

## TWO FORMS OF RELIGIOUS MYSTERY

The Church says that mystery in religion is a good thing for it requires a greater effort of faith from us. It reminds us that we cannot understand everything and that humbles us. The two types of mystery in religion are:

a) things that God plans but has hidden from us. The Roman Catholic Church says that God has revealed that contraception is wrong through the Church and that even if the Church fails to prove this ban to be correct, it is still binding and only immoral people wilfully break it. Even if the ban kills millions through passing AIDS, God knows best.

b) things that seem illogical to us for only God can understand them – like Jesus having two separate natures, being both fully God and fully man, and not being a mixture, and still being one person. Or God being He and not they though he is three persons who are distinct from one another and who have an intimate loving relationship with each other.

The two forms of mystery have a very close relationship. For example, if God is he not they though he is three persons then in the same way perhaps when I murder somebody that is somehow good and justifiable. Also if God hasn't given us the intelligence to see how three persons can be one God, then he is so much cleverer than us that we must put our complete trust in him. If he commands us to do something our human society says is evil we must do it – even if it is child-sacrifice! To debunk one form of mystery is to debunk the other indirectly.

The doctrine of a mysterious God that we cannot understand is bad for morality. We cannot prove that God is compatible and the existence of evil and suffering and temptation which automatically asserts that God's morals are inscrutable. This makes the invention of evil rules, like the absolute ban on contraception, and on ceasing to believe in Jesus feasible. People feel compelled to accept them believing that God has spoken and knows what he is talking about even if we can't work him out. The road to a hell is opened and the root of fanaticism is planted. The doctrine of mystery tells us that it does not matter what we think and we should let God or the Church that represents him tell us what to think. They may let us think in some things for ourselves but they consider thinking about mystery and wondering if it is really just a cover for incoherence to be blasphemy at worse and irreverent at best. Mystery is evil because it tells us what to think. It is never desirable even if we are forced to admit defeat and inability to understand.