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THE CONFERENCE *by Darryl Cope*

Somewhere, we know not where, at a time before time, as we know it, a discussion was taking place. The participants were beings of unimaginable power and intelligence; a discussion about us, before there was an us. This conversation evidently was a proposal for our creation as a race. We can only picture or imagine this discussion as we would, perhaps sitting around the breakfast table or maybe even a boardroom conference table with those in attendance voicing future plans, and goals and then perhaps details beyond the conceptual - working plans by which the conceptual could be implemented, a mechanism by which all of this could be realized and infinitely maintained. I wish that my imagination would allow me to picture a plurality whose aims and goals are so much in tune with one another, such perfect harmony that their existence is referred to as one. Is that one singular in number or does it of necessity mean more than one united in every way? Imagining them prior to this planning session would simply be fanciful figments of our imaginations. Information of events or history prior to this conversation is woefully lacking, and so we are lacking a frame of reference by which to even picture such an existence. As fragile mortals, it's very difficult for us to understand someone having existed forever. Only these beings can, with an infinite view both forward and backward say I AM. Having no beginning just doesn't seem to compute. That, to us, is not possible. There's very little information about this conversation or about the dreams or the goals of these powerful beings. There are though, a few telling statements found in the record left by them for us. Many of these statements have been read by millions without realizing the importance and/or the depth of them. One such statement by these mighty ones was one saying to another "let us make man in our image according to our likeness " and then going on to relate the purpose in this creation. That was to have this man created in Their image to rule over everything else. One supreme being speaking to another supreme being about this enormous proposal. The plan was unanimously approved and one volunteered or was chosen to fully express their concept and bring it into reality. The pronouns of Gen. 1:26- 27 clearly display a plurality in the planning and approval stage as well as a very overlooked switch to singular for the administration of Their plan. This sequence explains His descriptive name in later writings as WORD, "the expression or expressor of thought". Much later in the record we find a little more insight into the authorship of the plan with the words "all things were created by Him and for Him. (Col.1: 16) The intimation there seems to be not only did He create everything, but it appears to have been His idea(for Him). Understanding this can enhance forever our view, our understanding of deity.

One of my primary goals in teaching is to get students to think things through to their ultimate end. The statement, "let us make man in our image" was made by someone to someone. When we add to this the declaration in Jn. 1:1 "In the beginning was the WORD, the WORD was with GOD, And the WORD was GOD." Someone with someone else and they were the same (GOD), and they were equal. Phil.2:6 "although He existed in the form of GOD did not regard equality with GOD a thing to be grasped", or be held onto. He was equal but was willing to let go of the equality to remain harmonious with the predetermined plan for saving us. (Acts 2:23) He became one of us, emptied Himself from the form of GOD and was born as a human baby. In one form He was GOD; in the other, human. In one, He was immortal and eternal, the designer and creator of all things. In the other He was mortal, helpless, at the mercy of those who, in His other form were at His mercy.

In every aspect of human endeavor we feel the need to establish a hierarchy to control the ramifications of our differences. One of the most beautiful aspects of this narrative is He knew He was leaving His position of creator and lawgiver to become subject and as such having to ask permission. As

a human, in the flesh, He would feel the pull of the five fleshly senses, testing His harmonious relationship with GOD, and the law He Himself had given, thus creating the possibility of conflicting agendas. As mortal human beings we have differences in experiences, in our interpretation of those experiences, our likes and dislikes, our wants and needs, all of which give us different agendas. Different agendas give rise to jealousies, factions, and various forms of discord. Hierarchies tend to quell the chaos of everyone going their own way and doing their own thing with no regard for their fellows. In Jn 17:21, the Lord Jesus prayed for His disciples to be one (in harmony) even as (the same way) He and His father (GOD) are one. With that level of trust and cooperation there is no need for a ruler or judge to settle disputes. There are no disputes.

In this tent, as the apostle Paul refers to our current dwelling, we will never be free of the tug-of-war presented by our knowledge of what is right and what we want. Even our Lord Jesus, when He left that state of equality, had to have a superior. He had to check with His Heavenly Father to make sure His decisions were harmonious with the plan. The pull of the flesh is so strong that even someone who had, in the past, existed in the form of GOD, must now in this form, seek guidance from a Superior. That is why Peter urges us to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts. 1Pt. 3:15 Seek guidance from our King, who has proven Himself in harmony with the will of GOD. We will then do as He did.