

Genesis in the Light of the New Testament

F. W. Grant

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The Individual Application

There are two smaller sections of the first natural division of the book of Genesis. The first (chap. i. - ii. 3.) gives us the work of God and His rest; the second, (chap. ii. 4 - 25.) God in relationship with the creature He has made. Hence, in this latter part the covenant-name is for the first time introduced; it is not "God" merely, but "The Lord God" - Jehovah. We shall see more fully the force of this hereafter. In this double account there is an exquisite beauty, which the unbelief that cavils at it can never see.

It is necessary also to distinguish from the six days' work, what has been strangely confounded with it, the primitive creation of the first chapter and verse, and the ruin into which it had fallen when "without form and void, and darkness on the face of the deep." This used to be, and I suppose still may be called, the common view; and yet the more one looks at the passage the more it seems impossible to make such a mistake. For plainly the work of the six days begins with this: "God said, 'Let there be light;' and there was light." But as plainly the earth, although waste and desolate, was there before that, not created then. Moreover the words "without form and void," for which "waste and desolate" would be preferable as a reading, imply distinctly a state of ruin, and not of development; while a passage in which the first of these terms is used asserts expressly that the Lord did not create the earth so.*

*It is the word rendered "in vain," Isaiah xiv. 18. The two are found together in Isaiah xxxiv. 11 and Jeremiah iv. 23.

Nor can it be said that the exigencies of a geological difficulty have forced such a construction of the opening words of this account. Augustine, who knew nothing of such a difficulty, long ago decided for it from the mere force of the language used. The requirement of it by the mere typical view I am just now advocating, is independent of it also, and yet quite as urgent; for it makes the six days' work a remoulding of a former lapsed creation, the new birth, as we may call it, of a world. How plainly significant is that, at once! And such a view of it the words themselves necessitate.

There was, then, a primary creation, afterward a fall; first, "heaven and earth," in due order; then earth without a heaven - in darkness, and buried under "a deep" of salt and barren and restless waters. What a picture of man's condition, as fallen away from God! How complete the confusion! how profound the darkness, how deep the restless waves of passion roll over the wreck of what was once so fair! "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

Then mark how the new birth begins: "The Spirit of God moved [or brooded] upon the face of the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light.'" From the Spirit and the Word it comes: we are "born of the Spirit;" we are "born of the incorruptible seed" of "the Word of God." And "the entrance of Thy Word giveth light." How faithfully this beginning of creative work depicts that more mighty still in the human soul, and assures of what was even then for us in the counsels of divine wisdom! Truly His "delights were with the sons of men."

The first day gives us, then, the entrance of the Word giving light. The state of the creature is manifested by it, but as yet it shines on naught but desolation. Nothing is changed, save the darkness; there is nothing that God can find of good but the light itself. That He pronounces so - severs it from the darkness and gives it a place and a name; but the darkness too is named, and has its place, and is not all removed. For not in the earth itself is the source of light, and when turned away from this it is still dark. Practically, the day is not all light, but "evening and morning" make it up; yet, though darkness is in itself "night," it is well to note that it is never, now that light has once come in, simple and absolute night any more, but "evening;" some rays of the day there ever are; and in God's order, too, an evening surely giving place to morning. And then again, as to the "morning," its promise of the perfect "day" is never realized until God's work is wrought out and His Sabbath is reached; then, indeed, there is no more evening, or morning either, but "day," without mixture or decline - God's great finality - is fully come.

I do not believe this needs interpreting; the significance of its voice is not hard to apprehend. And then not only "day unto day uttereth speech," but also "night unto night showeth knowledge." Dear reader, if perchance one there be who may read this, down into whose desolate soul the light has shone, revealing not good but ill, when good has begun to have attraction too, but there is none - you are learning but this first day's lesson. Spite of all that is disclosed, the light is good. Welcome it as from God, the beginning of His gracious work in you, the promise of the day that yet shall come.

The second stage of this divine work is the making of the "firmament," or "expanse," by which a separation of the waters is effected. Strangely misunderstood as it has been by some, it is, one would think, self-evidently, the formation of the atmospheric "heavens," which draw up now (as they have been doing ever since) out of the deep below, waters which, purged of their saltiness, become the still inexplicably balanced clouds.

The spiritual stage it represents is scarcely more difficult to follow. A separation is now effected, not in the external condition merely, but more inwardly. The unseen things operate upon the soul, and attract affections and desires upward to them. That which was "lust" and "corruption" in a heart away from God is thus purified by the new object. It is the "kingdom of heaven" spiritually begun. The heart is under divine government. And while the general state of the creature remains apparently the same (there is still no fruit nor solid ground) - while still "in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing," yea, while "how to perform that which is good I find not" - still we can say, "To will is present with me," and "with the mind I myself serve the law of God." Peace is not come, nor liberty, nor power; but the heart drawn up to God, that intercourse with heaven is begun which at a further stage shall bring down showers of blessing to fertilize and bring forth fruit to God.

Still, by the Word is every stage produced. Each time God speaks. It is not mere development of what lies unfolded in the earliest germ. Step by step the forthputting of divine power accomplishes counsels that are all divine. "We are His workmanship"- the patient, perfect elaboration of the wisdom of God- "created in Christ Jesus." Happy we, proportionately as we are

yielded into His hands, and cast into the mould of His efficacious Word!

The "third day"

speaks to the Christian heart of resurrection. It is marked here by resurrection power: the earth comes up out of the waters. That which can be wrought upon and made fruitful is now brought up from under the irreclaimable waste of sea. This is not removed, but bounded and restrained; it cannot return to cover the earth. Its existence is indeed distinctly recognized; it gets for the first time its name from God; in the new earth there will be none. (Rev. xxi. i.) Meanwhile He lays the foundations of the earth,* that it never should be moved at any time.

* Not the world but that "dry land" which He has named named "Earth".

This is only the first half of the third day. It is a double day, as we may say, with God. Twice He speaks; twice He pronounces His work good. In the first half, the earth is separated from the waters; in the second, it brings forth the "grass," the "herb," and "the fruit tree yielding fruit." Let us examine the spiritual meaning of all this.

"Risen with Christ" is the truth which inevitably connects itself with such a figure. Christ having died and risen again for us, His resurrection no less than His death is ours. His death is our passage out of our old state and condition as sinners - as children of Adam. His resurrection is our entrance into a new state and sphere. "In Christ" - "if any man be" there, "he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The attempt to read this by experience has been the loss (practically) of its blessedness. Unable to look within and say "all things are new," men have been reduced either to modify this as if it were too extreme a statement, or else to doubt if they were really Christians. Moreover, the trying to produce such a state of things within them has resulted in constant disappointment and real loss of power. They have sought to mend self and produce there what they might find satisfaction in, instead of turning away from self altogether, to find in occupation with Christ and with His love true power over it.

But it is not "if any man be born again" or "be converted." It is not the result of the work within us that is stated, but the result of the new position before God in which we stand. Acceptance in Christ is acceptance as Christ. It is no question, therefore, of what is in us at all, but of what is in Christ for us; thus viewed, old things are indeed passed away, and all things become new.

Christ's resurrection has put us in this new place; we are risen with Him. The acceptance of this blessed fact brings us into rest and peace, and sets us on vantage-ground above the water-floods. It is for us spiritually God's bringing up the earth from under the waves, and settling it upon its everlasting foundations. True, the waters are not removed, the flesh is not become spirit, nor done away; on the contrary, it is now for the first time fully recognized as there, and incurable - has its place and its name defined; but the man in Christ has risen out of it - is "not in the flesh." It is in him; but he is not it, nor in it.

This is the first part of the day of resurrection only. The second part gives us the fruitfulness which is the immediate consequence of this; for being now "made free from sin," we are "become the servants of righteousness." Notice some features here.

God calls the dry land "Earth." In the original, this word is derived from one which means "crumbling," and it is manifestly a chief condition of fertility that earth should crumble. The more continually its clods break up into ever finer dust, the more its promise to the husbandman; and this is a simple lesson and a great one. The brokenness of spirit which makes no resistance to the Father's hand is a main element of fertility in souls wherein He works. It is not power He seeks from us, but weakness; not resistant force, but "yieldingness" to Him. All power is His: His strength is perfected in weakness.

The character depicted here is beautifully illustrated in this very "third day" state in Romans viii. Up to the very end of chapter vii, in the well-known experience already alluded to, the man in question is profoundly conscious of two "I's" in opposition to each other; "with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." There is the struggle that convulses him; one part for God and good, the other always contrary - alas, always the stronger too. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" delivers him "from the law of sin and death." Then there are two contrary parties still. But there is a change.

The flesh is there indeed yet, and nowise altered, but its now victorious antagonist is not "I myself." That is sunk;

it is now "flesh" and "Spirit" that conflict - the Holy Ghost in place of "me."

Oh for constant realization of this! The dropping (not of the flesh - that cannot be here, but) of that good and right-minded and holy "I" which is ever weakness, ever inability, with all its pious resolution and good will! "I live - not I - but Christ liveth in me."

Even thus is the fertile earth produced. Out of weakness, out of nothingness, out of infirmities, which make the power of Christ to rest upon us, and leave us clay in the potter's hands. The more we know the reality of resurrection, the more shall we know of this.

Then as to the fruit.

There is progress; from grass and herb to "fruit-tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself upon the earth " - another beautiful figure that. The fruit bears within itself the capacity of self-perpetuation. Itself for the Master's use (and it is well to remember that), the seed is in this fruit according to its kind, - love to produce love, and so on. If we want to find love, we must show it. And the riper the fruit is for the Master's taste, the riper the seed is also; the best ripe fruit is that which has hung in the sun most.

All this is simple; and it shows there is a real voice in creation round, to be understood if we have will to understand. The works of His hand bear witness to Himself, - creation to redemption - things seen to the unseen; the thoughts of God's heart, the depths of His love. It is not a mere accommodation of these things we are making; they are destined witness, though Christ must be the key to all.

And now we are come to the fourth day. Here the entire scene is changed. It is not the laying the foundations of the earth any more, but the garnishing of the heavens. Sun and moon are ordained as light-givers to the earth now made, and for signs and for seasons, for days and years.

And we are not only "risen with Christ," but in

Christ, heavenly; "seated together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This truth necessarily follows that of resurrection, and no view of our new creation could be in any wise complete which left out this. Here it follows, then, in very natural order, and the language of the type is not hard to apprehend. "Heaven" is, I doubt not, its own symbol, as indeed the firmament, the lower heaven, gives its name to the unseen and spiritual heaven, God's dwelling-place. Applying it in this way, the first object seen in it speaks for itself. Scripture too applies it (Mal. iv. 2.). The great luminary of the day, the source of heat and light to the earth, its light self-derived, unchanging, constant as the day it brings - clearly enough presents to us the "Heavenly One" back in the glory whence He came. The secondary light, light of the night, a light derived from His, yet oh how cold and dull comparatively at the best, changeful - full-faced or dwindled according as it fully faces or is turned away from Him; how easily we read that too, as we read such words as the apostle's here ! - " We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Let us learn the lessons that the moon teaches, for they are serious and yet helpful ones. What more serious

lesson than her changefulness? She belongs always to heaven according to God's ordinance. Practically, you cannot always find her there; nay, she is more often (to man's sight, of course,) out of the sky than in it. Then, when there, how seldom full-orbed! how often turned away from him from whom all her radiance comes! For so it does come; her part is reception merely; she shines perforce when in his light, not by her own effort in the least. And could you go up, attracted by her brightness, to see how fair and glorious she was, you would find yourself there not in the glory of the moon at all, but of that sun which was bathing her with brightness.

Then notice her from this earth new risen from the waters. Fair she may be, and "precious fruits be brought forth" by her; yea, "abundance of peace as long as the moon endureth;" still the direct sun-rays are another thing, and are the real fructifying, life-giving influence after all. It is one thing to be occupied even with what we are in Christ - and it is our guide in the night, too (Gal. vi. i6.) - it is yet another to be in the glory of His presence, where moon and stars are hidden in the day.

There is much more here, but I leave it and pass on. The fifth day brings another change of scene; and here, when we might have thought that we had left them finally behind, we are brought back again to the barren waste of waters. But now even here the power of God is working; the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and birds fly in the open firmament of heaven. It is still progress in the great creative plan, and new and higher forms of life are reached than heretofore. It is not now grass and herb, but the "living soul," and God blesses them, and bids them multiply.

Can we give this expression? I believe so. There are harmonies elsewhere that will guide us to an understanding of it.

Take one in the order of the Pentateuch itself, where the same thing occurs - a real progress by apparent retrogression. For if Genesis begins (as we have seen it does) with "life," Exodus gives us, very plainly, the redemption of God's people; while Leviticus leads us into the sanctuary of God, to learn in His presence what suits Him to whom we are brought and whose we are. Thus all is progress; but at the next step this seems ended, for in Numbers we pass out once more into the world to face the trials of the wilderness and the still worse exposure of ourselves that meets us there.

This seems retrogression; still it is progress after all. There is no dislocation of His plan who is ever working onward to perfection. For the world is surely the place where, after we have known redemption, and the God that has redeemed us too, we are left to be practiced in what we know, that we may be "those who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

There is discipline in this; and failure comes out plentifully too; still we are chastened to be partakers of His holiness; the new life in us gets practical form and embodiment, as we may say: in other words - the words of our type - the "living soul" is produced out of the midst of the waters.

For the waters are, as we have seen, the restless and fallen nature of man; and it is this (whether within or without) that makes the wilderness the place of trial that it is; yet out of this evil, divine sovereignty produces

good. And again, the "living soul " - since the soul is the seat of desires, appetites, affections, etc., - may fitly depict the living energies which lay hold of eternal things amid the pressure on every side of what is seen and temporal.*

* Take Philippians iii. as the vivid portrayal of this.

This, I believe, is the fifth-day scene. One day alone remains, and God's work is complete.

And this day, which is a second "third,"

has its two parts likewise, as the third day had. First, the earth (and not the waters now) bring forth the "living soul." It is not now the fruit of discipline, or the chafing and contact of sin and evil, but the development of what is proper to the new man apart from this. Jacob's and Joseph's lives show us this contrast fully, as we may see more afterward. And like Joseph's too, this sixth day shows us next the rule of the man, God's image. I can but little interpret here, it is true, but the outline is not the less plain because of the meagreness of the interpretation. The mere indication may attract some to look deeper into this final mystery of creative wisdom.

For what remains is rest, and only rest, God's rest in love over His accomplished work. Seven times He has pronounced all "good," the last time "very good." Now evening and morning come no more, but full, ripe, unending "day" - a day blessed and sanctified of God as the day of His rest.

The fuller exposition of this, however, will come more in its place after we have glanced at the dispensational application of the six days' work. For they have their fulfillment also, as I have already said, in the sphere of

the world at large, in the progressive steps by which from the beginning divine power and wisdom have been moving on to the accomplishment of that of which eternity alone can fully tell.

The Dispensational Application

The ordinary dispensational application of the week of creation is one which has so many adherents, and has given rise to so much speculation otherwise, that we shall do well to look at it before proceeding further. In the words of a modern writer, "In this application, 'one day is as a thousand years.' Six thousand years of labour precede the world's Sabbath. The parallel here has been often traced." It is as old, indeed, as the so-called "Epistle of Barnabas," * and its scriptural support is supposed to be the passage in 2 Peter iii, already referred to. According to it, the millennial kingdom answers, as the seventh thousand years, to the "seventh day," earth's Sabbath-rest.

(* Which, It is almost needless to say, was not the production of the scriptural Barnabas, although by the very general voice of antiquity attributed to him. Its date is supposed to be somewhat before the middle of the second century A. D. I quote the passage from the translation in the "Ante-Nicene Christian Library:"

"Attend, my children, to the meaning of this expression: 'He finished in six days.' This *implieth that the Lord will finish all things in six thousand years, for a day is with Him a thousand years. And He Himself testifieth, Behold, to day will be as a thousand years.'" The last is probably an incorrect citation of psalm xc. 4.)

But as to the principle, the passage in Peter is no proof at all. It is no statement of time, but the contrary - the simple assurance of how little God counts time as man counts it. It might be as fairly argued from it that the millennial "thousand years" was but a day, as that the

creation "days" represented each a thousand years; for it is not only one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, but also "a thousand years as one day."

Nor is the millennium, with all its blessedness, a proper Sabbath. The apostle represents the "rest" (literally, "Sabbath keeping,") that remains to the people of God, as God's rest, and that surely is, as both the epistle to the Hebrews (chap. iv. 9' 10) and the book of Genesis show, His ceasing from His work. But in the millennium there is not as yet this. It is the last work-day rather, and not till the new heavens and earth will God's rest be come. The seventh day is not, then, the type of a millennium at all, but of final and eternal rest.

Moreover, the millennial kingdom answers so fully to the sixth-day rule of the man and woman over the earth, that it is strange how it could escape the notice of those who were seeking a dispensational application of the creation-work. While on the other hand a mere arithmetical interpretation of the days as each a thousand years of the world's history, seems almost self-evidently artificial and unspiritual.

I may leave this, then, to point out what I have no doubt is the real dispensational application. In this it will be found we have but the former interpretation extended and adapted to the larger sphere.

Thus we have here alike a primitive creation and a fall, and then, too, that work of the Spirit and the Word by which every step toward the blessedness that shall be has been successively produced. The first day has very plainly the features of the age before the flood, when through the word of promise the light shone, but without further interference with the state of the creature. The

light fell only upon a ruin. Lust and violence were the general features of man's condition, and furnish a history over which the Spirit of God passes with significant brevity, and which "the troubled sea, when it cannot rest," sufficiently depicts. Upon this world a literal flood passed, and it perished.

The second day gives us the formation of the "heavens," a symbol not hard to read, when we have learnt elsewhere the constant use of these as the seat of authority and power. It is the uniform language of Scripture that "the heavens rule." The "sun to rule by day" is indeed not yet come, nor the moon by night. Naught fills these heavens as yet but "waters" - waters above as well as beneath - the very type of instability. And this makes it the perfect type of what took place when after the flood, man was put in the place of responsibility to be his brother's keeper. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," is the principle, and was the institution, as is plain, of human government. It was the formation of a political "heavens" with, as yet, nothing but waters filling them. And how quickly Noah, the acknowledged head of the new world, drunk with the fruit of his vineyard, exemplified the instability of the type! And from henceforth what has it been but the constant display of this - the want of self-government in those who govern? A step toward the full attainment of God's perfect counsel for the earth it is; even now, power ordained of God, and His ministry for good, and yet a Nero or Caligula may be this "power." And significant it seems that on this second day there is no voice of God pronouncing "good" what is nevertheless for good. Providentially, He may be working blessing by that

which in itself He cannot bless. And this is of solemn import for all times and spheres.

The third day following sees the dry land separated from the waters. These waters we have all along seen to be the type of human passion and self-will - what man left to himself exhibits. But this is evidently, on the larger scale we are now taking, just the Gentiles,* and the earth raised up out of these waters is the seed of Abraham after the flesh - that people ploughed up with the plough share of God's holy law, and among whom was sown the seed of the divine Word. Little fruit may it yet have yielded, and given up it may be for its fruitlessness and unprofitableness at the present time; yet it lies but fallow, like the actual land of Israel, waiting for the latter rain and the foretold fertility under the care of the divine husbandry. Nor has the past been only failure. For long the only fruit for God we know was to be found there, and in a sense, of its fruit are even we: "salvation" was "of the Jews." Thus there need be no difficulty in this fertile earth separated from the waters representing Israel's separation to God out of all the nations of the world.* *

* Compare Rev. 16:15 "The waters.. are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues."

* *To those acquainted with the meaning of Revelation xiii, it will not be insignificant that the last Gentile empire should be figured there in the beast from the ace, the Jewish Antichrist in the second beast from the earth.

The fourth day's lesson is one simpler still. The lights set in the heavens speak very plainly of Christ and of the Church; or, as we are accustomed to say, of the Christian

dispensation. The mystery here we have already glanced at, for the individual application scarcely differs from the dispensational. Here Christ, revealed by the Holy Ghost, shines out for men in the word of His grace; while the Church is the responsible reflector of Christ, His epistle to the world. The word of the Spirit to the churches (Rev. ii, iii.) may give us the moon's phases in the night of Christ's absence - that night surely now fast drawing to a close.

Let this scene preach to us that all true and divine light now is heavenly. To Let our "light shine" is naught else than to let men see we belong to another sphere, are not of the world even as Christ was not; and to let them see our faces brightened with the joy of what He is, our hearts satisfied with Himself, and so independent of the broken cisterns from which they strive to draw refreshment. This was once actually the Church's testimony, in those days when men were "turned to God from idols... to wait for His Son from heaven." Alas! while the Bridegroom tarried, the light grew dim. "They all slumbered and slept." The only light for the world is still the virgin's lamp as she goes forth to meet the Bridegroom.

His call of them to Himself will close this dispensation, and then will dawn that strange and solemn fifth day, when once again the "waters" will have risen and covered every thing; the time of which the ninety-third psalm speaks, though as of a past condition, - "The floods have lifted up, o Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves;" but only to prove that "the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea."

The time of the world's discipline will have come, "the hour of trial upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." These waters speak of a universal Gentile (that is, lawless) state; of the working of man's wild will: "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

But when God's "judgments are upon the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." This is the secret of the waters producing the living creature. It is the time when (the heavenly people being gathered home) God will be preparing a people for earthly blessing. Brief may be the time in which He does this: Scripture is none the less full of the detail of the mighty work to be done. And a most real and necessary step it will be toward that reign of righteousness and peace which the sixth day so plainly figures.

For here the rule of the man in God's image and likeness can scarcely fail to make itself understood by those who look for the Lord then to take a throne which as Son of Man He can call His own (Rev. i. 13; iii. 21.), and which therefore He can share with His people, as He cannot share His Father's throne. The first Adam, we are told by the apostle (Rom. V. 14.), was the image of the One to come; even as he also tells us (Eph. v. 25, 32.) Eve is of that Church which He will present to Himself without spot or blemish. Thus we can scarcely by any possibility mistake the spiritual meaning of the sixth day's work.

In that day, too, the earth brings forth the living creature. "Israel shall bud and blossom, and fill the face of the earth with fruit." She shall be Jezreel, "the seed of

God," and "I will sow her to Me in the earth," says the Lord God.

And as this is the last work-day, not yet Sabbath rest, so is the millennial kingdom in the hands of Him who takes it to bring all things back to God. "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. And when all things shall be subdued under Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject: unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD may be all in all." Then, and not till then, is the Sabbath reached.

"And on the seventh day God had ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

Here God alone appears, and the work being ended, all being according to His mind, He sanctifies the day of His rest. How significant this of the days never to give place to another, when redemption being fully accomplished, and all things brought to the pattern proposed in the eternal counsels, He shall indeed put the seal of His perfect delight upon the whole new creation, hallowed to Himself forever! How could God rest short of this consummation? Then indeed He will be "all," and that be the simple, full expression of the creature's blessedness, and of its perpetuity as well.

Some details of this final blessing are presented to us in the following section, which concludes this first part of Genesis (chap. ii. 4 - 25.); but before we go on to this let us only for a moment compare the meaning of the lives which shortly follow in the book - a meaning already briefly glanced at - with that now given of these six

creative days. We shall find in them, not absolute identity (for Scripture never merely repeats itself), but a parallel of a most striking sort; a remarkable witness of the internal unity of Scripture, and of this first book. How easy to understand that Genesis is, as it has been called, the "seed-plot of the Bible," when it is thus in the whole the expansion of those divine counsels which have their indication already in the creative work itself! And so indeed it is.

But it is plain that here the seven lives recorded in Genesis must have their counterparts in the six days' work; there is none to the seventh-day rest. And it is as plain that the last life, Joseph, the most perfect type of Christ, the man, God's image, answers here precisely to the sixth, and not to the seventh day. We shall obtain a seventh day then, so to speak, by taking the third day as a double one. We have already noticed that it is so, for God speaks twice, and twice pronounces His work good. Looking at the days thus, let us compare the double series.* (* It has been noticed by many that the six days themselves fall into a double parallel series. Arranged thus, we have, as to the parts of creation touched on, these respectively: -

1. Light.
4. Light.
2. Waters.
5. Waters.
8. Earth.
6. Earth.

Dividing the third day into two will give us a regular series of seven, which is commonly in Scripture (as noted elsewhere) 4 plus 3.)

Now, beginning with the third chapter, the story of Adam is just the exposure of man, such as the fall has made him: the light let in upon his condition, with no apparent internal change. And this is the truth of the first day.

Next, as to the division of the waters on the second day, we have already seen that its lesson corresponds with that of the two seeds into which the human race at once divides: the opposition, namely, between the carnal and spiritual mind, which every renewed soul is conscious of.

Then, if the third day give us in the earth's coming up out of the waters the type of how we too rise up out of the inundation of sin into the place at once of rest and power over it, the third life, Noah's, gives us as plainly our passage in Christ our ark out of the scene of the sin and judgment of man in the flesh to that in which blessing is secured by the sweet savour of accepted sacrifice.

The fruit of the second half of the third day, again, is seen in Abraham, the practical life of faith which follows upon this.

The fourth-day parallel seems less exact with Isaac; yet is he undoubtedly, more emphatically than any, the heavenly man. Even Abraham is found out of Canaan; Jacob almost spends his life away from it; Isaac may fail, and does, but never leaves it; and as the picture of Christ Himself, as he undoubtedly is, he is necessarily the picture of the reflection of Christ - of the Son and of the Sons of God.

The parallel of the fifth-day type with Jacob is self-evident; the lesson of each is discipline, and what God accomplishes in it for His own - the peaceable fruit of righteousness in those who are exercised thereby.

While

Joseph's life is as plainly the spontaneous fruit of the new nature, and the attainment of sovereignty over all around, as the sixth day is also of the same things, none the less blessed because so little known.

Thus the remarkable unity of this first book of Scripture is apparent. Nor will this glance at it be in vain, if it awake in any soul a fresh realization of that eternal love so manifestly set upon us, when He for whom are all things and by whom are all things formed the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. Well may our voices mingle in that jubilee-song, "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the heights; praise ye Him, sun and moon; praise Him all ye stars of light; praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl; kings of the earth, and all people; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens; old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name only is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven."

Paradise

We have noted already that from the fourth verse of the second chapter is a distinct part, and gives us "God in relationship with the creature He has made." Thus He is now spoken of, not simply as God - Elohim, but as the Lord God - Jehovah- Elohini.

Jehovah is the name of which the inspired translation is given in the third of Exodus - "I am:" expanded to its full significance in the book of Revelation as, "He which is, and which was, and which is to come." Thus in immutable existence He follows out the changes of created being, propping up creaturehood with the strength of eternity. "By Him all things consist." As in relation with a redeemed people - Israel - how blessed and reassuring this His covenant-name!

But here He is the "Lord God," not of Israel, but of man, a prophecy and picture of what shall be when "the tabernacle of God shall be with men." Still there is no "tabernacle of God" here; the final fact transcends all pictures.

That we have, however, a picture or type of eternal blessedness in this account that follows is plain to see. Its central figure, Adam, with his relationship to Eve, his wife, is so referred to elsewhere. (Rom. v. i4; Eph. v. 31, 32.) Paradise and the tree of life also meet us in prophecies of the blessedness to come. (Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 2.) That there should be contrast also in many respects is not inconsistent with the nature of types, but on the contrary most consistent. (i Cor. xv. 45 - 48; Phil. ii. 6.) We may therefore in the beginning of things,

contemplate the final end, however much we may find it true that "we see in part, and prophesy in part."

Man, then, is the manifest head of the new created scene; and if made in the image and likeness of God, how plainly is he in the image also of the true man, God's image. The dust of the earth, inspired by the breath of the Almighty, might well be the foreshadow of the union of the divine and human in one blessed Person in the time to come. The place of headship over all is but the anticipation of the wider headship of the Son of Man. "Image" and "likeness" of God have immeasurably fuller meaning in their application to the "last Adam" than to the first.

Then as to the relationship of the man and woman. It takes little to see in that "deep sleep" into which Adam was cast the figure of the deeper and more mysterious sleep of the "last Adam." Out of the man thus sleeping the woman is derived, as the Church out of Christ's death, and which by the creative Spirit is built up as His body, "of His flesh and of His bones."

This building of the Church being not even yet complete, the presentation to Himself is of course still future. To that day, however, the apostle carries us on in thought, at the same time reminding us of the necessary contrast between the earthly first man and the heavenly second. For whereas the Lord God brought the woman to the man, "He" - the Second Man - shall "present unto Himself" the Church, "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." "The margin of Genesis ii. 22 gives rightly, for "made He a woman," "builded."

Our eyes are dim to see so far into the blessedness of that bright future which for eternity we shall then enter on with Him. Let us rather turn back here to see how distinctly it is noted that all belongs of right to Him, whose Love must needs share it with His own. Thus, first of all, before the Bride exists, the creatures are brought to Adam, that he may see* what he will call them, and as master of them all he gives them names. And though the woman in due time shares this sovereignty as we know, (chap. i. 27, 28.) she yet comes into it by her connection with the man, and only so.

* "I do not doubt that "to see what he would call them," is that Adam might see.

How perfect is the harmony of all this! How blessed to see the Lord of heaven and earth thus at the very beginning occupied with these thoughts of His love as to that new creation which was once again to be wrought out of the ruins of the old! To wisdom such as this the craft of Satan and the weakness of man could add no afterthought. Against such power no other power could be aught but as the potter's clay. Such love combined with all gives acquiescence and delight that all of power and all of wisdom should be His, and make irresistible the designs and counsels of His heart.

And Eden, man's garden of delight! how sweet to know that that which lingers lovingly yet in the heart as in the traditions of men - which not six thousand years of sin and misery have been able utterly to banish from the memory - how sweet to know that that also is but the type of a far more blessed reality, "the Paradise," not of man only, but "of God" (Rev. ii. 7.)! The little that we can say of it belongs rather to an exposition of Revelation

than of Genesis. The trees and rivers and precious things of the latter we see but as images of beauty too little defined. It is to our shame, surely; for even as the fruits of the tree of life finally await the Ephesian "overcomer " - that is, the man who, amid the general decay and departure of heart from Christ, holds fast in the heart the freshness of the first, new-born love - so, who can doubt, a truer devotedness of heart to Him would give us even now a fuller knowledge, as well as a richer enjoyment, of what to Him (for it is His) the Paradise of God will be.

He who has the "keys of death and hell" has also, we may be sure, and in this sense too, the key of Paradise as well.

Chapter 1 - Adam

PART II (Chapters 1-7)

DIVINE LIFE IN ITS VARIOUS ASPECTS (Genesis chap. iii.)

The third chapter of Genesis is the real commencement of that series of lives of which as is plain, the book mainly consists. It is where the first man ceases to be "a type of Him that was to come" that he becomes for us a type in the fullest way—figure and fact in one. The page of his life (and but a page it is) that treats of innocence is not our example who were born in sin. Our history begins as fallen, and so too the history of our new life in God's grace. Figure and fact, as I have observed, are blended together here. We must be prepared for this, which we shall find in some measure the case all through these histories. Especially in this first one of all, what could be more impressive for us than the unutterably solemn fact itself? Children as we are of the fall, its simple record is the most perfect revelation that could be made of what we are in what is now our native condition, and also of how this came to be such. It is the title-deed to our sad inheritance of sin. And yet what follows in closest connection may well enable us to look at it steadfastly; for the ruins of the old creation have been, as we know, materials which God has used to build up for Himself that new one in which He shall yet find (and we with Him) eternal rest.

A simple question entertained in the woman's soul is the loss of innocence forever. It is enough only to admit a question as to Infinite Love to ruin all. This the serpent knew full well when he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath

God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? "—that is, Has God indeed said so? In her answer you can see at once how that has done its work. She is off the ground of faith, and is reasoning; and the moment reasoning as to God begins, the soul is away from Him, and then further it is impossible by searching to find Him out. Thus in Paradise itself, with all the evidence of divine goodness before her eyes, she turns infidel at once. "And the woman said unto the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, LEST ye die.'"

Notice how plain it is that she is already fallen. She has admitted the question as to the apparent strangeness of God's ways, and immediately her eyes fasten upon the forbidden thing until she can see little else. God had set (chap. ii. 9.) the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and without any prohibition. For the woman now it is the forbidden tree that occupies that place. Instead of life, she puts death (or what was identified with it for her) as the central thing. The "garden of delight" has faded from her eyes. It has become to her the very garden of fable afterward* (where all was not fable, but this very scene as depicted by him who was now putting it before the enchanted gaze of his victim) in which the one golden-fruited tree hung down its laden branches, guarded from man only by the dragon's jealousy. But here God and the dragon had changed places. Thus she adds to the prohibition, as if to justify herself against One who has lost His soverernty for her heart, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it"—which He had not said. A mere touch, as she expressed it to herself, was death;

and why, then, had He put it before them only to prohibit it? What was it He was guarding from them with such jealous care? Must it not be indeed something that He valued highly?

* The garden of Hesperides.

She first adds to the prohibition, then she weakens the penalty. Instead of "ye shall surely die," it is for her only "lest [for fear] ye die." There is no real certainty that death would be the result. Thus the question of God's love becomes a question of His truth also. I do not want upon the throne a being I cannot trust; hence comes the tampering with His word. The heart deceives the head. If I do not want it to be true, I soon learn to question if it be so.

All this length the woman, in her first and only answer to the serpent, goes. He can thus go further, and step at once into the place of authority with her which God has so plainly lost. He says, not- "Ye shall not surely die "-for so much the woman had already said - but "Surely ye shall not die." Her feeble question of it becomes on his part the peremptory denial both of truth and love in God: "Surely ye shall not die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

How sure he is of his dupe! and she on her part needs no further solicitation: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good " - she was seeing through the devil's eyes now - " that the tree was good for food " - there the lust of the flesh was doing its work - " and that it was pleasant to the eyes " - there the lust of the eyes comes out - " and a tree to be desired to make one wise" - there the pride of life is manifested - " she took of the fruit

thereof, and did eat; and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat."

Thus the sin was consummated. And herein we may read, if we will, as clear as day, our moral genealogy. These are still our own features, as in a glass, naturally. Let us pause and ponder them for a moment, as we may well do, seriously and solemnly.

It is clear as can be that with the heart man first of all disbelieved. His primary condition was not, as some would so fain persuade us, that of a seeker by his natural reason after God. God had declared Himself in a manner suited to his condition, in goodness which he had only to enjoy, and which was demonstration to his every sense and faculty of the moral character of Him from whose hand all came to him. The very prohibition should have been his safeguard, reminding the sole master of that fair and gladsome scene, were he tempted to forget it, that he had himself a Master. Nay, would not the prohibited tree itself have proved itself still "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," had he respected the prohibition, by giving him to learn what sin was in a way he could not else have known it, as "in subjection to the will of God"?

The entertaining of a question as to God was, as we have seen, man's ruin. He has been a questioner ever since. Having fallen from the sense of infinite goodness, he either remains simply unconscious of it, - his gods the mere deification of his lusts and passions, - or, if conscience be too strong for this, involves himself in toilsome processes of reasoning at the best, to find out as afar off the God who is so nigh. He reasons as to whether He that formed the ear can hear, or He that

made the eyes can see, or He that gave man knowledge know, or, no less foolishly, whether He from whom comes the ability to conceive of justice, goodness, mercy, love, has these as His attributes or not! And still the heart deceives the head: what he wills, that he believes. For a holy God would be against his lusts, and a righteous God take vengeance on his sins; and how can God be good and the world so evil, or love man and let him suffer and die? Thus man reasons, taken in the toils of him who has helped him to gain the knowledge of which he boasts, - so painful and so little availing.

The way out of all this entanglement is a very simple one, however unwelcome it may be. He has but to judge himself for what he is, to escape out of his captor's hands. Self-judgment would justify the holiness and righteousness of God, and make him find in his miseries, not the effect of God's indifference as to him, but of his own sins. It would make him also at least suspect the certainty of his own conclusions, which so many selfish interests might combine to warp.

But still "Ye shall be as gods" deceives him, and thus he will judge everything, and God also, rather than himself. And so, being his own god, he becomes the victim of his own pride, - his god is his belly, as Scripture expresses it; insufficient to himself, and unable to satisfy the cravings of a nature which thus, even in its degradation, bears witness of having been created for something more, he falls under the power of his own lust, the easy dupe of any bait that Satan can prepare for him.

It is thus evident how the fall from God - the loss of confidence in divine goodness - is the secret of his whole condition - of both his moral corruption and his misery

together. For let my circumstances be what they may, if I can see them ordered for me unfailingly by One in whom infinite wisdom, power, and goodness combine, and whose love toward me I am assured of, my restlessness is gone, my will subjected to that other will in which I can but acquiesce and delight: I have "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," and I have been delivered from the misery attendant upon it.

To this, then, must the heart be brought back; and thus it is very simple how "with the heart man believeth to righteousness." The faith that is real and operative in the soul (and no other can of course be of any value), first of all and above all in order to holiness, works peace and restoration of the heart to God and, let me say, of God to the heart. How fatal, yet how common, a mistake to invert this order! And what an inlet of blessedness it is thus to cease from one's own natural self-idolatry in the presence of a God who is really (and worthy to be) that! There is no such blessedness beside.

But we must return to look at man's natural condition. Notice how surely this leprosy of sin spreads, and most surely to those nearest and most intimate. Tempted ourselves, we become tempters of others, and are not satisfied until we drag down those who love us - I cannot say, whom we love, for this is too horrible to be called love - to our own level. Nay, if even we would consciously do no such thing, we cannot help doing all we can to effect it. We dress up sin for them in the most alluring forms; we invest them with an atmosphere of it which they breathe without suspicion. The woman may be here more efficient than the serpent. Herself deceived, she does not deceive the man, but she allures him. The victory is easier, speedier, than that over

herself: "She gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

The first effect is, "their eyes were opened;" the first "invention," of which they have sought out so many since, an apron to hide their shame from their own eyes. Thus conscience begins in shame, and sets them at work upon expedients, whereby they may haply forget their sins, and attain respectability at least, if conscience be no more possible.

How natural such a thought is we are all witnesses to ourselves, and yet it is a thing full of danger. It was the effort to retain just such a fig-leaf apron which sent the accusers of the adulteress out of the presence of the Lord. "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone at her" had been like a lightning-flash, revealing to themselves their own condition. They were "convicted in their own consciences;" but a convicted conscience does not always lead to self-judgment or to God: and "they, convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest " - the one who naturally would have most character to uphold, - " even unto the last," and left the sinner in the only possible safe place for a sinner - in the presence of the sinner's Saviour. She, whose fig-leaf apron was wholly gone, who had no more character or respectability to maintain, could stay. This was what the loss of that still left to her; and so had He said to the Pharisees, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." This is the misery still of man's first invention, which in so many shapes he still repeats.

When the voice of the Lord God is heard in the garden, the fig-leaf apron avails nothing. He hides himself from

God among the trees of the garden: "I was afraid, because I was naked," is his own account. This is what alternates ever with self justification in a soul: the voice of God - the thought of God - is terror to it. These two principles will be found together in every phase of so-called natural religion the world over, and they will be found equally wherever Christianity itself is mutilated or misapprehended, making their appearance again. Man, in short, untaught of God, never gets beyond them; for he never can quite believe that he has for God a righteousness that He will accept, and he never can imagine God Himself providing a righteousness when he has none.

Hence, fear is the controlling principle always. His religiousness is an effort to avert wrath - in reality, if it might be, to get away from God: and even with the highest profession it may be, still "there is none that seeketh after God." Notice thus, the Lord's picture of the "elder son" in the parable, who, hard-working, respectable, no wanderer from his father, no prodigal, but righteously severe on him who has spent his living with harlots, finds it yet a service barren enough of joy. The music and dancing in the father's house are a strange sound to him: when he hears it, he calls a servant to know what it all means. His own friends, and his merriment, are all outside, spite of his correct deportment, and he speaks out what is in his heart toward his father when he says, "Thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends."

There the Lord holds up the mirror for the Pharisee of all time. Plenty of self-assertion, of self-vindication, even as against God Himself; the tie to Him, self-interest; his heart elsewhere; a round of barren and joyless services.

This must needs break down in terror when God comes really in deed, the principle all through is fear, - servile, not filial.

So Adam hides himself among the trees of the garden, but the voice of the blessed God follows him. "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, 'Where art thou?'"

Here, then, we begin to trace the actings of divine grace with a sinner. Righteousness has its way no less, and judgment is not set aside, but maintained fully. And herein is shown out the harmony of the divine attributes, the moral unity of the God whose attributes they are. There is no conflict in His nature. Justice and mercy, holiness and love, are not at war in Him. When He acts, all act. Perfect evidence and measurement in one, manifests a grace overflowing, abounding over it - even then can he justify himself rather than God, and refuse the plainest and simplest testimony to sovereign goodness, which he has lost even the bare ability to conceive.

In how many ways is God beseeching man to consider his own condition at least, if nothing else! In how many tongues is this "Adam, where art thou?" repeated to the present day! Every groan of a creation subject to vanity, whereof the whole framework is convulsed and out of joint, is such a tongue. And herein is Wisdom crying in the streets, even where there is no speech and no word, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This, man never does until divinely taught. "Wisdom is justified" only "of her children."

And Adam does not yet approve himself as one of these. His confession of sin is rather an accusation of God - "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave

me of the tree, and I did eat." In patient majesty, God turns to the woman. She, more simply, but still excusing herself, pleads she was deceived - "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Then, without any further question, He proceeds to judgment - judgment in which for the tempted mercy lies enfolded, and where, if the old creation find its end, there appears the beginning of that which alone fully claims the title of "The Creation of God."

In the judgment of the serpent, we must remember first of all the essentially typical character of the language used. We have no reason to believe that Adam knew as yet the mystery of who the tempter was. "That old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan," was doubtless for him nothing more than the most subtle of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made. And herein, indeed, were divine wisdom and mercy shown, the tempter being not permitted to approach in angelic character, as one above man, but in bestial, as one below him; one indeed of those to which man as their lord had given names, and among which he had found no helpmeet. How great was thus his shame when he listened to the deceiver! he had given up his divinely appointed supremacy in that moment.

So in the judgment here it is all outwardly the mere serpent, where spiritually we discern a far deeper thing. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed among all cattle, and among all beasts of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.'" Thus the victory of evil is in reality the degradation of the victor: he is degraded necessarily by his own success. How plainly is this an eternal principle, illustrated in

every career of villany under the sun! By virtue of it, Satan will not be the highest in hell, and prince of it, as men have feigned, but lowest and most miserable of all the miserable there. "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a tie in my right hand?"

But there is still another way in which the serpent's victory is his defeat:- "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." That this last expression received its plainest fulfillment on the cross I need not insist upon. There Satan manifested himself prince of this world, able (so to speak) by his power over men to cast Christ out of it and put the Prince of life to death. But that victory was his eternal overthrow-"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

This is deliverance for Satan's captives. It is not the restoration, however, of the old creation, nor of the first man. The seed of the woman is emphatically the "Second Man," another and a "last Adam," new Head of a new race, who find in Him their title as "Sons of God," as "born, not of blood (ie., naturally), nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This is not the place indeed for the expansion of this, for here it is not expanded. We shall find the development of it further on. Only here it is noted, that not self-recovery, but a deliverer, is the need of man; and if God take up humanity itself whereby to effect deliverance, it must be

the seed of the woman, the expression of feebleness and dependence, not of natural headship or of power.

The first direct prophecy links together the first page of revelation with the last, for only there do we find the full completion of it - the serpent's head at last bruised. As a principle, the life of every saint in a world which "lieth in the wicked one" has illustrated and enforced it. In the next Section of this book we shall return to look at this.

The judgment of the woman and the man now follow, but they have listened already to the voice of mercy - a mercy which can turn to blessing the hardship and sorrow, henceforth the discipline of life, and even the irrevocable doom of death itself. That Adam has been no inattentive listener, we may gather from his own next words, which are no very obscure intimation of the faith which has sprung up in his soul. "And Adam called his wife's name Eve [life], because she was the mother of all living." The "woman which Thou gayest to be with me" is again "his wife," and he names her through whom death had come in, as the mother, not of the dying, but the living.

Thus does his faith lay hold on God, - the faith of a poor sinner surely, to whom divine mercy had come down without a thing in him to draw it out, save only the misery which spoke to the heart of infinite love. Like Abraham, afterward "he believed God," and while to the sentence he bows in submissive silence, the grace inclosed in the sentence opens his lips again. Beautifully are we permitted to see just this in Adam, a faith which left him a poor sinner still, to be justified, not by works, but freely of God's grace, but still put him thus before God for justification. And we are ready the more to

apprehend and appreciate the significant action following: "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them." Thus the shame of their nakedness is removed, and by God Himself, so that: they are fit for His presence; for the covering provided of Himself must needs be owned as competent by Himself. And we have only to consider for a moment to discern how competent it really was.

Death provided this covering. These coats of skin owned the penalty as having come in, and those clothed with them found shelter for themselves in the death of another, and that the one upon whom it had come sinlessly through their own sin. How pregnant with instruction as to how still man's nakedness is covered and he made fit for the presence of a righteous God! These skins were fitness, the witness of how God had maintained the righteous sentence of death, while removing that which was now his shame, and meeting the consequences of his sin. Our covering is far more, but it is such a witness also. Our righteousness is still the witness of God's righteousness, - the once dead, now living One, who of God is made unto us righteousness, and in whom also we are made the righteousness of God. The antitype in every way transcends the type surely, yet very sweet and significant nevertheless is the first testimony of God to the Son; - a double testimony, first to the seed of the woman, the Saviour; and then, when faith has set its seal to this, a testimony to that work of atonement, whereby the righteousness of God is revealed in good news to man, and the believer is made that righteousness in Him.

Not till the hand of God has so interfered for them are Adam and his wife sent forth out of the garden. If earth's

paradise has closed for them, heaven has already opened; and the tree of life, denied only as continuing the old creation, stretches forth for them its branches, loaded with its various fruit, "in the midst of the paradise," no longer of men, but "of God."