

MYSTERIES OF GOD

by Joseph More

There are three things that are totally mind-boggling:

- 1) Almighty God
- 2) The Universe
- 3) Eternity

God “*Always was and always will be.*” Since everything in our experience has a beginning, and has had or will have an end, the essence of God is beyond our understanding. Because of that, it is not only futile to try to understand that concept, but actually a waste of time.

The universe had to have a beginning, and we cannot understand how that took place. We only have to accept the fact that it was created, and it took a God who “always was” to bring it into existence. The scientists who prefer to ignore the physical evidence involved with the universe cannot explain it without God. If the universe ends, what is on the other side of it? Space? Isn’t that what the universe exists in? And if the universe doesn’t end, how can that possibly be?

We can only understand Eternity to the degree in saying that it never ends. This is only partially understandable in choosing a time - no matter how far into the future - and then saying that time continues. We can never get to a time in the future when that is not true. Therefore, one kind of definition of Eternity, is that there is never is an end to that same question and always the same answer.

It is safe to say that every human being of at least normal intelligence has asked themselves questions about their own existence.

It is also safe to say that they have never gotten any complete answers. Occasionally we may - through the use of reason - get a partial answer to a minor question. Unfortunately, these partial answers can be either correct or incorrect. Also, unfortunately, both are assumed correct.

The purpose here is not to supply the answer to anything. It will merely attempt to put into words what some of the major and some of the minor questions are, and to explain why some of the answers can be partially understood and why some will never be understood - at least in this life.

A normal human being has always realized that there has to be some being greater than he is. Reason tells us this.

If a man made it to the planet Mars, and found a pencil there, he would know that someone had been there before him. He would not believe that swirling winds combined with elements on Mars had somehow formed into a pencil. It would take a being with

intelligence and skill to have created it. It would also be known that the pencil has a purpose - even if it was discovered by a being from a foreign galaxy which did not use pencils on its planet. The function exists regardless of the lack of knowledge from its discoverer. If a monkey found a typewriter in a forest, its function as a typewriter would still exist even if the monkey did not use it to type letters to its relatives.

If the existence of a pencil reveals through reason that it must have a creator, then it is rather obvious that the existence of this universe presupposes a Creator.

This brings about the *First Supernatural Mystery*. Since God pre-existed the universe, nothing could pre-exist God, because our term "God" is our definition of what is - as St. Thomas Aquinas defined it - the first cause. The order of the universe (its immutable laws), as well as its existence, presupposed its creation by an intelligent being - a "Supreme" being. While we do not understand how this could be, we accept it as true by reason. While reason can tell us there must be a God, it cannot tell us anything about God - or what God may or may not expect of us. Those are an element of Faith - which will be discussed later.

So the First Supernatural Mystery is a God which necessarily must have always existed. He could not have come into existence, as that would necessitate something existing before He did. This would be a natural contradiction to the premise of a First Cause.

(A natural contradiction is the case in which two opposite situations cannot exist at the same time. It cannot both be raining and not raining in the same place at the same time).

Ignorance (lack of knowledge) of the concept of natural contradiction is why some people have tried to dismiss God as "all-powerful" by asking the question, "Can God create an object so heavy that he can't lift it?" The form of the question is a natural contradiction, because no matter how heavy God could create an object, He would still be able to lift it. The form of the question is what invalidates a "Yes" or "No" answer.

A similar example of this is the old question in court, "Are you still beating your wife." A "Yes" says he's doing it now, while a "No" answer says he formerly did, when neither answer would convey the truth that he never did, past or present.

It is important in any discussion - especially one in theology - to listen to a question and determine its validity before attempting to answer.

Thus far, we have a Supreme Being we call God, who always existed and is all-powerful. Again, we can't understand it - we just accept it.

It should be easy to accept a supernatural truth which we do not understand, because we already accept a multitude of natural truths which we do not understand. For one, we accept that a rubber ball bounces, but not even scientists can explain why.

The biggest natural thing we accept but do not understand, is the universe itself. It's size, which increases with each more powerful

telescope built, is mind-boggling. Even more so is the question previously asked: "If the universe ends, what is beyond it; if it does not end, how can it keep going on infinitely?"

Scientists like to try to explain this unanswerable question by theorizing that the universe turns back upon itself. They say it is like a strip of paper that is brought into a circle and then one edge is flipped over before taping the two ends together. By running a finger along the flat side of the paper, one will eventually get back to the starting point.

What they fail to mention is that the taped paper is being used in a two-dimensional space, while running your finger along it adds the third dimension. The universe is already three-dimensional, and there is no fourth space dimensional in which to play the fold-back game in.

The universe could therefore be considered the first, biggest, and most important natural Mystery, while God is the first, biggest, and most important Supernatural Mystery.

It can be valid to think about these and other Mysteries which will be covered, but it is neither practical nor sensible to think about them very much. It wouldn't hurt to do so a few seconds or minutes at a time - to keep us humble - but obsession with trying to understand Mysteries could really have you go crazy.

Every other Mystery that exists falls under the First Mystery. The *Second Supernatural Mystery* is why God created anything in the first place. Under our definition of God, He couldn't be bored - or lonely. He didn't create to prove anything to himself, or certainly anyone else.

To be the Supreme Being, God must be perfect, and therefore perfectly "happy," (to use a human term.) He needs nothing outside of Himself. So the "why" of any creation is the Second Mystery.

Before discussing God's creations, it is necessary to point out that anything or anyone that God created is necessarily less than Him. God cannot create another god equal to Him. It's the natural contradiction again. By definition a Supreme Being who "always was" can only create another being that suddenly "is." This means it cannot also be "always was" and is therefore less than God. (Humans can invent robots, but they will never be able to do what humans can do.)

Since God is perfect, and his creations are less than Him, then His creations cannot be perfect. When God created angels (and this must be believed by Faith, because reason cannot tell us this), they were created as beings with intelligence and Free Will - but not bodies. While they were all-good, as angels, they necessarily had to have at least a potential flaw (not being perfect). That potential flaw was built into the system of Free Will.

Free Will is a created concept. God doesn't have Free Will; His Will is also "always was" and "perfect." God cannot make bad choices, much less sin. (The most basic natural contradiction is that God cannot be perfect and also have a flaw - even a potential one.)

When God created angels, the potential flaw of their Free Will

was the right to choose between God - the perfect all-good - and something, anything, less.

To love God 100% would be a perfect act of humility to this all-perfect being. Anything less than 100% humility brings into action that potential flaw.

That flaw is Pride.

Angels were not created with Pride - only the potential for Pride. They were given some kind of a test by God, and one-third of the angels failed this test. They chose to follow Satan's Pride with their own Pride instead of God, and were then condemned to Hell for all of eternity because of it. None of them can ever escape Hell and none of the other two-thirds angels can lose Heaven. It is assumed that the test came with knowledge of God, but before attaining what is called the "Beatific Vision." (Knowing about someone and seeing them are two far different things.)

As far as the angels' test is concerned, some theologians say that it was a matter of God revealing His Plan of creating human beings, and that of one day having His Son take human form to live and die to reopen the gates of Heaven after Original Sin was committed in the Garden of Eden by Adam and Eve. One third of the angels resented the fact of being lower on the spiritual totem pole than a being who was human as well as divine. This offended them, and their potential flaw - possibility of Pride - became an actual flaw as a result of a choice of Free Will.

While the angels must have had a test and one-third failed it to become devils (all elements of Faith), the particular theory mentioned as the test does not fall within logical boundaries.

For the angels to be given knowledge of God's Plan for the redemption of man, they would have to know why man needed redemption in the first place. So they would have to know that devils (fallen angels) existed to tempt Adam and Eve. In this scenario, they would know that they had failed the test before having a chance to pass the test. That would be a case of predestination, which would eliminate the definition of Free Will. Again, this would be a natural contradiction.

A Third Supernatural Mystery is not why God created angels, but why God created them knowing ahead of time that one-third would sin by Pride and become devils.

God had a choice to create angels or not to create them. When we look at his choice with our finite minds, we might think, "If I would know that the end result of an action would not be completely good, I would not do it." (If a man or woman knew the day before a planned marriage that they would be unhappily married and end up separating - for whatever reason - they would probably not get married in the first place.) Humans make most choices in their lives based on a recipe of hopes, optimism, expectations, and idealism, and then heat and stir them in the pot of emotion. The reason we make so many mistakes involving choices is because we cannot see the future.)

God could see the future and created angels anyway. This

shows that an infinite mind (God's) thinks different than a finite mind (humans.) This brings us back to the original definition that a finite mind cannot understand an infinite Mystery.

At this point, it is time to cover the question, "Did God create sin?" By what has been said, the point is being made that God did not create sin as much as he created the potential for sin. Just because the angels were not perfect, it was not an absolute that sin was a necessary result of not being perfect, any more than sin is an absolute result of Free Will.

That is proved by the two-thirds of the angels who did not fail the test. All had the choice to pass the test; all had the choice to fail the test. Whether all the angels were created "equal" or they had different traits (similar to different personality tendencies in humans according to genetics), is another question. Even if they were given different tests (similar to humans) and some tests of Pride were harder than others (similar to humans), the bottom line is that each and every one was required to pass a test and one-third failed.

It is important to understand - or at least accept - that God knowing that one-third of the angels would fall did not make them fall. That would be a denying of their Free Will.

An analogy in our world may help to explain this principle. If you were on top of a 50 story building, and you saw two cars approach each other in an alley at 80 miles-per-hour, when they got 10 feet apart you would know that they would collide. Your being absolutely certain of this would not cause it to happen. Just because God knows the future, and what every angel would choose (as well as what every human being would choose), that does not mean He stops us from making our choices.

A *Fourth Supernatural Mystery*, therefore, is all the ramifications of Free Will. A part of that mystery includes why God didn't just create the angels whom He knew would pass the test.

Another thing that God created when He created the angels was "time." Since God "always was and always will be," then He exists outside of time. He created angels out of nothing, but their not being "always was" meant they had a beginning. That first beginning was the first second of "time." Anything that comes into existence has to exist in that new dimension. (If one wants to call "time" the fourth dimension, then the previously mentioned theory of the universe folding back onto itself would necessarily involve a fifth dimension - four of space and one of time. By the definitions of the three dimensions of space and matter, that is impossible.)

It is entirely possible that since God - and then the angels - exist in a spiritual world - as differentiated from our material world, that time for angels differs in the kind of time the universe - (and humans in it), experience.

A *Fifth Supernatural Mystery* (in a different category) is the Resurrection of the Body.

While we can somewhat understand the *why* of the Resurrection of the Body, - as we are made up of a body and Soul - we do not have the slightest idea of the *how* it will be accomplished. The *why*

involves a rejoining of the body and Soul of what a human being is made of. One possibility of the *how is* that our body will be what it was at the moment of conception. At that time, everyone was actually "equal."

God made the basic choices for us: we have no options as to whether we are born or not. (If God gave each of us that choice - and showed us our lives in advance, many people would say, "No, Thanks.") God also doesn't ask us at what time of history do we prefer to live, or who we want for our parents, or what country we are born, to what race we belong, how much natural intelligence we have, or the kinds and amounts of talents we possess.

Many of the above may be totally accidents of what particular sperm and egg are joined. These "accidents" are a result of God's Permissive Will, in allowing the use of Free Will by each of our parents to cause us to be created.

God is our ultimate "Creator," because without his general creation of the universe and humans on the planet Earth, the particular creation of us by parents could not have taken place. God's Directive Will - the one that created everything - is also responsible for creating each of our's Immortal Souls.

So here we are - alive on planet Earth, and we had entirely no say in the matter. Therefore, any effort - small or large, minor or important area, emotionally or mentally that we expend resenting the things we cannot change, is worse than a waste of time. It is not only useless but could bring about frustration, which could lead to resentment of God.

While all of those original choices or accidents are responsible for "what" we are, the choices as to "who" we are remain up to us. As we are growing up, we are also not responsible for the many situations in which we live. As adults, however, almost everything involved in our particular life is a result of our own choices.

All of those choices also fall under one of two great umbrellas. The first is in having our life and our choices falling under the overall purpose of trying to do God's Will and please Him, and the second umbrella is having our life and our choices falling under the sole purpose of doing only our own will and pleasing only ourselves.

Our actions under the first umbrella must necessarily be guided by charity, while our actions under the second umbrella would, by definition, be guided by selfishness.

These two completely different - and largely mutually exclusive - philosophies of life, not only determines in most ways the general way we live our daily life, but is the most important determinant in the ultimate decision as to where we spend Eternity.

This is where another one of the mysteries of God enters the picture - His granting of the Grace necessary for salvation - from that earned by one persons's prayers, penances, sacrifices, and good works - and which can then be applied to another.

It is not unusual for an individual to wonder what God's Plan is for them. Besides that specific Plan, questions can arise as to God's Plan for the human race. Because humans with finite minds will never - while on Earth - understand God's infinite mind, it doesn't stop us from wondering why the evidence of that Plan is what it is.

It also does not stop us from wishing that God had asked us about his proposed Plan before He initiated it. As an example, I would personally have suggested that God reduced the male sex drive by from 75% to 90%. It would seem that the end result be less Souls going to Hell for all Eternity. While it would then have taken longer to "increase, multiply, and fill the earth" that would not seem to have not made any negative effect. Since God exists outside of time, it would not seem to make a difference to Him how long it would take to accomplish that. The original Plan for the level of the male sex drive would easily be understood to be appropriate, but God knowing in advance what would be the result of it after Original Sin, would seem to have adjusted it downward beforehand. Our Lady of Fatima said: *"More souls go to Hell because of sins of the flesh more than any other reason."*

Another thing involving sex, is the attractiveness of men toward women and women toward men. In the animal kingdom, all mating is done by instinct. Animals of the lower species are basically identical, and only in the higher animals is there some sort of distinctiveness. Quite the opposite is true with human beings. Since human beings mate by choice, physical appearance becomes very important - at least in the initiation of that choice. It would be easier if all women were beautiful (at least in their own way) and all men were handsome (at least in their own way). Then they would be a much greater chance of mate selection being based on philosophy of life, personality, similar interests, and compatibility - more than just physical attraction. Because many, if not most, relationships are based on physical attraction rather than the most important qualities, that may probably the number one reason that relationships do not last and that marriages are not *"till death do us part."* And of course, if sex is involved before marriage, the important qualities that should be there for a successful, and especially happy marriage, can be permanently missing.

Other questions involving sex:

- * Wouldn't it be better if after someone was married, they would no longer be attracted to any other members of the opposite sex?
- * Wouldn't it be nice if only married women could conceive and have children?

(At minimum, that would eliminate the vast majority of abortions.)

(God certainly made a point about how he feels about the exclusiveness of sex within marriage, by there being some 30 sexually-transmitted diseases.)

The first part of the acceptance - not understanding - of God's Plan simply means acknowledging that God, being God, is infinitely

wiser than the human beings He created. As St. Augustine said, " *I could not believe in a God I could understand.*"

The second part of acceptance - not understanding - of God's Plan for each one of us, would be easier for us to accept, and to follow God's individual Plan for each of us if we at least always knew what that Plan was. That is not usually how it works. We have to go through life trusting that if we truly want to do God's Will in our life, that He will lead us where He wants us to go. It is true, that sometimes in hindsight, we would then understand that the road on which we were led was the best one to contribute to the Salvation of our Soul. Very often, and maybe even most of the time, that it is not a road that we would have chosen for ourselves without the benefit of that hindsight being foresight.

It is good to know that even though God chooses the individual road that each of us travels (if we are open to God's Will), it is still our choice follow it at the time - even though we do not know where that road may need. God never takes away our Free Will to make our own choices.

Some of the questions which will not be answered until, and if, we make it to Heaven:

- * After Satan and the rebellious angels sinned, why did God not banish them to Hell at that time - instead of waiting to doing at the end of the world?
- * God allowed Satan to tempt Eve as a test, and she disobeyed God in sinning, and then she got Adam to sin. From then on, since all human beings - except for Christ in the Blessed Virgin Mary - would be conceived in Original Sin and have to suffer the consequences of it, why wasn't Satan banished to Hell then?
- * Being born into the world since that time, we have to face and fight the temptations of "*the world, the flesh, and the devil.*" It would seem that fighting the first two would be enough. We are told, and it must be believed, that the reward that God offers is so great - Heaven for all Eternity - that the test for earning it must also be great. This is why where we end up for all Eternity must always be the number one consideration for everything we do in this life. Unfortunately, none of us are so good that it overrides all temptations of "the world, our flesh, and that devil."

Other questions:

- * Why doesn't everyone have the same level of health?
(As long as they followed the rules for good health.)
- * Wouldn't it be nice if evil people could not harm good people?
(Evidently their Free Will to do evil is allowed to override our Free Will choice to be safe.)
- * Wouldn't it seem punishment enough for a person who denies God and sins indiscriminately for say 90 years, to be punished by 90 years in Hell. Unfortunately, if that would be the situation, what would happen to his Soul after that? (The answer is that since Heaven is for Eternity is a reward for obeying God's

Commandments and having God first in our life for that 90 years - then an Eternity in Hell is certainly possible for not obeying them - or not having God first in our life - for those same 90 years.

However, one does not have to deny or ignore God for those whole 90 years. Simply dying with one unrepentant, unforgiven Mortal Sin on the Soul deserves Hell for all Eternity. Again, that goes against our finite's mind opinion of justice, but not a contradiction to God's infinite mind's definition of Justice. One of the reasons for this, is that before we die, God is All-Merciful - but after we die, God is All-Just.)The first one is popular - but not the second.)

And God being first in our life has to be by His definition - not the one by pagans, Jews, and non-Catholics. And God's Plan to be first is only accomplished by 100% orthodox Catholics. Otherwise, Christ wasted His time by teaching how He was to be worshiped - the Catholic Mass.

Now while God does not want us to sin, He does not expect us to never commit Venial Sins - as a result of the weakness from Original Sin, and "the world, the flesh, and the devil." To commit a Mortal Sin, however, is a different story. For a Sin to be Mortal, it has to fulfill three conditions:

- (1) It has to be a serious matter.
- (2) We have to know it's serious.
- (3) We have to do it anyway.

In other words, we had to commit that Mortal Sin as an act of Free Will. It can't have been accidental. This is why Christ established Confession to receive the mercy of God of forgiveness when we are truly sorry - even for Mortal Sins. There is no excuse not to be sorry for a Mortal Sin, and therefore dying with even one unrepentant one on our Soul deserves Hell. And since a Mortal Sin cannot be forgiven in Hell, it is for all Eternity.

And speaking of Eternity, we can understand it on a practical basis by simply thinking that it goes on forever. To accept it in the spiritual realm requires not only Faith and Hope, but also trust that God is not only All-Merciful, but also All-Just.

Every action in a choice involves a non-action of another choice. And every non-action in a choice involves a choice in another. While every choice comes from Free Will, some actions are from the full action of the Will, while others come from partial action of the Will. The latter comes from choices made primarily by the emotions - and many from the emotion of the moment.

An example is a person who is dying of thirst while on a raft in the middle of an ocean. While his reason knows that drinking salt water will kill him, the physical need of water overpowers that knowledge, causes him to bypass his long-term desire of wanting to live for a long time, and is controlled by his short-term emotion of living for the present.

Temptation comes from inside - the weakness of our fallen human nature (the flesh), or from the outside - the afore-mentioned

“world and the devil.”

There are a multitude of other questions that will only be answered in Heaven. It, therefore, could be an additional suffering in Hell to go through Eternity by never getting any of the questions answered.

(And only if we get to Heaven will we find out how the pyramids were built.)