Studies in Genesis - 02

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"In the beginning God created . . ."

"In Christ . . . a new creation"

(Gen. 1:1; II Cor. 5:17)

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It was a perfect creation that came from the hand of God. Then confusion and chaos followed; "and the earth became without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." But "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light." That was the beginning of the renovation of the earth by the Lord in the six days, even as He said.

In this renovation of a marred creation, we see, day by day, a beautiful analogy of God's work of grace in the sinner's heart. Light for darkness; fruit-bearing for chaos and ruin. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Sin entered, possibly with the fall of Satan. God renovated the earth in six days. He placed Adam in a beautiful paradise. Sin once more marred the handiwork of God; and from that time on, He has been occupied with revealing to fallen man the Way of salvation, even through faith in our crucified and risen Lord Jesus.

"In the beginning God created . . ." Sin wrought havoc and ruin. But "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

Briefly stated, this is the message which we shall study in some detail in this, our second lesson in the book of Genesis. Christ in us, "the hope of glory"—this is the central message, not only of Genesis, but also of all the Word of God.

CHRIST—THE KEY TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

We saw in our last lesson, that in the fifty chapters of Genesis we have definite prophecies and beautiful types of the coming Redeemer. We saw that Christ is the key that unlocks the treasures of the entire Old Testament, even as He is the key to the whole Word of God. Therefore, the Old Testament ought to be very interesting to us because we
know Him who is the theme of every book of the Bible, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. No one can understand the Old Testament unless he knows Him. But having believed that Jesus Christ died for us, having received Him as the One whom God sent, the One who is promised all through the Old Testament, then we can go into the Old Testament with the key, and it is all open to us.

The late A. J. Gordon tells this story: One day he brought home a set of blocks for his children to play with. The task set before them was to put the blocks together to portray a woodland scene. It was like the modern jigsaw puzzles.

The children had a hard time putting the pieces of wood together, until they noticed that on the reverse side of the blocks there were parts of a man's face. Then they began putting the face together, piece by piece. This was easily done, for the face was that of George Washington. And when they had completed their task, when they turned the blocks over very carefully, they found that the woodland scene, too, was all complete. The key to the puzzle was the face.

My friends, the Old Testament is just like that. When you go to it to see the face of Jesus, every chapter opens before you. Someone has said, "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." What a mine of exhaustless treasure we have here!

"IN THE BEGINNING GoD . . ."—A REVELATION

Now let us read together Gen. 1:1-5. "In the beginning God . . ." How majestically Genesis opens! There is no argument here about God. There is simply the statement that God exists—"In the beginning God." Therefore, even from the opening words, the Bible is to be to us a revelation of God. And that is what it is.

No one can understand the Bible unless he accepts the first four words of this book; but if he accepts these words, then all the Bible will be plain to him.

If this book is about God, it must contain much that we shall not understand until we see Him face to face. However, nothing is impossible with God; and this is the answer to all the difficult things that we may find in our study. We are in a world where God can not be found, apart from
His revelation to us. If the human race in its sinful condition is ever to know God, it must be because God reveals Himself. Accordingly, in this Book, which we call the Bible, we have a revelation of God.

There is no other place where God can be found. We may look about us in the sky, in the earth, in the sea, and find the handiwork of God; but we can not know God Himself unless He makes Himself known. Job cried of old, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Certainly not. The whole world is in darkness, in spite of its education and scientific attainments. But, praise His name! He has revealed Himself; and here, in Genesis, we find the beginning of that revelation.

Now let us look at these four words again, "In the beginning God . . ." This brief statement presents two things: The first, that God exists; the other, that God always was. "In the beginning"—how far back does that take us? It matters not how many thousands of millenniums may be involved in that statement, God was there. The record does not say that God was from the beginning; but that when the beginning began, God was already there. Therefore, He was in the beginning. Before an angel was ever created, before a star was ever hung in the heavens, the eternal God, the self-existent One, was there. Thus, in one single statement, we have brought before our gaze the eternal God. And once we believe it, my friends, there is nothing strange to us between the covers of this Book.

"IN THE BEGINNING"—THE TRIUNE GOD

The Hebrew word translated "God" releases a flood of light concerning the character and nature of God Himself. That word is "Elohim." I am not a Hebrew student; but if you want to know what "Elohim" means, just read the footnote in your Scofield Reference Bible. Dr. Scofield points out that this Hebrew word translated "God" is a uni-plural noun. It is not singular in number, but plural; and yet it suggests unity. Thus the first word translated "God" in the Bible presents Him as a plurality, and yet that plurality is a unity. In other words, we have in the Hebrew for "God" the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

I have a dear friend, a Hebrew Christian, who accepted Christ when he had the significance of this word pointed out
to him. He asked many questions of the soul-winner who was dealing with him, the principal one being: "Moses said, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.' Why do you Christians want me to accept three Gods?" The Lord's servant who was dealing with him placed into the hands of this Israelite a Hebrew Bible, and asked him to read Gen. 1:1. When he came to the word "God," the Christian worker asked him the question, "Is that Hebrew word in the singular or the plural?" The Hebrew inquirer dropped the Bible from his hands, and fell on his face as he had revealed to him for the first time the knowledge that God is a plurality and yet a unity. I do not know a person in the world who has been more mightily used in soul-winning than has this Hebrew Christian.

Here at the very outset, as God comes to reveal Himself, He gives to us in one word a flood of light concerning the Godhead. And, my friends, the primary purpose of the Bible is to bring people to a personal knowledge of that God. The primary purpose of the Bible is not to reveal to us what God has done as Creator, but rather to bring men to know God personally. Our Lord Jesus said in John 17:3,

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Everyone who is saved knows God. If a soul does not know God, that soul is unsaved; for eternal life is to know Him, the true and the living God.

I trust, my friends, as we go along in our study, that you may get a vision of the greatness of your God, such as you have never had before; and that your hearts will be thrilled as you come to an experimental knowledge of the fact that this great God, who is revealed in the Bible, dwells in your heart. He is "Christ in you the hope of glory."

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED . . ."

Let us turn again to Gen. 1:1 and begin the study of the works of God in the creation and in the renovation of the earth and sea. In this we shall see foreshadowed the work of spiritual re-creation and how that re-creation is brought about.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Now these words refer to the original creation, the earth as it
was when it first came from the hand of God. This verse gives us the only account we have in the Bible of the original creation.

When was that beginning? How far back into the past does that statement take us? Let us note that there is no reference here, in this opening verse of Genesis, to the six days' work of renovation. That comes later, as we shall see. Many people imagine that the Bible teaches that the earth was created in six solar days, but nowhere does the Bible say so. The original creation takes us back to the dateless past, whereas God's renovation of the earth in six days took place some six thousand years ago.

Some time ago I visited a college student in his home, to discuss spiritual things. He told me that he could not believe the Bible for various reasons, one of which was that he could not accept the statement that the world was created in six days. When I told him that the Bible made no such statement, he looked puzzled and amazed, and said, "I thought everybody believed the Bible taught that!" "No," I said; "the Bible does say that in six days the Lord 'made' heaven and earth. There is a difference between 'creating' and 'making'. To create is to bring into existence out of nothing. To make is to take pre-existing matter and change its form. The latter is what God did in the six days' work, the account of which comes later in this first chapter. The only account of creation is given in verse 1, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'."

Let me ask again, "How far back does that take us?" Just recently a British Association for scientific research said that the earth is one hundred million years old. There is nothing in Scripture to gainsay that statement. "In the beginning" will take us back as far as any scientist desires to go.

How beautiful this earth must have been when it first came from the hand of God! There was evidently a race of beings upon it; but when God later renovated the earth and placed Adam and Eve in the garden, He said to the man and the woman, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Let us note the word "replenish." It suggests that there had been a race of beings upon the earth even before Adam's creation. We know, however, that they were not human beings; for I Cor. 15:45 refers to Adam as the "first man." The race of beings must have been of some
other order, possibly of angelic character. However, we may rest assured that the earth must have been very beautiful and perfect when it first came from the hand of God.

Let us remember that Gen. 1:1 gives all the information we have concerning the original creation. We are not told whether it took place a thousand years ago or many billions of years ago. We are not informed as to whether the heaven and the earth were called into existence in a moment of time, or whether the process of their formation covered an interval of ages. The bare fact is stated, “In the beginning God created,” and nothing is added to gratify the curious. The earth, though, must have been very beautiful when it first appeared; for Job said that in that day “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God (angels) shouted for joy.”

“And the Earth Became Waste and Void”

Some great catastrophe, described in Gen. 1:2, came upon the earth, “And the earth was (became) waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” The word “was” is better translated “became.” It is so translated in other parts of Scripture.

Again, we have in Isa. 45:18 the statement, “God Himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain (waste and void).” If God created it “not waste and void,” it must have become so by some great catastrophe. What was the catastrophe? The Scripture is not silent as to it. Let us read carefully Ezek. 28:12-19. Here we have a description of Lucifer, the great tempter of the king of Tyrus. Lucifer is here described as having been in the Eden of God; and the description of that Eden marked it as being altogether different from the Eden into which Adam and Eve were later placed. It was without doubt the Eden that was part of the original creation, of which Lucifer was possibly the head; when he fell, the creation must have fallen with him, becoming waste and void, as Gen. 1:2 states.

Then Isa. 14:13-17 tells us why Lucifer fell. This passage sheds much light on Gen. 1:1, 2. It tells us how he said in his heart,

“I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend
above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

These verses are very strange and deeply mysterious, but most likely Lucifer was at the head of the original creation when he made that utterance. However that may be, it was because of this sin that he fell; and to his fall Jesus referred when He said in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightening fall from heaven"—a marvelous testimony to the eternal deity of Jesus of Nazareth! God cast Lucifer out, and he became Satan. And just as the earth was affected later when Adam fell, so also the earth evidently became waste and void at the fall of Lucifer.

"AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVED UPON THE FACE OF THE WATERS"

How long the earth remained in this chaotic state we do not know—many years perhaps, possibly millions of years. But God did not abandon the earth, even though it was all ruin and chaos. It would not have been surprising if He had abandoned it. But "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Why should God trouble any more about a creation which lay under His righteous judgment? Why should He condescend to notice that which was now all waste and void? Why did He? Because He is gracious in mercy. He prepared to resurrect it, restore it, and fill it with life, beauty, and fruitfulness, with a man exercising dominion over it.

The original creation in its fallen state was not abandoned by God. Hope for it dawned when "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Here is sovereign grace intervening. Here was a movement on the part of the Holy Spirit that was absolutely necessary; for how could the earth resurrect itself? How could that which lay under the righteous judgment of God bring itself into a place of life and blessing? How could death transform itself into life, and darkness into light? In the very nature of the case, it could not. The ruined creation was helpless, hopeless. If there was to be a restoration and a new creation, divine power had to intervene, and the Holy Spirit had to "move."

"IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION"

My friends, we shall see in all this a shadow of God's matchless grace in the re-creation of fallen man. What He
did for the fallen creation was but a shadow of what He later did for lost humanity; for all this is a shadow of Christ and His redeeming, regenerating work. It is an analogy which holds in the spiritual realm, even as in the original creation.

We are making a study of what God has recorded concerning the creation and renovation of the earth; and I want you to see in it a marvelous illustration of the work of God in the re-creation and redemption of the sinner. As we have seen, the original creation, as described in Gen. 1:1, fell into a state of chaos; and evidently through the rebellion of Lucifer, the judgment of God rested upon it. It therefore became waste and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Some such catastrophe actually took place, and at the same time is a picture of what has happened to man. Through sin man has fallen, physically and spiritually, into a state of chaos, waste, and void.

Man, when he came from the hand of God, was perfect in all his ways; but, like Lucifer, he fell because he desired to be what God had never intended him to be. He desired to be a god; and when he rebelled against his Maker, he lost everything that God had given him. Not only so; he merited nothing but unsparing judgment. Why did God not leave man to the endless judgment he deserved? The only answer is that the Lord, in His sovereign mercy, inclined His heart toward man, and prepared to bring about a new creation. "If any man be in Christ," says Paul, "he is a new creation (Revised Version): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Out of the death of sin God is now bringing on to resurrection ground all who are united to Christ, His Son.

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN" THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORD OF GOD

How is this re-creation work of regeneration being effected? Through the same agencies mentioned in the opening verses of the first chapter of Genesis—the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters . . . And God said . . ." The Holy Spirit "moved" and the Word of God was spoken!

My friends, fallen man in himself is just as helpless as was the fallen earth. The sinner can no more regenerate him-
self than could the ruined earth lift itself out of the chaos, into which it had been thrown. The new creation, like the material creation, must be accomplished by God Himself. And just as the Spirit of God and the Word of God brought order and beauty out of chaos, so also the Holy Spirit is brooding over a world of lost men, enlightening, convicting, wooing them; and through the Word of God He says: “Let there be light.” It may, indeed, be said of all those who put their trust in Christ: “And there was light.”

The Holy Spirit “moved” and “God said.” That is what the Holy Spirit is doing today. He is moving upon the multitudes of unsaved, unregenerated, darkened masses of humanity; the Word of God goes forth; and those who hear it live. These are the two agencies, by which the work of regeneration is brought about. Man, like the original creation, has fallen into ruin through rebellion; and, outside of Christ, he is like the creation as described in Gen. 1:2. All is “waste, void, darkness.” But as God did not forsake the chaotic earth, so He has not forsaken fallen humanity. Our God of love came to regenerate through the Spirit of God and the Word of God.

That none may fail to grasp this eternal truth, let us recall a few of the words of the Lord Jesus; space forbids more than a few. In explaining to Nicodemus how he could be born again, He said,

"The wind bloweth where it listeth (or willeth), and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

Again, just before He went to the cross, He said to the eleven disciples who loved Him,

“When he (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8).

Of course, we know that the Comforter is the Holy Spirit. And yet again, our Lord said plainly,

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

The Word of God is “living and powerful” (Heb. 4:12). “God hath spoken”; and He is working in the hearts of all
who will heed the convicting power of His Holy Spirit, even unto the salvation of sin-darkened souls.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORD GIVETH LIGHT"

God's first spoken word, in the Genesis record, was, "Let there be light: and there was light." This was the work of the first day.

Here we have the two agencies God used in the re-creation of the earth and in the re-creation of sinful men. First, the activity of the Holy Spirit, and then the spoken Word. No less than ten times in this chapter do we read, "God said." God might have re-fashioned and re-furnished the earth without speaking at all, but He did not. He plainly intimated from the beginning that His purpose was to be worked out and accomplished by His Word. God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." Light came, produced by His Word. And then we are told that "God saw the light, that it was good."

Likewise, in the new creation, the first step toward the regeneration of a sinner is the entrance of light. That is the first need because the entrance of sin has blinded the eyes of man's heart. It has darkened his understanding so much that man, left to himself, is unable to perceive the awfulness of his condition, the condemnation which rests upon him, or the peril in which he stands.

My friends, I would never attempt to lead a person to Christ, whether man, woman, boy, or girl, if it were left to me to convince that person of his need. Paul says in I Cor. 2:14:

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Mark you, Paul does not say that "he will not know them," but that "he cannot know them." He is incapable of seeing spiritual light. God alone can give light. Therefore, when an inquirer sits by the side of an unregenerated man, whose mind is darkened by sin; when he gives him God's Word, the Holy Spirit moves in the heart of that man, and God says, "Let there be light."

The psalmist sang, "The entrance of thy word giveth light." And just as the shining of the light in Gen. 1:3 made
manifest the desolation upon which it shone, so the entrance of God’s Word into a human heart reveals the awful ruin which sin has brought, and brings about conviction. That is the first vision which the light of God gives—a vision of sin and what it is. My friends, you will never know the awful condition of your own heart until you see it in the light that emanates from God. It is a blessed day in the experience of a sinner when God says of him, “Let there be light.”

“CHILDREN OF LIGHT”

“And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness” (verse 4).

This was the first step in the renovation of the earth. It is also an illustration of the work of the renovation of a sinner. What is the significance of the statement, “And God divided the light from the darkness”? Heb. 4:12 tells us:

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Now, my friends, that is not a figurative expression; it is a statement of literal fact. Man is made up of spirit, soul, and body. The spirit is capable of God-consciousness; the soul, of self-consciousness; and the body, of sense-consciousness. In the day that Adam sinned he died spiritually. Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of the spirit from God. When Adam sinned, his spirit was not annihilated; but it was alienated from God. It was a soul. The spirit, the highest part of man’s complex being, no longer dominated. Instead, it fell to the level of the soul, and ceased to function separately. Hence, today the unregenerate man is dominated, not by his spirit, but by his soul, which is the seat of emotions, lusts, passion. But in the work of regeneration the Word of God “pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit”; and the spirit is rescued from the lower levels to which it has fallen, being brought again into communion with God. The spirit, being that part of a man which is capable of communion with God, is light; and the soul, when it is not dominated and regulated by the spirit, is darkness.

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Hence, in that part of the six days' work of restoration, which foreshadowed the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, we read: "And God divided the light from the darkness." Likewise, all through the believer's life, God continues to separate the light from the darkness. He has translated us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and we are now the children of light. We are not to go on in rioting and drunkenness, but to live as people who are of day, who are of God. And the wonderful destiny before us is joy and pleasure and glory in the presence of God.

"PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE"

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven" (verses 6-8).

This brings us to the second day's work, and here for the first time we read that God made something. This was the formation of the atmospheric heaven, "the firmament," named by God "Heaven."

Now that which corresponds to this in the new creation is the impartation of a new nature through being born from above. The one who is born again, or born from above, becomes the "partaker of a divine nature," a life from God. Regeneration is not the improvement of the flesh or the cultivation of the old nature. It is the reception of an altogether new and heavenly nature. It is important to note that the "firmament" was produced by the Word of God; for again we read, "And God said." So also in the New Testament we read that it is by the written Word of God that the new birth is produced. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (Jas. 1:18).

"THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT"

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree
yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself” (verses 9, 11).

This is the work of the third day. Let us note the words in verse 9, “Let the dry land appear.” Here is the earth emerging from the waters of death, bringing forth fruitfulness and beauty. This corresponds with the message of the second chapter of Ephesians; for we are told there that we who were once dead in trespasses and sin are now raised with Him. Moreover, just as the earth, after it had emerged from the waters of death, brought forth new life, beauty, and fruitfulness, so also the believer begins to yield fruit unto God when made a partaker of Christ’s resurrection. The earth could not yield fruit or know beauty until it was raised from the waters of death; and in like manner, the sinner must be quickened and raised before he can live unto God and bring forth the fruit of righteousness.

It is also significant that this was the work of the third day, and the number three in Scripture speaks of resurrection.

“I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME”

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day” (verses 14-19).

Here we find that God made the sun, the great luminary of the day, and set it in the midst of the heavens. We know from scientific research that the planets of our solar system all revolve around that sun, each kept in its right path by a mighty attractive force. Yes, for thousands of years our earth has been revolving in its circuit around that sun without the slightest deviation; thousands of times it has kept this path around the sun. Why has it not rushed off into
calamity and disastrous collision with its neighboring planets on this side and on that? Simply because all the rest of the planets also have kept their places, both in relation to the sun and in relation to this earth.

What do we learn by the illustration from this marvelous fact? What is it that keeps these planets all in their course and in their place in relation to each other? It is just the attractive power of the sun. There is a mutual attraction between themselves, but the one great ruling and controlling influence is the attraction of the sun.

What a beautiful illustration we have here of Christ and His beloved people! He who keeps the planets in their course is He who marks out the path for our feet, both in relation to our Lord Jesus Christ, our great Center and Sun, and in relation to one another. And He would keep us in our place, if we were only submissive to Him, by the attractive influence of His mighty and matchless grace. If the eyes of each one of us are set upon Him, we are then kept in our place, in relation to Him and in relation to one another. Everything concerning the glory of God and His people and concerning our present happiness, depends upon our fixing our eyes upon the Lord Jesus. Thus the lesson of the fourth day is this: The sinner is enlightened, re-born, raised from his spiritual death, and set in an eternal relation to Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness; and through Him, in an eternal relationship to others of like faith.

The earth’s relation to the sun, kept in place by the attractive power of the sun, would also suggest the eternal security of the believer. There is no possibility of the earth’s ever tearing away from the mighty attractive power that holds it in place. And in like manner there is no power in heaven or on earth or under the earth, present, past, or future that can separate us from Him who holds us by His mighty power.

"FRUIT ... MORE FRUIT ... MUCH FRUIT"

The fifth day’s work emphasizes increased fruitfulness.

"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abun-
dantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day” (verses 20-24).

These verses are very significant when read in the light of the fifteenth chapter of John. We are told there that we are related to Christ as the branches are to the vine, and that we are to bring forth “fruit... more fruit... much fruit.” Moreover, we are told that our fruit should remain.

Let us note the word “swarm” in verse 20, “Let the waters swarm.” This would suggest the abundance of fruitfulness. How desirous the Lord is that we should bring forth in abundance “the fruit of the Spirit,” as recorded in Gal. 5:22: His “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance”!

CHRIST, “THE LAST ADAM,” AND THE CHURCH, HIS BRIDE

The sixth day’s work crowns the whole!

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” to “have dominion” (verses 26, 27).

Here we see the first Adam and his bride set over the works of God’s creation. And here we see also the perfection of Scripture. In verse 27 we read, “And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” We note the change from “him” to “them.” We are not presented with the actual fact of the formation of the woman until we read the next chapter, though here we find God blessing them and giving them jointly the place of universal government. But Eve received all her blessing in Adam. In him she received her dignity and dominion over the things of creation. Though not yet called into actual existence, she was, in the purpose of God, looked upon as a part of man.
Thus it is with Christ and the church, the bride of "the last Adam." From all eternity God designed her position in Christ, her Head and Lord, even as we read in Eph. 1:4:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Before a single member of the church had yet breathed, all were in God's eternal mind predestined "to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).

Adam and his bride exercising dominion over the earth foreshadow the millennial reign of Christ, when Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords shall have dominion over the whole earth. Then the church, the bride, will rule with Him.

"His Rest Shall Be Glorious"

In that day "his rest shall be glorious," even as Isaiah foretold many centuries ago (Isa. 11:10). And this state of bliss was prefigured in God's creation rest on the seventh day:

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God 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" (Gen. 2:1-3).

Moreover, this carries us on to the eternal state, when God shall rest indeed. Never again will God's rest be broken by sin. All tears will be wiped away by His blessed hand.

Thus, my friends, we have seen in the story of the creation and renovation of the earth, and in the steps in that renovation, the whole history of man in re-creation, foreshadowed from the time of his sinful state right on to that day when he shall be associated with Christ in His reign, even unto the eternal state.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

How can man ignore the love of such a wonderful Saviour!