

# ON THE MAKING OF MAN




GREGORY OF NYSSA

# ON THE MAKING OF MAN

*Translated from the Greek by William Moore and Henry Austin Wilson*
*From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, Vol. 5, edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D.*

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duction. The footnote apparatus is retained where it serves the text; we have set aside those notes that pertain only to the nineteenth-century volume context, and any commentary at variance with the Orthodox confession of the Fathers themselves. We add a scripture index for the text in hand.

The texts are typeset in IM Fell English, a face cut by John Fell in seventeenth-century Oxford and freely available again through the work of Igino Marini. The Greek, where there is any, is set in Philokalia, designed for the Athonite tradition.

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# ON THE MAKING OF MAN

# NOTE ON THE TREATISE "ON THE MAKING OF MAN"

This work was intended to supplement and complete the Hexaëmeron of S. Basil, and presupposes an acquaintance with that treatise. The narrative of the creation of the world is not discussed in detail: it is referred to, but chiefly in order to insist on the idea that the world was prepared to be the sphere of man's sovereignty. On the other hand, Gregory shows that man was made "with circumspection," fitted by nature for rule over the other creatures, made in the likeness of God in respect of various moral attributes, and in the possession of reason, while differing from the Divine nature in that the human mind receives its information by means of the senses and is dependent on them for its perception of ex-

ternal things. The body is fitted to be the instrument of the mind, adapted to the use of a reasonable being: and it is by the possession of the "rational soul," as well as of the "natural" or "vegetative" and the "sensible" soul, that man differs from the lower animals. At the same time, his mind works by means of the senses: it is incomprehensible in its nature (resembling in this the Divine nature of which it is the image), and its relation to the body is discussed at some length (chs. 12-15). The connection between mind and body is ineffable: it is not to be accounted for by supposing that the mind resides in any particular part of the body: the mind acts upon and is acted upon by the whole body, depending on the corporeal and material nature for one element of perception, so that perception requires both body and mind. But it is to the rational element that the name of "soul" properly belongs: the nutritive and sensible faculties only borrow the name from that which is higher than themselves. Man was first made "in the image of God:" and this conception excludes the idea of distinction of sex. In the first creation of man all humanity is included, according to the Divine foreknowledge: "our whole nature extending