

A Small Taste of Jonathan's Corner

From the "Major Works" series

CJS Hayward

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Preface

This book, like many others, is a collection of works that I have written. In other collections, I have tried to give as much as possible about a given topic. "The Best of Jonathan's Corner", available at <https://bestof.jonathanscorner.com>, has a collection of favorite works that totals to about 600-700 pages. (Yes, I'm prolific.)

This collection is meant to be the opposite. It's meant to give a little taste of what, exactly, some people have found interesting. But it is meant not to be a long and daunting read, only short and inviting. A sort of elevator pitch, as far as books go. If you like it, you are welcome to explore cjshayward.com.

I am intentionally not trying to convince you of good writing or what my credentials are, merely give a tiny slice of admittedly what I consider my best work. If you read these short works and want more, then you will know without my telling you.

I hope you'll like them!

C.J.S. Hayward, Author

The Angelic Letters

My dearly beloved son Eukairos;

I am writing to you concerning the inestimable responsibility and priceless charge who has been entrusted to you. You have been appointed guardian angel to one Mark.

Who is Mark, whose patron is St. Mark of Ephesus? A man. What then is man? Microcosm and mediator, the midpoint of Creation, and the fulcrum for its sanctification. Created in the image of God; created to be prophet, priest, and king. It is toxic for man to know too much of his beauty at once, but it is also toxic for man to know too much of his sin at once. For he is mired in sin and passion, and in prayer and deed offer what help you can for the snares all about him. Keep a watchful eye out for his physical situation, urge great persistence in the liturgical and the sacramental life of the Church that he gives such godly participation, and watch for his asceticism with every eye you have. *Rightly*, when we understand what injures a man, nothing can injure the man who does not injure himself: but it is treacherously easy for a man to injure himself. Do watch over him and offer what help you can.

With Eternal Light and Love,
YOUR FELLOW-SERVANT AND ANGEL

My dear son Eukairos;

I would see it fitting to offer a word about medicating experience and medicating existence.

When one of the race of men medicates experience by means of wine, that is called drunkenness. When by means of the pleasures of the palate, that is called gluttony. When by means of other pleasures, it is called lust. When by means of possessions and getting things, it is called avarice. Escapism is an ancient vice and a root of all manner of evils: ancient Christians were warned strongly against attempting to escape this world by medicating experience.

Not that pleasure is the only way; medicating experience by mental gymnastics is called metaphysics in the occult sense, and medicating experience by means of technology is a serious danger.

Not all technologies, and perhaps not any technology, is automatically a problem to use. But when technologies become a drone they are a problem. Turning on a radio for traffic and weather news, and then turning it off, is not a drone. Listening to the radio at a particular time to devote your attention to a concert is not a drone. Turning on a radio in the background while you work is a drone; even *Zen and the Art of the Motorcycle Maintenance* discusses what is wrong with mechanics having the radio on in the background. And texting to get specific information or coordinate with someone is not a drone, but a stream of text messages that is always on is a drone. Technology has its uses, but when technology is a drone, noise in the background that prevents silence from getting too uncomfortable, then it is a spiritual problem, a tool to medicate experience. And there are some

technologies, like video games, that *exist* to medicate experience.

(Of course, technologies are not the only drone; when Mark buckles down to prayer he discovers that his mind is a drone with a stream of thoughts that are a life's work to quiet.)

More could be said about technologies, but my point here is to point out one of the dangers Mark faces. Not the only one, by any means, but he has at his disposal some very powerful tools for doing things that are detrimental. It's not just a steady stream of X-rated spam that puts temptation at his fingertips. He has all the old ways to medicate experience, and quite a few powerful technologies that can help him medicate his experience as well. And for that he needs prayer.

But what is to be done? The *ways* of medicating experience may be in some measure than many saints have contended with; the *answer* is the same. Don't find another way to medicate experience, or escape the conditions God has placed you in, trying to escape to Paradise. Don't ask for an easier load, but tougher muscles. Instead of escaping the silence, engage it. *Prayerfully* engage it. If your dear Mark does this, after repenting and despairing of finding a way to escape and create Paradise, he will find that escape is not needed, and Paradise, like the absent-minded Professor's lost spectacles, were not in any of the strange places he looked but on his nose the whole time.

A man does not usually wean himself of drones in one fell swoop, but pray and draw your precious charge to cut back, to let go of another way of medicating experience even if it is very small, and to seek not a lighter load but a stronger back. If he weans himself of noise that medicates uncomfortable silence, he might find that silence is not what he fears.

Watch after Mark, and hold him in prayer.

Your Dearly Loving Elder,
Your Fellow-Servant,

BUT A WIND AND A FLAME OF FIRE

My dear, dear Eukairos;

When fingers that are numb from icy cold come into a warm, warm house, it stings.

You say that the precious treasure entrusted to you prayed, in an uncomfortable silence, not for a lighter load but for a stronger back, and that he was fearful and almost despairing in his prayer. And you wonder why he looks down on himself for that. Do not deprive him of his treasure by showing him how much good he is done.

He has awakened a little, and I would have you do all in your power to show him the silence of Heaven, however little he can receive it yet. You know some theologians speak of a river of fire, where in one image among others, the Light of Heaven and the fire of Hell are the same thing: not because good and evil are one, but because God can only give himself, the uncreated Light, in love to his creatures, and those in Hell are twisted through the rejection of Christ so that the Light of Heaven is to them the fire of Hell. The silence of Heaven is something like this; silence is of Heaven and there is nothing to replace it, but to those not yet able to bear joy, the silence is an uncomfortable silence. It is a bit like the Light of Heaven as it is experienced by those who reject it.

Help Mark in any way you can to taste the silence of Heaven as joy. Help him to hear the silence that is echoed in the Church's chanting: when he seeks a stronger back to bear silence, strengthen his back, and help him to taste the silence not as bitter but sweet. Where noise and drones would anaesthetize his pain, pull him *through* his pain to health, wholeness, and joy.

The Physician is at work!

With Eternal Light and Love,
YOUR FELLOW-SERVANT AND ANGEL

Dear blessed Eukairos;

Your charge has had a fall. Do your best that this not be the last word: help him get up. Right now he believes the things of God are not for those like him.

The details of the fall I will not treat here, but suffice it to say that when someone begins to wake up, the devils are furious. They are often given permission to test the awakening man, and often he falls. And you know how the devils are: before a fall, they say that God is easy-going and forgiving, and after a fall, that God is inexorable. Do your best to aid a person being seduced with the lie that God is inexorable.

Mark believes himself unfit for the service of the Kingdom. Very well, and in fact he *is*, but it is the special delight of the King to work in and through men who have made themselves unfit for his service. Don't brush away a mite of his humility as one fallen, but show him what he cannot believe, that God wishes to work through him now as much as *ever*. And that God wishes for him prayer, liturgy, sacrament..

And open his eyes now, a hint here, a moment of joy there: open them that eternity is now: eternal life is not something that begins after he dies, but that takes root now, and takes root even (or rather, *especially*) in those who repent. He considers himself unworthy of both Heaven and earth, and he *is*; therefore, in God's grace, give him both Heaven and earth. Open up earth as an icon, a window to

Heaven, and draw him to share in the uncreated Light and Life.

Open up his repentance; it is a window to Heaven.

In Light and Life and Love,

YOUR BROTHER ANGEL

My dear fellow-ministering angel;

I would make a few remarks on those windows of Heaven called icons.

To Mark, depending on the sense of the word 'window', a 'window' is an opening in a wall with a glass divider, or alternately the 'window' is the glass divider separating inside from outside. But this is not the exact understanding when Orthodox say an icon is a window of Heaven; it is more like what he would understand by an open window, where wind blows, and inside and outside meet. (In most of human history, a window fitted with glass was the exception, not the rule.) If an icon is a window of Heaven, it is an opening to Heaven, or an opening between Heaven and earth.

Now Mark does not understand this, and while you may draw him to begin to sense this, that is not the point. In *The Way of the Pilgrim*, a man speaks who was given the sacred Gospels in an old, hard-to-understand book, and was told by the priest, "Never mind if you do not understand what you are reading. The devils will understand it." Perhaps, to Mark, icons are still somewhat odd pictures with strange postures and proportions. You may, if you want, help him see that there *is* perspective in the icons, but instead of the usual perspective of people in their own world, it is reverse perspective whose vanishing point lies behind him because Mark is in the picture. But instead of focusing on correcting

his understanding, and certainly correcting his understanding all at once, draw him to venerate and look at these openings of Heaven. Never mind if he does not fully grasp the icons he venerates. *The devils will understand.*

And that is true of a great many things in life; draw Mark to participate in faith and obedience. He expects to understand first and participate second, but he needs to come to a point of participating first and understanding second. Many things need to start on the outside and work inwards.

Serving Christ,
Whose Incarnation Unfurls in Holy Icons,
YOUR FELLOW

Dear cherished, luminous son;

Your charge is reading a good many books. Most of them are good, but I urge you to spur him to higher things.

It is a seemingly natural expression of love to try to know as much about possible about Orthodoxy. But mature Orthodox usually spend less time trying to understand Orthodoxy through books. And this is *not* because they have learned everything there is to learn. (That would be impossible.) Rather, it is because they've found a deeper place to dig.

God does not want Mark to be educated and have an educated mind. He wants him to have an enlightened mind. The Orthodox man is not supposed to have good thoughts in prayer, but to have no thoughts. The Orthodox settled on the path have a clear mind that is enlightened in hesychastic silence. And it is better to sit in the silence of Heaven than read the Gospel as something to analyze.

Books have a place. Homilies have a place. But they are one shadow of the silence of Heaven. And there are more important things in the faith, such as fasting and almsgiving, repentance and confession, and prayer, the crowning jewel of all ascesis. Give Mark all of these gems.

With Deep Affection,
YOUR BROTHER ANGEL

My dearly beloved, cherished fellow angel Eukairos;

Your charge Mark has been robbed.

Your priceless charge Mark has been robbed, and I am concerned.

He is also concerned about a great many things: his fear now, which is understandable, and his concerns about where money may come from, and his loss of an expensive smartphone and a beautiful pocketwatch with sentimental as well as financial value to him, and his inconvenience while waiting on new credit cards.

There are more concerns where those came from, but I am concerned because he is concerned about the wrong things. He has well over a week's food in his fridge and he believes that God failed to provide. Mark does not understand that *everything* that happens to a man is either a temptation God allowed for his strengthening, or a blessing from God. I am concerned that after God has allowed this, among other reasons so Mark can get his priorities straight, he is doing everything but seeking in this an opportunity for spiritual growth to greater maturity.

If you were a human employee, this would be the time for you to be punching in *lots* of overtime. Never mind that he thinks unconsciously that you and God have both deserted him; your strengthening hand has been invisible to

him. I do not condemn you for any of this, but this time has been appointed for him to have opportunities for growth and for you to be working with him, and the fact that he does not seek growth in this trial is only reason for you to work all the harder. That he is seeking to get things back the way they were, and suffering anger and fear, is only reason for you to exercise more diligent care. God is working with him now as much as ever, and I would advise you for now to work to the point of him seeking his spiritual good in this situation, however short he falls of right use of adversity for now.

Your name, "Eukairos," comes from "eu", meaning "good", and "kairos", an almost inexhaustible word which means, among other things, "appointed time" and "decisive moment." You and Mark are alike called to dance the great dance, and though Mark may not see it now, you are God's agent and son supporting him in a great and ordered dance where everything is arranged in God's providence. Right now Mark sees none of this, but as his guardian angel you are charged to work with him in the dance, a dance where God incorporates his being robbed and will incorporate his spiritual struggles and, yes, provide when Mark fails to see that the righteous will never be forsaken.

A good goal would be for Mark to pray for those that robbed him, and through those prayers honestly desire their good, or come to that point. But a more immediate goal is his understanding of the struggle he faces. Right now he sees his struggle in terms of money, inconveniences, and the like. Raise his eyes higher so he can see that it is a spiritual struggle, that God's providence is not overruled by this tribulation, and that if he seeks first the Kingdom of God, God himself knows Mark's material needs and will show deepest care for him.

Your Fellow-Servant in Prayer,
**BUT AN ANGEL WHO CANNOT STRUGGLE MARK'S
 STRUGGLE ON HIS BEHALF**

My dear, esteemed son and fellow-angel Eukairos;

That was a deft move on your part, and I thank you for what you have helped foster in Mark's thoughts.

Mark began to console himself with the deep pit of porn, that poison that is so easily found in his time and place. And he began to pray, on his priest's advice, "Holy Father John, pray to God for me," and "Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for me," Saint John the Much-Suffering and Saint Mary of Egypt being saints to remember when fighting that poison. And you helped him for a moment to see how he was turned in on himself and away from others, and he prayed for help caring about others.

At 10:30 PM that night on the dot, one of his friends was walking in the dark, in torrential rains, and fell in the street, and a car ran over his legs. This friend was someone with tremendous love for others, the kind of person you cannot help but appreciate, and now that he had two broken legs, the flow of love reversed. And Mark unwittingly found himself in an excellent situation to care about something other than himself. He quite forgot about his money worries; and he barely noticed a windfall from an unexpected source. He kept company and ran errands for his friend.

What was once only a smoldering ember is now a fire burning brightly. Work as you can to billow it into a blaze.

With an Eternal Love,
YOUR RESPECTFUL BROTHER ANGEL

My dear, scintillating son Eukairos;

I would recall to you the chief end of mankind. "To glorify God and enjoy him forever" is not a bad answer; the chief end of mankind is to contemplate God. No matter what you do, Mark will never reach the strictest sense of contemplation such as monastic saints enjoy in their prayer, but that is neither here nor there. He can have a life ordered to contemplation even if he will never reach the spiritual quiet from which strict contemplation is rightly approached. He may never reach beyond the struggle of asceticism, but his purpose, on earth as well as in Heaven, is to contemplate God, and to be deified. The point of human life is to become by grace what Christ is by nature.

Mark is right in one way and wrong in another to realize that he has only seen the beginning of deification. He *has* started, and only started, the chief end of human life, and he is right to pray, go to confession, and see himself as a beginner. But what he is *wrong* about is imagining that the proof of his fledgling status is that his wishes are not fulfilled in the circumstances of his life: his unconscious and unstated assumption is that if he had real faith like saints who worked miracles, his wishes would be fulfilled and his life would be easier. Those saints had *less* wishes fulfilled, not more, and much harder lives than him.

(And this is beside the point that Mark is not called to perform miracles; he is called to something greater, the *most excellent way*: love.)

Mark imagines you, as his guardian angel, to be sent by God to see that at least some of his wishes happen, but the truth is closer to saying that you are sent by God to see that some of his wishes do not happen so that in the cutting off of self-will he may grow in ways that would be impossible if he always had his wishes. There is a French saying, «*On trouve souvent sa destinée par les chemins que l'on prend pour l'éviter.*»: "One often finds his destiny on the paths one takes to avoid it." Destiny is not an especially Christian

idea, but there is a grain of truth here: *Men often find God's providence in the situations they hoped his providence would keep them out of.*

This cutting off of self-will is part of the self-transcendence that makes deification; it is foundational to monks and the office of spiritual father, but it is not a "monks-only" treasure. Not by half. God answers "No" to prayers to say "Yes" to something greater. But the "Yes" only comes *through* the "No."

As Mark has heard, "We pray because we want God to change our circumstances. God wants to use our circumstances to change us."

Mark has had losses, and he will have more to come, but what he does not understand is that the path of God's sanctification is precisely through the loss of what Mark thinks he needs. God is at work allowing Mark to be robbed. God is at work allowing Mark to use "his" "free" time to serve his friend. And God is at work in the latest challenge you wrote to me about.

Mark has lost his car. A drunk and uninsured driver slammed into it when it was parked; the driver was saved by his airbag, but Mark's car was destroyed, and Mark has no resources to get another car, not even a beater for now. And Mark imagines this as something that pushes him outside of the Lord's providence, not understanding that it is by God's good will that he is now being transported by friendship and generosity, that he is less independent now.

Right now Mark is not ready either to thank God for his circumstances or to forgive the driver. But do open his eyes to the good of friendship and generosity that now transports him. Even if he sees the loss of his car as an example of God failing to provide for him, help him to see the good of his being transported by the love and generosity of his friends. Help him to see God's providence in circumstances he would not choose.

Your Fellow-Servant in the Service of Man,

A BROTHER ANGEL

My dear son Eukairos;

Your precious charge, in perfectly good faith, believes strongly in *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*. His devotion in trying to bring *into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* is really quite impressive, but he is fundamentally confused about what that means, and he is not the only one.

Mark would never say that you can reason your way into Heaven, but he is trying to straighten out his worldview, and he thinks that straightening out one's ideas is what this verse is talking about. And he holds an assumption that if you're reasoning things out, or trying to reason things out, you're probably on the right path.

Trying to reason things out does not really help as much as one might think. Arius, the father of all heretics, was one of many to try to reason things out; people who devise heresies often try harder to reason things out than the Orthodox. And Mark has inherited a greatly overstated emphasis on how important or helpful logical reasoning is.

Mark would be surprised to hear this; his natural question might be, "If *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* is not what you do when you straighten out your worldview, then what on earth is?"

A little bit more of the text discusses unseen warfare and inner purity: (*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;*) *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*

Men's thoughts are not just abstract reasoning; they are all sorts of things, some entangled with sinful desire, that are around all the time to a mind that has not learned hesychastic silence. Thoughts that need to be taken captive include thoughts of money entangled with greed, thoughts of imagined success entangled with pride, thoughts of wrongs suffered entangled with anger, thoughts of food compounded with gluttony, thoughts of desired persons compounded with lust, thoughts of imagined future difficulties entangled with worry and doubt about the Lord's good providence. Such thoughts as these need to be addressed, and not by tinkering with one's worldview: these thoughts remain a battleground in spiritual warfare even if one's worldview condemns greed, pride, anger, gluttony, lust, worry, and doubt.

Work with Mark. Guide him and strengthen him in the unseen warfare that includes learning to cut off such thoughts as soon as possible: a fire that is spreading through a house is hard to put out, and what Mark needs to learn is to notice the smoke that goes before fire and extinguish the smoldering that is beginning and not waiting for leaping flames to make doomed efforts to fight it. Help him to see that his thoughts are not only abstract ideas, and help him to be watchful, aware of his inner state. Unseen warfare in thoughts is of inestimable importance, and do what you can to help him see a smoldering smoke when it has not become a raging fire, and to be watchful.

Do what you can to draw him to repeat the Jesus Prayer, to let it grow to a rhythm in him. If the question is, "What should I start thinking when I catch myself?", the answer is, "The Jesus prayer."

Keep working with Mark, and offer what support you can. And keep him in your prayers.

With Deepest Affection,

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE ANGEL CHOIRS

Dear fellow-warrior, defender, and son Eukairos;

I wish to write to you concerning devils.

Mark has the wrong picture with a scientific worldview in which temptations are more or less random events that occur as a side effect of how the world works. Temptations are intelligently coordinated attacks by devils. They are part of unseen warfare such as Mark faces, part of an evil attack, but none the less on a leash. No man could be saved if the devils could give trials and temptations as much as they wished, but the devils are allowed to bring trials and temptations as much as God allows for the strengthening, and the discipleship, of his servants.

Some street drugs are gateway drugs, and some temptations are temptations to gateway sins. Gluttony, greed, and vanity are among the "gateway sins", although it is the nature of a sin to give way to other sins as well. Gluttony, for instance, opens the door to lust, and it is harder by far to fight lust for a man whose belly is stuffed overfull. (A man who would fare better fighting against lust would do well to eat less and fast more.) In sin, and also in virtue, he who is faithful in little is faithful in much, and he who is unfaithful in little is also unfaithful in much. You do not need to give Mark what he expects now, help in some great, heroic act of virtue. He needs your help in little, humble, everyday virtues, obedience when obedience doesn't seem worth the bother.

The liturgy speaks of "the feeble audacity of the demons", and Mark needs to know that that is true, and true specifically in his case. What trials God allows are up to God, and the demons are an instrument in the hand of a God who would use even the devils' rebellion to strengthen

his sons. The only way Mark can fall into the demons' hands is by yielding to temptation: nothing can injure the man who does not *harm himself*. The trials Mark faces are intended for his glory, and more basically for God's glory in him—but God chooses glory for himself that glorifies his saints. Doubtless this will conflict with Mark's plans and perceptions of what he needs, but God knows better, and *loves* Mark better than to give Mark everything he thinks he needs.

Do your best to strengthen Mark, especially as regards forgiveness to those who have wronged him and in the whole science of unseen warfare. Where he cannot see himself that events are led by an invisible hand, help him to at least have faith, a faith that may someday be able to discern.

And do help him to see that he is in the hands of God, that the words in the Sermon on the Mount about providence are not for the inhabitants of another, perfect world, but intended for him personally as well as others. He has rough things he will have to deal with; help him to trust that he receives providence at the hands of a merciful God who is ever working all things to good for his children.

With Love as Your Fellow-Warrior and Mark's,
YOUR FELLOW-WARRIOR IN THE WAR UNSHEN

My dear, watchful son Eukairos;

Mark has lost his job, and though he has food before him and a roof over his head, he thinks God's providence has run short.

Yet in all of this, he is showing a sign of growth: even though he does not believe God has provided, there is a deep peace, interrupted at times by worry, and his practice

of the virtues allows such peace to enter even though he assumes that God can only provide through paychecks.

Work on him in this peace. Work on him in the joy of friendship. Even if he does not realize that he has food for today and clothing for today, and that this is the providence he is set to ask for, help him to enjoy what he has, and give thanks to God for everything he has been given.

And hold him in your prayers.

As One Who Possesses Nothing,

ONE WHO RECEIVES ALL HE NEEDS FROM GOD

My prayerful, prayerful Eukairos;

Prayer is what Mark needs now more than ever.

Prayer is the silent life of angels, and it is a feast men are bidden to join. At the beginning it is words; in the middle it is desire; at the end it is silence and love. For men it is the outflow of sacrament, and its full depths are in the sacraments. There are said to be seven sacraments, but what men of Mark's day do not grasp is that seven is the number of perfection, and it would do as well to say that there are ten thousand sacraments, all bearing God's grace.

Help Mark to pray. Pray to forgive others, pray for the well-being of others, pray by being in silence before God. Help him to pray when he is attacked by passion; help him to pray when he is tempted and when he confesses in his heart that he has sinned: *O Lord, forgive me for doing this and help me to do better next time, for the glory of thy holy name and for the salvation of my soul.*

Work with Mark so that his life is a prayer, not only with the act-prayer of receiving a sacrament, but so that looking at his neighbor with chaste eyes he may pray out of the Lord's love. Work with Mark so that ordinary activity

and work are not an interruption to a life of prayer, but simply a part of it. And where there is noise, help him to be straightened out in silence through his prayer.

And if this is a journey of a thousand miles that Mark will never reach on earth, bid him to take a step, and then a step more. For a man to take one step into this journey is still something: the Thief crucified with Christ could only take one step, and he took that one step, and now stands before God in Paradise.

Ever draw Mark into deeper prayer.

With You Before God's Heart that Hears Prayers,

A PRAYING ANGEL

My dearly beloved, cherished, esteemed son; My holy angel who sees the face of Christ God; My dear chorister who sings before the eternal throne of God; My angel divine; My fellow-minister;

Mark is no longer your charge.

He has passed through his apprenticeship successfully.

He went to church, and several gunmen entered. One of them pointed a gun at a visitor, and Mark stepped in front of her. He was ordered to move, and he stood firm. He wasn't thinking of being heroic; he wasn't even thinking of showing due respect to a woman. He only thought vaguely of appropriate treatment of a visitor and fear never deterred him from this vague sense of appropriate care for a visitor.

And so death claimed him to its defeat. *O Death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?* Death claimed saintly Mark to its defeat.

Mark is no longer your charge.

It is my solemn, profound, and grave pleasure to now introduce you to Mark, no longer as the charge under your

care, but as a fellow-chorister with angels who will eternally stand with you before the throne of God in Heaven.

Go in peace.

Your Fellow-Minister,

מיכאל • MHXΛGL • MICHAEL • WHO IS LIKE GOD?

Doxology

How shall I praise thee, O Lord?
 For naught that I might say,
 Nor aught that I may do,
 Compareth to thy worth.
 Thou art the Father for whom every fatherhood in Heaven
 and on earth is named,
 The Glory for whom all glory is named,
 The Treasure for whom treasures are named,
 The Light for whom all light is named,
 The Love for whom all love is named,
 The Eternal by whom all may glimpse eternity,
 The Being by whom all beings exist,
 יהוה
 O ΩΝ.
 The King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
 Who art eternally praised,
 Who art all that thou canst be,
 Greater than aught else that may be thought,
 Greater than can be thought.
 In thee is light,
 In thee is honour,
 In thee is mercy,
 In thee is wisdom, and praise, and every good thing.
 For good itself is named after thee,

God immeasurable, immortal, eternal, ever glorious, and humble.

What mighteth compare to thee?

What praise equalleth thee?

If I be fearfully and wonderfully made,

Only can it be,

Wherewith thou art fearful and wonderful,

And ten thousand things besides,

Thou who art One,

Eternally beyond time,

So wholly One,

That thou mayest be called infinite,

Timeless beyond time thou art,

The One who is greater than infinity art thou.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

The Three who are One,

No more bound by numbers than by word,

And yet the Son is called Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ,

The Word,

Divine ordering Reason,

Eternal Light and Cosmic Word,

Way pre-eminent of all things,

Beyond all, and infinitesimally close,

Thou transcendest transcendence itself,

The Creator entered into his Creation,

Sharing with us humble glory,

Lowered by love,

Raised to the highest,

The Suffering Servant known,

The King of Glory,

Ο ΩΝ.

What tongue mighteth sing of thee?

What noetic heart mighteth know thee,

With the knowledge that drinketh,

The drinking that knoweth,

Of the vovs,
The loving, enlightened spiritual eye,
By which we may share the knowing,
Of divinised men joining rank on rank of angels.

Thou art,
The Hidden Transcendent God who transcendest
transcendence itself,
The One God who transfigurest Creation,
The Son of God became a Man that men might become the
sons of God,
The divine became man that man mighteth become divine.

Beyond measure is thy glory,
The weight of thy power transcendeth,
Thy power of thine all-surpassing authority bespeaketh,
And yet art thou,
Not in fire, not earthquake,
Not wind great as maelstrom,
But in soft gentle whisper,
Thy prophets wait upon thee,
For thy silence is more deafening than thunder,
Thine weakness stronger than the strength of men,
Thy humility surpassingly far exceedeth men's covetous
thirst for glory,
Thou who hidst in a manger,
Treasure vaster than the Heavens,
And who offerest us glory,
In those things of our lives,
That seem humble to us,
As a manger rude in a cavern stable.

Thou Christ God, manifest among Creation,
Vine, lamb, and our daily bread,
Tabernacled among us who may taste thy glory,
Art come the priest on high to offer thy Creation up into

Heaven,
Sanctified,
Transfigured,
Deified.

Wert thou a lesser god,
Numerically one as a creature is one,
Only one by an accident,
Naught more,
Then thou couldst not deify thine own creation,
Whilst remaining the only one god.

But thou art beyond all thought,
All word, all being,
We may say that thou existest,
But then we must say,
Thou art, I am not.
And if we say that we exist,
It is inadequate to say that thou existest,
For thou art the source of all being,
And beyond our being;
Thou art the source of all mind, wisdom, and reason,
Yet it is a fundamental error to imagine thee,
To think and reason in the mode of mankind.
Thou art not one god because there happeneth not more,
Thou art The One God because there mighteth not be
another beside thee.
Thus thou spakest to Moses,
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Which is to say,
Thou shalt admit no other gods to my presence.

And there *can* be no other god beside thee,
So deep and full is this truth,
That thy Trinity mighteth take naught from thine Oneness,
Nor could it be another alongside thy divine Oneness,

If this God became man,
That man become god.

Great art thou,
Greater than aught that can be thought,
And thus dealest thou,
With thy Creation.

For thou camest into the world,
O Christ,
Thy glory veiled,
But a few could see thy glory,
In a seed.

But thou returnest soon,
In years, or centuries, or ages untold,
A day or a thousand years, soon,
Then a seed no more.
None shall escape seeing you,
Not an angel choir to shepherds alone,
But rank on rank of angel host.
Every eye shall see thee,
And they also which pierced thee,
Thou camest and a few knees bowed,
Thou wilt return,
And every knee shall bow,
And every tongue shall confess,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
To the glory of God the Father,
As the Father triumphs in the Son.

Who mighteth tell of thy glory, thy might?
We hope for Heaven yet,
Yet the Heavens cannot contain thee.
Great art O ΩN,

And greatly to be praised.
Thou art awesome beyond all gods,
Who sayest,
Wound not my christs.
For the Son of God became the Son of Man,
That the sons of man might become the sons of God,
And the divine image,
The ancient and glorious foundation,
And radix of mankind,
Be transfigured,
Into the likeness of Christ,
And shine with uncreated Light,
The glory of God shining through his sons.

Let our spiritual eye be ever transfixed upon thine eternal
radiant glory,
Our hearts ever seeking thy luminous splendour,
Ever questing,
Ever sated,
Slaked by the greatest of draughts,
Which inflameth thirst.

Glorified art thou,
In all ages,
In every age,
Thy soft, gentle whisper,
Speaking life,
In every here and now,
And today.

Let us give our lives,
To thine all-surpassing greatness,
From this day,
From this hour,
Henceforth and forevermore.

Αμην,
So be it. Amen.

Epilogue: Thank You, and Next Steps

I really appreciate if you've taken the time to read these four brief works. It means a lot to me.

If you have a moment, please review this book at tinyurl.com/small-taste-jonathans-corner.

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Much Love,
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