others outside.

Eagle. By what name did Moses call the Ark?

Dove. By the name *Tebah*, as did Moses call the basket that saved his life on the water, when Pharaoh's daughter came to draw him out. An Ark was built to save Noah, a basket to save Moses,² and God has many ways to save the ones he has redeemed. But never forget that it is not *Tebah*, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, which is the root of the scriptures.

Eagle. But some say that the Ark is the church, and godly and learned men are of that opinion.

Dove. Body and head are one; root and branch are one; husband and wife are one, and spirit and soul, and fire and flame; the one who is sanctified and the one who sanctifies are one; and Christ and the church are one – the church which is flesh of his flesh, and spirit of his spirit. The one who is in Christ is in the true church also: Eve was drawn out of Adam, and the church out of Christ, and Christ out of the flesh of the church, and the church again out of the spirit of Christ. Many speak of one manifold church. For the whole world is the house of God, who fills Hell also, for he dwells in all things. The parish churches are mere empty barns; some are like goat pens and sheep folds. Other churches are like the flocks of

¹ Rom 8.16.

² Ex 2.

Jacob, brindled, spotted, or speckled.¹ Few speak the language of Israel in its purity, but an unclean argot is in our midst, as Nehemiah says. The upper lip is in Israel, and the lower lip is in Ashdod;² the people are in Babel. The churches are derelict; their timbers are rotten. Some, to be sure, are like gold candlesticks, others like brass, others like lead, though all are candlesticks. Some are princesses, others are whores, but few dwell in the house with the son of God. Yet there is no church but the spiritual, no spirit but the second Adam, no temple of God but the pure mind of man, no lasting temple for man but the Almighty and the Lamb, no unity but the unity of the eternal spirit, no song, no communion, no oneness, no prayer, no baptism into any church unless the spirit of its Head rules in power. For they profess to a knowledge of God, yet by their works they deny that God loves them, or watches them, or judges them. Therefore abandon yourself, and forsake the old parish priests, and the old corrupt churches, lest they collapse upon you, and you fall beneath them into the grave and the pit.³

Eagle. The Ark was sealed with pitch. What does the pitch signify to us?

Dove. It was called Gopher, though languages are merely the voice of the jackdaw, for all that men dote on them. The

¹ Jacob uses sympathetic magic to affect the markings of his uncle Laban's flocks, and thus to boost his own property (Gen30.25-43). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² The prophet Nehemiah condemns intermarriage with the people of Ashdod, who do not speak Hebrew (13.23-25). (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ 1 Cor 6.17; Eph 5.31-32; Mt 19.6; Heb 2.11; Song 6.8; Gal 4.30; Titus 1.16; Rev 18.3-4.

pitch is peace, and the covenant between man and his creator, namely through faith in the righteousness of another. And this is true faith, that a man has been bound and sealed to follow the true church, and not to let the outside world seep within him.¹

Eagle. You have spoken of the door in the side of the Ark, but what did the Ark's window signify?

Dove. The light of the Holy Spirit. Without it, a man is like a smoke-filled house, its windows shuttered against the light; and in the fumes of his natural thoughts, the winged things of Hell take flight. This light is like a window, crystal clear, and the sun shines through it from Heaven. But the blind see neither the window, nor the Light of the World. And none can discern the Godhead but through the Father, nor the Father but through the Son, nor the Son but through the Spirit, nor the Spirit but through himself. He opens a window in Heaven so that a man may see what is in the breast and mind of the Lamb; moreover, he opens a window in the heart, for a man to see his own chamber. And the scriptures are opened to him as well.²

Eagle. But what are the three decks in your symbolism?

Dove. The three parts of man: namely spirit, soul, and body. The three states of the church: under the law, under the gospel, and under the new heavens also. Three decks together make one Ark,³ Trinity in unity, just as the water, and the blood, and the spirit flow in the same vein.

¹ Rom 3; Jas 1.27.

² Isa 54.12; Mt 11; 1 Cor 2.16; Lk 24.32.

³ 1 Jn 5.8.

But man is like an animal that can neither understand itself nor turn to God.

Eagle. But how did Noah gather the birds and the animals into the Ark?

Dove. The beast has more sense than man, for the beast sought the Ark to save its life, while man was drowned in the flood. God gathered the animals and birds that were to be saved by means of an instinct, and once aroused, they went of their own accord. The ones he leads, who are led by the Father, and the ones who learn, will go to the Son.¹ And again the spirit is abroad in the world, gathering those who are saved within, and leaving the stubborn without in the end.

Eagle. But in the Ark there were unclean animals as well as clean. What do you say of that?

Dove. Every branch that does not bear fruit in me will be cut down, says the Vine,² and every man who clings to his natural life in Christ, and does not bear fruit for God, will be cast like a strange chick out of the eagle's nest: that is, out of the warmth of eternal life. And so it will be in the end.

Eagle. We were not long coming out of the Ark after the waters receded.

Dove. You know that every beast came out in its turn, each at peace with the others, each with its mate, to show the orderly conduct of those who are saved.³ And as they

¹ Jn 6.45.

² Jn 15.2.

³ 1 Cor 14.

were buried, so were they raised, namely ourselves, with the Ark. And when the kingdom is given to the Father, there will be no disorder, but each will go to his place and his eternal task, given according to his nature and deeds.

Eagle. But after the flood, a rainbow of green and gold was placed in the heavens. What does this show us?

Dove. The bow appeared in the clouds¹ with its two ends downward, and not up, to show that the Father will shoot his arrows at mankind no longer, but has put down his bow. One side of the rainbow is blue and green, to show the drowning of the world by flood, and the other side is red and gold, to show that the world will yet be burnt by fire.

Eagle. But how can there be retribution when the bow's two ends are pointed down?

Dove. It is the will of the Most High that man not sin against him, and that there be no need for retribution. But while man continues in sin, let him look to the rainbow, and flee from the fire to come.²

Eagle. I was close to forgetting to tell you that some are asking how Noah made the Ark.

Dove. Many builders are at the work, though few themselves are saved: many soldiers and governors and preachers are at the building, who in the end will be lost. Therefore let a man work out his own salvation with fear and trembling.³ And as for what you were close to forgetting

¹ Gen 9.13.

² Mt 3.

³ Philemon 2.12.

to ask, there are many things concerning the Ark that you have not asked, and I have not answered.

Eagle. Oh gentle Dove, show me in a few words the mysteries of the Ark.

Dove. The mysteries of the Ark transcend all speaking. The mysteries of holiness are beyond understanding. God was revealed in the flesh, and was justified in the spirit, and was seen by angels, and was preached to the generations, and was believed in the world, and was taken up in glory, and will come again in great glory, and we wait for him.¹

Eagle. Indeed, you have answered well. And since we have this opportunity to speak together, I will continue.

Dove. Then, oh Eagle, avoid being angered, as many are, when the bottom of your wound is probed, for ignorance is the kinswoman of anger. He would be free from anger, let him learn.²

Eagle. It angers many that the basest of fools judge the wise, and condemn what they do not understand.

Dove. Woe to him who calls the light darkness. But heavenly ones perceive the eclipse of the natural moon, without the eclipse of the spiritual sun. The creature drags itself after its light, but do you not see that the trees grow without suspecting the life that is in animals? The animals roam without knowing the reason that is in man. Men reprove without understanding the faith that is in the saints on earth, just as they fail to comprehend the lives of angels, and the angels themselves have not the

¹ 1 Tim 3.16.

² Ps 25.9.

power to understand the richness of the Three in One. Therefore, as I have said before, put everything in its proper place, and you will see plainly that the natural senses can neither swim nor fly to Noah's Ark. Can you not see that the learned clergy wallow in the lusts of the flesh, and drown in the spirit of blood, and that some unlettered people fly and seize the castle of the kingdom of Heaven through force, when the greater part seize through force the things of this world?¹

Eagle. Yet for all that, I see the same end come to both. The godly die in the end, and the ungodly cannot escape it.

Dove. The truth is that the bodies of the godly slumber in Christ, while the bodies of the ungodly decay with their souls, just as one ship sinks beneath the waves, and another sails through them. When a godly man leaves this world, it is only as though he were leaving his garment, as Joseph left his in the hand of Potiphar's wife, who is the world.² And the Sun of Righteousness draws the warmth of that soul out of the body, and leaves the flesh, like a dead coal, to the care of the grave. And the bodies (or the physical nature) of the godly will be raised, like the rising of the sun in its glory and strength. But as for the others, their bloated corpses will be like a dungheap for the devils to wallow in eternally.³

Eagle. Then is there no physical resurrection for the wicked?

¹ Ps 104; Mt 11.12.

² Joseph's mistress tries and fails to seduce him during his early career as a slave, and subsequently has him imprisoned (Gen 39.1-13). (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ 1 Cor 15.43; Isa 66.24.

Dove. The root of all nature will be stirred once again, but all their impulsion from the grave will not call them to resurrection. For even though they stand on the earth, at that time they will long to be hidden under the earth, and in the cracks of the rocks.¹ They will not rise into the air to meet the Great Magistrate. For in life their souls did not rise upward, but ran downward like roiling waters, and sank to the depths.

Eagle. What depths do you mean? What are the depths and heights?

Dove. Oh Eagle, if you listened as you should, you would gain more understanding. The depths are the bottomless pit, or the second death, and that dread death is Hell, and the unspeakable wrath which burns sin and stubborn sinners like a river of brimstone, for the least of sins arouses the greatest wrath.² And as for the heights, those are the end of the second birth. Nobody knows them, except those who fly to them out of their own selves, and live there.

Eagle. But is it safe for men to fly so high? For as high as one climbs, so far one will fall.

Dove. That is true enough for those who fly on natural wings, for so did Lucifer and his hosts plummet to deepest Hell. The proud are laid low, and the lowly of heart are lifted up. But if the contrite heart seeks to know the depth of God's love, that heart will be taught, and upheld, and raised to the heights of the Lord, and led in the spirit of Noah's truth.³

¹ Rev 6.

² Rev 21.8; Isa 30.33.

³ Lk 14.8; Ps 25.9.

Eagle. You often speak of Noah. But what is the spirit?

Dove. The Spirit of the Most High is the eternal wind, and the morning star, and the light of men, and the wellspring of ages, the seal of the testament, the Breath of the Lamb, the Ruler of Angels, and the life of men: and that spirit bears some to Paradise while their bodies remain on earth.¹

Eagle. Paradise: where is that garden? I have often heard it mentioned.

Dove. None can fly there but the one who has abandoned his own self: that is to say, his will, and his cunning, and his designs, and all his selfish ways. Paradise is not far from you, but is in every place where the love of God is revealed. All the true doves are there, hearing utterances they cannot express, among myriads of angels and sanctified spirits.² And on the other hand, Hell, and fire, and wailing, and darkness, are in the hearts of many while they walk this earth.

Eagle. Then let me ask you. Is there a Heaven or Hell except in this world?

Dove. Oh, to be sure. There is a Heaven which is eternal, and a Hell like a fire which burns forever. But even so, there is a Heaven or Hell in every man in this life. But a man does not see where he is, any more than a man slumbering in his bed sees when the dark veils of flesh hang about him, and all the shutters are closed.³ But the time to awake is at hand, when the flesh will be buried or burnt, and then

¹ Philemon 3.20.

² Philemon 3.10; Heb 12.22.

³ Lk 17.21; Jas 3.6.

every man will go to his home, and see his resting place.

Eagle. But I am afraid of this. Where will I be in the age that is everlasting?

Dove. Although Felix trembles,¹ few ask this in the end. If you follow nature, you will burn forever and never become ash. But if you get another nature and a new heart, you will join the doves in bliss.²

Eagle. Then will you tell me about this new heart? I have always been honourable, and so have my forebears, as my lineage shows; and many who received the creed and the christening fear Hell no more than you.

Dove. Even so, Hell comes on those who do not fear it. And family lineage is only a web that nature wove, in which the spider of pride lurks. You are no better off if you are descended from the royal princes of Wales,³ unless you are one of the lineage of the rightful prince of the world, born not of the will of man, but of uncorrupted seed. However clean you may be on the outside, you must be renewed in your inner nature, or you will be burnt, for all your plumage, and your gentility, and your intelligence. And as for creed and baptism by water, they are no more than straw in the dungheap unless you are reborn also.⁴

¹ Felix, the Roman governor in Caesarea, trembles on hearing the teachings of his prisoner, Paul, yet rejects them (Acts 24.25). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Acts 26.18.

³ Morgan Llwyd's claim to descent from the princes of Wales is mentioned in Bob Owen, 'Gwreiddiau Teulu Morgan Llwyd.' *Coffa Morgan Llwyd o Wynedd*. Ed. John W. Jones. Llandysul: Gomer, 1952. (Rob Mimpriss.)

⁴ Jn 1.13; Jas 1.18; Acts 8.13, 23.

Eagle. In myself know nothing of this second birth, although I have heard men speak of it.

Dove. The second birth is when a man passes from one world to another world in this life, when the soul in the spirit, crying with pain, breaks through the course of nature within, determined to remain no longer in the womb of earthly thought, and despite every creature, comes out of darkness to light, out of corruption to cleanliness of the spirit, out of hatred to love, out of bondage to heavenly freedom, out of prison to authority, out of the conflicts of the world to the fellowship of the saints, out of the embrace of devils to the company of the angels of God, out of the din of the flesh to hear the voice of God, out of vanity to mental sobriety, out of mockery to paradisaal prudence, out of decaying flesh to the living spirit, and out of the womb of nature to the heavenly Jerusalem. There are two parts to the second birth. One is for the soul and spirit, of which we are speaking, and the other is for the body when the world ends, and is called the physical adoption. And as the body in the grave has not been born until the resurrection, so the soul festers in nature until it is resurrected with Christ. And so God makes a man see that he lies in Hell, and lurks in the earth, until he lifts his thoughts to Paradise.¹

Eagle. You often speak of Paradise. Do you know who is there?

Dove. Give me leave to speak of the joys of my own land and country! Everyone longs to speak of their home. Already I am there in part, and the other doves are there with me,

¹ Jn 3.3; Acts 26.18; Eph 2.1-2; Rom 8.

as I have said before.¹

Eagle. But what if I were to kill you now? Where would your soul go?

Dove. It would go straight to my home, for nothing can keep me away from my nature, and Paradise is heavenly nature.²

Eagle. And do you know what you are saying?

Dove. Yes, though I cannot make you understand.

Eagle. But are you not afraid to die in spite of all this?

Dove. No, any more than a weary labourer is afraid to sleep in his bed.³ Death is a messenger from my father to bear me home from this school of the world as I leave the prison of the flesh.

Eagle. But others are afraid to die.

Dove. They have cause, for when Death comes for them on horseback, Hell follows in his wake.⁴

Eagle. Why are you not afraid to die?

Dove. Because another has died for me, and that is my surety. For if he has died in my place, that is death enough.⁵

Eagle. And did he not die for all others, as well as for you?

Dove. He died for all, and all who live derive their wellbeing from him. But they do not love him, and so they sink

¹ Lk 6.45.

² Rom 8.38-39.

³ Philemon 1.

⁴ Rev 6.

⁵ Heb 7.

from him to live and die like Balaam.¹ And had he not submitted to death, this world would not have stood for a moment after the fall of Adam.

Eagle. Yet he did not die until many years after the fall.

Dove. But understand, oh eagle, that he had promised and resolved to die since the foundation of the world, and whatever he intends, it is as though he has already done it.²

Eagle. And did he intend his death to save all?

Dove. The love of the Father in the Son smiles upon all, but the wrath of the Father, and his terrible Sovereignty, reject many with a frown. For the mercy and the justice are one, and will achieve their end. No part of God is in conflict, but one thing satisfies the other, and each is nourished in the other eternally, like joy and sorrow in the same heart. The will of the Father's heart (like the Saviour's) is to save the sinner, but the eternal motive is like fire, or like a potter.³ The root of this matter is deep, as I have already shown, and every teacher reasons differently, and has a different opinion. This is enough for the wise, and too much for the mocker. And as for the weak of mind or the dry of heart, let them wait quietly. The day is dawning, and the deep is opening to receive to its breast all who are lowly and care-worn.

Eagle. And yet this does not content some minds?

Dove. Some will never be content, either in this world or in

¹ Heb 2; 2 Cor 5.

² Rev 13.8.

³ 1 Tim 2.4; 2 Pet 3.9; Ps 101; Rom 9.

the world to come. But be content in the love of God, as he would have everyone be: eat from the tree of life, though many snatch the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.¹ It is enough for a man to know the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of the Most High for his poor soul:² for all other knowledge will expire and be snuffed out like a candle when the last storms rise.

Eagle. But in that case what use is our conversation? If it is not good to have knowledge, can it be good to speak or enquire about it?

Dove. The knowledge of the Father in the Son is eternal life, but knowledge outside of him is death, and is oppressive to the spirit. The Father does not perceive himself outside the Son, but in him, and the Son in him also.³ But as the Jews looked on the Son outside the Father, without knowing either, many look on the Father outside his pleasure and his beloved Son, and receive him in burning fire.

Dove. Oh Dove, you are too quick for me. Do you take pride in that?

Eagle. I cannot and dare not be proud. For it is not I who made myself. And the one who made me pure in all things, to him be eternal glory. I have neither voice, nor colour, nor form, nor plumage, because of any act that I

¹ The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is forbidden to Adam and Eve (Gen 2.16), while the tree of life is forbidden to them after their fall and exile (Gen 3.24). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² 1 Cor 14.38; Eph 3.18-19.

³ Jn 17.3.

could do for myself.¹ Let none boast of himself but the one who is in Him, blessed by all who know Him in love.

Eagle. But even so, many are vainglorious and puffed up, and boast as much as they can.

Dove. Yet for all that, man of himself is only a sup of poison, a lump of soil, a stuporous, surly, senseless brute, or a blade of grass which withers, a heap of rotting bones. He is but the devil's footman in a lump of rotting flesh, and you think he should be proud? Yes, those who are saints in the righteousness of the Ark can see that their flesh is nothing but a bloom, and that the Most High cannot endure a proud mind or eye.² And the hills will be laid low, like Dagon or Jezebel.³ For wherever there is pride, there is folly, wilfulness, indifference, cruelty, ill will, jealousy, strife, discontent, bloodshed, contention, malice, violence, boastfulness, scornfulness, slander, antagonism, and puffing up in every evil.

Eagle. But are none of these things to be found amongst you?

Dove. Yes, like disease in the healthy, or a thorn in the foot, or wind in the belly, or a bone out of joint. Sin tracks the good man and seeks to take hold of him, but the mind of an evil man pursues and takes hold of his sin. Some put to death, and others nurture, their dearest lusts. Some fear them, and hate them as enemies, and others welcome

¹ Ps 100.3; Jer 9.

² Gen 3.19; Eccl 3.18; Isa 40.7; Ps 138.6; Prov 16.5.

³ Dagon, a god of the Philistines, is destroyed when the captured Ark of the Covenant is brought inside his temple (1 Sam 5.1-5). Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, King of Israel, persecutes the prophets of God, but suffers a violent death during a coup (1 Ki 18.13, 2 Ki 9.30-34). (Rob Mimpriss.)

them into the mind like sugar on the tongue.¹ Some are immersed in their physical lusts like trout in the water, and others swim for their lives out of the self. Some are like the sow and the goat, others like the harmless sheep that knows the voice of her shepherd.

Eagle. You mention the shepherd, but there are many voices in the world, and the sound of many doctrines. How do you know the voice of the Holy Spirit among them?

Dove. Have you not seen how a little lamb knows the voice of her mother among a hundred sheep?² None can discern the true spirit but those who have its nature in them, so it is futile to give signs and words to recognise it.

Eagle. Well, then. You leave every man to his own opinion.

Dove. When the true shepherd speaks, and a man hears him, his heart burns within, and his flesh trembles, and his mind ignites like a candle, and his conscience ferments like wine in a vessel, and his will bows to the truth. And a powerful, tender voice from Heaven raises the dead to life,³ from the grave of the self to their coronation, and strangely transforms the whole of their lives so that they live like lambs of God.

Eagle. But does the flesh not vanquish the best of you?

Dove. No. The flesh strives against us, but overpowers none, and like the House of Saul it weakens and weakens.⁴ For

¹ Rom 7; Gal 6.1; Rom 8.13; Ps 18.23; Job 20.12.

² Jn 10.

³ Lk 24; Hab 3.2; 1 Kings 19.

⁴ Saul, the first king of Israel, is chosen (1 Sam 9-10) but subsequently rejected (1 Sam 15.23) by God, and is less successful in battle than David (1 Sam 18.5-7), who succeeds him. (Rob Mimpriss.)

whoever is in the Ark has crucified the flesh and its desires and lusts. They are like men who have died to the pleasures and glories and riches of the world, which are no longer alive to them, or in them.¹ They have withered in their senses, and in their self will, and so the eternal flower has blossomed through them and in them and to them.

Eagle. How would you define this flesh that we speak of, since many do not understand their own words?

Dove. The flesh is everything under the sun which is extrinsic to the inner man. Whatsoever is transitory, and not eternal, that is the flesh. The flesh is the senses of man, and the pleasures of this world. The flesh is the distractions of the old and the young. The flesh is the nourishment and offspring of man. The flesh is time, and all that ends in it. The flesh is the will and the mystery of man. The flesh is the prayers and sermons of many. The flesh is the honour of great men, and the pride of small men. The flesh is everything that the natural man can see, and hear, and hold, and comprehend. And all flesh is grass. Lo, it withers. Not one man endures for even a moment. The breath of Emmanuel blows on the blossom, as on a garden herb which you crush between your fingers. This flesh is called by the name, The Old Man, because it is cunning to thieve, quick to remember, slow to understand, familiar to a man, and like a father to him. It is called the flesh because it clothes a man like a garment, is dear to him, is near to him, is part of him, grows in him, and corrupts him. This flesh is the Enemy

¹ Gal 5.12; Gal 6.24.

of God, the Bane of Man, the livery of Hell, the image of a beast, the beloved of the Sinner, the shelter of the hypocrite, the web of the great spider, the trafficker of souls, the home of the damned, and the dungheap of devils. Woe, woe, woe, to all who dwell in the flesh, who can neither please God, nor be saved, unless they return to him.¹

Eagle. Who are they, who live in the flesh and according to the flesh?

Dove. If I were to name them all, I would name the greater part of the earth's inhabitants: the proud princes, the dumb priests, the illiterate labourers, the somnolent worshippers, the empty believers, the rapacious nobles, the cheating tenants, the lascivious young, the credulous old, the unjust magistrates, the biased jurors, the duplicitous lawyers, the grasping gentry, the scheming poor, the ignorant peasants, the puffed-up scholars, the unreasoning soldiers, the unrelenting tax collectors, the brutish tavern keepers, the idle sportsmen, the embittered husbands, the rancorous wives, the obstinate children, the pampered voluptuaries, the blind thieves, the malicious murderers, the unruly quarrellers, the hotblooded brawlers, the bestial adulterers, and all who worship the letter of the law, and those who resemble them. Of these it has been said before, and again I testify, that they will not inherit the Kingdom of God.² They are sunk in the flesh, and know nothing of the ways of the Spirit of Life. Dead they were, dead they are, and dead

¹ Rom 8; Isa 40; Eph 4.22; Gal 5; Rom 8.8.

² 1 Cor 6; Gal 5.

they all shall be, unless God is pleased to call some of them.

Eagle. What must a man do to come out of the flesh into the Holy Spirit, and out of himself to live in God?

Dove. Many are enquiring and groping over time, and trying to mend the broken branch of their natures, but the strength of nature is like a tide that overwhelms them in the end. And in the end there is judgement; by evening, the Day of Judgement will come. A man and an oak and a day are hard to know,¹ but if any man would deny himself, and follow the Lamb in the second birth, and endure to the end and be saved, let him never snuff out the light that is in his conscience, but blow it into flame. Let him follow the light of God, and the morning star that is in him, and the light of the sun will shine brightly on him.²

Eagle. What is this morning star?

Dove. The certainty of knowledge, the assurance of the spirit, the sure eye of faith, the earnest of perfection, the Seal of Jehovah, and the testimony of the Three in One, the anchor of the soul, and all a man has when he knows the love of God for him, in him and through him, in strength and inexpressible peace.³

Eagle. Oh. And what can I do to have this for myself?

¹ A traditional Welsh verse states that a man and an oak and a day are hard to know: the day because it is long, the tree because it is closed, and the man because he is two-faced (T.H. Parry Williams, *Hen Benillion*. Llandysul: Gomer, 1988. p. 25). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Lk 13.23-24; Mt 19.28; Mt 24.13.

³ Col 2.2; 2 Pet 1.

Dove. You must knock hard on the door of God in prayer,¹ like a beggar, and not be silent until you receive it. In spirit and thought you must stay at his gate every minute, for those who seek will find.

Eagle. But many pray and yet come no nearer. When does the prayer of a man reach the breast of God?

Dove. When the spirit of God sighs in the depths of a man, when you seek to turn to God, and resolve to try the spirit of God as a dowry for your soul, and you steel yourself to remain fervent and covetous until you receive it. For a knock or two will not suffice to open the door of God. Few devils are cast out by fasting and prayer without faith, or by faith without prayer and fasting. And a great change in the weather is near: there is spiritual thunder, there are spiritual earthquakes, there are spiritual voices, there is spiritual hail. There is spiritual lightning, there are spiritual dragons, and spiritual judgements. And all these lie in the spirit of a man unseen. Let him listen with his heart, and he will hear these things within him. Many would gladly travel the world, but they do not acknowledge the great ample world in the heart. But the morning has dawned for the man who knows himself, for the bridegroom is already at the door, and the king, and the judge.

Eagle. But many have been saying for years that the judge has arrived, and that his finger is lifting the latch. And yet I see no signs that he has appeared, or that the Day of Judgement has come.

¹ Lk 11.13.

Dove. The Day of Judgement has started in the conscience, and it will be revealed plainly when Almighty God shows himself. He does not put off the day, as some say, for they neither discern him, nor acknowledge that he fills the whole earth, sees all things, judges nations, drives the whole of nature, rebukes consciences, fulfils prophecies and opens the scriptures. Although the Jews have waited long for the Messiah, they did not accept him when he came, for he did not come in the form they had expected. But now he is ready to come to his temple, but who can endure the smelter's fire, and the launderer's soap?¹ He will come, and everyone will see it, as I said about the flood before.

Eagle. Yet you are straying from the question I asked.

Dove. So did the Saviour of the World when questions were put to him according to the wisdom of the Serpent. And the flesh will get no answer to them, and the one who discourses much with men hears little of the voice of God and Paradise. And I would sooner be silent than speak to the deaf, for fear of speaking in vain. For I must give an account of every useless word.²

Eagle. Then what will become of those of us who chatter all day about the first thing that comes into our heads?

Dove. The spirit of a talkative man is like the devil's unbridled horse. Oh, how many thousands of idle words does every man speak every week? All those filthy, obscene, irreverent, angry, mean, ignorant, slanderous, thoughtless words, those mocking, drunken, rowdy,

¹ Mal 3.1-2.

² Mt 12.37.

surly, cunning, vicious words? When they march in their hosts to meet the sinner, what will become of his hopes for that day? Therefore call fervently for the Holy Spirit to be a watchman on the door of your lips, before you say too much.¹

Eagle. But what if I have already said too much, and cannot remember one word in a thousand, although the angels recorded them as soon as they came from my lips?

Dove. Seal your lips from henceforth, and open your conscience before God, and cling hard to the Lord Jesus, and he will be your surety on the Day of Judgement, and do not sleep, day or night, until you have assurance from him. The debtor fears arrest and capture, for he will be imprisoned until he has paid the last farthing. When Adam sinned, he told the Lord Jehovah, 'I heard your voice in my conscience, and was afraid, and hid myself.' Here is Mount Sinai and the mystery of thunder;² here the furtive conscience tries, if it were possible, to slink away from God and out of sight. And since a light is hidden in man, he is ashamed to do before others the natural thing that a beast would not hesitate to do. For the refulgence of the Image of God rests on the soul of a man, although the soul knows nothing of it clearly until it breaks out of the earthen vessel, and the mind flees out of the body. Therefore permit yourself no defect, no guilt on your conscience, no pus in your wound. For if the form and image of your sin, like a goblin from Hell, is on your conscience, everything will disturb you, and every

¹ Ps 120.3-4; Ps 141.3.

² The Dove mimics the language of Heb 12.18-24. (Rob Mimpriss.)

happenstance will make you afraid. If you do anything against your conscience, in thought or word or deed or conduct, the thunderstorm will draw near in you and raise its battle cry. And if your conscience stirs you to do this or that good thing (extending its finger within and showing it to you), and if you neglect it and turn away, the writing is on the wall, making the joints within you shake.¹ And besides that, understand, oh Eagle, that there is an image in the mind of every man, the image of all that his eye has seen in this world, reflecting all as in a mirror in the mind, and these images persist forever unless they are destroyed before the body dies. There was only one way for God to destroy them. He took his dear son, the likeness of himself, and beat him against your idols. He shattered his own likeness and killed him on the cross, so that the idols of your heart would be destroyed through the strength of the spirit of the cross.² And if you desire rest for your conscience, and everlasting peace, you will be given assurance to know how Christ, the Anointed One of God, died for you, and you in him and he in you. And by believing all these things, the conscience is swept clean through faith, and relieved of all the old sinful thoughts, however corrupt they were. It is the blood of the Lamb that cleanses the soul, the water and the blood. And in that water and blood within, there is virtue, and all the strength of the spirit of the eternally living God. This is the Well of Christ which is open for you, and in you is his refreshment. Everything is of God,

¹ A disembodied hand writes a warning of divine judgement on the wall of Belshazzar's palace (Dan 5.5-6). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Gen 3; Job 21.15; Heb 10.22; Lev 26.36; Jas 4.17; Ezek 14.4; 1 Jn 3.8.

and nothing of man, so therefore wait for him. And since you speak of the sins of the tongue, and the mischief of words, always remember that the thoughts of the heart are actual words in the ear of the Most High, and that while the thoughts of the flesh are in you, they are like hounds which follow you day and night, and howl your imperfections in the ears of the Judge. Oh, where will you escape from them, but out of yourself? One idle thought is heavier than the whole world, for the world is only fleeting, and the mind is eternal. And the outward voice is only an echo of the sound within. And the minds of all are forever running away from God through the eyes and ears to hide among visible, transitory things, not staying within to listen to the inexpressible voice in the spirit. The enemy has gouged out the eye and the ear of every man who is close to created things and is far from the one who is uncreated and eternal.¹

Eagle. You speak now of some interior world, and I understand none of it.

Dove. I have already spoken about this. But some do not understand, even when the same thing is said three times, since the flesh is like dark sackcloth on the windows of the mind. You, oh man, are in the centre of all nature, although you do not see it. Do not listen to those vain surveyors, who dwell too much on the 21,600 miles which girdle the earth, or calculate that there are three thousand miles from the core of the earth to its surface, or forty thousand from there to the sun, or eighty thousand from the sun to the firmament, and from there

¹ Rom 6; 1 Jn 5; Heb 9.14; Zech 13.1; 2 Cor 5.18; Ps 14.1; Jer 4.14.

to Heaven as much as to the earth. But a word of faith sounds in you.¹ The Trinity is with you. Both Hell and Paradise permeate every place, as I have already said.

Eagle. Despite all you have said, none of this is going to my head, nor to my heart either. And the head is the door to the heart. How is a man to think without misapprehending these matters?

Dove. There can be only one who is immeasurable, who, being perfect, must be in every place at once, speaking to all continuously, listening, and upholding all things at once. It is not some part of him which is here, and another part there, for there are no divisions within him. But he is entirely, and wholly, and completely in all places at once. Therefore Moses could speak with him face to face, for the whole Godhead was before his eyes. Yet none can see this but the spiritual mind, just as the sun is only seen by its own light. Who prays? Or who preaches? Or who journeys throughout the world, and sees that the whole Godhead, God Almighty himself, and all his countenance, is revealed there, and understands that where his love is, there is life and Paradise, and where his wrath is, there is death and Hell? Such is the immeasurable God, forever blessed, complete in himself, to whom be universal and eternal praise. No man can speak his name without awe and trembling, for even as he speaks of him, his being is sustained by him. Before him the heavens flee, and in his presence the heavenly angels hide their faces, yet men, like infernal, irrational brutes, roar, swear without thinking, misuse his name, lie, think evil thoughts,

¹ 1 Tim 3.6-7; Rom 10.7-8.

blaspheme, curse others and their own souls, not seeing the inextinguishable fire that is in them, and awaits them. And others, poor wretched souls, seek God from a distance, and pray to him as though he were outside themselves, without seeing that the Well and Root is in them, and seeks to break out and grow in them. For he is with all men, however evil they may be, and gives light to every man who enters the world, and though he permeates all, stays only in a few. He who has an ear to hear, let him hear.¹

Eagle. Oh Dove, are you not yet weary of speaking of these things? I would not wish to tire you.

Dove. Look to your hypocrisy, for is it not you who seeks an excuse? You will get no good from tiring, or from dissembling, and excusing yourself. There is no weariness in me, for the things of Heaven are my life.² And I was made for the purpose of bearing testimony. And the purpose of every serving vessel is its material and design. The angels do not grow weary of singing or giving praise. And you pray: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.'

Eagle. Even so, are none of you ever weary?

Dove. The spirit is willing, and the flesh is weak. The sick man does not grow weary of his life, but of his sickness, and longs for greater strength. New strength will descend on the faintest, if he seeks it from above. The weak will

¹ Jer 23.24; Mt 11.27; Rom 11.36; Deut 28.58; Rev 6; Isa 6; Rom 3.14-18; Jn 1.9; Eph 4.6.

² Job 23.12.

stand, and the strong will fall.¹

Eagle. But what do you think will come of the man who is ready to sink beneath his thoughts and lie down beneath his burden in despair?

Dove. Nothing is heavy but the ancient earth, they say, yet even so, God still upholds it and all its reaches by his word, without weariness or toil. Look to him. He can uphold your heart, no matter how heavy it is. He carries his lambs in his arms. Look and see how he brings you ancient power, and gives the poor wretch new strength, and fills him with new sap, as the root gives new fruit and leaves to the branches every year. For in the root there is life. Father Abraham hoped against reason and hope, as did Barak and Gideon and Habakkuk and Isaiah,² and many others more recently and in the present age. It would take too long to name them all, though every man delights in talking of that by which and in which he lives. But if you can train your ways and thoughts, and commit yourself wholly to the Lord, looking to him and leaning on him in the least thing, he will sustain you under the millstone. And if the Father so decrees, you will drink with the Son from the bitter cup for the slaying of sin.³

¹ Mt 26.41; Isa 40.30-31.

² Abraham waits twenty-five years in exile for God to fulfil the promise of a son (Gen 12-21; Heb 11.8-12); Barak is persuaded by Deborah the prophetess to lead an army against Israel's enemies (Judg 4); Gideon is convinced by miracles that God has chosen him to lead his people (Judg 6-8; Heb 11.32), while the books of Habbakuk (3) and Isaiah (43) predict God's future kindness to Israel in the face of defeat and exile. (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Jesus gives two disciples this warning of martyrdom in Mt 20.20-23. (Rob Mimpriss.)

One must be as willing to lie dead in the grave as to sit in one's chair. The pain of the mind is a physic, which God gives to those he loves, to bring down their pride. The spirit of man is God's lineage, and the Father of Spirits disciplines it: fall at his feet, and you will be comforted.¹

Eagle. I see that the dove never tires of flying in goodness, though others soon drop like ducks to their ponds. Blessed are those who do not grow weary of soaring above this world.

Dove. But are you not one of them, oh Eagle?

Eagle. Not yet, alas. I am not tired by idle chat, but I quickly grow tired by talk of heavenly things. Yet despite this, while I am in your company, it seems that some spiritual appetite bears me forward.

Dove. Then cleave to the company of the heavenly ones. It is easy to know the hypocrite by the company he keeps. Bad company is the mouth of the devil, engulfing the minds of fools. Cunning, evil men are gaping leeches, sucking the mind silently from the body into Hell, and out of the love of God.² But as for good company, you have already heard how much the raven said against it. Indeed there are tares among the wheat, and again there are weeds among the hay,³ and there is Judas among the Apostles, and water snakes are among the fish. But for all this, woe to him who refuses the good because there is evil beside

¹ Isa 40.28; Isa 40.11; Rom 4.18; Heb 11; Prov 16.3; Ps 55.22; 1 Pet 5.7; Heb 12.

² Prov 22.24-25; Prov 1.14-15; Prov 4.14.

³ See Jesus' parable of the tares and the wheat in Mt 13.24-30. (Rob Mimpriss.)

it, and woe to him who mistakes the one for the other.

Eagle. But I have yet to see one pure church for me to join: not one does good – not one. (And yet there is one, and that, you say, is Christ.) But tell me plainly: are the new churches better than the parish churches of old?

Dove. I have told you before that many can speak like doves, and like ravens also. In the churches there are many different birds: the vulture, the osprey, the kite, the cuckoo, the hawk, the owl, the swan, the stork, the lapwing, the bat, the heron, the nightjar, and the cormorant, and other similar breeds, and according to the law all these are unclean birds.¹ Yet the spirit of the doves is among them in the churches, though the spirit of the world pelts her with stones.²

Eagle. But what do you say of the stock doves and their like who resemble yourself?

Dove. Moses did not call them unclean, although they are not doves. I do not judge, but I bear in mind that the finest hemp is not satin, that not all that glitters is gold, that Ephraim is not Gilead, that Ashdod is not Zion,³ that it is no good to drown before swimming to shore, nor to tire before completing the race. It is not enough for a man to set out from Egypt, and be slain in the desert for his

¹ Barton and Muddiman suggest that the birds, loosely defined, that are listed as unfit to eat in Lev 11.13-19 are mostly carnivores or scavengers (*The Oxford Bible Commentary*. Oxford: OUP, 2001. p. 100). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Lev 11; Acts 7.51.

³ Ephraim is a mountainous region in central Israel, though Gilead, to the east of the Jordan, was noted for its perfume (Jer 8.22); Ashdod was a centre of Philistine power, unlike Zion, a mountain outside Jerusalem. (Rob Mimpriss.)

unbelief.¹ The Saviour of the World had companions in the flesh who denied him. I say that God has walked through three temples already: the Temple of Jerusalem built by Solomon (which was dark to the spirit and clear to the flesh); the second, earthly temple of the Son who was slain, and was resurrected in spiritual glory; and the third, the magnificent church of God's presence with the apostles. And the final church will be the New Jerusalem, which encompasses the Old Testament and the New, and will surpass them both.²

Eagle. Then finally show me the Fourth Temple, for I see that everyone is weary of the temples and services of the present.

Dove. The Final Temple is God revealed in men, and men revealed in his name. When men worship God in himself, and not in human customs, God himself becomes all in all to them and within them. For until now, Creation has concealed the Creator. But when God Almighty reveals himself, his creation will fade away. He is constantly present in all things, yet none of the spirits of men on earth yet discern him as all in all, for they desire the husk more than the one within. Before the creation of the world there was only God, manifest in himself, and after this world is destroyed, none will be extolled but God. Some will see his wrath, and others his eternal love. The one who has not seen God with his spirit has not praised

¹ God condemns the generation he has led out of Egypt to die without conquering Canaan as a punishment for their lack of faith (Num 14.26-32). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Judg 12.6; Acts 26.28; Mt 24.13; Jn 7.3; 1 Kings 6; Jn 2.21; Acts 2; Rev 21.10, 12, 14.

God himself, for it is the spirit of this great world that most of them worship in his place. The time is at hand when men will have neither light, nor loveliness, nor prince, nor shepherd, nor pasture, nor houses, nor lands, nor possessions, nor rest, nor wealth, nor knowledge, nor life, nor anything but God himself, and he will be their sufficiency. As the proverb says, without God, one has nothing; with God, one has enough. And those who live apart from God, when this world burns they will have nothing but their sins, and the eternal pangs of the conscience. Therefore let a man examine the things on which he has set his heart. Many temples are the cause of many disagreements; many creeds have built many temples, but in the end there will be only one temple for all who are godly, and for them alone. The Temple of God is the body of his Son: the Temple of the Son is his immeasurable spirit (for it is in his own spirit that he dwells, and not outside it). The Temple of the Holy Spirit is the children of the Kingdom, and their Temple is God, the first and last, who is all in all. Those who seek to please God, let them abide in his Son, and those who seek to follow the Son, let them walk in his Spirit. It is hard for a man to be crushed and deprived for his comfort, but the one who has ears to hear, let him hear.¹

Eagle. You have spoken of having ears to hear before. Does everyone not have them?

Dove. There are many voices in the heart of man: the din of the world, its tidings, its troubles, its pleasures and its

¹ Rev 21.22; Titus 2.13; 1 Cor 15.24; Rom 1.24; 2 Thess 1.10; Jn 4.22-23; Col 2.9; 1 Cor 6; Gal 5.16.

fears.¹ Also from within the chambers of the heart comes the tumult of the thoughts, the distempers, and the ebb and flow of flesh and blood. And so the unhappy soul, like a lodging house filled with drunkards, is full of clamour within, each lust at odds with the other, or like a busy fair or market where din and talk and rowdiness fill the streets. This is why a man does not know even half his own thoughts, and cannot properly hear what his own heart is saying.

Eagle. Then how can the thoughts of a man have peace?

Dove. By going into the secret room, which is the presence of God within. But when you let your thoughts escape through the eyes and senses, or you look within to the images of the things you have seen and remembered, your mind is like Lot leaving his house to confront the Sodomites, until the spirit of God takes hold of you to talk with God in the chamber of the heart. And when the mind is distracted without, the devil within frustrates the thoughts from coming back inside to God, and so the poor soul wanders from home, and sees and longs for outward things, not perceiving God within him.² And now, oh Eagle, let me ask you: does everything you have asked or spoken come from the depths of your heart, do you think?

Eagle. I still cannot bring myself to show all my mind to anyone.

Dove. Then set your heart to do so. Nothing is secret that will not be made plain, for all things are laid out before the

¹ Zech 2.13.

² Isa 26; Gen 19; Ezek 6.9.

great bright face of God and his angels, and before the thousand thoughts of the conscience. And that which was whispered in the ear will be preached from the rooftops in the marketplace. The thoughts of a man lying in bed will be declared in the firmament. As soon as a word is spoken, it is impressed in the air, and the angels present it to the other world, which is close beside you. All the secrets of the imagination will come to clear light, and every veiled counsel, and every furtive vice and fleshly pleasure, every murder and theft and false conspiracy, and every darkness and every idle word, as you have been told, will come to judgement. A man cannot account for one in a thousand, yet even so, he must give his account. Understand also that everything is already clear in itself, and it is only the flesh and time and earthly measures which prevent one man from knowing the thoughts of another, and when these are broken, all will see the motives within. And then all will be praised or condemned by the lips of God.¹

Eagle. But even so, a man knows many things he ought not to say, and there is much that would be evil if spoken.

Dove. That is true. Therefore say nothing to anyone unless it is for his good. Why do you wag your tongue in vain, when speech was given to you, and not to the beast?² But for all a man's cunning, let him remember and discern that the world sees one thing, and angels many, and the conscience more, and God sees all things at once.

Eagle. But how can anyone discern all things at once?

¹ Lk 12.2; Job 34.21-22; Isa 29.15; Eccl 12.14; 2 Cor 5.10.

² Eph 4.29; Col 4.6.

Dove. You can see that the sun looks on the whole land and everything in it at once, and more by far does the one who made the sun discern, without the sun. Does the one who made the ear not hear, without the ear? And does not the one who devised the eye not see, without the candle of the fleshly eye?¹ If a man realised that the Great Judge sees his every thought and step on the paths within and without, he would not dare to sin. But Lucifer keeps the blindfold of the flesh over the eyes of a man's thoughts, and that man cannot even discern himself until it is too late.

Eagle. Then is there a time when it is too late for a man to repent?

Dove. For many, tomorrow will be too late, just as they think today is too soon. And the one who turns sometimes returns without knowing. I was found, says the Most High, by the one who did not seek me.²

Eagle. What if a man's heart is hardened today? Is it too late for him to try to repent tomorrow?

Dove. Whoever is utterly hardened once will never truly attempt to return until he is in the pit from which there is no escape.³

Eagle. But how can a man know the day of his salvation?

Dove. When the birds are singing, when the mill is turning, when the breeze is blowing. When the iron is hot, when this hour abides. When the mind enquires, when the

¹ Ps 19.6; Ps 94.9.

² Zeph 3.2-3; Isa 65.1.

³ Heb 3.

conscience warns. Before breathing is laboured, before the city gate is shut, before the soul takes flight, before the cord is broken,¹ before the tree falls. Before the will hardens, before the conscience is seared, before the candle is snuffed out. Before judgement is passed, before tomorrow dawns, before this moment passes. Return, oh children of men. How long will you delay taking life?

Eagle. Many speak of claiming their salvation at some propitious hour. Is everyone sent such a propitious hour from the planets?

Dove. The planets rule the fleshly, animal mind until it comes out of the body under the sun.² But the earnest, spiritual man already transcends the planets in his mind, although his body is yet like the animal's. To the stubborn man, there is no propitious hour, nor is there an evil hour to the heavenly man.

Eagle. But our elders have taught us the contrary, and the sign of the cross is good.

Dove. It does no good to cross the brow when the unclean spirit is in the heart. There is already a sign of the cross in the heart of the faithful man, thwarting his lusts and killing his corrupt nature, and transforming his mind. That is the cross that saves a man from every evil. But understand that the man who fears God has no fear of the planets, any more than the magistrate on the bench fears the one who stands beneath him, for the godly man rules all things in the spirit with God himself. But any other man fears his own shadow more than he fears God, for he

¹ 2 Cor 6.2; Eccl 12.

² Job 38.33.

does not perceive the Most High through faith.¹

Eagle. Then what do you say of wizards and witches? Is it not true that they know many occult things?

Dove. If any man gives himself to the devil, then the devil will teach him what he knows, raising his children in malice and evil. But the devil himself does not know what punishment is coming upon him, and so he trembles. On the other hand, those who dedicate themselves to God will be taught by him, and no evil will be able to touch them, since they will be in a higher world, in another nature, ruling with the Lamb, and ready to judge men and angels.² Oh, blessed are those who have received the first resurrection, for the gates of Hell will not stand against them.³

Eagle. They are blessed indeed. But I fear that I am still under the foot of nature, flesh and blood.

Dove. Now is the time for you to rise to the heights, and to escape your enemy by fleeing to the feet of Christ. This is the day to break through all; this is the hour to be blessed. And oh, that some will not see their season, but will continue into the night, and the winter that is coming. The swallow and the woodcock know their time, and the oxen know their owner, but man is more wayward than the wild ass.⁴

Eagle. You must show more fully who is blessed, and who is not, for there are many trades among men, and many

¹ Gal 6.14; Hos 11.12 & 12.3; Dan 3.16.

² See 1 Cor 6.3. (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Deut 18.10, 11, 13, 15; Jas 2.19; 1 Jn 5.18; Rev 2.11.

⁴ 2 Cor 6.2; Jer 8.7; Isa 1.3.

callings. Also, what do you say about the physicians, and about the men of law? You have spoken of many other kinds of men before.

Dove. The physicians cause the deaths of many through their ignorance, or through their love of money, just as many preachers cause the deaths of souls. But the physicians are also a help to many, by the grace of God. If you are sick, go earnestly to God, and also entreat those who are of the faith, and in favour with Heaven, to pray for you. And if God counsels you to do so, then seek a physician. But do not consult the physician first, lest you be turned away without hope. And as for the lawyers, remember that just as foolish physicians fill the cemeteries with the bodies of the dead, and the ignorant preachers fill the church with vain opinions, so do godless lawyers fill the court with futile disputes. And just as the best law is to be at peace, so the best remedy is to suffer a wrong, and to be lowly and agreeable. God suffered greater wrong at your hand than you will ever bear at the hand of your neighbour.¹

Eagle. But if I suffer every blow, men are so unreasonable that they will gouge my eye out of its socket in the end.

Dove. Await justice, not from men, but from God, and you will surely receive it. The time is very close when all men will receive their due. The wrong that others do you is no more than a flea bite compared with the wrong and oppression that you are laying on the neck of your own soul. Remember this before going to law on any account. Oh, how fidgety and impatient are the crowd! How ready

¹ Jas 5; Mt 5.39-40.

to go to law! How unready for the Gospel! Which teaches a man to give his cloak to the one who wants his tunic rather than quarrelling, for it is better to suffer the greatest of wrongs than to be in the least of conflicts. But be like the lamb which is silent at the hand of the shearer, and blind and harmless and deaf before your accusers.¹

But woe to you lawyers, for the law will consume you: woe to the litigious of the land, for they are the firebrands of Hell. Woe to the murdering physicians, for many have gone to the other side before you. Woe to you oppressors, who gorge on wealth, for you will vomit it up with your blood. Woe to you ill-famed noblemen, who drag the poor behind you to destruction. How will you give account of your wretched tenants? What will become of you when every exalted thing is broken and burnt? Woe to every great tree, and every little tree, that does not produce good fruit. The fire has kindled in Wales, the gate of your forest, oh heirs of the Britons, stands open before the blaze. And the axe is at your root. Unless you produce good fruit at last, you will be destroyed as a people. And woe to you idlers, who fritter your time, and your health, and your money, and your eternal minds, on vanity. Woe to you, ignorant labourers. Your whole work is digging the earth and ploughing it, and herding the flocks on the mountains, and now your flocks have turned on you, and testify against you. Woe to you, wicked, cunning Censor, who searches books for obscenity or sin. The truth will search out your sin, and judge you. Woe to you, the hypocrite, who fears the gaze of man. You are not ashamed to sin in secret, and you will

¹ Ps 98.9; Isa 53.7.

be judged in plain view. Woe to you, the able-bodied beggar, who is not willing to work for the welfare of any. Seek not prosperity, lose prosperity. Woe to you, the slumbering conscience, who like a dumb dog betrays your owner; it is high time for you to howl. Woe to you who flock with the crowd, your spirits jaunty, who eat the sugar of fleshly lusts in the devil's concourse, and carouse your souls. Soon there will be not a drop of water for you to cool the tip of your tongue.¹ Woe to you, wicked gentry, who lap at the sweat of the poor, who make your tenants groan, and break their backs. The time of your oppression hastens, and will not delay. Woe to you, dumb priests, who love foxes, who bark at sheep, blind bitter dogs, proud, lazy, covetous, snarling, sleepy, lecherous, vile. You will all be driven out of the church. And woe to all you ancient Welsh who have not yet been renewed.² But blessed are you who yearn for God, for you will be filled with His presence within you. Blessed are you who are diligent, faithful, persevering, for you will receive the reward for your work. Blessed are you who pray in sincerity, for your prayers will be answered. Blessed are you who deny yourselves, for God will not deny you. Blessed are you who sow God's seed in sincerity, for you will enjoy a spiritual harvest. Blessed are the spiritual, for you will possess the mystery of God. Blessed are the watchful, for the devil will not take hold of you. Blessed are you who wait in silence, for the Lord Jesus will visit

¹ The rich man in Hell pleads for a former beggar to be sent with water to cool his tongue in a parable of Jesus (Lk 16.19-31). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Jas 3.16; Job 20.15; Ps 10.9-10; Job 24.9; Isa 2.12; Mt 3.10; Zech 11.1; Eccl 11.8-9; Job 11.11; Job 24.5; Prov 6.13-15; Mt 23; Prov 19.15; Prov 6.10; Jas 5.5; Jer 51.39; Amos 4.1; Mic 3.3; Isa 56.11; Jer 23.

you. Blessed are you who suffer with the Lamb, for with the Lamb you will reign. Blessed are you who have been awoken, and have been divested of self, for you shall live in God himself. Blessed are you who endure until the end in goodness, for your reward is beyond telling. Blessed are the weak, the humble, the broken-hearted, for God will stay in them. Blessed are the harmless, for no one shall harm them. Blessed are the little children of God, for great is his care for them. Blessed are the doughty servants of God, for they shall sit at banquet, and the Lamb shall serve them. Blessed are those who are willing and patient, for nothing shall trouble them. Blessed are the lowly, for they shall be lifted up. Blessed are those who swim against the current of nature, for they shall come to that sea where the holy spirits dwell. Blessed are those who do every good deed they know, for they shall gain the knowledge they seek, and be given new strength like eagles. Blessed are those who walk with God, like Enoch,¹ for God shall call them and shall receive them from among men. Blessed are the pure and still of mind, for they shall know Paradise and the tree of life. Blessed is he who fasts from fleshliness, for he shall eat the Manna of God. Blessed is he who denies the pleasures of the flesh, for he shall drink from the river of God. And in a word, blessed is he who has been born again, for all things are his birthright. God will be his father, and he will be his precious son. The Lamb will be his light, and he will be a light in God. Nothing will harm him, and all things will work together for his good. When he cannot

¹ Enoch is an ancestor of Noah noted for his godliness, and is spared physical death as a reward (Gen 5.19-24; Heb 11.5). (Rob Mimpriss.)

keep hold of God, God will keep hold of his seed in him. He will rest forever in the heart of God, for he is his son, when many others languish forever in the heat of those black rocks, dead without hope of life, and alive without hope of death for eternity. But the second death cannot harm him who has been born again, and the tongues of angels cannot account for all the treasures that have been kept in God since the beginning of the world for his soul. But he will know him and receive him, and will care for him and enjoy him eternally. Behold now, here is a curse and a blessing. Behold, here are Mount Ebel and Mount Gerizim.¹ Here is death, and here is life. Choose life, oh man, and not death.²

Eagle. Tell me, how can a man take hold of life?

Dove. The promise applies to you by name if you take hold of it. Your name, by nature, is Evildoer, Godless, vile sinner, hardened, convict, blind and deaf: to those so named in the scriptures the promise is given. Although the soul is weak, and cannot take hold of the covenant, God's covenant takes hold of the soul. For in the name of the Son the nations will put their trust.³ And if he has said that you will cleave to the Son, what does it matter if the enemy says you will be lost? It is not the word of the enemy that will stand.

¹ These two mountains situated near modern Nablus are to be used in rituals symbolising the blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience to God in Deut 11.28-30. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Mt 5; Zech 10.1; Ps 1.3; Jer 29.13; Mk 4; Ps 25.14; Ps 27.14; Lam 3.26, 31; 2 Tim 2.12; 1 Jn 3.24; Rev 2.10; Isa 57.17; Philemon 2.15; 1 Jn 2.12-13; Jn 7.17; Heb 11.5; Mt 5.8; Rev 21.7; Rev 7.17; Eph 5; Rom 8.28; 1 Cor 2.9.

³ 1 Tim 1.13; Rom 4.5; Rev 3.17-18; Mt 12.21.

Eagle. I pray you, tell me, what is the New Covenant?

Dove. An agreement between God and his son for man, and between God and man through the blood of the Lamb. God is love, and good will towards man. And although man abandoned him, and chose the devil as his prince in the spirit of this great world, yet God was moved to take his son, his own dear heart from his breast, and gave him to die, as a grain of wheat falls to the ground to feed many. Christ is a great and inexpressible gift, and the hand of faith to receive him is a great gift. None can buy it, but the poorest can receive it. Much has been said concerning the New Covenant, and for that reason I will say only this. It is through its virtue that the sinner belongs to Christ, and Christ to the sinner: God dedicates himself through Christ to man, and man must dedicate himself through Christ to God. And therefore all things that belong to God, the All in All, belong to man, belong to sinful man, for all his will and mind belong to the spirit of God. The Father says to the Son, 'All that I have is yours,' and the Son says to the sinner, 'All that the Father has is mine, and all that is yours is mine, for you yourself are mine, oh man.¹ I have bought you. I will keep you and save you. And you must have faith in me, to keep and take me.' That is the sum of the New Covenant.

Eagle. And what is this faith you mention?

Dove. A strange spirituality, not only to believe that Jesus is the Christ, but also that this Christ is the beloved and the king and the life of your soul, and that Jesus died for you to live in you, and to carry you without delay to God, to

¹ 1 Jn 4.10; Rom 5.8; Jn 12.24; Rom 8.32; Isa 55.1; Song 2.16; Jn 17.6, 10.

the root in the heavenly Trinity, from which man escaped at the fall of Adam.¹ When a soul discerns this for himself, and comprehends it within himself, that man believes, a little. The candle is beginning to burn, and it will never be snuffed out.

Eagle. But why do you keep on saying that Christ is the heart of God the Father?

Dove. Because he is the life, and the mystery, and the wisdom, and the beloved, and the first, and the last, and the greatest of his Father, just as his heart is to a man. And in his heart there is only good will to all, not wishing that any be lost.² So when a man does wrong to God, he would sooner think harshly of God than of himself, as though the Most High were at fault, and not man.

Eagle. Although you say God is good, I cannot believe he bears me no anger.³

Dove. His anger is against your flesh, and that is the truth. You must allow him to destroy your flesh, or your flesh will destroy your spirit, but for your spirit he feels only love. Is there any darkness in the sun? Any flaw in perfection? Has God ever done you injury? Have you not

¹ Eph 2.8; Jn 20.28; 1 Pet 3.18.

² Jn 1.18; 1 Cor 1.24.

³ The Puritan emphasis on sin, conversion, and salvation by faith, encouraged doubt, not as to the veracity of Christian teaching, but as to its individual application. John Flavel records the case of 'that good gentlewoman, Mrs Honeywood, who under a deep and sad desertion... seeming to despair utterly of the grace and mercy of God,' threw a Venice-glass to the floor, and cried out that as sure as it shattered, she was damned. The glass did not shatter. (*Divine Conduct, or the Mystery of Providence Opened.* 1678.) (Rob Mimpriss.)

always had good from him? Has he not saved you from many perils? Has he not long borne with you, although you daily spat your sins in his face? Has he not placed his creation, and his people, and his son, and his Bible before you, along with countless loving warnings? And in spite of all this, do you think him a harsh master? He asks nothing of you but what is for your good. Say what the wife of Manoah said: If God intended to kill us, he would not do so much for us.¹ Now is not the time for despair. Behold, the day is breaking clearly, and the saints cry out, Hallelujah, and the sinners are awaking, and the creatures of darkness are running to their lairs, and the flowers are blooming, and the summertime is near. Get up and take heart, for it was God's good will to ordain you to live in such a time as this. For all you know, it is God's loving purpose to work through you in your generation. It is true that the devil wants you to think ill of God, to think he hates you, as the devil hates you. But remember that God keeps hold, not of the nature of angels, but of the nature of men, of the Seed of Abraham, and not of the Seed of Lucifer. Say this in your heart: 'Through the strength of Christ, for as long as I live, I will think well of God. Although he kills me, I will sit at his feet.' And if thoughts come in like fireballs from the devil, turn them back at once to their father, and then those faithless thoughts will not be yours, but the Evil One's, and Satan is merely a gander. Oppose him in your heart, and he will flee from you. The sum of all your duty is to think well of God, and ill of your own thoughts, for he is

¹ Manoah's wife assures him that they will not die, despite having seen God (Judg 13.2-23). (Rob Mimpriss.)

good, and you are a nest of evil. Do this until you love God as your dear sufficiency, and hate yourself implacably, as you should.¹

Eagle. But every day I hear some voice within me, saying that God is righteous, that the gate to Heaven is narrow, that the many are lost, that hypocrisy is everywhere, that God's worshippers are few, that the Enemy is implacable, that man is defenceless, that I myself have often stumbled, that my sins are unequalled, and that a hundred to one I will never be saved.

Dove. This is my answer. Behold, the door to life is still open. Do not be careless. You can go within to that palace of eternal glory. A cry from God has gone throughout the land to summon all within, no matter how heavy their sins, or how frequent their failures. And if you turn in your will towards God, he will give you weapons to fight the serpent, and will give you the strength to tear down the devil's entrenchments, in yourself and in the world. And he will teach you to worship the Father in his spirit and in his truth, casting out hypocrisy and false thinking. And then you will know that you have been saved, that you have passed through the gate into the righteousness of God, who belongs to all who believe in his heavenly gospel. For salvation comes not from man, but from God.²

Eagle. That is very comforting, but still something fights me within. What will become of the lost? Is there no help for them?

Dove. You must be slain before you are healed, and be lost

¹ Ps 99.8; Job 36.23; Ex 34.6-7; Judg 13.23; Heb 2.16; Job 13.15; Jas 4.7.

² Isa 65.1-2; Mt 11.28; Eph 6; Jn 4.24; Rom 3.

before you are saved. And just as the Emmanuel came from highest Heaven to deepest Hell, so it is his office to raise many from the depths of woe to the heights of bliss. I know of one to whom the Devil came, saying, 'You are lost.' He replied, 'That is true. But,' he said, 'this is true also: Christ came to save the lost.' That is your life line. It cost Christ his life to spin it to save yours. The Lord Most High is the lover of the greatest sinners.¹

And if your sins are as red as scarlet, he will make them whiter than snow. His spirit is like the launderer's soap, purging the deepest stain. And as the Son is full of grace, so the Spirit is full of grace also. Ask, and you will receive. He makes the last first and the filthiest most clean. He takes new rods to chastise you in your conscience, and to drive you out of your self. He does not want you to be an illegitimate son, but one of the true heirs of God, and for that reason he will discipline you. And as soon as you have seen the depths of Hell in your own heart, and the height of the love of God, and the mysteries of Paradise, and once you have discerned what you are, what you were, and what you will be for eternity – truly I say, when you first feel the loving, soothing balm and ointment of God eternal, purging the filth from your heart and conscience, you will cry out, 'Hallelujah! Glory to God who fills the entire world. Who is his equal? To him be all praise. He touched my hard heart, and taught me to sing him songs of joy with all his saints in spirit and power. God loved me, God remembered me, sought me, found me, saved me, raised me. Light of my life in death, well of my spirit, sum of my longings, root of the world,

¹ Hos 6.1; Mk 2.17.

and ruler of angels. Father my God, lover of men: from him, through him, to him, all things have their being. Who can search him out?' But when you are at your most joyful in the Paradise of God, then be most watchful, lest the envious Serpent come and whisper to you thus: 'At last you can be free from care. All things are good. Let in your lawful, natural lusts to mix with your heavenly desires, and then you will have both,' the Serpent will say.¹

But this is the truth: by such means you will lose the pure spirit of the dove, and the raven will rush in to take its place, bringing with it a host of dark thoughts: doubtful, discontented, tempestuous. And then you will fall from the love of your first spouse, and so you will lose your life and your dear light, and will prostitute your mind with the great spirit of this world, which also desires your soul for its property. No young rake ever lusted after a pretty maiden as much as the spirit of this world lusts after your soul, for he knows that the natural life of God made your spirit in his image, to be his pure beloved, and you must not corrupt yourself with any creature. And therefore if ever you have had a taste of God's word, beware that you do not lose it, or prostitute your mind to the lusts of the devil, and the corruption of the flesh, and all this fleeting world.²

Eagle. But what if a man falls from his care and his longing and his first love? Is there no hope for him?

Dove. Let him get up at once. Let him consider that it is better

¹ Isa 1.18; Mal 3; Ps 51.12; Lk 11.13; Heb 12; Ps 147.3; Ps 40.2-3; Ps 2.11; 1 Pet 5.8.

² Ps 30.6-7; Hos 2; Jas 4.4; Heb 6.

to be in the arms of the Son of God than to wallow in the flesh. Beware of hardening your conscience through frequent heating and cooling. Your reason, oh chosen man of God, is like a hall, swept and tidied and well lit: take care that the seven spirits of corrupt nature do not enter a second time, or in the end you will be worse off than before.¹ It is painful and horrific when a sinner is born into this world, but it is worse for some in the end when they born out of the world. Oh, take care that your candle on earth is not snuffed out, leaving you without light to show you where you are going when you die. But be courageous: grow in knowledge and humility and confidence before God. Hold on to the good you have received. Let the mustard seed germinate in you and grow. Keep sin at bay, and cry out for help, and the Saviour will draw near to you. Remember the former servants of God, for however frequent their frailty, their Master gave them honourable names. Namely, Noah the Perfect, Abraham the Faithful, Lot the Righteous, Job the Patient, David the Likeness of the Heart of God, Jonah the Prophet, and Moses the Humble, who when provoked seven times, sinned only once.² Therefore strike boldly at the enemy in the strength of the Lamb. Take the sharp sword of the death of Christ to maul the Serpent, and to slay the Old Man within you. If you fall, get up, and if you get up, take care not to fall. You need keep yourself only from sin, which is the enemy of God, and the devil's

¹ Jesus uses such a parable to warn of the dangers of an incomplete commitment to his teachings in Lk 11.15-26. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² For the sin of disobedience, Moses is warned by God that he will not live to see his people enter the promised land (Num 20.2-13). (Rob Mimpriss.)

pincers, for through sin he grasps hold of your mind.¹

Eagle. Please, explain to me more clearly what sin is.

Dove. Sin is transgression against the law, the impurity of the creature, the rebellion of nature against God, the rejection of his holy will. It is sin when the mind seeks contentment where it is not to be found. You must understand that it is through the sin of Adam that creation was shattered in pieces, and that God indwells these pieces, which is to say, all things. And sin seeks happiness in these fragments, not in God. The gluttonous man seeks the good in food, in drunkenness, in fine clothes, or in intellectual gifts. Also men and women suppose that perfection is to be found in each another, and wade through filth before the bright face of God to seek it, but instead of finding it, both fall into the den of demons. For the treasure and flower of good is not found in any creature, or in the whole of creation. The heavens and the earth and the sea cry out, 'It is not in us.' The riches of the deep, and time itself, cry out, 'It is not in us.' You can have all these, and yet lack good, for it hides itself from all, in the dwelling places of eternity. The lusts of the mind are like arrows, and every one which misses God is sin: oh, how countless they are. And man can only sin while he remains in the thicket of nature, and gazes at one thing after another without returning to wholeness in God himself. And as many men as are in the spirit of God, so many are without sin. For often the soul of a man sins while his spirit yet remains pure.²

¹ Hos 2.7; Ezek 16; Lk 11.24; 2 Pet 2.20; Ps 13.3; 1 Cor 16.13; Rev 2.25.

² 1 Jn 3.4; Isa 55.2; Lk 15.16; Philemon 3.19; Job 28; Ps 51.6.

Eagle. I was almost ready to faint, but now I have something of strength, and courage and heart, to question you further before I retire. Please tell me, what is the difference between the soul and the spirit of the same man?

Dove. The spirit of man is a great treasure, and the soul is like a ship that bears it from place to place. The spirit of man is the castle, and the soul is the town which surrounds it. The spirit is the kernel of the mind, and the soul is the shell of reason without: the spirit, say the scriptures, is the marrow, and the thoughts of the soul are the joints. The spirit of man is the root of the tree, and the reasoning of the soul is the branches. The soul imbues every living thing, and gives a kind of understanding to the animals, but the immortal spirit is found only in men and angels. Man engenders the soul in his own likeness, but God is the father, not the grandfather, of the spirit. The rational soul is the mast of man, but the spirit is the rudder of the ship. Sometimes the spirit of a man roams, like Dinah,¹ out of the ways of the soul, and then the wind of the spirit of this world snatches it away; but the spirit of the natural man is constantly out of himself like the Prodigal Son until he repents,² borne along in the cart of the devil, and following his piping in the flesh. The spirit is like the house of Lot, and the fleshly soul is like the street of Sodom. And just as there is a difference between a man's breath and his mind, so there is a difference between the soul and the spirit. The spirit is the house of

¹ Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, is on friendly terms with the neighbouring Shechemites until she is raped (Gen 34). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² See Lk 15.11-32. (Rob Mimpriss.)

the soul, and the soul is the gate of the spirit. When the body dies, it is the spirit which rises up to the throne of the one who dwells in eternity, while the soul of the animal sinks down, for it is blood.¹

Understand also that God set man at the centre of all creation, the heart of the universe. God breathed his spirit into man from his lips, and it endures forever.² His natural spirit is assembled from the firmament, and his body from the four elements. The man of God partakes of the stars in beauty, and of the plants in growth, and of the animals in fleshly senses (which are the natural soul), and partakes also with the angels in eternal understanding, and with Christ in the nature of Heaven. Accept none of the deceptions of the deceivers of this age, and nothing will be strange to you.

You see in yourself two kinds of thought. One is private, profound, purposeful, proper, precious, like gold in the mind. The other flits in and out of the mind, like a guest at a lodging house, and does not remain. You see also that the one kind of thought opposes the other, and that you think many things against your own will. Acknowledge this, therefore: open your eyes and see that the root of the will is your spirit, and that the soul is the rule of your members. The soul in this world stands in the body, and the spirit shelters in the soul. All can see the body of a man, and many can perceive the impulse of the soul, but few comprehend the most secret spirit, which is the foundation of the heart. None see it clearly but the

¹ Heb 4.12; 1 Thess 5.23; Lk 15.17; Eph 2.2-3; Eccl 3.21.

² Ps 139.

spirit of God, which searches all.¹ Moreover, just as the body is the shadow of the soul, and the soul of the spirit, so you can see that your spirit casts its appetites (all its natural thoughts) as vanity and oppression of the spirit into the manger of the soul, and the soul casts its physical wants into the trough of the body. Three heavens work on the three parts of man, the lowest on our bodies, as we see each day, the middle on our souls, and the highest on our spirits. In spirit, soul and body, God revealed himself, man sinned, and Christ suffered. The virtues of the natural man are in his soul, and his sins are in his spirit, while the virtues of the spiritual man are in his spirit, and his sins are only in his soul. Whoever does not acknowledge his soul and his spirit understands neither his thoughts by day nor his dreams by night. Why do the saints have warfare within? Because the town and the castle shoot at each other. Why are there arguments among the faithful? Because the souls of some struggle against the spirits of others, for the spirits of all are one in God, but their natural souls are not at peace with one another. Moreover, many starve the spirit to fatten the soul and the human reason. The three parts of man are figured in the children and servants and animals of Job; or in the three sons of Noah and their wives; or in the three young men in the furnace, and the Son of God was the fourth;² or in the Temple precinct, and the Holy Place,

¹ Job 38.33.

² Three Jews are thrown into a furnace as a punishment for refusing to worship an idol, but a fourth figure appears among them in the flames, and they are unharmed (Dan 3). (Rob Mimpriss.)

and the Holy of Holies.¹ Remember that these three are your dwelling place and your inheritance, and that Holy Scripture speaks often and at length of soul and spirit and body, though few yet understand it. And those who perceive a little gleam of light are not permitted to express it in human speech, for these are the unutterable depths. We have scarcely glimpsed the beginning of all that will be revealed. But wait humbly for God until you behold the eternal mysteries of his love, and be thankful for a little light.

Eagle. But I am afraid of the spirit of the Antichrist, lest I receive false doctrine, and an angel of darkness come to me in the guise of an angel of light. There are many deep, unfamiliar, perplexing doctrines which I do not understand.

Dove. It is easy for a child of day to recognise the Antichrist, the Wolf of the Night, as I have already said: by his voice and garb and colour, and the habits of his life. He changes costume frequently, and comes in the guise of humility and learning and new light, and pretends to wisdom or joy, and a zeal to burn the flesh and live in the spirit. But even so, Self is the sum of all his religion. The will of the Self is all he does, the thoughts of the Self are all he desires, and the senses of the Self are all he obeys. It is easy to know you, oh duplicitous and writhing Serpent, although you twist your thread much finer than before. You boast of virtue and religion and good doctrine; you

¹ The Dove compares the parts of human nature with the courts of the Temple of Jerusalem: the temple precinct, open to all, the Holy Place, restricted to priests, and the Holy of Holies, restricted to the High Priest on his annual visit on the Day of Atonement. (Rob Mimpriss.)

speaking of the scriptures and the authority of God, but you live in selfishness and envy, in fleshly audacity, judging others before you have heard the judgement of God on yourself: making war, killing, burning, plundering in the name of Godliness, attacking the sheep like a vixen, and fleeing to your lair, lurking in the physical senses, and stitching leaves to cover your nakedness.¹ Behold, the voice of the Most High will terrify you, and the brightness of his coming will consume you. Yet those who worship God himself will be spared.²

Eagle. But what of the one who suspects in his heart that all his religion so far has been a mere fleshly vanity, and the banner of a hypocrite?

Dove. Begin anew, and account yourself a little child. Forget what is behind you, for you do not know that there was no grace from God in the things you have done. For the Kingdom of God appears first as a blade of wheat, and then as the ear, and then as the full grain of the ear. Let no man judge the day of small things, lest the heavy judgement of God fall upon him. You were in affliction of mind in the spirit of bondage at Mt. Sinai, and on that terrifying, cloudy peak you remain in part, but your other foot is on Mount Zion.³ Remember that the love of God casts out fear, just as Sarah cast out Hagar. The love of God melts hearts much sooner than his anger. Beware the yoke of bondage. Will you be one of Hagar's children in

¹ Adam and Eve stitch loincloths following the Fall (Gen 3.7). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Mt 7.16; 2 Cor 11; Col 2; 2 Cor 10.12; Rev 13; Mt 7.3; Jer 7.4; Ps 29.9; Eccl 7.26.

³ Philemon 3.13; Mk 4.28; Zech 4.10; 1 Jn 4.18.

the end?¹ Your attitude should always be sober, cheerful, grateful, loving, modest, innocent. Not a sour, surly, downcast countenance, but the countenance of an angel: prudent, diligent, peaceful, and pure. And if you are otherwise, look and see: the great tree is blossoming in you and in others. Be thus from now on.

Eagle. Yet still I think you answer obscurely and grudgingly at times, and that many of the things you say are to be put aside before long.

Dove. Remember then, oh Eagle, that all the discussion we have had so far is like a hornbook or a children's A. B. C. But there is a time and place for everything, and one must needs put line after line and command after command before the ignorant,² and teach the child his letters, which he has not yet understood in full. So you see what kind of work the Most High does in the turning of a page. Perhaps by this means he will do much in the hearts of some. But there are mysteries to show in brief, that I will not now speak of at length. And I say that all this is but a passing glance in a mirror, or a scented rose that withers even as it blooms. Books and letters are no more than grass, and life is in the spirit, not the letter. Whoever is spiritual knows from which spirit these things have come, and that spirit does not mock. But beware, whoever you are, and no matter how wise or how godly, of the peril of neglecting what is written here, or reading it carelessly, and casting it aside to gather dust in the

¹ The warlike and lawless Ishmaelites (Gen 16.11-12) are descended from Abraham's illegitimate son, sent into exile with his mother, Hagar, at the behest of Abraham's wife (Gen 21.9-21). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Isa 28.13.

corner, without comprehending its depths. For in some places the deep things of God appear, and in others only milk,¹ or diversions for the little ones. And sometimes I say the same things frequently.

Eagle. But many of the learned pay little regard to such things, it seems.

Dove. Be quiet at last! There is not one learned man in the world, not one who can read the pages of his own heart and mind. The doctor is only a cunning beast, the good scholar (as you would call him) is no more than a twittering sparrow, unless he has the gift of Heaven. And if he has, he will be lowly in his thoughts, and will do good to everyone in love, and will live in righteousness and sobriety and godliness. True learning teaches a man to be as harmless as a child, as gentle as a sheep, careless of the world, like one who slumbers on the breast of the creator, alert against sin, assiduous in his calling, free from jealousy within, rejoicing in the good of others, quiet beneath the worst of men, patient under the wrath of God, contented with whatever happens, heavenly like Christ himself, loving in sorrow, steadfast in hardship, bold as a lion, innocent as a dove, cunning for the gospel, disdainful of himself, weary of the blooms of nature, and bleating for Paradise. And where these things are absent, there is no true learning.²

Eagle. But what if I have not learnt any of these things?

Dove. I have already told you that God sends all his children from the house of the self to the school of his son. And

¹ See Heb 5.11-13. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Isa 44.25; Jer 8.8; Titus 2.

the one who devotes himself wholly to the son will be made learned concerning the kingdom of Heaven, and will hear a voice within him, saying, This is the way; walk in it.¹ Put up waymarks for yourselves, says Jeremiah:² build cairns to guide you in the wilderness. One stone is knowledge, and where that is absent, men go astray, for without knowledge the heart cannot be aright: knowledge can exist without grace, like fuel without a fire, but there is no fire without fuel. Another stone is love for all. Where love is found, God himself is there, and where it is present, it is eager to benefit all, and careful to harm none. Another stone is humility, and a lowly mind: peaceable, grateful, quiet; and these things are taught by God himself. Another stone is righteousness, and the peace that comes from righteousness, and the joy in the Holy Spirit that comes from peace. And the one who serves Christ in these things will be pleasing to God, and will be accepted among his children.³ These are some of the mountain cairns that will lead you to Canaan. Look to these waymarks within, and press ahead, and remember: it is not enough for a man to embark on a good road, unless he knows that it is the right road. Be still within, and you will understand all things without. Do not move until the cloud rises.⁴ It is easy to unstitch the great way while trying to mend it. Stay in the tents of God until the

¹ Isa 30.21.

² See Jer 31.21. (Rob Mimpriss.)

³ Rom 14.17-18.

⁴ The Israelites are guided through the wilderness by a pillar of cloud, marching when it moves, and camping where it rests (Num 10.11). (Rob Mimpriss.)

palace of the New Jerusalem is built.¹ Zeal without knowledge is a raging fire, but a meek bright love is a wonderful thing.

Eagle. Tell me something else. What do you think of all the creeds and religions: of the Turks, and the Papists, and the Protestants, and the Lutherans, and the Calvinists, and the host of other sects in this age? I promised the Raven as well that I would ask you about the Book of Prayer before we part.

Dove. Do not speak of the religions: multitudinous, old and new, each condemning the others. No religion will be of use except the New Creation. And there is only one way in, which is to be born again in the name of Christ. Without that new birth, it would be better for a man to be born a cat or a dog or anything else that has no immortal spirit within it.²

The sum of Godliness is this: to love God with all your heart, and to love your neighbour as yourself; if a man neglects these things, it matters not what his opinions are. And the one who believes he has mastered these things has not recognised the root of bitterness in the garden of his heart. He is only deceiving himself. The contentious quarrel among themselves like dogs and pigs, though the better part in them are not like dogs or pigs. Yet you, oh lazy, cunning man, stand above Hell and laugh to see them in that dark entryway, striking each other without seeing, calling to each other without understanding, for they do not speak each other's

¹ The sacrifices involved in the building of the Second Temple are described in Ezra 2-6. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Gal 6.15; Jn 3.3.

language. But from now on, put away all blazing arguments, unloving, warlike, that never do anyone good. And cease from debate, lest the devils laugh, unless you can debate in love and humility, but seek to learn much from each other in a few words, and to learn all from God. And as for the Book of Common Prayer, there is no need to say much about that. It is high time that it were buried, so that no one is harmed by it further. For the old things are passing away; behold: everything is being made new.

Eagle. Oh, that I could have knowledge. Where do souls go when they leave this life? When once they depart we hear no more from them. Do they go afar or stay near, and where are they?

Dove. Oh, ignorant Eagle. Where does the candle go when it is snuffed out, but to its blazing natural firmament? Or where does the fire go, or the heat from the iron, when it is plunged into water? The spirit of man does not pass from his house of clay through the nostrils,¹ for it is not through the nostrils that it entered the body in the first place. For the spirit of a man's mind is a quick, pure, lively thing which imbues the bodies of all, while moving and stirring none. Oh, you blind, open your eyes and see that the spirits of all, when they break free from the body, remain in the nature in which they once lived.² If a spirit's thoughts were corrupt, then corruption will be its dwelling place. The nature of eternal love or wrath gathers all its children to itself, and catches hold, like a flame on tallow, of every spirit that partakes of its nature.

¹ Morgan Llwyd expands on this image in a later English-language tract, *Lazarus and His Sisters*. 1655. Cockatrice, 2016. p.8. (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Gen 25.8.

But a man does not see his home while his flesh hangs about him, and men, I say, are like birds singing on the branches, thinking nothing of the root below. The holy souls sleep peacefully in God, in the quiet light that is everywhere before his face, away from the clamour and glamour of the spirit of this world; and they await the stirring of the body through the shaking of the root of nature. But the spirits of the lost have broken the cord of life in the darkness of the wrathful mind of God; they howl and wail, but the world does not hear them. Why is that? Because in Hell they have no voice to cry out; neither do most of us have spiritual ears to hear them, or hearts to consider them, although they are of the same nature as us. But the faithful understand the language of the saints in the other world, and sing the same Hallelujah with them to God; they do not pray to them to go to God on their behalf, for he himself is closer to them than the saints and angels. But as for the sheep and the goats in the light and the darkness, remember that there is a great gulf between them, as there was between Lazarus and the couches of the rich, and that difference is the eternal nature.¹ Like the sweet and the bitter, the good and the ill, these, although they are in the same place, are irreconcilably sundered. And when a man's spirit slips from his body into that darkness, he has no eyes ever to see the light, nor ever a thought for the good. And on the other hand, those who escape to that light have never a thought for the darkness. Therefore let every man look to see in which of the two his mind lives, while he yet remains in the body, for the lost know

¹ Lk 16.26.

nothing of their own history.

Eagle. Oh Dove, I would now be so bold before the end as to ask you for your own history: that is, the History of the Dove.

Dove. I told you at the start, but you did not understand. One must break the husk of the parable to get at the flesh, and the scriptures are full of parables also. At first I was in Enoch, contending with the Old World, though no one received me except dear Noah and his family. After that I came to Abraham, who then cast his natural reason aside, and followed me through faith. I was at the windows of all the Patriarchs and Prophets also. But after the Prophet Malachi, I found no good landing place until the coming of John. Then I rested on Jesus Christ and his Apostles,¹ and I flourished in their churches. But after they departed from the world, the Crow of Night came, the spirit of Antichrist, and he was given leave to harry me. And so I fled to the breasts of the Martyrs, and I was with them in the flames, to comfort them. But of late I have landed at the windows of the new churches, and sometimes on some of their preachers, although there is yet filth in their nests. And now it is fitting to make haste, for it is written, 'Who are those who flock like clouds and like doves to their windows?'²

Eagle. And what would you wish your followers to be like?

Dove. Not like this generation, which curses the Father without blessing its mother, or is clean in its own sight,

¹ John the Baptist sees the spirit of God descending on Jesus in the form of a dove (Mt 3.16). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Isa 60.8.

and imperfect in the sight of God. Not like this generation, which is haughty of glance, and has teeth like swords, and back teeth like daggers to wipe the poor from the earth. But I would have my disciples to be like the ants that store up provender before it is too late, and like rabbits that build on the rock, and like locusts that agree to march forth in rank,¹ and like the humble spider that lays hold of the word of life, for such will dwell in the palace of the king of Heaven. And they will be made so contented that nothing can trouble them, so humble that nothing can make them proud, so joyful that nothing can sadden them, so sober that nothing can fool them, so tireless that nothing make them lame, so pure that nothing can sully them, so outstanding that nothing can surpass them, so firm that nothing can undermine them, so solid that nothing can shake them, so simple that nothing can make them cunning, so open that nothing can close them, so modest that none will be slandered by them, so low that no wind can shake them, so high that no natural thought can reach them, as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves. And furthermore, some will be able to claim by grace that they are dead to the world, yet have eternal life; are less than nothing to themselves, yet more than everything in their root; are cast down daily, yet still stand; have no knowledge in themselves, yet understand all things in God; are filled with sorrow, yet enjoy the candle of matchless joy; are tossed by the waves, yet are firm at the anchor; listen to all, yet believe no man, and prove all things; look on the branches, yet dwell in the root; walk the highways of the soul, yet keep

¹ Prov 30.11-12ff; Prov 30.24-25ff.

themselves in the palace of God in the spirit; work constantly, and yet are at rest; are quiet on the earth, and yet attest to the truth; are full of thought, and yet think of nothing; are hated by the flesh, and yet loved by all good spirits; strive against devils, and yet are friends of the angels of God; hear more of the voice of the world than they wish, and less of the voice of God than they long for; seek the basis of religion, and show it on their faces in sincerity and goodness; and are wedded to the wisdom of God, though they do not yet possess it in full. And though they sin often, they will be tender in their consciences, worse than the worst in their own sight, and as good as the best in the mantle of the Lamb; for like the unsearchable wind are the ones who are favoured by the Most High. Oh Eagle, be one of them.

Eagle. Those ones are far ahead of me. But tell me what the weak ones among them say.

Dove. The weakest among the faithful are kept safe like lambs among sheep, who are moved to pity when they hear the bleatings of the weak in speech and debate. 'By nature we are dead, and when I saw this I sought life, but I could not achieve it until everything in me and around me was dead to me. Then the creature lost its hold on me, and in that moment I grasped hold of the Creator, or rather, he took hold of me. I had heard sermons before, but without listening; I had said my prayers, but without praying; I had sung psalms, but my heart was dumb. I had attended the Sacraments, but seen nothing of the body of the Lord. I had talked, and had said many things that in truth did not come from my heart, until the rose within me wilted.

And after all this affliction, in the end I had to end so that I could begin anew, and die before the stalk of wheat would germinate in my ground. Sin had used me and destroyed me; God glowered in anger on the throne of my conscience, and the devil leered and laughed, and bellowed from within, “Ho, ho, this bird is mine! He is fast in my snare. His mind is caught in three iron chains, bound in his own will and in the spirit of this great world, and in the wrath of the Almighty.” It terrified me that I could not break these three chains and free myself. Besides all this, the hounds of Satan were behind me, hunting me down, and the mockers of the land derided me. And when I saw my Hunter, it mattered not a whit to me what the world and its dogs might say. The children of the kingdom grew suspicious of me, and indeed some heirs of the king drove me to despair and confusion and coldness. When this died away, the Enemy awoke all the roots of Hell within me, to be angry, unchaste, cruel, hotheaded, and filled with evil fires – worldly, surly, indulgent, frivolous – and then I grew tired of life, and fearful of death, for there was no sin in the worst man I saw that did not try to raise its head in my heart also. Heaven had departed, and Hell had drawn close by; the Angels of God abandoned me, and devils like beasts came instead. I saw that I had fallen amongst pitiless murderers of the spirit on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho;¹ I tried to call for help, but was unable to pray, until the Blessed Samaritan, the Heavenly Saviour, came close to me and lifted me up. And I say all these things for your sake, so

¹ The speaker is quoting Jesus’ Parable of the Good Samaritan in Lk 10.30. (Rob Mimirriss.)

that if ever you come to such anguish because of sin, you will not fall into despair and worldly regret, or struggle like a sheep in the briars, but will wait peacefully beside the road. The redeemer will come by, and will set you free. And if not, if you faint, faint in his arms while waiting for his word and promise to you.¹ But if you follow this, you will live, in the spirit of strength and love and wisdom. It was in my heart to write and warn you in perfect love, but the Serpent came to me, and tried to halt this pen. He spat his lies at me, hissing like this: "It is Self that sets you to work. You write too obscurely, and no one can understand it until your fog lifts, and you do not understand it yourself. Give it up. Men already know enough, if only they act in accordance with it. Already there are too many books in the world. Your only reward will be to be abandoned like an owl in your perversity, like a pelican, like a fool, or like those vain philosophers who seek by their natural light to perceive the Godhead in Creation. And have you ever seen the Lord? Or have you ever heard God himself? Begone to some hole, and hide yourself. The Day of God has dawned. It would be better for you to be silent, and give up writing. Leave others alone, and give your conscience some rest. Enjoy yourself. Eat your food with a cheerful heart. Walk out, and take your pleasure as you see your neighbours doing, and your days on earth will be longer." So did that cunning cockatrice advise me; so did he try to deceive me. So did he try his worst to cloud my mind, to seal my lips, and to halt my pen. And if the Serpent had had his

¹ Jacob wrestles with God, and compels a divine blessing (Gen 32.22-32). (Rob Mimpriss.)

way, I would not have written, and you would not have read or heard, these things. But the Dove came and helped me, and comforted me, saying, “Press ahead. Let every servant use his talent, as men say, and woe to him who does not.¹ It is not Self that drives you, but first a genuine love of God, and then a faithful love of the Welsh. Neither you nor others will benefit from wasting your brief lives in unbelief and fruitlessness. And some will glimpse some wisdom through the mist and darkness. And even though the flesh does not understand what the Holy Spirit within you is writing, the spiritual part will perceive it. Neither are there many books in Welsh, for the records of the ancient Britons were destroyed. And, says God, my people in Wales will be destroyed from lack of knowledge, and as for you, it is no worse for you if you are despised in the flesh. You deserve to be rejected by God himself, and abandoned in an eternal wilderness, yet God will never abandon you. And although nature is not God, and although one cannot know him through Philosophy, he did not make this world in vain, but set it as a mirror to see his reflection in it. And you too,” said the Dove, “have seen God himself through faith, and heard his voice through the spirit that speaks to men. And although a part of your outer self is as sinful as the worst, yet there is the man within you who does not sin, and has a hand in all good, and seeks the good of all. And to you, oh uncorrupted Seed and smoking flax,² I say

¹ The speaker is quoting Jesus’ Parable of the Talents (Mt 25.14-30). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² A smoking flax, like a bruised reed, is an object of God’s particular care and mercy (Isa 42.3). (Rob Mimpriss.)

again, Arise, and go ahead in obedience, in diligence, in haste and gratitude.” Thus did the Dove answer all the arguments of the Serpent, and undo the rope he had tangled in my mind.’ That, oh Eagle, is the voice of one of the weakest of my followers. That is one of many.

Eagle. What else?

Dove. Another one speaks like this. ‘My struggle was short from start to finish. My life is like a churning river running to the sea. I was born among crags, raised among conflicts, snared for a time, freed at the acceptable time, loved from the beginning of the world, and I myself have love for the one who loved me, and will love him fully when time is at an end. For I am under the love of God, although all men condemn me. I am the least on land, wretched at sea, filled with trials, but rejoice in the hope of heavenly glory. Now I walk in the spiritual pastures, among the sheep, and I warn the goats lest they break their necks. Whoever would take heed, let him do so. My task is to be blameless among men. And although I cannot do good to all, I take care to harm none: I strive to live away from the Self, in the Holy Spirit and in Christ, for God, according to the Scriptures, yet under the authorities, above the world, beneath the cross, against sin, and in the house of sanctification, in the breast of the rock of ages, weary of the course of nature, crying out for the heavenly springs, and praying to God to give me the peace of Heaven, and abundance of truth for the gentle Welsh, to feed them with knowledge and spiritual understanding, and to fill them with all the fullness of God; that I might have a portion of the heavenly country

among those who are true in godliness, and for the time to come quickly when there is no war except at the gates of Satan and his angels (and this I will see). Jabez prayed, and God listened.¹ He sought four things that were granted him. I too wait for the unchanging God who can do more than I have wit to ask or imagine. To him be glory, and honour, and wisdom, and thanks, and kingdom, and love, and all for eternity.²

Eagle. Time slips away like a ball. Let the Dove give the Eagle one more word of counsel before we part.

Dove. Understand and follow what you have already heard. Follow the lamp that was given to you. Beware of the eggs of the serpent and the raven in the reasonings of your Self. Do not let the spirit of the creature rule in you, for those who are filled with the creature are most often empty before God. Do not seek to be full of thought. Better one sober, heavenly thought in a day than five hundred frivolous, natural thoughts. Yearn to destroy the Lord of Sin within, and everything else will be given to you. And thus you will recognise sin, which ruled in your forebears. Day and night your thoughts flock to it, like ravens to a carcass. Sin is whatever your conscience hides from, whatever your shame opposes, and whatever your true friends warn you against. Avoid that sin, whatever it is, before all else. Remember, whatever company you are in, that you are journeying towards the eternal world, so consider the fall of the first Adam and the resurrection of the second. Undoubtedly you fell with the first: arise

¹ Although Jabez's name signifies the pain of childbirth, he asks for and receives material blessing from God (1 Chr 4.9-10). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Jer 3.15; Eph 3.19; 1 Chron 4.10; Eph 3.20.

without doubt with the second also. Do not accept any doctrine before it has been examined. Do not refuse any word before considering it, and do not shrink from a truth you have once received. Do not believe the gossip of the country, but listen to what God says to your immortal soul: if you do not have the source of all knowledge and virtue within you, you will not do these things. But if you do, be spiritual and unshakeable in your heart, not like a wave of the sea, or foam on the water, or a rootless tree, or a storm, or a ship without anchor, or chaff in the wind. Be few in your words, and plentiful in outstanding heavenly deeds. And when you speak, remember that where there are many words, sin is not distant; yet do not be dumb, for righteous lips will feed many. When seeking to receive more of the Holy Spirit, take care that the Evil One does not rush in under guise: there are lunatics and demoniacs, and the enemy rides on the saps and humours of their bodies. The dumb and deaf foam at the mouth, and captivate and amaze the foolish; others, like the Baptist, come neither eating nor drinking, and men say that the devil is in them.¹ But you must test the spirits. And I say that wherever there is light and purity and love and humility, God himself dwells there. Beware of the ways of the Papists as well, not because there is no learning among them, but because they were cruel to all others, and therefore there is much blood on their house. Do not let your mind be dazzled by many opinions, while you yourself do much against your conscience. Do your

¹ Jesus accuses his generation of rejecting both the stern message of John the Baptist, and the joyful message of Jesus himself, attributing John's message to demons (Mt 11.16-19). (Rob Mimpriss.)

best, oh Eagle, to resist every evil, and to assist every good in the land within and without. Sleep no more on the dungheap of the flesh, oh ruler. Your time is short. Do let lethargy, shameless indulgence, pride or vanity swallow up your time or the time of your household. For the thing that passes once can never be called back. Command peace and order, if you have authority in the land, oh judge. Let not your neighbours live like unreasoning brutes. Punish all who do evil against their conscience, as you yourself have already said. It is not enough to speak without acting. And if anyone tries to conceal his light, reason with him in the fear of the Lord. This is damnation, that men love darkness more than the light within them, and go in droves to their slaughter. To every evil deed give the punishment that is due. Do not take the life of a man like an animal. Be the foster-father of goodness in all, not like Nimrod,¹ who slew and consumed the whole himself. Do not seek to bend anyone's conscience to your own opinion through force, but only through reason, and protect the right of all to speak their mind in peace. The opinions of the fool are as many as his days, and as restless as his eyes. Even today, there are crossroads full of thieves in every corner of the earth. If you turn from the way, you will fall into their hands. For this reason I say, beware, for these days are the last, most lawless, most perilous days. Your task is to deny yourself, to extol the Son of God, to love every man, to hate every sin, and to nestle with God alone. Wait patiently for his pleasure, reaching ahead for the eternal

¹ Isa 59.5; Jas 1; Prov 10.19-21; Mt 17.15; Mt 11.18; 1 Tim 4.1-2; Rev 16.6; Gen 10.9.

treasures, and keeping the wisdom of the saints in front of you like a candle. Beware of the blizzard of knowledge in the head without strength in the heart or purity in the life. And expect the Day of Judgement every minute. Seek the peace, and love the truth, and truly the God of peace and light will be with you and within you. But if you reject my advice, and refuse to listen to my words, behold the stinking carcass you will be in the land, and the comfortless prisoner in the bottomless pit, without hope of release. But, oh eagle, strong of wing, I think you are mature in goodness, and therefore it is my will for you also to soar across the thirteen counties of Wales, and declare in every town and village, in every parish and hamlet, to every community and household, to every one of Adam's branches, young and old: Repent. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Do not chatter vainly with your neighbour any more. Commit yourself to seeking the revelation of God with all your heart, resolved in your intention to return to him by his own strength. Keep the true Sabbath within you and without, and the God of Mercy will shine upon you from above.

Eagle. Oh Dove. I have listened to you quietly as the greatest should listen to the least, and I am thankful in my mind for all I have heard, and for all your kindly counsel. I will give you a word before we part. Stay constantly on the wing, for I know that many dark-winged birds desire to take hold of you in their envy. If there were need, I would say, 'Beware of falling down to the love of the earth; beware of flying out of sight of the Ark.' But there is another who teaches you, so I need advise you no further.

Dove. As yet we have been only twittering; there will be another voice after the sixth day.¹ Let no man look for sense from this simple dove according to the teachings of the world. I mean ill to none; therefore, let none be angry with me; neither let anyone fatigue himself to pick holes in this little book. The sum of all I have said is a mystery of the Rebirth in the water and fire of the spirit. That is enough, I say, for the wise, and too much for the cunning.

Eagle. I have many other hard questions to ask, but we will leave them locked until we have the key at the next opportunity, if it is given to us. It will be sweet for some who read our conversation, but bitter for those who ignore it or mock it. And I know that Solomon spoke the truth: the mocker will seek wisdom but not attain it, but the wise will understand with ease. The sinner despises what he does not understand, and sins against what he knows.² He will gain nothing by taking this book into his house unless it penetrates within him. But the words you have said to me are like honey on my lips. Whatever comes next, we will let it come, and meanwhile we will fly together around the Ark which saved a remnant of mankind. It is good for a child to be with his parents and for a man to be with God. I will wait for him. Let him do as he will. But listen – I hear other birds debating. Shall we go and listen to them?

Dove. Let every man listen to the true voice, and not run after shadows. But you, oh Eagle, do whatever is in you which ought to be done. Amen, and so farewell.

¹ God speaks to Moses on the seventh day after he climbs Mt Sinai (Exod 24.15-16). (Rob Mimpriss.)

² Prov 14.6; Jude 10.



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LAZARUS AND HIS SISTERS
BY MORGAN LLWYD

Morgan Llwyd (1619-1659), the nephew of a professional soldier and magician, was a Roundhead, a millennialist, a chaplain in the army of Oliver Cromwell, and later a civil servant of the commonwealth in Wales.

His Welsh-language writings, grounded in Puritan theology, yet enriched by his mysticism and esotericism, are considered masterpieces of imagery and cadence, among the best prose ever written in Welsh. His three English-language essays, first published in 1655 and collected here, display the depth and richness of his religious thought, and his passionate engagement in the tumultuous events of his day.



THE SLEEPING BARD

BY ELLIS WYNNE

translated by Robert Gwyneddon Davies

Three nightmare visions of the world, of death and of hell.

The anonymous poet is dragged from sleep by the fairies of Welsh myth, and rescued by an angel is taken to see the City of Destruction, whose citizens vie for the favour of Belial's three beautiful daughters; to the realm of King Death, the rebellious vassal of Lucifer; and finally to Hell itself, where Lucifer debates with his demons which sin shall rule Great Britain.

First published in 1703, this classic of religious allegory and Welsh prose combines all the blunt urgency of John Bunyan with the vivid social satire of Dryden and Pope.



GOING SOUTH:
THE STORIES OF RICHARD HUGHES WILLIAMS
translated by Rob Mimpriss

Set in the North Wales slate quarries at the end of the nineteenth century, these stories represent a time of unparalleled cultural wealth and economic hardship. With a simplicity that belies their emotional impact, they depict the quarrymen united by humour and friendship against the sorrows and upheavals of their time.

Richard Hughes Williams, nicknamed Dic Tryfan (1878-1919), was proclaimed as a Welsh Gorky in his day, but only now has a body of his work been translated. A liberal, a secularist and an internationalist, he yet depicts his compatriots with loyalty, with humour and with unfailing compassion.

‘The Welsh short story was not the same after Hughes Williams had made his mark on it. There was no way it could have have been. He showed a new path and a new style. He adopted a new attitude to life — the attitude of the observer, that to observe is more important than to judge, and that to record what exists is better than to describe what ought to be. He took his work seriously, and lived for its sake. If he is forgotten, as largely he has been, his influence on the literature of Wales will remain.’

E. Morgan Humphreys



HALLOWE'EN IN THE CWM

BY OWEN WYNNE JONES

translated with an introduction by Rob Mimpriss

Owen Wynne Jones, also known as Glasynys (1828-1870), was a school-teacher and clergyman, an editor and poet, and a folklorist and short-story writer, whose contributions to the Welsh anthology, *Cymru Fu* (1864), influenced T. Gwynn Jones among others.

Combining horror, romance, humour and adventure with his own moving descriptions of the hospitality and generosity of ordinary people, these stories provide an account of a way of life now vanished, and a glimpse into the extraordinary richness of the Welsh oral tradition.

'Glasynys had a message for his age, for the common people of Wales who saw him championing their heritage. A sectarian, divided, unpoetic age crushes the spirit, and defaces the life of man. Glasynys describes his dream of the common people of Wales, learned in song and dance, and living through poetry alongside fairies, monsters, spirits and dragons... We enter his world, and delight in his dream.'

Saunders Lewis

'An invaluable translation.'

Angharad Price



OF THE NINTH VERSE

by A. L. Reynolds

Anwen and her younger brother, Idwal, are inseparable almost from birth. The childhood they share involves harvesting the hay and looking after the newborn lambs in the Conwy valley, though Anwen sees before her the promise of a degree in Edinburgh or Durham and a career as a mathematician, while Idwal seems destined by his strength and skill to take over the running of the family farm. Then, as their feelings for each other grow darker and more complex, Anwen finds herself put to a terrifying choice. With a luminous prose that reflects the richness of the novel's inner and outer landscapes, *Of the Ninth Verse* explores both the violent, destructive force of passion and the fragility of the human heart.

an enthralling novel by a writer at the peak of her powers.'

Jim Perrin

This subtly written... compelling narrative of forbidden yet irresistible love.

Angela Topping, poet and critic



REASONING: TWENTY STORIES

by Rob Mimpriss

Reasoning is the first of three collections by Rob Mimpriss. It is followed by *For His Warriors* and *Prayer at the End*.

An old man tries to assess his guilt in the marriage his daughter has destroyed. A young man tries to understand why, in the same family, he should be both hated and loved. A seventeenth-century Puritan preacher and a Cardiff woman facing divorce unite in their call to 'know your innermost heart,' while a Romanian dissident under Ceauşescu and a Welsh-language activist find themselves outwardly liberated but inwardly still in chains.

'Through the stealthy movements of his prose, Rob Mimpriss enacts the quiet enigma of people's lives and relationships. The result is an understated fiction of compelling intensity.'

M Wynn Thomas

'Rob Mimpriss could be described as a quiet writer with a loud voice. It's good to know he's planning ahead. I'll be listening for more.'

Michael Nobbs, gwales.com



FOR HIS WARRIORS: THIRTY STORIES

by Rob Mimirriss

For His Warriors is the second of three collections by Rob Mimirriss. It is preceded by *Reasoning* and followed by *Prayer at the End*.

A Welsh farmer's wife during the Second World War kills the landgirl her husband has taken as his lover. A leader of the Cornish-language revival commits her last act of protest the day Russian troops march into Berlin. A lonely man on the waterfront in Llandudno wonders whether he or his girlfriend will be first to die of Aids, and a bored man in a restaurant in Cardiff Bay invents a story of arrest and torture to amuse his petulant lover.

'Both humour and pity often arise from the characters' inability to understand themselves and those close to them. In suggesting both the truth and the self-deception Mimirriss not only engages our sympathy but makes us question our assumptions about ourselves.'

Caroline Clark, gwales.com



PRAYER AT THE END: TWENTY-THREE STORIES

by Rob Mimpriss

Prayer at the End is the third of three collections by Rob Mimpriss. It is preceded by *Reasoning* and *For His Warriors*.

A cigarette quenched in the Menai Strait makes a man vow to live a selfish life. The memory of an unborn twin makes a man regret the selfish life he has lived. An elderly shopkeeper befriends the teenagers outside his shop, and a lonely householder sets out to confront the trespassers on his land.

‘In the most seemingly unremarkable of Rob Mimpriss’s pieces there is a skill, and a mystery and elusiveness to that skill, which other short-story writers might envy. This is a masterful collection.’

Gee Williams

‘heaving with loss, regret and familial bonds.’

Annexe Magazine



PUGNACIOUS LITTLE TROLLS

by Rob Mimpriss

In his first three short-story collections, Rob Mimpriss painstakingly mapped the unregarded lives of Welsh small-town and country-dwellers. In *Pugnacious Little Trolls*, he combines the skill and quiet eloquence of his earlier work with confident experimentation, with stories set among the bird-bodied harpies of Central America, among the dog-headed Cynocephali of Central Asia, among humanity's remote descendants at the very end of the universe, and in the muddle of slag-heaps and job centres that H. G. Wells's *Country of the Blind* has become. In the three stories at the heart of the collection is Tanwen, idealistic and timid, embarking on her adult life in the shadow of global warming and English nationalism.

'Where is the Welsh short story going? Wherever Rob Mimpriss takes it.'

John O'Donoghue

'bathed in white fire in every sense... Borges would happily own them.'

Gee Williams





Hell by Hans Baldung (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

Morgan Llwyd (1619-1659), the nephew of a professional soldier and magician, was a Roundhead, a millenialist, a chaplain in the army of Oliver Cromwell, and later a civil servant of the commonwealth in Wales.

His famous religious allegory, *A Book of Three Birds*, is considered the most important Welsh book of the Seventeenth Century, and an enduring masterpiece of Welsh prose. With its introduction reflecting on the political turmoils of our time, this new translation by Rob Mimiriss brings to life the pungency of Morgan Llwyd's writing, the richness of his religious and political thought, and the urgency of his drama and characterisation.

'Lucid, skilful, and above all, of enormous timely significance.'

Jim Perrin



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