

CREATION REVEALED IN SIX DAYS

P. J. WISEMAN

*New Discoveries in Babylonia
about Genesis*

Fourth Edition



We can recollect few books so startlingly convincing or so helpful in clearing up many difficulties connected with the Old Testament. Fortunately it is a book easily read and understood . . .—*The Inter-Varsity Magazine*.

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1. A clay tablet in the author's possession inscribed with a register of offerings of 56 sheep and goats.

Note the colophon or appendix giving the date as the 7th year of Gimil Sin, King of Ur (c. 2200 B.C.).



2 Note the last four lines which form the colophon to the Fourth Tablet of the Babylonian "Creation" series.

CREATION REVEALED IN SIX DAYS

*The evidence of Scripture confirmed
by Archaeology*

By

AIR COMMODORE

P. J. WISEMAN, C.B.E.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM STATED

A NEW endeavour is made in the following pages to trace the Biblical creation narrative back to its source and to ascertain why it is divided by six "evenings and mornings".

Many will doubt whether it is possible—after centuries of discussion—to write anything new about this first page of the Bible. I take however the same view as Butler did when he wrote (*Analogy II, iii*), "Nor is it at all incredible that a book, which has been so long in the possession of mankind, should contain many truths as yet undiscovered".

There are several undiscovered truths regarding this first narrative of creation which hitherto have remained unnoticed. One of these is so important, yet so simple and unquestionable, that our failure to recognise it is all the more surprising, seeing that this oversight has created considerable difficulties resulting in continued misinterpretation, causing the narrative to be rejected by so many. This misunderstanding on our part is certainly not due to any want of clearness in the narrative itself but, as the following pages will show, to our failure to recognise its extremely ancient character. Consequently its interpretation has become fettered by speculations as to the time occupied by God in His acts and processes of creation.

The most outstanding literary problem on the first page of the Bible is the precise meaning of the 'six days', separated as they are from each other by an "evening and a morning". In addition there is also the problem of the rest on the seventh day. These 'days' have perplexed almost everyone who has read the narrative of creation. Were they days of twenty-four hours each? Or can they be interpreted as though long periods of time were intended? Why are these days separated from each other by an "evening and a morning"?

In whatever way these questions are answered it is obvious that the record implies that God did something for six days and ceased doing it on the seventh day. What did God do on those six days? and why did He cease on the seventh? While the modernist rejects the account as 'impossible', the answer usually given by those who regard the Bible as trustworthy is that during those six days God created or re-created the world, and because He had finished it at the end of the sixth day He rested on the seventh. Whatever meaning is given to the word 'day', whether literal or symbolic, is such an answer in accordance with the facts? I do not think so, and this book endeavours to explain why it cannot possibly be the true interpretation. It disagrees not only with the Bible but also with science, and with all we know about the literary methods of writing in ancient times.

A brief summary will make clear what the following pages endeavour to explain. It is that:

(1) The six days, divided from each other by an evening and morning, cannot possibly refer to the time occupied by God in His acts and processes of creation.

(2) The six days refer to the time occupied in revealing to man the account of creation.

(3) God rested (lit.: ceased) on the seventh day not for His own sake but for man's sake, and because this revelation about creation was finished on the sixth day, not because on that day (or period) the creation of the world was finished.

(4) The narrative of creation was probably written on six tablets. Later it appears to have become the custom in Babylonia to write the story of creation on six tablets.

(5) There is good and sufficient evidence to show that the first page of the Bible is the oldest document which has come down to us.

The evidence on which these statements are based will be stated as fully as is possible without the introduction of too much detail. Until the evidence has been read, is it too much to ask that judgment on these statements may be suspended?

It can be said with assurance that none of the explanations hitherto given either of these days or of the "evenings and

mornings" have satisfied the minds of men. That proposed in the following pages is simple because the statements made in the narrative are accepted in their natural ancient sense and setting. It is an attempt to restore 'a commonplace truth to its first uncommon lustre'.

We need a faith that enquires. There should be no need of an apology for this further investigation into the meaning of the narrative. Its importance can scarcely be over-emphasised. Estimated simply as a piece of descriptive writing, the first chapter of Genesis constantly challenges attention, for it is unquestionably unique in the world's literature concerning the origin of things. That it is regarded both in the Old and New Testaments as the foundation of faith in God as Creator few will deny. Although the writer of these pages has no doubt that the greater and more convincing revelation of God to man was made through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, he has noticed that philosophers as well as thoughtful students in our universities are apt to go back, not only to Christ, but right back to the first page of the Bible in order to secure a sure foundation for their thinking and faith. Thinking men assert that the battle between belief and unbelief must be decided here; they cannot regard it as a matter of secondary importance, whether God was, or was not, in a real and definite sense the Creator of the universe and of man. Neither can they think it an enquiry of little consequence whether this narrative of creation is a revelation from God or merely a myth, or nothing more than a series of guesses made by some man at an unknown date.

My purpose is not that of reconciler of Scripture with science, important as that may be; nor is it an attempt to bring the narrative of creation into harmony with modern thought. God's thought and modern thought are not at all the same thing; it often happens that they are not in harmony, "for My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 8-9). Modern thought about the origin of things is still in its usual state of flux, and there is nothing that can become out of date so

quickly as the merely 'up-to-date' scientific explanation of the first chapter of Genesis. This narrative has often been 'harmonised' with modern scientific theories, only to find that scientists have necessarily changed their ideas, leaving the 'explanation' quite out of date. Mr. H. G. Wells, for instance, complained that "we do not rewrite and retell Genesis in the light and language of modern knowledge". In a later chapter his version of the origin of life will be stated, but had the Genesis account been subjected to constant amendment in accordance with modern thought the various editions of it would make an interesting history of the changes in human thought on this subject, but it certainly would not impress us with the sum of human wisdom about origins. There is no disagreement whatever between truly scientific findings and a true interpretation of Genesis. When rightly interpreted both can look after themselves, and I venture to prophesy that this Bible account of creation will see the disappearance of many scientific and philosophic theories, and yet remain in harmony with the great *facts* discovered by scientists.

Mine is the more modest, though not less important task of attempting to find out how the *account* of creation came into existence, not how the universe came to be; of ascertaining what the first chapter of Genesis says and testing the validity of current interpretations as to its meaning. The investigation began some time ago with as open a mind as was possible; certainly the conclusions reached are different from those expected.

Until the results of modern archæological research became known it was not possible to understand fully the literary methods in use in early days. During the years the writer was living in Babylonia, time was spent in examining, on the one hand the text of Genesis, and on the other the ancient methods of writing prevailing there 5,000 years ago. It was the study of the Bible creation record in the light of these old literary methods which has made possible a more exact knowledge of the unique structure and meaning of the narrative.

We are often told that the only scientific way to study the Bible narratives is to read them in their ancient literary setting as pieces of contemporary literature. In one respect

at least this advice is essential, because much of the criticism of this creation narrative betrays a lack of knowledge of the literary methods existing in ancient times. Probably no passage in the whole range of literature, ancient or modern, sacred or secular, has been subjected to such detailed, continuous and critical examination as this first page of the Bible. But strangely enough this criticism originated before scholars were aware of early literary methods. Every advance in archaeological discovery has enabled us to understand these ancient writings better. There has been a vast growth in our knowledge of the remote past, particularly about the old ways of writing, and the present reinterpretation is made in the light of methods customary in early times.

It should not therefore surprise us that at this late date there should be a new understanding of the meaning of the narrative. That there has been a constantly developing appreciation of its significance is obvious. As knowledge has advanced it has been possible to see how this ancient document agrees with the ascertained facts of science and disagrees with some scientific theories. We welcome scientific investigation and are grateful to the astronomers for what they have to tell us about the mechanism of the universe, to geologists for interpreting the record of the rocks, to biologists for telling us what they have discovered about life and its manifestations, to the philologist for a more exact knowledge concerning the origin and meaning of ancient words, and to the archaeologist for far-reaching discoveries about ancient things.

Some have imagined that the growth of scientific knowledge has already dealt a death blow to the Scripture narrative of creation. Indeed, not a few have written as if all that now remained to be done—some have already done it—is to hold a post-mortem examination as to which writer was mostly responsible for its destruction. Just when a verdict is about to be pronounced, further evidence, often that of archaeology, is produced in favour of the Scripture narrative, and it is then found to be more vitally alive and accurate than has been assumed apart from modern scientific research.

In stating the results of our inquiry it is obviously impracticable within the limits of this book to do other

than accept certain reasoned convictions as a basis. These are:

(a) There is a God. (b) He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. (c) He could, if needed, reveal to man something about creation. In other words, we begin where the narrative of creation begins, "In the beginning God created . . ." and, like the Bible, accept the statement that God was the Creator. The Bible point of view that He not only could, but did reveal Himself to man is also accepted. But no assumptions are made as to His methods of creation, or speculations indulged in as to the length of time occupied by Him in His acts or processes. It is submitted that the Genesis narrative details neither the methods He used, nor the time taken; all we are told is that God commanded and 'it was so'; except that concerning the creation of man some details are given, and these, though few, are important. These pages do not deal with the problem of *how* God created the universe and life on the earth; they are limited to the literary problem of the origin of the narrative and its meaning—especially the meaning of the six days. A discussion of the ontological, cosmological, and teleological positions is outside our immediate purpose.

Sir Ambrose Fleming has said (*Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, 1927), "The majority of persons take their opinions on difficult subjects ready made from those they deem special authorities, and hence, when once a certain view of a subject has been broadcast and widely accepted as the right and fashionable one, it is very difficult to secure an unbiased reconsideration of it." This first page of the Bible has suffered badly from traditional misinterpretations and misconceptions which should never have occurred, and some of these popular errors have made shipwreck of faith in God as Creator, and in the Bible account, as His revelation to man. While sufficient reasons are seen for adhering to the narrative, there are good reasons for rejecting some of the current interpretations of it. As Dr. Murray has written, "We cannot, of course, escape the necessity of theorising, if we are to define to ourselves and to others the message which Holy Scripture conveys to us. But the abiding wonder of the gift of God to us in the Bible is the

way it remains permanently ahead of all its interpreters. We are terribly prone to make idols of our theories, and to identify them with the Truth that we are trying to interpret. But as each generation of students goes back to the original deposit and tests the theories it has inherited in the light of it, the Bible seems to have an inexhaustible power to help us clear out of the way difficulties that are not inherent in the Truth itself, but have been introduced into our statement of it by a lack of proportion in our treatment of the evidence, either by ignoring what we can now see to be the vital elements in it, or by overstressing the implications of earthly metaphors, which can only correspond very partially to the spiritual reality."

It is realised that the questions raised by the narrative of creation cannot be settled on a narrow basis; it challenges some popular theories at present prevailing about man's origin, the beginning of man's belief in God, and the relation of this record of creation to other early accounts—particularly those recovered from Babylonia and Assyria. These problems must be considered, and unless we are content to be obscurantists, we must test the validity of current ideas. It is hoped that this wider investigation will not make a simple solution appear complex. I have abstained from any extended reference even to the second narrative (Gen. ii. 5,-iv. 26) lest by doing so I should obscure the problem we set out to solve. The second narrative needs a book to itself, for it contains features not mentioned in the first narrative, the geographical situation of Eden, the Tree of Life, the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, the serpent, the fall and its effects. But the second narrative confirms the conclusions reached concerning the first narrative.

Let us have the forward look and the open mind of John Robinson when he said that "he was very confident that the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word".

CHAPTER II

WHY THIS UNUSUAL STRUCTURE?

THE ACCOUNT of creation on the first page of the Bible is written in a literary form quite unlike any other narrative in it. Even to the most casual reader it is obvious that there is something very exceptional in its structure. Not only is it divided into six sections by the use of the words "and there was evening and there was morning" but the sections are serially numbered from one to six. The whole record is fitted into a unique framework composed of words and phrases which are repeated six or more times. This framework is constructed in the following manner:

Verse

DAY ONE

3. God said let . . . and . . . was.
4. " saw . . . that it was good.
" divided. . . .
5. " called. . . .
And there was evening and there was morning day one.

DAY SECOND

6. God said let. . . .
7. " made. . . .
" divided . . . and it was so.
8. " called . . .
" saw that it was good (LXX Version).
And there was evening and there was morning day second.

DAY THIRD

9. God said let . . . and it was so.
10. " called. . . .
" saw that it was good.
11. " said let . . . and it was so.
12. " saw that it was good.
13. And there was evening and there was morning day third.

DAY FOURTH

14. God said let . . . and it was so.
16. " made. . . .
17. " set. . . .
18. " saw that it was good. . . .
19. And there was evening and there was morning day fourth.

DAY FIFTH

20. God said let . . . and it was so (LXX Version).
 21. „ created. . . .
 „ saw that it was good.
 22. „ blessed. . . .
 23. And there was evening and there was morning day fifth.

DAY SIXTH

24. God said let . . . and it was so.
 25. „ made. . . .
 „ saw that it was good.
 26. „ said let. . . .
 27. „ created. . . .
 „ created . . . created. . . .
 28. „ blessed. . . .
 „ said. . . .
 29. „ said . . . and it was so.
 31. „ saw that it was very good.
 And there was evening and there was morning day the sixth.

Apart from the repetition of these phrases, the words used are remarkably few and simple. This is all the more surprising seeing that it is an outline of the origin of the heavens and the earth; of vegetable, marine and animal life, and also of the instruction given by God to first man. The principal words used in addition to the framework are those translated, light, darkness, night, firmament, waters, heavens, dry, earth, seas, grass, herb, seed, winged creature, cattle, creeping things, man, image, male, female, replenish, dominion, meat. It will be noticed that 'God said' ten times (four times on the sixth day), in this number there is a similarity to the 'Ten Words' as the ten commandments are called.

If this record of creation is carefully examined it will be seen that the six days fall into two clearly parallel parts, the events recorded in the last three days being parallel with the first three. Those best acquainted with ancient Hebrew literary methods will readily recognise a feature frequent in the Old Testament of a balanced symmetry due to a repetition of thought expressed in almost synonymous words. The parallelism is as follows:

On the first day it was revealed how light came into existence, on the fourth day, about the sources and purposes of the light, the greater light for the day and the lesser light for the night.

On the second day God explains how the atmosphere came to be, and how it separated the waters above from those below the expanse. On the fifth day how the waters below were populated with fish and the atmosphere with birds.

On the third day God tells how He gathered the waters together so as to form areas of dry land, and then how the various forms of vegetation came to be. On the sixth day it is said how the dry land was populated with animal life, how man was created, and explains how the first of the forms of green vegetation was for animal life, and both green vegetation and trees were assigned to man for food.

The second three days tells how space, water, air, and land are populated. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the record it is comprehensive, and later it will be seen how this parallel arrangement agrees with science. It may be summarised as follows:

<p>1. <i>Light</i> Separating the light from the darkness, effecting day and night.</p>	<p>4. <i>Lights</i> (Sun, Moon and Stars). to divide the day from the night and for seasons and for days and years.</p>
<p>2. <i>Water and atmosphere</i> Atmosphere separating the waters below from those above.</p>	<p>5. <i>Water and atmosphere</i> Life in the water (fish). Life in the atmosphere (birds).</p>
<p>3. <i>Land and green vegetation</i> (a) Land. (b) Green vegetation and trees.</p>	<p>6. <i>Land, green vegetation, man</i> (a) Land animals. Man. (b) Green vegetation and trees assigned to animals and man.</p>

The key to the arrangement may be seen in the words "without form and void" (verse 2). In the first three days we are told of the *formation* of the heaven and earth, and on the second three days of the furnishing of the void. Thus the *formlessness* takes shape or *form* in the narration of the first three days and the *void* becomes occupied and inhabited in the second three days' narrative.

We must notice one other thing about the structure of this narrative: while the complete section extends from chapter i. 1 to ii. 4, it will be seen that this special framework of the days is confined to verses 3 to 31 of chapter i. The first two verses being an introduction or superscription, and the last four verses (chapter ii. 1-4) an appendix or colophon. In ancient times when men wrote on clay tablets it was customary to add a colophon giving information regarding the 'title' of a tablet or series of tablets, the date when written, the name of the writer, and other literary information.

Does the colophon at the end of this Genesis creation narrative contain any of this valuable information? Before this question is answered it is necessary to review the other important passage where the six days are mentioned.

CHAPTER III

CURRENT THEORIES AND THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that the only references to the six days of work and one of 'rest' in connection with the narrative of creation are those relating to the Fourth Commandment. In no other connection in the Bible are the six days mentioned. The Fourth Commandment requires that mankind should work for six days and rest on the seventh, because God did something for six days and ceased doing it on the seventh. It is very necessary therefore that we ascertain what God did on the six days and why He ceased on the seventh day.

The Fourth Commandment says: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy, six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exod. xx. 8-11).

The impression conveyed by this passage is of ordinary days, certainly the six days' work and one day's rest of the Israelites refer to normal days. Why is it then that no system of interpretation reads both the six days and the seventh day, that is both the whole of the creation narrative and the whole of the Fourth Commandment consistently?

There can be no doubt whatever about the answer. A simple but serious misinterpretation has led to an assumption that both Genesis and the Fourth Commandment were intended to teach that God CREATED the heaven and the earth and all plant, marine and animal life, as well as man, in six 'days' of some sort. Because of this false supposition some reject the 'days' of whatever length (and the narrative); others deny either the literalness of the six, or else that of the seventh day; others lengthen either the sixth or the seventh day to thousands or millions of years. Even the group of expositors who suggest that someone saw creation in a vision usually explain the six days literally, but interpret the 'rest' on the seventh day as a long period of unknown duration. At the same time all interpret the six days of work and one of rest which the Israelites were to observe as literal days. *I suggest that every time the days are mentioned in both these passages they are intended to be taken literally as ordinary days.*

Because of the incorrect assumption that what God did on the six days was to CREATE all life and man, various interpretations have been adopted in an attempt to harmonise the Genesis narrative and the Fourth Commandment with scientific ideas concerning the origin of the heavens and the earth. These may be summarised as follows:

- (1) The geologic 'day' theory.
- (2) The six days *re*-creation theory.
- (3) The vision theory.
- (4) The antedate or artificial week theory.
- (5) The myth or legend theory.

We are all liable to identify our own particular interpretation of the meaning of a Bible statement with the Bible statement itself. Consequently, when our own special theory as to its interpretation is doubted, we are sometimes apt to

assume that the doubter is challenging not merely our interpretation but also the accuracy of the Bible narrative. *For reasons which I hope to explain later, I believe that the days in both the narrative of creation and the Fourth Commandment are literal.* But ever since I have considered these passages in the light of what is said about them in the rest of the Bible, and of what is known of literary methods prevailing in ancient times, none of the theories mentioned above have appeared to me to be satisfactory.

Each of these theories may be subjected to the following tests: Does it agree with

- (1) All the statements in the Genesis narrative?
- (2) All the statements in the Fourth Commandment?
- (3) All the facts (not theories) of science?

Perhaps the most popular is:

The Geologic Age Theory.

This theory is that each 'day' is a long geologic age. Sir William Dawson was one of the leading exponents of this interpretation of the meaning of the word 'day' in Genesis. He writes in his *Origin of the World*:

"It would, I have begun to suspect, square better with the ascertained facts, and be at least equally in accordance with Scripture, to reverse the process, and argue that because God's working days were immensely protracted periods, his Sabbath also must be an immensely protracted period. The reason attached to the law of the Sabbath seems to be simply a reason of proportion: the objection to which I refer is an objection palpably founded on considerations of proportion, and certainly were the reason to be divested of proportion, it would be divested also of its distinctive character as a reason. Were it as follows, it could not be at all understood: 'Six days shalt thou labour, etc.; but on the seventh day shalt thou do no labour, etc.; for in six immensely protracted periods of several thousand years each did the Lord make the heavens and the earth, etc.; and then rested during a brief day of twenty-four hours; therefore the Lord blessed the brief day of twenty-four hours and hallowed it.' This, I repeat, would

not be reason. All, however, that seems necessary to the integrity of the reason, in its character as such, is that the proportion of six parts to seven should be maintained" (p. 137).

"In reviewing the somewhat lengthy train of reasoning into which the term 'day' has led us, it appears that from internal evidence alone it can be rendered probable that the day of creation is neither the natural nor the civil day. It also appears that the objections urged against the doctrine of day-periods are of no weight when properly scrutinised, and that it harmonises with the progressive nature of the work, the evidence of geology, and the cosmological notions of ancient nations. I do not suppose that this position has been incontrovertibly established; but I believe that every serious difficulty has been removed from its acceptance; and with this, for the present, I remain satisfied. Every step of our subsequent progress will afford new criteria of its truth or fallacy.

"One further question of some interest is—What, according to the theory of long creative days and the testimony of geology would be the length and precise cosmical nature of these days? With regard to the first part of the question, we do not know the actual value of our geological ages in time; but it is probable that each great creative aeon may have extended through millions of years. As to the nature of the days, this may have been determined by direct volitions of the Creator, or indirectly by some of those great astronomical cycles which arise from the varying eccentricity of the earth's orbit, or the diminution of the velocity of its rotation, or by its gradual cooling" (p. 153).

As this explanation was admittedly made in order to harmonise the narrative of creation with the facts of science, we may look at its scientific implications first.

If the 'days' are interpreted as geologic periods of unknown length, then the explanation does what those who adopt it desire to do: it enables Genesis to be reconciled with science in regard to the slow and gradual formation of the heavens and the earth, and of the appearance of life on it. As to the time occupied by these geologic days Sir William Dawson in his *Meeting Place of Geology and History* (p. 18) says: "Man is of recent introduction on the earth. For millions of years the

slow process of world-making has been going on with reference to the physical structure and to the lower grades of living creatures."

But is this explanation in general agreement with science? Sir William thinks that he can relate the last three geologic ages with the last three 'days' of Genesis. Even if it is conceded that this explanation makes Genesis agree with science, does it agree with the Bible? Can we interpret either the Genesis narrative or the Fourth Commandment consistently so as to give the word 'day' the significance of an untold number of millions of years? We may well believe that the geologic formation of the earth occupied a very long period of time, but is it not difficult to interpret the seventh day as lasting for an equivalently long period of millions of years? And if all the days are to be interpreted as millions of years then the Fourth Commandment is difficult to interpret.

In fairness to the advocates of this theory, it must be emphasised that it was not invented in recent times simply in order to harmonise Scripture with science. The interpretation is at least 1,600 years old. Before Christian thought was pressed by science to allocate a very long time to the geologic formation of the earth, men felt that there was something wrong with an interpretation of Genesis which involved the creation of all things within a period of 144 hours. Professor Dickie in *The Organism of Christian Truth*, p. 121, says, "The theory was widely held that the six days of creation meant six extended periods of time. It commended itself among others to Augustine . . . but neither Augustine nor modern harmonisers of Genesis and science get the theory, whether true or false, from Scripture. There is nothing in the Bible even to suggest it. On the contrary it has always been read into the Bible from without, on scientific or quasi-scientific grounds."

Is this theory able to give a satisfactory explanation of the seventh day on which God ceased from His work? If the six 'days' are intended to be read as six long geologic periods extending to millions of years, how long a period are we to assign to the seventh day which God sanctified or set apart by ceasing from His work? No one doubts that the six days' work

and the seventh day's rest which the Israelites were enjoined to observe were just ordinary days. Why then should we assume that the seventh day is used for a period amounting to thousands of years? and in what sense is the present age which has continued since creation hallowed or sanctified? and can we say that God has rested or ceased from creation ever since?

On the use of this word 'day' that great Hebraist, Dr. Ginsburg, wrote, "There is nothing in the first chapter of Genesis to justify the spiritualisation of the expression 'day'. On the contrary, the definition given in verse 5 of the word in question imperatively demands that 'yom' should be understood in the same sense as we understand the word 'day' in common parlance, i.e. as a natural day.

"The institution of the sabbath on the seventh day, which if understood as an indefinite period would have no meaning for man, and the constant usage of this expression in Scripture to denote an ordinary day, with the few exceptions of poetical or oratorical diction, and the literal meaning which all commentators and Bible readers have assigned to it till within the last century, are additional proofs that the primitive record purports to intimate by the expression 'yom' a natural day.

"The arguments generally produced by those who ascribe to the word 'day' here an unlimited duration of time are untenable. They say (1) that the word 'day' is not to be taken here in its literal meaning is evident from chapter ii. 4, 'for the portion of time spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis as six days is spoken of in the second chapter as one day' (Hugh Miller). But the word used in the hexaemeron is the simple noun, whereas in chapter ii. 4 it is a compound of 'the day of' with the preposition 'in', which, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, makes it an adverb, and must be translated, when, at the time, after. They say (2) that the Psalm of Moses, xc. 4, is decisive for the spiritual meaning. But the reference to that Psalm is inapposite; for the matter here in question is not how God regards the days of creation, but how man ought to regard them."

But the greatest defect of this theory is that it does not deal

with the six 'evenings and mornings'; it either ignores or fails to make any reasonable interpretation of them. Was each of them an indefinitely long night in which there was no light? Was the geologic night as long or almost as long as the geologic 'day'? The words 'evening and morning' seem very unnatural to describe such a geologic night. Was there in any sense an evening and morning to that kind of day, and in what sense has there been an hallowing of the sabbath day which is alleged to have lasted from creation till now?

A variation of the geologic age interpretation should be mentioned—it is that put forward by Mr. Hugh Capron in his *Conflict of Truth*. He says that on each of the six ordinary days God issued a commandment, or pronounced the laws upon which the production of phenomena depends, that just as a man might say "I will build a house" or "I will make a garden" the resolution takes but a moment, but its accomplishment may take much time. While Mr. Capron has rightly stressed the reiterated statement that Genesis purports to be an account of what *God said*, he also fails to deal with the 'evenings and mornings'. While an 'evening and morning' is a most natural phrase to separate one day from the next, Mr. Capron's interpretation does not convince that an 'evening and morning' is an appropriate method of dividing periods which may have occupied millions of years.

The Six Days Re-creation Theory.

The second theory—that of six days *re-creation*—puts forward the idea that there has been two quite distinct creations and that these were separated by an unknown period lasting possibly millions of years. It interprets the first chapter of Genesis thus; the first sentence "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is presumed to be a completed account, or at least all we are told about the first or original creation of the heaven and earth. The theory assumes that plant, animal and human life were included in that creation, notwithstanding that no mention is made of the creation of *life* until later in the chapter.

The second verse is said to leave room for, or to assume that a catastrophe came upon the earth affecting the sun and moon,

resulting in the earth becoming 'darkness and waters', chaos and ruin, involving the destruction of all plant, animal and human life.

The remaining verses (3-31) are said to refer to the six literal days in which God *re*-created the earth; the light is made to appear again, the waters which had covered the earth are made to recede so that dry land appeared and all plant, animal and human life are re-created—all in six ordinary days of twenty-four hours each. This theory then assumes that chapter ii. 1-4 refers only to the second or re-creation period.

Mr. G. H. Pember who was one of the leading exponents of this view, states it thus in his *Earth's Earliest Ages* :

"God created the heavens and the earth perfect and beautiful in their beginning, and that at some subsequent period, how remote we cannot tell, the earth had passed into a state of utter desolation, and was void of all life. Not merely had its fruitful places become a wilderness, and all its cities been broken down; but the very light of its sun had been withdrawn; all the moisture of its atmosphere had sunk upon its surface; and the vast deep, to which God has set bounds that are never transgressed save when wrath has gone forth from Him, had burst those limits; so that the ruined planet, covered above its very mountain tops with the black floods of destruction, was rolling through space in a horror of great darkness. But what could have occasioned so terrific a catastrophe? Wherefore had God thus destroyed the work of His hands? If we may draw any inference from the history of our own race, sin must have been the cause of this hideous ruin: sin, too, which would seem to have been patiently borne with through long ages, until at length its cry increased to Heaven, and brought down utter destruction. For, as the fossil remains show, not only were disease and death inseparable companions of sin then prevalent among the living creatures of the earth, but even ferocity and slaughter. And the fact proves that these remains have nothing to do with our world; since the Bible declares that all things made by God during the Six Days were very good, and that no evil was in them till Adam sinned" (p. 33).

"It is thus clear that the second verse of Genesis describes the earth as a ruin; but there is no hint of the time which elapsed between creation and this ruin. Age after age may have rolled away, and it was probably during their course that the strata of the earth's crust were gradually developed. Hence we see that geological attacks upon the Scriptures are altogether wide of the mark, are a mere beating of the air. There is room for

any length of time between the first and second verses of the Bible. And again; since we have no inspired account of the geological formations, we are at liberty to believe that they were developed just in the order in which we find them. The whole process took place in preadamite times, in connection, perhaps, with another race of beings, and, consequently, does not at present concern us" (p. 28).

"We must now return to the ruined earth, the condition of which we can only conjecture from what we are told of the six days of restoration. Violent convulsions must have taken place upon it, for it was inundated with the ocean waters: its sun had been extinguished: the stars were not longer seen above it: its clouds and atmosphere, having no attractive force to keep them in suspension, had descended in moisture upon its surface; there was not a living being to be found in the whole planet" (p. 81).

"This 'light' of the first day must be carefully distinguished from the 'light holders' of the fourth, since the word used conveys in itself no idea of concentration or locality. Nevertheless the light must have been confined to one side of the planet, for we are told that God at once divided between the light and the darkness, and that the alternation of day and night immediately commenced" (p. 84).

"In twenty-four hours the firmament was completed, and then the voice of the Lord was again heard, and in quick response the whole planet resounded with the roar of rushing floods as they hastened from the dry land into the receptacles prepared for them, and revealed the mountains and valleys of the earth" (p. 89).

"Then follows the institution of the Sabbath on the seventh day: and the fact of its introduction in this connection is sufficient to show that it was no special ordinance for the Israelite, but a law of God for all the dwellers upon earth from the days of Adam till time shall cease" (p. 97).

Here again it is obvious that this interpretation has been adopted because of the impossibility of compressing the geologic formation of the earth into a period of six ordinary days.¹ This difficulty is obviated by stating, what is doubtless true, that the period occupied by the events of verse 2 may be

¹ It may be mentioned that the length of the day in the remote past was, according to the mathematical astronomers, little different to that of the present day. "The moon causes tides to sweep round the earth in just under twenty-five hours. In the deep oceans little friction is caused by such action; but in shallow seas tidal action causes much fluid friction, which leads to the dissipation of energy as heat. This energy comes mainly from the earth's energy of rotation, so that tidal

a vast number of millions of years. But it is equally obvious that the theory creates more difficulties than it attempts to solve.¹ While it provides the long periods required by geology, and also adheres to the Scripture narrative as to the literalness of the six days, it gives no satisfactory reason for the 'evenings and the mornings'. Notwithstanding Pember's insistence that those who adopt the geologic ages theory fail to explain these 'evenings and mornings', it is very significant that he himself fails to do so. Are we to suppose that God re-created the earth and all life upon it in six ordinary days, and then only during the *daylight* hours of those six days?

It is submitted that Scripture gives us no information whatever about these alleged two quite distinct and complete creations separated from each other by millions of years. And science for its part has no knowledge of the alleged universal destruction of all marine, animal and human life in one catastrophe; nor is it aware of an infinitely long period of perhaps millions of years when, after all forms of life had existed on the earth, there was left no kind of life whatever on it. Isaiah xlv. 18 is sometimes quoted as evidence that the second verse in Genesis refers to a catastrophic ruin which had overwhelmed the earth and all life on it. Does the statement "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited" imply any such thing? Is not this verse in entire agreement

friction lessens the rate of rotation of the earth and therefore lengthens the day. Of course the effect is very small. The earth has a vast stock of rotational energy; and, even though it has been calculated that the tidal friction leads to a rate of dissipation of energy equal to some two thousand million horse-power, the day is thereby only lengthened by 1/1200 of a second per century" (*Scientific Theory and Religion*, p. 329).

¹ "This identity even to small details (so far as is possible in so simple and condensed account) of the written and geological record coupled with the fact that the fossil record merges without break into modern times, can mean only one thing, and that is that the written account describes the record of the rocks. The evidence all points against the interpretation that the geological record can be dropped in between the first and second verses of the chapter. This theory was formulated over a hundred years ago to fit in with the ideas of the time, and was not held by either Hugh Miller or Sir J. W. Dawson who were in a better position to assess the value of the evidence than was Dr. Chalmers in 1814" (A. Stuart, M.Sc., F.G.S., in *Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, 1937, pp. 105-6).

with Genesis i. 2, that the formlessness and emptiness does not express God's final purpose for the world? It must be borne in mind that the second verse in Genesis refers to a time when the Spirit of God was working on the earth.

Those who adopt this re-creation theory say that subsequent to the second verse (except presumably to the sun and the moon in verses 14-18) the whole passage relates to the earth. It is said that it is the earth only, not the heavens, which were re-created in the six days. Seeing that they assume the Fourth Commandment refers to the six days as being the time occupied by God in creation, they appear to have overlooked the fact that according to this assumption the Fourth Commandment says that God did something relating not only to the earth, but *also the heavens* during the six days.

The Vision Theory.

Still another explanation—the vision theory—has been adopted to explain the 'days'. It is said that the narrator had visions of each stage of the creation on each of the six days. This explanation at least has the merit that it does not involve the creation or re-creation of all things in 144 hours or use the word 'day' to indicate a long geological period. But can it be sustained? I think not in its present form, because one significant fact about this first narrative is that all the marks of a vision are absent. We do not read "I beheld", "I saw", etc. On the contrary, we read that "God saw". The difference between a normal narrative and a vision may be seen when we compare this record with such a passage as Jeremiah iv. 23-24, which has been used in order to illustrate verse 2, "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled."

It is also said that the earlier chapters of the Bible are like the last chapters. They are, but with this important difference: the one is a narrative, the other a vision. A comparison shows the difference of style. In the Book of Revelation we read, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the

first heaven and the first earth were passed away . . . and I heard a voice out of heaven saying . . .” Such phrases as “I turned to see”, “after this I looked and lo”; the constantly repeated “I saw” are entirely absent from the Genesis account. Dr. S. R. Driver (*Genesis*, p. 23) stated, “The narrative contains no indication of its being the relation of a vision (which in other cases is regularly noted, e.g. Amos vii–ix; Isa. vi; Ezek. i, etc.); it purports to describe not appearances (‘And I saw and behold . . .’), but facts (‘Let the earth . . . and it was so’), and to substitute one for the other is consequently illegitimate.” I agree entirely with his statement that “it purports to describe not appearance but facts”.

A still less satisfactory way of dealing with the narrative is to say that it must be read as poetry. It is sufficient to cite Dr. Ginsburg’s comment on this, “there is in this chapter none of the peculiarities of Hebrew poetry”. It is prose, not poetry, and purports to be an account of what ‘God said’.

The Antedate or Artificial Week Theory.

The fourth theory is that which found favour with such scholars as Drs. Driver and Skinner and the moderate school of critics. Let Dr. Driver tell us in his own words what this theory is, “Genesis ii. 1–3, it will be observed, does not *name* the sabbath, or lay down any law for its observance by man; all that it says is that God ‘desisted’ on the seventh day from His work, and that He ‘blessed’ and ‘hallowed’ the day. It is, however, impossible to doubt the introduction of the seventh day as simply part of the writer’s representation, and that its sanctity is in reality antedated: instead viz. of the seventh day of the week being sacred, *because* God desisted on it from His six days’ work of creation, the work of creation was distributed among six days, followed by a day of rest, *because* the week, ended by the sabbath, existed already as an institution, and the writer wished to adjust artificially the work of creation to it. In other words, the week, ended by the sabbath, determined the ‘days’ of creation, not the ‘days’ of creation the week.”

Dr. Driver having adopted the theory that the Genesis narrative in its present form is a comparatively late production

and that the fourth Commandment pre-dated it, some such explanation became necessary. But I suggest that it is a most remarkable fact that the alleged unknown writer of Genesis does not mention the word 'sabbath'. Surely he would have done so if he had been engaged on such an attempt to 'fake' the narrative as described by Dr. Driver. Not to have done so would be fatal to his purpose. This antedate theory generally rejects the Genesis narrative as real history. It is said by this school of 'critics' that the creation narrative is nothing else than the common stock of oral traditions of the Israelite nation which had been originally borrowed from Babylonian sources and that it was put into writing about the eighth century B.C. That this is not the case will be seen in later chapters.

The Myth or Legend Theory.

The last of the theories on our list is not very different, it is that the Genesis narrative is mythological or legendary in character and does not warrant serious attention as a reputable historical document. This theory would merit critical scrutiny if a satisfactory explanation were given why it is written without mythological or legendary elements. Kautzsch, who is sufficiently critical of these early narratives, says, "it avoids all intermixture of a mythological character in particular, all thought of an evolution such as is usually bound up inseparably with the cosmogonies of ancient religions" (*Hastings, Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5, p. 669). The idea popularised by Wolf two centuries ago, by which he endeavoured to explain all ancient stories as myths, has been generally discarded by scholars, though it sometimes reappears in surprising places. As Dr. Farnell of Oxford University says, "There has come in recent years, to aid both our sanity and our science, the conviction that the most potent cause of the type of myths just referred to *has been the actual reality or historic matter of fact.*"

There is also the person who tells us that religious truthfulness and scientific truthfulness are not the same thing. If what is meant by this is that Biblical and scientific explanations of events are not at all likely to be made in the same way, we agree; but if it means that the truth of one may in reality be

misleading error, then we disagree. Surely Truth is one and is not divided against itself.

I submit that all these theories and 'explanations' fail to determine in a complete and reasonable way what God did for six days and why He ceased on the seventh day.

What then is the explanation?

Before an answer can be given we must enquire precisely what the Fourth Commandment says and also what Genesis says. In the remaining part of this chapter we will examine the words used in the Fourth Commandment, leaving the Genesis account to the next chapter.

If words mean anything, it is obvious that the revelation from God on Mount Sinai was of the greatest possible significance. I do not stay to discuss this with those who would deny its actual occurrence. Nowhere in the Old Testament is there anything to equal it in awe and solemnity; if the nineteenth chapter of Exodus is read, it will be seen how important was the occasion. Nearly two centuries had passed without any exceptional revelation from heaven, then we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the Mount and be there: and I will give thee tables (tablets) of stone, and a law, and Commandments which I have written" (Exod. xxiv. 12). Those 'Ten words' thereafter had a special significance. "Thus saith the Lord" prefaces the utterances of the prophets, yet a clear distinction was drawn between these prophetic revelations and the giving of the law on Sinai; a difference not so much in degree of the revelation as in its status and circumstances. The law had been given by God speaking 'face to face' with Moses; it is said to have been personally communicated to him in a most exceptional manner.

When did the seventh day's rest originate? There can be no doubt that it was introduced at a very early date (that this could not be the first day after the creation of the first man will later become evident seeing that many important incidents are stated to have occurred between the creation of the man and that of the woman). But obviously it had lost much of its proper significance by the time of the Exodus, for on Mount Sinai God called upon the Israelites to "*Remember* the sabbath day to keep it holy". Specific directions were then given as to

the manner in which it should be kept. Unlike the early Babylonians the Egyptians apparently did not keep a seventh day's rest, so that the Israelites who had been slaves in Egypt had not been permitted this rest. The fact that the seventh day had a recognised significance, prior to the introduction of the sabbath, may be clearly seen by reference to Exodus xvi, where the cessation of the manna is recorded, for this incident happened before the Fourth Commandment was given. Moreover, evidence of the institution of an observance of the seventh day may also be seen during the Flood (Gen. vii. 4; viii. 10-11). The division into weeks can also be seen in the history of Jacob (Gen. xxix. 27-8). There is however no sufficient reason to suppose that the Patriarchs were required to keep the seventh day in precisely the same way as the Israelites were commanded to keep the sabbath after the giving of the law.¹

Precisely what does the Fourth Commandment say about the seven days? The Authorised version translates it: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." First we notice that in the Hebrew version we find that the word 'in' does not appear. And the best manuscripts of the Septuagint version omit 'the sea', in editions such as Professor Swete's

¹ There are clear indications that long before the time of Moses or even Abraham, the seventh day had a peculiar meaning in Babylonia. They observed the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st and 28th days of the month, but in a very different way from that of the Hebrews. Other nations such as the Egyptians used it and they certainly would not have borrowed it from the Israelites after Sinai.

Its recognition was so widespread that Josephus could write in the first century, "There is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the Barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come" (*Contra Apion*. ii. 40). Obviously therefore it has a universal and not merely a national significance.

Before it was known that the Babylonians kept a seventh day there were some who thought that the seventh day's rest of Genesis ii. 3 was an isolated instance, and the remaining references to a seventh day in the lives of the Patriarchs an accident. Now it is generally known that a seventh day's observance existed long before the Mosaic era, the testimony of Genesis is now generally accepted that it was an institution from the beginning. Three-quarters of a century ago Dean Burgon clearly showed that a seventh day's rest was known to the Patriarchs.

Cambridge Septuagint these words form no part of the text. Moreover, the word 'seventh' is found instead of 'sabbath'.

The word translated *rested*, like the same word in Genesis ii. 3, simply means *ceased*, or *desisted*. It does not necessarily mean the rest of relaxation; for this, quite a different Hebrew word is used. In Arabic the word *sabbatu* means *to cut off*, *to interrupt*, and in Assyrian *to cease*.

Another word which needs comment is the Hebrew word *malâch* translated *work*. It expressly refers to *ordinary* work and Dr. Driver renders it *business*; it simply means *occupation*. Delitzsch says of it, "It is not so much a term denoting a lighter kind of labour as a general comprehensive term applied to the performance of any task whether easy or severe." The idea of creation is not in any way inherent in it.

Finally the precise significance of the word translated *made* must be understood, because *the meaning of the passage which has caused so much difficulty is dependent upon the sense in which it is used in this verse*. It is a translation of the Hebrew word *âsah*, a very common Hebrew word which is used over 2,500 times in the Old Testament. On more than 1,500 occasions it is translated 'do' or 'did'. The word itself does not in any way explain what the person 'did' or what was 'done'. As Dr. Young says, "The original word has great latitude of meaning and application. In verse 11 it means to make or *yield* fruit. In 2 Samuel xix. 24 to dress (or trim) a beard." Yet notwithstanding that this word has such a wide application, there has been a tendency to elevate its meaning in this Fourth Commandment to the equivalent of the word 'created'. It necessarily means no such thing. It simply says that God *did* something and what God *did* on the six days can only be discovered by the context in which the word appears. One thing however is quite clear, the Fourth Commandment does not use the word 'bara' or create, or say that God *created* the heavens and the earth in six days.

The use of the word in the immediate context is illuminating:

verse 9. Six days shalt thou *do* (*âsah*) all thy work.

„ 10. In it thou shalt not *do* (*âsah*) any work.

„ 11. For in six days the Lord *made* (*âsah*) the heaven and earth.

If only the translators of the Authorised Version had translated the word *ʾasah* in verse 11 in precisely the same way as they had the two preceding verses, the difficulties we have experienced would possibly never have arisen. Its literal translation would then have read "For in six days the Lord *did* the heavens and the earth . . . and rested the seventh day". We should then have asked what the Lord *did* for the six days, and why He rested on the seventh day. Instead of which it has been incorrectly assumed that during the six days He was creating the earth.

Further instances of the exceptionally wide meaning possessed by the Hebrew word *ʾasah*, translated *made*, may be seen by reference to any good Hebrew concordance. In Brown, Driver and Briggs edition of *Gesenius* the following meanings are assigned to it: do, make, produce, yield, acquire, appoint, ordain, and prepare. It is therefore obvious that the word must be translated in the light of its context. Here are some translations of this word as they appear in the Authorised Version.

- Genesis xviii. 8. the calf he had *dressed*.
 „ xx. 9. thou hast *done* deeds unto me.
 „ xx. 10. that thou hast *done* this thing.
 „ xxi. 23. kindness which *I have done* unto thee.
 „ xxvii. 17. the savoury meat and bread which she had
prepared.
 Exodus xix. 4. ye have seen what *I did* unto the Egyptians.
 „ xxiii. 22. obey His voice and *do* all that I speak.

It is obvious that in such an instance as Genesis xviii. 8 the word *ʾasah* is not intended to convey the idea that Abraham either *created* or *made* the calf he was preparing for a meal.

There would have been no difficulty, for instance, if this word had been rendered in exactly the same way as did the translators of the Authorised Version over 300 years ago and as the Revisers did 250 years later, in the following passages:

- Genesis xix. 19. which thou hast *shewed*.
 „ xxiv. 14. thou hast *shewed* kindness.
 „ xxxii. 10. the truth which thou hast *shewed* unto thy
 servant.
 Judges vi. 17. then *shew* me a sign that thou talkest with me.

If the Fourth Commandment had been similarly translated it would have read, "For in six days the Lord *shewed* the heavens and the earth and all that in them is and rested on the seventh day."

What did the Israelites of that day understand by the Fourth Commandment? Surely this, that because God did something for six literal days and ceased on a seventh day, they too were required to work for six days and to cease on the seventh. There is not the slightest indication, or any impression that there had been some miracle of speed in creation, or that the Creator of the heavens and the earth had need of a day's rest after six days' work, or that the Commandment referred to six long geologic ages, or that the day of God's cessation was also a correspondingly long geological period of time. Neither here nor anywhere else is there anything which would lead them to infer that all had been accomplished as in a flash, or that creation occupied a limited period of time, or that it relates to a second Creation or to six literal days of *re-creation* and a very long period for the seventh day. They accepted the plain and obvious meaning that God did something for six ordinary days and ceased on a seventh literal day. Read in the sense of its use in other passages in the same documents, the word *āsah* would not convey to them the meaning of *creation* in six days, but of something *done* in six days.

If then God was not creating the heaven and the earth during these six days what was He *doing*?

The Genesis narrative considered in the next two chapters will help us to answer this question.

CHAPTER IV

TOWARDS A SOLUTION

ON THE first page of the Bible there is an additional statement about the six 'days'; it is that each of them is divided by an 'evening and a morning'. Therefore an interpretation which would make these days other than ordinary twenty-four-hour days seems impossible, and must

be set aside. To an ordinary reader of modern days, as to those of ancient times, these days, each with their evenings and mornings, imply six days of ordinary length.

What did God do on those six days? and why did He cease on the seventh?

I submit that the answers hitherto given to these questions have not been very convincing. This is all the more remarkable, *seeing that it is possible to give an entirely satisfactory answer to the second question without any hesitation whatever, because our Lord Himself ANSWERED IT. In a weighty statement, made on an important occasion, He declared that "the sabbath was made for man"* (Mark ii. 27).¹ He was the Lord of the sabbath (v. 28) and claimed to be the one who from creation exercised authority over the seventh day and therefore could authoritatively state both its purpose and origin. He is referring here to the introduction of the sabbath at the beginning for mankind generally, not to the Sinai laws.

It is clear therefore that the seventh day was originally introduced by God *in order that MAN could rest for a day and not*

¹"At the root of the Sabbath-law was the love of God for mankind, and not for Israel only. Cf. Ephrem: "the Sabbath was appointed, not for God's sake, but for the sake of man" (Prof. Swete, *Commentary on Mark*).

"One of the simplest and most obvious, but yet one of the deepest and most important, of the apophthegms of our Lord. The verb rendered *was made* (*ἐγένετο*) means was brought *into existence*. The preposition somewhat barely rendered *for means because of, or on account of*. The idea is, that the reason or (occasioning) cause of the existence of the Sabbath is to be found in man, not *vice versa*. Man needs a Sabbath, man universal. The Sabbath is a *means* in order to some *end* or *ends* terminating in man." (Morison in *Commentary on Mark*).

"We find here rather the most emphatic confirmation of the inviolably-continuing *σαββατον* in the all-expressive *ἐγένετο*. Not, 'Moses gave you the Sabbath'—but, 'the Sabbath *was* from the first, when all things came into being, when the world and *man* were created'. As already in the reception of this commandment into the decalogue, which contains only what is original and permanent law for all men, not what was temporarily designed for Israel alone, so again does Christ, in the words *διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον*, set forth the universal validity of the sabbath as originating from the creation" (Steir, *The Words of the Lord Jesus*, Vol. II, p. 130).

Dean Alford said, "Peculiar to Mark and highly important. The sabbath was an ordinance *for man*; for man's rest, both actually and typically as setting forth the rest which remains for God's people (Heb. iv. 9)."

in order that GOD could rest for a day. The Creator did not need a seventh day's rest; its introduction, said our Lord, was for man's benefit, not God's. That this is abundantly clear may be seen from every reference in the Fourth Commandment to the purpose of the seventh day. It was to be a day's rest after six days of work or business and it extended even to the trained cattle which had worked for six days. Our Lord's attitude to the sabbath is illuminating; everything He said about it was to the effect that should there be anything in keeping the sabbath day inconsistent with man's true welfare in relation to the Creator, He was prepared in that respect to have it broken. As Bengel says, "The origin and end of things must be kept in view; the blessing of the sabbath in Genesis ii. 3 *has regard to man.*"

Every commentator has realised the difficulty created by the assumption that the seventh day was instituted by God for His own rest. They have all seen that it is necessary to 'explain' such a remarkable idea which has been thoughtlessly assumed and the usual 'explanation' is that God did not really rest, or cease, on the seventh day, but that He has rested or ceased from creation ever since. Is such an idea true either to Scripture or science?

Had our Lord's statement been borne in mind, we should never have got into the rut of thinking that this seventh day's rest was instituted by God as being necessary for Himself. Such a conception is clearly contrary, not only to our Lord's explicit statement but to the rest of Scripture. In that great creation chapter (Isa. xl), we read, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not neither is weary."

So the answer to our second question, why did God cease on the seventh day? is quite simple and unquestionable, He ceased for man's sake in order that *man* might rest.¹

¹ Although the fact that the sabbath was made *for man* is very generally accepted in a theoretical way, as may be seen from the following quotation from Dr. Griffith Thomas's *Commentary on Genesis*, yet elsewhere in it there is the usual discussion as to the probability of the days being long geological periods, and that it is long geological periods which are referred to in the Fourth Commandment.

"*The Sabbath for Man* (verses 1-3)—Strictly this section should be

This answer assists us in answering the first question, what did God do on the six days? As the seventh day was undoubtedly introduced for man's benefit, then it is only reasonable to suppose that what was done on the 'six days' also *had to do with man; and if with man, then obviously on the six days God was not creating* the earth and all life, because man was not in the world when these were being created. Fortunately it is not necessary to rely on 'reasonable suppositions' and 'assumptions', for we are expressly told that each of the six days was divided by 'an evening and a morning'. Why these six 'evenings and mornings'? Why were they introduced? For God's sake or for man? It never seems to have occurred to commentators to ask this simple question. If they had, there could have been no possible doubt about the answer. Endless difficulties have been created in thinking that Almighty God, the Creator, ceased His work of creating the world as the evening drew on and recommenced it as morning light appeared. An instance of the difficulty caused by this false assumption may be seen when that capable writer on this subject, Sir Robert Anderson, wrote in his *Bible and Modern Criticism*, "The problem may be stated thus. As man is to

placed in close connection with chapter i as the crowning point of the record of the days of creation. As the Sabbath is mentioned here for the first time we are justified in inquiring as to its fundamental purpose and principles.

"The Sabbath should first be considered in its primary meaning. In the light of God's creative work the fundamental and primary idea of the Sabbath is twofold, cessation from work and satisfaction after work.

"The Sabbath should then be noticed as a divine institution. The very familiar terms 'sanctify' occurs first here, and we are enabled to see that its root idea is 'separation' or 'consecration'. God separated—i.e. set apart—the Sabbath to be consecrated to a special purpose.

"The Sabbath should be emphasised as of permanent obligation. The institution of the Sabbath is evidently grounded in creation and is therefore pre-Mosaic, and not at all to be limited to the Jews. It is noteworthy that the Fourth Commandment calls attention to the Sabbath as an already existing fact ('Remember the Sabbath day,' Exod. xx. 8). There are many indications in Genesis and in Babylonian records, that the Sabbath was part of the primeval revelation which received fresh sanction under Moses. Only in this way can the universality of the tradition and the precise working of the Fourth Commandment be explained."

God so his day of four and twenty hours is to the Divine day of creation, and here I would suggest that the 'evening and the morning' represent the interval of cessation from work which succeeds and completes the day. The words are, 'and there was evening and there was morning, one day'. The symbolism is maintained throughout. As man's working day is brought to a close by evening, which ushers in a period of repose, lasting till morning calls him back to his daily toil, so the great Artificer is represented as turning aside from His work at the end of each 'day' of creation and again resuming it when another morning dawned." Because he assumed that during those six days God was creating the universe, he found it necessary to explain the six evenings and mornings as symbolic nights on which *God* rested and not man. That they are rightly regarded as nightly periods of rest may be seen by the comment made nineteen hundred years ago by Josephus (who, in this matter, represents the Jewish opinion of that time) that "these evenings and mornings were times of rest".

We agree, but rest for whom? If the seventh day's rest was introduced for *man's* sake, are we to represent the six nightly periods of cessation as being introduced to meet *God's* need of rest? He who did not need a *seventh* day's rest, did He need a *nightly* one? Was it necessary for God to cease from His work of creation when darkness came on, and to wait till morning light dawned before He could resume? The idea needs only to be stated in this blunt fashion in order to enable us to see that the cessation for the six mornings and evenings was to meet man's necessity for rest. God had no need of a nightly rest, "He fainteth not, neither is weary." Our Lord said that the seventh day's rest was instituted for man, so it is evident that, during these six days preceding it, God must have been doing something which also occupied the attention of *man*, and that on each of these six nights God ceased for man's sake.

How unworthy of God has been the idea that this record of creation was ever intended to teach that, at sunset, the Almighty God turned aside from creating the world and resumed it at sunrise! Evenings and mornings have to do with the inhabitants of this planet earth; God who dwelleth

in light is not limited by periods of darkness on half of the earth, but *man* is. Is it legitimate to think of the God of Heaven, when creating, being unable to continue because of the turning of the earth upon its axis, or by its movements in relation to the sun? These things affect man's time, not God's. As the creation Psalm (cxxxix. 12) says, "Darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and light are both alike to Thee," but of man it says (Ps. civ. 23), "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening."

It should have been obvious to us by the very mention of the 'evening and morning' in those six days, and of the cessation on the seventh day, that *God was doing something with MAN during each of the six days*. It is clear, therefore, that *He was not creating the heavens and the earth*. When He called light out of darkness, when He made the atmospheric firmament, when He caused the waters to recede and dry land to appear, man was not there to know anything about it; evenings and mornings were unknown, and man had then not been created. The activities of the days in the first chapter of Genesis cannot therefore refer to the period of time occupied by God in the creation of the world. Those six nightly periods of rest, as well as the seventh day's rest were introduced after man had been created. Consequently the first page of the Bible must refer to six days during which God did something in relation to creation after *man was on the earth*.

Thus far we have reached a partial answer to our first question. We know what God did *not* do for the six days; He was not creating the heavens and the earth; the narrative certainly does not teach that. Better, we have some positive information, He was doing something after man had been created and in which man was concerned.

What did God do in the presence of man for six days? The record gives a very simple answer. God was saying something about creation. Each of those six days commences with "God said", and it is a record of what God *said to man* as stated in verse 28, "And God said unto them". The word is used in the present tense, "God saith". It is therefore not only a statement of a command given by God in the past; it is

more: it is a record of what He then said to man about creation. These two things have always been evident, there is the conjoint repetition of "God created" and "God said". This double aspect has puzzled many; for instance Professor Skinner says, "The occurrence of the 'so' before the execution of the fiat produces a redundancy which may be concealed but is not removed by substituting 'so' for 'and' in the interpretation." This representation has been called the two-fold conception of creation. I submit that it is an account of what 'God said' about the things 'God made'; that, in other words, it is His revelation to men about His creative acts in time past.

Consequently this narrative is a series of statements to man about what God had done in the ages past. It is a record of the six days occupied by God in revealing to man the story of creation. We are told what God *said* on the first day about the separation of light from darkness, then came the evening and the morning. The second day God said how He had made the atmosphere with its waters below and above it, and on the third day how He had caused the waters to recede so that dry land appeared. It is a narrative of what 'God said' to man, *there is no suggestion that the acts or processes of God had occupied those six days*. During the daylight hours of those six days God told man how in the ages past He had "commanded and it stood fast" and in such a simple way that man could understand how He had created the world and introduced life upon it.

Another significant thing should be noticed. At the time 'God said' to man about creation, *He gave names to the things He spoke about*. On the first day He called the light 'day' and the darkness He called 'night'; on the second day, when telling about the firmament, He called it 'heaven' and then we read how on the third day "God called the dry land earth and the gathering together of the waters *called* He seas". Why did God give names to these things? A name to identify a thing is not necessary to God, but it is necessary for man. The supposition that God gave names to things before man had been created has been a great perplexity to all commentators. When we see that *the names were given for man's sake*

still another difficulty which has embarrassed many and stumbled not a few disappears.

During the daylight hours of each of the six successive days (each divided by an evening and a morning, when man rested) God revealed to him something new about creation, and during the first three days gave to man the names of the things He had revealed. When at the end of the six days God had finished talking with man He instituted the seventh day as a rest day for man's sake. In six days God had revealed "the heavens and the earth and all that in them is", and the six days occupied in this work were followed by a day of rest. As Dillmann says, "God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, that is not later on, but just then on the seventh day."

It may be said that all this is very anthropomorphic. Of course it is; it is God giving names for the instruction of man and recognising man's need of rest. The whole of the Bible is frankly anthropomorphic. At one time it was used as an argument against this narrative of creation that it looks at everything from man's point of view; that this planet earth is regarded as the thing of greatest consequence in creation.

What else should we expect in the circumstances? It was this planet, and not the Sun, or Mars, or Jupiter that man was interested in. Besides, modern science has shown that human life as we know it exists only on this planet. "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers; the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps. viii. 3-6). In past interpretations this anthropomorphism has been applied to God apart from man. It has been assumed that before man existed God gave things names, whereas it was, on the contrary, God explaining His works of creation to man.

In the second narrative of Genesis we read how God talked with man, instructed him in language, and taught him to give names to created things, and in the choice between good and

evil. The Bible account of the origin of man is that of a person who was made in the image and likeness of God, his Maker, with a capable mind. It is in this that he mostly differs from the animal creation. It is the conceptual qualities of his mind which enable him to use language, and gives him ideas of space and time. Man became possessed of this knowledge by what God *said* especially during those six days.

It may be asked, why should God talk to man about creation? Just because it was the one subject about which man could know nothing with certainty except God revealed it to him. Other things he may be able to find out for himself, and his accumulated human experience and acquired knowledge could be handed down. But if man was to know anything trustworthy about the important subject of the origin of things around him, it was vitally necessary that God should tell it to him in such a simple way as would enable him to understand. This is just what the Genesis narrative does. We are often told that no part of the Bible was revealed in order to tell man what he could find out for himself. If that is true, then the first chapter of Genesis would need to be revealed by God, because it was not possible for a writer either in the eighth or any earlier century to discover by reflection or research the facts of creation as given in this narrative. The attitude of the Old Testament is that man knew about these things, because God had revealed them to him, and not because some man had the ability to think it out for himself. As Dr. Denney wrote, "To begin with, creation in Scripture constantly appears as an inspiration to worship. The contemplation of heaven and the earth fills the mind with adoring thoughts of God. We see it in Psalms like the viiith, the sixth, the xxixth, the xxxvth, and the civth, and many more. 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night teacheth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone in to all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world.' The Psalmist did not mean that he came to know God by studying astronomy."

It has been assumed by some that God waited until the

time of Moses, or even later, before revealing this account of creation. This assumption implies that God left men in the dark for a considerable period of time. When Moses lived there were in Egypt alone nearly two thousand gods, as well as hopeless ideas concerning creation. A long period of time elapsed between creation of man and Moses; had these ages no revelation of God as Creator?

There are many reasons why God should not leave man in the early days to grope in the dark concerning the origin and significance of created things around him. Subsequent events teach us that it is just on this very subject—the otherwise unknown—that man speculated and went wrong; worshipping created things instead of the Creator. In New Testament words (Rom. i. 21-25), "Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." They "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator". Early history is sufficient illustration of the way in which the facts about God as Creator and of His creation were changed into the worship of the Sun and the Moon, and how mixtured representations of man, animals and birds became endowed by man with the attributes of a god—a god made not merely in the image of man, but of beasts and creeping things.

So it is not at all difficult to understand why God should tell man about Himself and about creation in the earliest days. Even Dillman, who is critical of the Genesis account and rejects the possibility of a primitive narrative concerning creation (because he assumes that early man was not sufficiently intelligent to understand anything regarding creation), says, "There exists in the spirit of man as soon as he attains to a certain maturity an unavoidable necessity which compels the formation of opinions regarding religious themes on which experience throws no light. One of these themes concerns the beginning of things." Where there is intelligence, the question

was bound to arise; even a child will ask who made the stars and other visible things.

A Diestical outlook has developed in the mind of some in the present day. It seems to imagine that God, having given the world some sort of start in the immeasurably distant past and having placed within it an infinite potentiality, then left both the world and man in it to evolve without His supervision or care. Needless to say this is contrary to the Bible view. God has never ceased from His creation. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work" (John v. 17).

Because the six days have been misunderstood as though they were periods occupied by God in His creative acts, instead of the time occupied by Him in revealing what He had created in the infinite past, the first page of the Bible has fallen into not a little reproach, and has become a stumbling-block to many. The misunderstanding may not have mattered gravely until this last century; now there is a serious conflict between the interpretations made by Christians of *God's words*, and by scientists of *His works*. This should never have occurred, nor should those interminable 'explanations' as to how there could have been 'days' and 'evenings and mornings' before the sun and moon were functioning in relation to the earth have been necessary; they are now seen to have been entirely irrelevant.

The foregoing interpretation has not been adopted merely as a method of escape from the difficulties of the six days; it is rendered necessary both by the implicit statement made by our Lord about the origin of the seventh day of rest and by the repeated statements made about the 'evenings and mornings' in the Genesis narrative. The new interpretation explains all the statements—not by explaining them away, but by accepting them in the most literal manner, and in accordance with the general usage of the ancient words.

A further question will naturally be asked—when and to whom was the revelation regarding creation made? What information there is concerning this will be included in the following chapters.

CHAPTER V

THE COLOPHON

A COLOPHON is a note added at the end of an account, giving particulars of the title, date, name of writer or owner, together with other details relating to the contents of a tablet, manuscript or book. When used on ancient tablets its purpose was similar to that which may be seen in old manuscripts and books. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as "the inscription or device, *formerly placed at the end of a book or manuscript*, and containing the title, the scribe's or printer's name, date and place of printing etc." Instances of its use may still be seen at the end of some modern magazines and newspapers where the names of the printers, the place where printed, and sometimes the date of the printing are given. In modern books the colophon has fallen into disuse; the information originally given in a colophon having been transferred to the first or title page.

It is often said that the only reasonable way to read the Bible is to read it in the same way as we do an ordinary book. Presumably what is meant by this is that any book should be read in the light of the times and circumstances in which it was written, and there can be no question as to the wisdom of this advice. But in the case of the oldest pieces of writing, this has scarcely been possible until the last century when excavation and decipherment of ancient writing has enabled scholars to become acquainted with the literary methods prevailing in the Tigris and Euphrates districts in early times. Consequently it has only been possible in more recent times to compare the literary construction of this Genesis narrative with other ancient methods of writing. But it cannot be regarded as other than serious that notwithstanding archaeological discoveries many still read this creation record, not as ancient, but as though it had been written in relatively modern times. This mistake has been made notwithstanding the very obvious fact that the narrative itself is constructed in a most antique manner by use of a framework of repeated phrases. However,

almost every scholar in modern times has recognised that Genesis ii. 1-4 is a *colophon* or appendix to the first narrative of creation. We do not know who wrote the colophon as we now have it; whether part was copied from the ancient tablet or whether, when compiling Genesis, Moses or some early writer added it.

Until the time of Alexander the Great, indeed as long as documents continued to be written in Babylonia and Assyria, they were generally written on stone or clay tablets, and the colophon, with its important literary information, was added in a very distinctive manner. Illustrations of these colophons may be seen on the frontispiece. The first is of a clay tablet with the usual colophon now in the author's possession. The second is of the Fourth Tablet in the Babylonian 'creation' series. There can now be no reasonable doubt whatever that any account of creation read by Abraham in Babylonia, would in the usual way be written on tablets similar to these. The colophon often contains the following information:

- (1) The 'title' or designation given to the narrative.
- (2) The date of writing.
- (3) The serial number of the tablet, when it formed part of a series.
- (4) If part of a series of tablets, a statement whether the tablet did or did not *finish* the series.
- (5) The name of the scribe or owner.

When we turn to the colophon to the creation tablets (Gen. ii. 1-4) this is what we find:

- (1) The title—"the heavens and the earth".
- (2) The date—"in the day that the Lord God did (*ásah*) the earth and heavens".
- (3) That it was written on a series of tablets (numbered one to six).
- (4) It states after the sixth tablet that the writing was *finished*.
- (5) The only name appearing on this colophon is the name of the Lord God. In this instance can it possibly be intended to indicate the author or writer?

We will look at these literary aids in the order mentioned above.

The 'title' given to an ancient piece of writing was usually taken from the opening words of the first tablet. In this instance the title is "the heavens and the earth". Long before the time of Abraham the cuneiform or wedge-shaped script was in general use, but earlier still the simpler method of pictographic or picture writing was used. Therefore any document written in Babylonia would later need to be translated into Hebrew. When translations are made the position of words in a sentence often undergo a change; this may be seen from the difference between the Hebrew order of the words, "In the beginning created God the heavens and the earth", and the English order as in our Bible. That the phrase "the heavens and earth" is a title may be seen from verse 4, which reads, "These are the generations (lit. : histories) of the heavens and the earth". In *New Discoveries in Babylonia about Genesis* I have explained the significance of this phrase which occurs at the end of each section of the Genesis narratives. Ample evidence is given in that book that the great Hebrew scholars agree that the word translated "generations" means "history of . . .", "an account of . . ." That this phrase "heavens and earth" was actually used as a *title* in ancient times may be seen by such statements as that by Jeremias in his *Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, Vol. I, p. 83, when referring to ancient Babylonian tablets he writes, "This 'tablet of the secrets of the heaven and earth' . . . represented in fable, according to Berossus, the celestial book of revelation."

The second piece of literary information referred to, is that ancient colophons often include the *date* when tablets were written. The *date* in the Genesis colophon is written in this way, "when they were created in the day that the Lord God did the earth and heavens". This verse has perplexed commentators of every school of thought. All seem to suggest that it implies a contradiction of the *six* days, by stating that creation only occupied *one* day. The date does not refer to the time when the world was created but, as it states, to the day when the *histories* or records were finished.

Those acquainted with the method of 'dating' tablets in early days will readily recognise this phrase "in the day the

Lord God did the earth and heavens" as the *date* of the Genesis creation tablets. Both the Babylonians, Egyptians and Assyrians gave the year a name by identifying it with some important happening in that year. There is a sense in which we have done something similar, but we date from the greatest of all events, the birth of our Lord. Here are some ancient instances of 'dating' taken from ancient tablets:

"Year Sumubel the King built the wall of Sippar."

"Year the canal Tutu-hengal (i.e. the year the canal was dug)."

Although almost every commentator has recognised the phrase "in the day . . ." as a date, they have wrongly assumed that it is the date the world was created. Long ago Dillman translated the phrase by the words "at the time of . . ." As that great Hebraist, Dr. Ginsburg, pointed out, the word 'day' as used in the first chapter of Genesis "is the simple noun, whereas in chapter ii. 4 it is a compound of 'day' with the preposition 'in' which according to the genius of the Hebrew language makes it an adverb, so it must be translated 'when' or 'at the time'".

Next we noticed that it was often necessary to use a series of tablets in order to write a narrative. In Babylonia the account of creation was generally written on *six tablets* and these were serially numbered at the end of each tablet. The evidence for this will be given in the next chapter. At the end of each of the six sections of the first narrative of creation we see that these same serial numbers 'one' to 'six' are given. The Hebrew word used for 'one' indicates that it is the *first of a series* and the article is employed in connection with 'day sixth' to indicate the *close of a series*.

In regard to the fourth piece of information given on the colophon, we know that when more than one tablet was necessary in order to record a narrative, it was a custom to state on the last of the series of tablets that the narrative was *finished* and sometimes to indicate on the earlier tablets of the same series that the narrative was '*not finished*'. A significant instance of this appears on tablet No. 93016 in the British collection. This tablet is the fourth in the celebrated

series of six Babylonian creation tablets, and the colophon reads, "*am sumati duppu 4 kam-ma e-nu-ma elis la gamir*", that is, "tablet 4 of 'when on high' (that is the title given to the series of tablets) *not finished*". Unfortunately the colophon of the sixth tablet of the same creation series is badly damaged. The only words which remain legible are "sixth tablet of 'when on high' . . ." Had we access to the original text of this colophon or had this one been in a more decipherable state it would probably have read "sixth tablet of 'when on high' *finished*", just as final tablets of other series do. An example of this may be seen in Dr. Langdon's *Sumurian and Babylonian Psalms* where he reproduces a series of liturgical tablets. These are often composed in a set of six tablets. The last tablet of one series reads, "Tablet six of . . . which is finished", indicating that the series was finished or completed at the end of the sixth tablet. Yet it has been assumed that the reference to 'finished' is to the acts or processes of creation.¹ What was finished on the sixth day was the revelation and recording of the acts of creation long past. And I suggest that the reason why the Babylonians and Assyrians clung so tenaciously throughout the centuries of their history to this particular number of tablets, six, on which the record of their creation stories, was that it was originally written on six tablets.

If we look at the opening words of the colophon attached to the Genesis narrative we read "and were *finished* the 'heaven and the earth'" (the title given to the series). The verb *finished* occupies the first position in the Hebrew. So the Genesis text uses the word in a manner similar to the literary custom which prevailed in ancient times, thus indicating that the sixth tablet concluded the series of tablets on which the account of the creation of 'the heaven and the earth' had been recorded as old books ended with 'finis'.

An additional indication that we are dealing with a *series* of tablets may be seen by the use immediately afterwards of the Hebrew word *sabh*, translated *host*. We often read of the 'host of heaven' but never of the host of the 'heaven and

¹ In Hebrews iv. 3 γενηθέντων is the First Aorist passive and does not mean finished in the sense referred to in Genesis ii. i.

earth', or of the 'host of earth'; nor is the word ever used of plant or animal life or of the other created things mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis. This is significant; it cannot be therefore, as is so often supposed, a summary of the creation of all things, for life and man are not mentioned. The Hebrew word translated 'host' conveys the idea of an orderly muster or arrangement, or orderly collection of things. Fürst suggested 'joined together for service' as a meaning but the root meaning appears to be 'to set in order'. Translators have usually given the word the meaning of 'contain' or 'contents', assuming that all the orderly or arranged contents of the heaven and earth are referred to. But as Dr. S. R. Driver points out that to use it in this sense of the heaven and earth is to give it an exceptional meaning. The meaning of the Greek words used in the Septuagint translation is, 'to order, arrange, set an army in array', 'to marshal'.

Jastrow in his Hebrew Talmudic Dictionary gives the primary sense 'to join', 'to follow'. The sense of the Hebrew and Greek words is therefore to join or 'arrange in order', it is appropriate to an ordered arrangement or series of tablets one to six. The meaning of this verse is therefore, "And were finished (indicating the finish of a series of tablets) 'the heavens and the earth' (the title given to the six tablets) and all their arranged order". What God had 'made' or 'done' in the six days, the context will help us to understand better still. The Authorised Version reads, "on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made", or as Professor Driver translates it, "His *business* which He had *done*". About this word 'work' Driver says, "It is the word used regularly for 'work' or 'business' forbidden on the sabbath". It does not in any sense imply creation; it refers to ordinary daily transactions. It is significant that the word translated 'work' in Exodus xx. 10 is from precisely the same root as the word 'made' in Genesis ii. 4. Thus, what had been made or done was an orderly collection or arrangement, a *finished* series of tablets numbered one to six. That which had been *finished* was the concluding tablet of the series of tablets, entitled "the heavens and the earth". It certainly was not that on some particular seventh day or seventh period God

had finished the universe. The Hebrew word 'rested' is the same as that translated 'ceased' in reference to the discontinuance of the manna (Joshua v. 12) when the food of Canaan became available.

At the end of verse 3 is the phrase "which God created and made"; this also seems to have perplexed every commentator. The Hebrew construction makes it very difficult to translate into English. It is a 'lamed of reference'; the stating of a motive in order to define more exactly. Dr. Driver translates it "in doing which God had created, i.e. which He had creatively done". In revealing the narrative of creation, He had instructed man who had been made in His own image and likeness. He had made man acquainted with His purposes, given him knowledge and made known His acts and mind concerning the creation of the heavens and the earth. The Septuagint Version (the oldest translation of the Old Testament from which so many of the O.T. quotations are incorporated into the N.T.) reads *ὃν ἠρξαστο ὁ θεὸς ποιῆσαι*, etc., "which at first God made this the written account (or book) of the genesis (or origin) of the heavens and the earth".

The failure to recognise that we are here dealing with a *history* or *account* of creation as the Septuagint plainly puts it, written in accordance with ancient literary usages has made this colophon more than difficult for commentators to explain. For instance, Professor Skinner wrote that this "half verse is in the last degree perplexing". But the perplexity vanishes in the light of the literary methods in use in early times and now there is no need of this perplexity as to the 'descendants' of the heavens and the earth. Given its proper significance of 'histories' or "written account of the heavens and the earth" its meaning is plain.

Having examined every important word in this colophon we find its literal translation is:

"And were finished 'the heavens and the earth' and all their series, and on the seventh day God finished His business which He had done, and He desisted on the seventh day from all His business which He had done. And God blessed the seventh day, and set it apart, for in it He ceased from all His business which God created in reference to making these the

histories of 'the heavens and the earth' in their being created, in the day when Jehovah God did 'earth and heavens'."

Not one word has been used in this translation which has not the support of the great Hebrew scholars.

There remains the fifth and last of the pieces of literary information usually given in the colophon—that of the name of the author or writer. Here we are met with the fact that the only name mentioned in the colophon is that of the Lord God; yet seeing that which He did in the six days was clearly not the Creation of the Universe, but the account of its creation, the phrase "in the day that the Lord God made the earth and heaven", would seem to indicate that God was the author of the record concerning creation. Perhaps the evidence is insufficient to state that God *wrote* the tablets, but there is enough internal evidence that He revealed the account in the first chapter of Genesis. Was there a similarity of circumstances in the revelation of the 'Ten Words' and the ten times repeated 'God said'? In the account of the giving of the Commandments we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables (tablets) of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written" (Exod. xxiv. 12). "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tablets of testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God" (Exod. xxxi. 18). "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tablets of testimony were in his hands. The tablets were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other were they written, and the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets" (Exod. xxxii. 15). The parallel is much the same, note, "the work of God . . . writing . . . tablets. . . ."

Did something similar take place when God revealed the account of creation?

It is worthy of note that there is no subsequent reference to *God having written* the Ten Commandments; it is therefore quite obvious that the Jews were not very interested in the literary methods through which the record came, but were rightly concerned with the narrative itself. They did not think

so much of the *method* of revelation, as the fact that it had been revealed by God.

There are, of course, indications in both Old and New Testaments of a revelation made in the beginning. In such creation passages as that of Isaiah xl we read, "Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? (lit. from the first), have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth?" (verse 21). And Hebrews iv. 4 says, "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works". Bishop Wescott's comment on this verse is, "The subject is simply 'God' and not Scripture". In his Greek Testament, Alford says, "He (God, not Moses, nor the writings) hath spoken". The words are emphatic: *God* spake; this implies a direct revelation. Weymouth translates it thus, "For as we know, when speaking of the seventh day, *He* used the words". There can be no question that the reference in this verse is to Genesis ii. 3 and not to the Fourth Commandment. It implies that God Himself is the narrator of the account of creation on the first page of the Bible, and says it is a record of what God said *to them* (Gen. i. 28).

In his *God the Creator* (p. 16) Dr. Hendry says, "The first step of a scientific approach to theology must consist of an examination of this fundamental notion of revelation"; again, "The concept of revelation has come to be generally employed with a meaning which is quite spurious. It has ceased to be an act of Divine disclosure and it has become an act of human perception".

A review of the evidence given in this colophon of the creation narrative (Gen. ii. 1-4) takes us back to the older view of a primeval revelation. The explanation given in this chapter enables us to understand why it is that the narrative is so sublime in its elevated simplicity, so concise yet expressive in its language, so pregnant in meaning yet uncontaminated by human speculation. It stands as God intended it should, as the first page of Scripture, as the basis of belief in God the Creator and as the original and primitive revelation from God to man.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIBLE AND BABYLONIAN CREATION TABLETS

IN THE year 1872, Mr. George Smith was deciphering some tablets in the British Museum when he noticed on one, numbered K36, a reference to 'creation'. Thereafter, he concentrated his attention on the search for further tablets which might throw light on the early narratives of Genesis. The clay literature at his disposal was immense; it consisted of nearly 20,000 tablets and fragments of tablets. Most of them had been discovered by Layard, Rassam and Loftus in the ruined library of Asurbanipal, at Nineveh, nearly twenty years before. Although little more was found referring to 'creation', several fragments relating to a 'deluge' were deciphered. On December 3rd, 1872, Mr. Smith read before the Society of Biblical Archaeology his translation of these tablets; General Sir Henry Rawlinson, who had been the first to recognise the value of several of the larger fragments, presided; the place was crowded with archaeologists, theologians and other scholars, including the Prime Minister. This distinguished company is described as 'listening breathlessly' while the able archaeologist detailed the finding and deciphering of these early Babylonian writings.

The paper read that day became famous and was enthusiastically discussed in Europe and America. It produced a confident expectation that further archaeological research would reveal the source from which the early chapters of Genesis had been derived, or at least show that the Babylonians had similar accounts. Consequently a sum of money was placed at Mr. Smith's disposal by the *Daily Telegraph* so that he could himself go to Assyria in search of the missing parts of the so-called 'Genesis narratives'. Some fragments of the Deluge account were soon discovered in the same ruined library at Nineveh. Mr. Smith thus described the finding of a piece of a 'Creation tablet'. "My next discovery here was a fragment evidently belonging to the creation of the world; this was the upper corner of a tablet, and gave a fragmentary

account of the creation of animals. Further on in this trench I discovered two other portions of this legend, one giving the creation and fall of man; the other having part of the war between the gods and evil spirits. At that time I did not recognise the importance of these fragments, excepting the one with the account of the creation of animals, and, as I had immediately afterwards to return to England, I made no further discoveries in this direction."

Two years later the results of his efforts to recover the Genesis stories were summarised in a volume entitled *Chaldean Account of Genesis* ('containing the description of the Creation, the Fall of Man, the Deluge, the Tower of Babel, the Times of the Patriarchs and Nimrod, Babylonian fables and legends of the gods from the cuneiform inscriptions'). When it was published, some people imagined that these Babylonian Legends would ultimately prove to be the source from which the Genesis narratives had been derived and the long title certainly suggests it. Others boldly asserted that by the discovery of these Assyrian tablets the origin of the early chapters of Genesis had already been ascertained. It is now known that the tablets Smith found represent not an original source, but a muddied and contaminated river which had already travelled far from its beginning. Writing of the Assyrian creation record he said that "the tablets composing it are in a mutilated condition, and too fragmentary to enable a single tablet to be completed, or to give more than a general view of the whole subject. The story, as far as I can judge from the fragment, agrees generally with the account of creation in the Book of Genesis, but shows traces of having originally included very much more matter. The fragments of the story which I have arranged are as follows:

- (1) Part of the first tablet, giving an account of the Chaos and the generation of the gods.
- (2) Fragment of subsequent tablet, perhaps the second, on the foundation of the deep.
- (3) Fragment of tablet placed here with great doubt, probably referring to the creation of land.
- (4) Part of the fifth tablet, giving the creation of the heavenly bodies.

(5) Fragment of seventh (?) tablet, giving the creation of land animals.

(6) Fragment of three tablets on the creation and fall of man.

(7) Fragments of tablets relating to the war between the gods and evil spirits (*Chaldean Account of Genesis*, pp. 7 and 62).

I have cited this able Assyriologist because of his interest in the discovery of a Babylonian equivalent to the Genesis creation narrative, and in order that we may see the origin and growth of the expectation that a parallel account to that in the first chapter of Genesis would one day be recovered from the soil of Mesopotamia. Notwithstanding unremitting search by numerous scholars for over a period of seventy years, that expectation has never been realised. On the contrary, as more and more of the missing parts of these so-called tablets have come to light, the wider grows the chasm which separates the Babylonian and Genesis records.

Subsequent discoveries gradually provided many of the missing parts of the Babylonian story. In 1888, Dr. Sayce deciphered tablet No. 93016, and in 1890 Dr. Jensen, of Marburg, published an up-to-date text in his *Die Kosmologie der Babylonier*. Five years later Dr. Zimmern gave a still more complete translation in Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos*. Dr. King added much material in 1902. Up to that time only a few lines of the sixth tablet had been recovered, but so long as parts were missing, the hope of archaeologists remained that, when found, the tablets would contain matter similar to that in the creation narratives of Genesis. The view prevailing at the time may be seen, for instance, in Dr. Ryle's *The Early Narratives of Genesis* (p. 18), "The sixth tablet which has not yet been found must have recorded the formation of the earth and the creation of the vegetable world, of birds and fishes."

The search for the missing fragments continued during the earlier part of this century. In 1899, the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* commenced the immense task of thoroughly excavating the city of Babylon, but nothing was discovered there which added materially to our knowledge of the Babylonian story of creation. But the German excavators at the old capital of Assyria, Ashur (Kalah Sherghat), were in this respect more successful, for they found some copies of the

'Creation' series, including the long-missing sixth tablet. These new Assyrian texts were published in 1919 by Dr. Erich Ebeling in *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts*; but the newly discovered sixth tablet did not contain any of the matter which Dr. Ryle said it 'must have recorded'.

Over sixty copies of the tablets and fragments have now been recovered and, except for the astronomical poem (tablet 5), the so-called Babylonian 'Creation' series is now sufficiently complete to make a full comparison with the Genesis narrative. The two accounts are as follows:

<i>Bible</i>	<i>Babylonian Creation tablets</i>
1. Light.	1. Birth of the gods, their rebellion and threatened destruction.
2. Atmosphere and water.	2. Tiamat prepares for battle, Marduk agrees to fight her.
3. Land, vegetation.	3. The gods are summoned and wail bitterly at their threatened destruction.
4. Sun and Moon (regulating lights).	4. Marduk promoted to rank of 'god'; he receives his weapons for the fight, these are described at length; defeats Tiamat, splits her in half like a fish and thus makes heaven and earth.
5. Fish and birds.	5. Astronomical poem.
6. Land animals.	6. Kingu who made Tiamat to rebel is bound and as a punishment his arteries are severed and man created from his blood. The 600 gods are grouped; Marduk builds Babylon where all the gods assemble.

I submit that a comparison of the two accounts shows clearly that the Bible owes nothing whatever to the Babylonian tablets. Perhaps it is not surprising to find as the various fragments were discovered, pieced together, and deciphered, that the more comprehensive knowledge about these tablets did not overtake the old false conjectures and expectations as to their probable contents. At first many archaeologists were inclined to agree with Smith that the probable origin of the Bible narrative was the Babylonian Legend; but when these completed tablets came to light it became obvious that the Genesis account was not derived from the Babylonian. Thus

in *The Babylonian Legends of the Creation and the Fight between Bel and the Dragon*, issued by the Trustees of the British Museum, we read that "the fundamental conceptions of the Babylonian and Hebrew accounts are essentially different". Sir Ernest Budge said, "It must be pointed out that there is no evidence at all that the two accounts of the creation, which are given in the early chapters of Genesis, are derived from the seven tablets" (*Babylonian Life and History*, p. 85). It is more than a pity that many theologians, instead of keeping abreast of modern archaeological research, continue to repeat the now disproved theory of Hebrew 'borrowings' from Babylonian sources. For instance, we find the following paragraph even in the late editions of Dr. Driver's *Genesis* (p. 27), "The more immediate source of the Biblical cosmogony, however, there can be little doubt, has been brought to light recently from Babylonia. Between 1872 and 1876 that skilful collector and decipherer of cuneiform records, the late Mr. George Smith, published, partly from tablets found by him in the British Museum, partly from those he had discovered himself in Assyria, a number of inscriptions containing, as he quickly perceived, a Babylonian account of creation. Since that date other tablets have come to light; and though the series relating to the creation is still incomplete, enough remains not only to exhibit clearly the general scheme of the cosmogony, but also to make it evident that the cosmogony of the Bible is dependent upon it." The newer information we now possess emphatically contradicts Dr. Driver's final statement, and I submit that there was no evidence whatever to support it. Even Jeremias who argues that both Bible and Babylonian tablets had a common origin says (*Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East, Vol. I, p. 196*), "The prevailing assumption of a *literary dependence* of the Biblical records of creation upon Babylonian texts is very frail." But this deposed theory, rejected by archaeologists, remains a popular impression to this day, as may be seen from the report on *Doctrine in the Church of England*, where it is stated (p. 45) that "it is generally agreed among educated Christians that these (Gen. i and ii) are mythological in origin".

In order that we may test the widespread assumption that

the Genesis record is based on the mythological Babylonian accounts, I select from nearly 800 lines of crude polytheistic and mythological matter, those lines which bear the closest resemblance to Genesis i, though to my mind they have no more similarity than a mud hut has to a palace. I use Dr. Langdon's translation (*Epic of Creation*, Oxford University Press).

TABLET 1

Line

1. When on high the heavens were not named,
2. And beneath a home bore no name,
3. And Apsu primeval, their engenderer,
4. And the 'Form', Tiamat, the bearer of all of them,
5. There mingled their waters together;
6. Dark chambers were not constructed, and marshlands were not seen,
8. And they were not named, and fates were not fixed,
9. Then were created the gods in the midst thereof;
81. In the midst of the nether sea was born Asur,
95. Four were his eyes, four were his ears,
132. Mother Huber, the designer of all things,
133. Added thereto weapons which are not withstood; she gave birth to the monsters.
135. With poison like blood she filled their bodies,

Colophon. First tablet of "*when on high*" taken from upon a tablet . . . a copy from Babylon, according to its original it was written:

The tablet of Nabu—mušetik—umi son of . . .
5th month Ayyar 9th day 27th year of Darius.

TABLET 4

Line

128. Unto Tiamat whom he had bound he returned again.
129. The lord trod upon her hinder part.
130. With his toothed sickle he split her scalp.
131. He severed the arteries of her blood.
132. The north wind carried it away into hidden places.
133. His fathers saw and were glad shouting for joy,
134. Gifts and presents they caused to be brought unto him,
135. The lord rested beholding the cadaver,
136. As he divided the monster, devising cunning things.
137. He split her into two parts like a closed fish.
138. Half of her he set up and made the heavens as a covering.
139. He slid the bolt and caused watchmen to be stationed.
140. He directed them not to let her waters come forth.

Colophon.—Fourth tablet, “when on high”, not finished.
According to a tablet which was damaged in its text.
Writing of Nabubelohu of Naid-Marduk.

TABLET 6

Line

1. When Marduk heard the words of the gods, his heart prompted him as he devised clever things.
2. He opened his mouth speaking unto Ea, that which he conceived in his heart, giving him counsel.
3. Blood will I construct, bone will I cause to be.
4. Verily I will cause *Lilu* (man) to stand forth, verily his name is man.
5. I will create *Lilu*, man.
6. Verily let the cult services of the gods be imposed, and let them be pacified.
7. I will moreover skilfully contrive the ways of the gods.
8. All together let them be honoured and may they be divided into two parts.
9. Ea replied to him, speaking to him a word.
10. For in pacification of the gods he imparted to him a plan.
11. Let one of their brothers be given. He shall perish and men be fashioned.
12. Let the great gods assemble. Let this one be given and as for them may they be sure of it,
13. Marduk assembled the great gods,
23. It was Kingu that made war;
24. That caused Tiamat to revolt and joined battle.
25. They bound him and brought him before Ea. Punishment they imposed upon him, they severed the arteries of his blood.
26. With his blood he (Ea) made mankind. In the cult service of the gods, and he set the gods free.
27. After Ea had created mankind and (?) had imposed the cult service of the gods upon him.

Colophon.—Sixth tablet of “when on high”. The colophon of this tablet is badly damaged but on tablet BM 92629 there is the name of the owner of the tablet, Nabu-balatsu-ikbi.

I submit that the continued propagation of these legends as the source from which the Genesis narrative is derived is entirely unjustifiable. Surely it is not reasonable to imagine these crude accounts of gods and goddesses plotting war amongst themselves, smashing skulls, getting drunk and similar activities, as the basis of the first chapter of the Bible. When Mr. George Smith discovered the first fragment in the

British Museum he imagined that it referred to the creation of animals; now we know the animals referred to were the 'monsters' created in order to fight Tiamat. The old theory of the supposed similarities between the Bible and Babylonian tablets was founded on the 'expectation' that discoveries would provide the missing links; excavation has proved this hope to be false.

Neither is there any evidence for the assertion that the Genesis record is merely the old Sumerian or Babylonian account stripped of all its mythical and legendary elements. It should be obvious that if this 'stripping' had taken place there would be nothing left with which to construct a narrative of creation.

Until recent years it was thought that the account was written on seven tablets; but the more recent discoveries have clearly shown that this was not the case. In his *Semitic Mythology* (p. 289), Professor Langdon states, "The Babylonian Epic of Creation was written in six books or tablets, with a late appendix added as the seventh book, as a commentary on the fifty sacred Sumerian titles of Marduk. No copies of the Babylonian text exists earlier than the age of Nebuchadnezzar. The epic had immense vogue in Assyria, where the national god Ashur replaced Marduk's name in most of the copies, and it is from the city of Ashur that all the earliest known texts are derived. These are at least three centuries earlier than any surviving southern copy. Since traces of the influence of the epic are found in the Babylonian iconography as early as the sixteenth century, it is assumed that the work was composed in the period of Babylon's great literary writers of the first dynasty." George Smith and others had conjectured that the Assur tablets had been copied from Babylonian sources, the finding of tablet 45528 proved this, for the colophon read:

"First tablet of *Enuma Elis* ("when on high") taken from . . . a copy from Babylon, according to its original it was written." As Professor Langdon says (*Epic of Creation*, p. 10), "The Epic was undoubtedly written in the period of the First Babylonian Dynasty 2225-1926." This date will, however, have to be reduced if Dr. Sidney Smith's dates in *Alalakh and Chronology* are adopted.

The closest resemblance, and certainly the most significant one, is that from the days of Abraham (which is as far back as can at present be traced) the Babylonians always recorded the 'creation' series on *six tablets*. Although there is this agreement in the number six, the similarity ends there. Long ago Schrader wrote in his *Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament* (Vol. I, p. 15), "Neither the cuneiform creation story nor that of Berossus gives any hint that the Babylonians regarded the creation of the universe as taking place in seven days." Professor Langdon summarised the Epic in these words, "The arrangement of the poem in six books was probably taken from the rules of liturgical compositions. When the Babylonians edited the canonical Sumerian liturgies for their own use and provided the Sumerian text with an inter-linear Semitic version, the material was almost invariably distributed over *six tablets*."

It is important that we should notice that nowhere in the Babylonian account is there any suggestion of the creation of the world in six days, or in six periods. After seventy years of search into supposed likenesses between the Bible and Babylonian tablets the only valid similarity is that the Genesis narrative is divided into six days, numbered one to six, and that the Babylonian accounts of creation are almost invariably written on six tablets.

Why six?

CHAPTER VII

THE TESTIMONY OF ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGY, the science of ancient things, provides additional information and we are now in a much better position to assess the value of its evidence than when clay tablets were first discovered. We have already noticed that references found in the Babylonian 'creation' tablets were once thought to be the source from which the Genesis narrative had been derived. Now it can be seen clearly that the Babylonian stories have little in common with Genesis, except that literary methods of writing and transmission in early days

were probably similar. There is nothing either in Babylonian or Egyptian literature, comparable with the first page of the Bible. We can see that other early accounts, even if stripped of their crude polytheism, could not conceivably take the place of the present introduction to the Bible (see Appendix III).

This does not necessarily mean that no gleam of light or truth remained in these accounts as transmitted by the Babylonians, because some of them seem to give indications of a widespread knowledge of an ancient revelation on this subject of creation. The Babylonians asserted that original knowledge had been received from 'on high', but such similarities as exist are so overlaid with crude polytheistic ideas that it is difficult to discover any reasonable references to creation on their tablets. Besides the Babylonian accounts already referred to, other fragments have been preserved which tell us of the ancient beliefs of the Sumerians and Babylonians regarding the creation of the world and man.

Berossus, a priest of Bel at Babylon, who lived at the time of Alexander the Great, translated into Greek some of the ancient history of the Babylonians, including the story of creation. Only fragments of this history remain, and what has survived is known to us only through second-hand sources; it is from the works of Eusebius and Josephus that we learn what he wrote. Since excavation has made us familiar with the story of Babylonia, we know—what was previously doubted—that he accurately reproduced the ancient Babylonian stories current in his day. The account of the primitive revelation which he copied from some ancient source reads in the version which has come down to us as follows: "In the first year (after creation) there appeared from the Erythrean sea which borders on Babylonia, a Being gifted with reason whose name was Oannes . . . his voice and language were human and his picture is still preserved. This Being, they say, abode during the day with mankind, eating nothing, he taught them the knowledge of writing and numbers and arts of every kind. He taught them to construct houses, to found temples, how laws should be made and the land cultivated. He explained seeds and harvesting of crops, things necessary to civilised life he taught men. Since that time nothing has

surpassed this instruction. At sunset this being, Oannes, went again into the sea. Oannes wrote a book (logos) concerning creation and citizenship" (see Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, and Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*).

How much of this reflects the original story and how much later legend? Oannes is stated to have been the original instructor of mankind; an old Babylonian account said that "for six days he instructed Alorus (according to the story, Alorus was the first man who reigned) and when the sun went down he withdrew till next morning". The Babylonians knew nothing whatever of a *creation* in six days; the reference is quite clearly to an occasion when *six days' instruction* was given and according to Berossus this *instruction* represents the original book of revelation.

These stories are very persistent in Babylonia and took various forms. They claimed very much the same for the god Ea as was claimed for Oannes, and there are sufficiently good reasons for saying that precisely the same functions are ascribed to both. When these Sumerian creation stories got into the hands of the Babylonian priests, they introduced their favourite gods into them and let their mythological ideas run riot. Ea is the personification of water, he is lord of *Apsu*, the celestial ocean as well as the terrestrial ocean. The Babylonians persistently represented their gods as having originated in the sea. *Apsu* is 'the house of wisdom' for out of it arises the wisdom of Ea. The temple at Eridu, situated at that time on the edge of the Persian Gulf, was called E-apsu, 'the house of the deep'. Ea was regarded by the Babylonians as the teacher of mankind. His name appears repeatedly on the Babylonian tablets of creation and in the version which comes from Eridu (one of the oldest habitations of man), Ea is the creator of mankind. The Babylonians had, at one time, Anu as god for the heavens, Enlil for the earth, and Ea as god of the water, hence the insistence of water as the abode of that god. Ea is regarded as the "creator of the race of men", the "god of wisdom, the lord of knowledge. He knows all things". He is referred to as the divine man.

The Babylonian priests said that Nabu was the "god of writing" and that the art of writing was transmitted to man-

kind through him. Under the name of Nebo he is mentioned in the Old Testament (Isa. xlvi. 1). On Babylonian tablets he is described as "the bearer of the tablets of destiny", thus identifying him with Ea. We are told that "when Ea created first man he gave him 'divine power, a broad mind . . . and lent him wisdom'" (Jeremias, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, Vol. I, p. 47). These tablets are referred to as the tablets upon which "the commandments of the gods and the life of man are written". This mode of thought is constant in ancient Babylonian literature, though inextricably mixed up with crude ideas about their gods. In his *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion of the Ancient Babylonia* (p. 373) Professor Sayce wrote, "A curious point in connection with the legend (of Cutha) is the description of chaos at a time when writing was as yet unknown and records unkept. Perhaps we may see in this an allusion to the fact that the Babylonian histories of the pre-human period were supposed to have been composed by the gods."

That the Babylonians regarded these tablets of destiny as a revelation there can be little question, for we are told that "Enmeduranki, one of the seven primeval kings, received the secrets of Anu (Ea), the tablet of the gods, the tablet of . . . the mystery of the heaven, and taught them to his son" (Vol. I, p. 83). The title given on the colophon of this Babylonian tablet is "tablet of the secrets of the heaven and earth"; according to Berossus it is the celestial book of revelation. The similarity of this title and that in the Genesis colophon will be noted.

Perhaps one other thing should be mentioned, but not pressed. Jeremias says (Vol. I, p. 51), "Berossus, who knows of a multiple revelation of the Divine Wisdom in different ages of the Universe, relates in his Babylonian history of the Deluge that Kronos commanded Xisuthros (the Babylonian Noah) to inscribe everything, the beginning, middle, and end, in written signs and to deposit it in Sippar (the Babylonian priest Berossus could only mean tablets, perhaps the book of legends of Oannes is meant)." And Professor Langdon states, "The numerous Neo-Babylonian tablets published in Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian tablets in the British Museum,

probably come from *Sippar* or Agade." There I leave a highly interesting Babylonian tradition about the transmission of early records through their Noah.

The place occupied by Oannes and Ea in Babylonian stories is, in Egyptian traditions, taken by Thoth. This god, whom the Egyptians represent as having a human body with the head of an Ibis, was regarded as the source of all wisdom. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge says that Thoth "was thought to be a form of the mind and intellect and wisdom of God who created the heavens and the earth, the picture characters, or hieroglyphs as they are called, were held to be holy, or divine, or sacred"; "He was lord of wisdom and possessor of all knowledge, both heavenly and earthly, divine and human" (*The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 1). To him is ascribed the origination of speech, writing and civilisation. In the early days the Egyptians invented gods by the hundred, yet, amongst the most ancient of these, Thoth is represented as holding a writing palette and a reed pen.

As far back as it is possible to go in Egyptian history, to the First Dynasty, they had a perfected system of writing. At first this picture writing was probably not difficult to understand, but when it became semi-alphabetic, the signs lost much if not all their meaning and became far from easy to decipher. It was called picture writing because every sign is a picture of some creature or thing. It must be understood however that the Egyptians did not express their ideas merely by drawings or pictures, they wrote down words even in the earliest times, words which can be spelt and grammar which can be studied, just as one can Greek or Latin. The Egyptians maintained that it was Thoth who taught mankind to write, that he was also 'lord of the voice', master of speech. In Genesis i. 14 we read, "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*." The word used for 'signs' is 'thot' and means 'to mark', or 'describe with a mark'.

Eusebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica* says in regard to the ancient Phoenician ideas of the origin of the world that 'Tauthe' (the Thoth of the Egyptians) "invented writing and recorded the history of the first Cause".

Another ancient document is "The Asatir", the Samaritan *Book of the Secrets of Moses*. It was first translated from the Samaritan script and became known by Dr. Gaster's publication of it in 1927. He says, "I claim for the *Secrets of Moses* that it is the oldest book in existence of this kind of literature." It was compiled, he says, "about the middle or end of the third century B.C.". The Samaritans hold the book in high esteem and ascribe it to Moses, and say that the old tradition "has been preserved unaltered down to our very days". In chapter iii. 9 of this book it states that Adam possessed three books and that "In seven years he (Noah) learned the three books of creation: the Book of Signs, the Book of Astronomy and the Book of the wars which is the Book of the generations of Adam". Dr. Gaster says (p. 36) that the Samaritans "declared the calculation of the Calendar to be a Divine revelation made to Adam, Genesis i. 14, where the luminaries are set into the heavens to be for 'signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years', has been taken by the Samaritans to prove that from the very beginning . . . this knowledge had been imparted to Adam". Much is written about the Book of Signs which was given to Adam (ii. 7), and Enoch is said to have "learned from the Book of Signs" which was given to Adam. In ii. 12 it is said that "Adam started reading the Book of Signs before his sons". Noah obtained possession of it (iii. 9) and in iv. 15 it is said that Noah gave it to Arpachshad, from Arpachshad the knowledge was handed down to Abraham, to Joseph, to Moses (p. 36). This *Book of Asatir* shows that there were glimmerings of truth which had become overlaid by tradition. It contains absurd corruptions and in this respect is a manifest contrast to the first page of the Bible. If the Book of Signs was, as the Samaritans teach, that referred to in Genesis i. 14, then it is possible that "*the Book of the Wars which is the Book of the generations of Adam*" is our Genesis ii. 5 to v. 1, which in our English translation is called 'the book of the generations of Adam'. It is significant that not a little of this section has to do with warfare, first against the tempter in Eden, next with the expulsion from Paradise, then the murder of Abel by Cain, resulting in the sentence against Cain a "fugitive and

vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" (iv. 12) and Cain's lament that "it shall come to pass that everyone that findeth me shall slay me". It is clear that as early as the third century B.C. the Samaritans held that the contents of the first chapter of Genesis had been communicated to Adam.

With the common Hebrew and Samaritan tradition about these ancient records as having been handed down to Noah, the oldest Babylonian accounts generally agree. Berossus writing also in the third century B.C. gives the Babylonian account of the ten rulers who lived 'before the Flood' and relates that the seventh (comparable with Enoch) was named Edoranchus, the equivalent of Enmeduranki. A fragmentary text which was found has been published by Zimmern (*Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Bab: Religion*) it describes how this person was given the secret of the gods Anu, Bel and Ea, the written tablets of the gods, "the mystery of the heaven and earth".

These ancient stories make it impossible to resist the oldest convictions of men that they have come down to us from the earliest times of mankind.

The question will be asked to whom was this creation narrative revealed in the six days? The Babylonians said it was to first man and this was known to the Egyptians. More than two thousand years ago the Jews had their own beliefs about it, and in more recent years some additional ancient books containing these beliefs have been discovered. One of these books has been lost to scholars for over one thousand two hundred years, it is known as *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, or as the title of one version renders it, "These are the secret books of God which were shown unto Enoch". It is known as the 'Slavonic' Enoch, and was discovered in 1892: parts of it were originally written in Hebrew and Greek. It is old enough to be quoted in the first century for it was written before the Christian era. Its chief interest to us is the information it gives of the beliefs about the revelation of the account of creation current in the days of our Lord. Amongst much irrational extravagance and senseless fantasy it purports to be a description of Enoch's translation to the seventh heaven and says, "And the Lord spake to me Enoch . . . I

will tell thee now, even from the first, what things I created . . . not even to the angels have I told my secrets, nor have I informed them of their origin, nor have they understood my infinite creation which I tell thee of to-day. . . . And I separated between the light and the darkness . . . and it was so . . . and I said to the light 'let it be day' and to the darkness 'let it be night'. And the evening and the morning were the first day' . . . and thus I caused the waters below which are under the heaven to be gathered in one place and the waves should be dried up and it was so. Then it was evening and again morning the second day." One version states, "On it God showed to Enoch all His wisdom and power: during all the seven days how He created the powers of the heaven and earth and all moving things and at last man." Again chapter xxxiii, "And now Enoch what things I have told thee and what thou hast understood and what heavenly things thou hast seen upon the earth and what thou hast (one version has 'I have') written in the books by My wisdom all these things I devised so as to create them . . . do thou take the books which thou thyself hath written . . . and go with them upon the earth and tell thy sons what things I have said to thee. . . . Give them the works written out by thee and they shall read them and know Me to be the Creator of all and shall understand that there is no other God beside Me." On this Dr. Charles comments, "This was the ancient belief of the Jews, from being the scribe of God's works as he is universally in the Ethiopic and Slavonic Enoch." It was the popular belief that Enoch who prophesied of a second coming referred the first coming to the time when God came to Adam. It is stated thus, "Listen, my sons, In those days when the Lord came upon the earth for the sake of Adam and visited all his creation which He Himself had made, the Lord called all the cattle . . ." Again (chapter lxiv), "For thou art before the face of the Lord for ever, since God hath chosen thee above all men upon the earth, and has appointed thee as the *scribe of His creation* of visible and invisible things."

It is clear therefore that in Old Testament times the current belief was of a *revelation* to First Man and to Enoch and of 'heavenly tablets'. Constant reference is made to God

teaching man to write. This is further illustrated in another book called I. Enoch or the Ethiopic Enoch which was written in the second century before Christ. It tells of Enoch the Scribe and much about the 'heavenly tablets' which had been written and passed down to succeeding generations by Enoch. It will be seen that the testimony which archaeology has to give is of considerable importance.

Unexpectedly, our investigation has brought us back to a revelation in the earliest times of man. Both the Hebrew, the Samaritan, the Greek writings current in Palestine during the two centuries before Christ, and the old Babylonian traditions, assert a transmission of writings about creation down from the beginning of time to Enoch and Noah.

CHAPTER VIII

EVIDENCES OF ANTIQUITY

THERE has been general agreement among Biblical scholars that the first narrative of Genesis is very ancient, but divergent views have been held as to the date it was first put into writing.

The view current from the Middle Ages to the early part of the nineteenth century was that the account of creation was based upon a primitive revelation made known to the Patriarchs and first put into writing by Moses, though some held that the narrative was first revealed to Moses. The main reason for this view was that before the days of excavation few could conceive that writing was sufficiently known in the time of the Genesis Patriarchs to enable them to possess a *written* account. Indeed commentators in the early part of the last century found it difficult to assert—for there was then very little evidence to support it—that writing was practised even as early as the time of Moses.

The 'liberal critical' view is that the first chapter of Genesis was put into writing by an unknown writer, or school of writers, about the eighth century B.C. But many of them, however, freely concede that this alleged unknown writer took

an earlier account, or an oral tradition which had been handed down among the Hebrews from the remote past and put it into the form in which it appears at the beginning of the Bible. A more extreme critical view (which in Chapter VI we have seen to be unreasonable) is that after the Exile some unknown writer took the crude Babylonian accounts and purified them of their absurdities and so constructed this account.

Does the narrative itself give any clue as to the time when it was written? In addition to the ancient literary methods referred to in Chapter V, there are, I think, some pieces of evidence which should assist us in ascertaining its chronological place in the Old Testament.

Perhaps the most significant fact about it is that *it contains no reference whatever to any event subsequent to the creation of man and woman, and of what God then said to them.* The significance of the omission of all later events may best be judged by comparing this record with every other account extant, not merely those existing in the eighth century B.C. but those current centuries later, it then becomes impressive. It has been said that "every religion has tried to give some explanation of the universe in which we live. All are either fantastic or puerile or else disgusting". For instance, the Babylonian version, which is known to go back to a period before the days of Abraham, contains references to events of a relatively late date, such as the building of Babylon, and the erection of various city temples.

Another thing of considerable significance is that all the references in this first chapter *are universal in their application and unlimited in their scope. We find no mention of any particular tribe or nation or country, or of any merely local ideas or customs. Everything relates to the earth as a whole and to mankind without reference to race.* Compared with the second narrative, the difference in this respect is very illuminating; in the second there are historical notes; we are told that the cradle of the human race was near the rivers Hiddekel, Euphrates, Pison and Gihon. References are made to later developments, to Ethiopia, to Assyria, to gold, and bdellium. These notes regarding countries, rivers and minerals have been included in the second narrative in order to explain the geographical situation and circumstances. They are absent

from the first narrative. Every other account of creation extant contains some references to a limited historical or purely national outlook. All who handled this account throughout these earlier ages must have regarded it as so sacred that they refrained from altering its primitive character by adding anything to it.

Another instance of its unique antiquity may be seen in the childlike simplicity with which reference is made to the Sun and the Moon. These are referred to simply as the 'greater and lesser lights'. It is well known that astronomy is one of the most ancient, if not the oldest of all the branches of knowledge. It originated in Babylonia—the land from whence the Father of the Hebrew race came, and long before the days of Abraham Babylonian writers had given names to both the Sun and Moon; moreover we cannot disregard the persistent tradition that Abraham was well versed in the astronomy of his day. When he lived at Ur certainly, that city was renowned for its worship of the Moon god named '*Sin*', while the Sun god named '*Shamesh*' was one of the oldest and best known of all the gods in the Babylonian pantheon. I have in my possession many seals and tablets written long before Abraham was born, on which the Babylonian names *Shamesh* and *Sin* occur. Yet this account must have been written before these ancient names had been given to the Sun and the Moon, which means it must have been written before the days of Noah.

The brevity of the narrative is a further indication of its ancient character. If this account is compared with the Babylonian series of six tablets of 'creation', it will be seen that the Bible uses only one-fortieth the number of words. Writing in the earliest days was necessarily brief and later became more extended.

In regard to the idea that an alleged eighth-century writer eliminated not only all mythical and legendary matter, but also any reference subsequent to the creation of first man, this idea is not tenable in the light of certain other characteristics of the narrative. For instance, there is the statement, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness". This has often been explained as the 'plural of majesty', but, as Professor Skinner says, "The difficulty of the first person plural

has always been felt". Surely it is impossible to imagine an Hebrew writer of the eighth or of any century originating such a sentence. Neither is it reasonable to suppose that any Hebrew into whose hands this document fell would leave it there if he knew that he had the right either to edit or suppress it. The narrative must have been ancient and held to be so sacred that notwithstanding their belief in one God this statement was regarded as unalterable. The main characteristic of the Old Testament writers, living as they did in a country surrounded by nations whose ideas were polytheistic, was their intense monotheistic faith, summarised in the statement, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord".

An argument precisely the opposite to that which asserts deletions and corrections of an ancient text, is that put forward by Dr. Driver and Dr. Skinner and others, in an endeavour to explain the narrative as an attempt by an alleged eighth-century writer to incorporate into this ancient account of creation a reference to the sabbath day. They say that he did this by artificially dividing the narrative into six days of work and one of rest, so as to enable him to make a dramatic reference to rest on the sabbath day. Thus we find one school of writers asserting that everything which is subsequent to creation has been expunged from the original account, while the other says that this unknown writer deliberately introduced into it something which they think is of a later date. When we turn from these speculations about the sabbath to the narrative itself we see that the *sabbath* is never referred to. It is simply called the *seventh day*. On any rational and even 'critical' grounds this would be regarded as clear evidence that the narrative had been written before the word *sabbath* had been introduced, or at least before it had become a common name in the vocabulary of the people to describe the seventh day's rest. It is surely more reasonable to say that the document is ancient than that the alleged eighth-century writer set himself the task of intertwining the idea of six days' work and a sabbath rest into the narrative of creation yet avoiding even mentioning the word sabbath. The omission of the all-important word is clear evidence against this theory, and good evidence of the antiquity of Genesis i.

In previous chapters we have noticed that for six days God told man about creation, and that from the earliest times in Babylonia the story of creation was written on six tablets. The assumption at present prevailing is that early ideas about creation were transmitted orally and there can be no doubt that this did often happen, though one thing that archaeology has shown us is that the ancients committed even trivial things to writing at a very early period and that their traditions often refer to a primeval revelation to first man.

Was this Genesis record transmitted to subsequent generations by word of mouth? Dillman, arguing against any possibility of accuracy in an oral transmission, writes, "The creation of the world was certainly never a matter of human experience. Where, then, can anyone get knowledge of it, to tell us? This question must be faced. On its answer depends our whole conception of the passage. First of all, it is evident that the account is not a free poetic invention of the author. In his whole work he represents himself always as a historian, not as a poet. What he narrates, he held also to have happened, or found it reported as having happened" (Genesis, Vol. I, p. 28). "Important external events, highly influential in the history of man, are forgotten; how then should an occurrence, so purely in the mental sphere as the one here under consideration, be preserved and transmitted by human memory? Besides there would be poor guarantee for the truth of this narrative if, like that of all other history, it had to be founded upon the credibility of a chain of external tradition" (p. 99). But if as he says, "in the main the authority gives what has been handed down by tradition, still the question arises, when has this tradition its origin? To this formerly it was simply answered that it rested ultimately on a special Divine revelation . . . but that hypothesis of a Divine revelation about the process of creation does not merely fail to furnish what it should, because on account of the length of the chain of tradition a guarantee for the undistorted tradition could not possibly exist, but is in itself untenable". He then explains why a primitive revelation is considered by him to be impossible because "it is dependent upon the formation of language" and "full development of the thinking faculty.

Before these powers existed there could be no word of revelation dealing with such a question", and adds rather weakly "that we should not look for light on this".

Dillman is of course right in implying that a revelation is useless unless the man to whom it is made can understand speech, and meaningless unless he has a mind capable of comprehending such a revelation. Probably he is also right when he doubts the possibility of the human memory retaining in a pure state a revelation which is transmitted orally over a long period. It must however be remembered that Dillman's assumptions are clearly contrary to the Bible statements as to first man, for the Genesis narratives explicitly state that he was made in the image and likeness of God, endowed with a brain and given the faculty of speech, and made capable of assigning names to animals.

It has been said that early man speculated about the origin of things and that this first chapter of Genesis is the result of these speculations. Is it possible to imagine that some writer thought things out as best he could, writing this narrative as the result of his reflections? To suggest this as a solution would imply that the speculations of this alleged eighth-century writer are nothing less than miraculous in their insight. If the chapter is no more than the ideas of a human mind, how comes it, that in the words of Professor Wade, the account is so accurate that he writes "of the inherent improbability of an ancient writing anticipating accurately the conclusions of modern science" (*Old Testament History*, p. 41). It is not practicable to suppose that this chapter is merely a miracle of literary insight, seeing how absurd were all the other prevailing ideas of a creation. It is far more reasonable to believe that it is a revelation than that some unknown writer made so perfect a guess at it.

Apart from the Genesis record, does the Bible throw any light on how man originally became possessed of his wisdom? Some information on this will be found in Appendix II.

The fact that this account of creation (a) does not contain any reference whatever to any event subsequent to the creation of first man and woman and what God said to them, and (b) all its references are universal in their application and scope,

no mention being made of any particular tribe or country or customs, and (c) that the current names for the Sun and Moon do not appear but that they are simply called the greater and lesser lights, and (d) it contains the plural 'us' which no late writer would ever have dared to use, and (e) the use of the word 'seventh' instead of 'sabbath', all show that this first page of the Bible is very ancient indeed.

CHAPTER IX

CREATION IN GENESIS—GRADUAL OR INSTANTANEOUS?

DOES THE Bible anywhere suggest a measurement or limit of time for the acts or processes of creation? Is creation in its comprehensiveness as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis stated to have been accomplished suddenly, as instantaneously say as a flash of lightning, at a given moment of time, or does the Genesis narrative imply that God worked gradually, by successive acts or processes extending over an unspecified period of time? In other words, does Genesis state whether the Creator of the heavens and the earth worked by a sudden or by a gradual method?

I submit that the only references to time in connection with creation are those relating to the six days of *revelation* of the narrative, and that there is no reference whatever to the time occupied by God in creating the universe and all things on it. The significance of the six divisions of the narrative have already been discussed, and we have seen that neither in Old nor in New Testament times were men interested in the speculations as to how long the heavens and the earth and life had existed; nor did they concern themselves with the precise methods or processes by which God caused things to be. For them it was sufficient that the first narrative of the Bible meant that God was, in the most real sense, the Creator of all things in heaven and earth. On one point all commentators have been in general agreement, that obviously the narrative tells of successive acts, and it is quite clear that all acts of creation were not accomplished all at once. In this

sense they were gradual and it is significant that there is no appeal in the Bible to any speed of action on the part of God. In all the references to creation the impression produced is of a considerable period of time. An instance may be seen in Psalm xc, "Thou Lord hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. . . . For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night". In Psalm cxlv. 13 we read, "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations", or "of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of Thy hands" (Ps. cii. 25). Here the impression left on the mind is not that of brevity of time; there is order and succession on a vast scale. There is no suggestion of a crowding into a few hours the great works of creation, and not the slightest implication anywhere that material things were of comparatively recent creation. The references are to eternities in the past.

Even subsequent to Biblical times there was very little speculation concerning the age of the universe, or of the time taken for the formation of the earth's crust, or of the length of time man had been on the earth. Until inquiry by scientific methods had been developed, men were not very much concerned with a quest for knowledge in these directions. But long before science had awakened questions on these problems, men like Origen in the second, and Augustine in the third century, held that the days of Genesis were not normal twenty-four-hour days, but that creation had extended over long periods of time. On the other hand writers like Milton had adopted the 'instantaneous or sudden' view which he represents in *Paradise Lost* in this way:

The sixth and of Creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin; when God said,
 Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
 Cattle and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
 Each in their kind. The earth obeyed, and, straight
 Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
 Innumerable living creatures perfect forms
 Limbed and full grown. Out of the ground uprose,

As from his lair, the wild beast, where he was
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake or den
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked ;
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green :
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once and in broad herds, upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calved : now half appeared
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts—then springs, as broke from bonds
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce
 The libbard, and the tiger ; as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks ; the swift stag from underground
 Bore up his branching head ; scarce from his mould
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved.

If this does not mean instantaneous creation, then it implies something very nearly approaching it, for the poet is endeavouring to represent the completion of animal creation before nightfall on the sixth day. It is surely significant that there is nothing whatever in Scripture comparable with Milton's description of creatures "limbed and full grown" out of the ground uprose ; or of the "tawny lion pawing to get free his hinder parts" ; or of "the tiger, as the mole rising the crumbled earth above them threw".

A contemporary of Milton's, Dr. John Lightfoot, a great scholar and Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, wrote that man was created "at nine o'clock in the morning".

This Miltonic idea of 'speed' in creation became current and it was against the poet's conception that the nineteenth century reacted so extravagantly. As frequently happens in such a burst of impetuosity, the pendulum was violently swung out of control in the opposite direction. Even scientists vied with each other in adding hundreds of millions of years to the time they required for the origin and development of the earth and of life on it, including human life. This was taken to such extremes that the process known as 'throwing away the baby with the bath water' took place, men jettisoned not only their fallible human interpretations of what they imagined the first chapter of Genesis to mean, a six days' creation ; they went further, some abandoned all real belief in God, substituting 'evolution' as a merely mechanical process in place

of a Creator, as though this could be an alternative creative agency. All that was needed, it was said, is a sufficient number of millions of years, and an explanation can be given of the development of the heavens and the formation of the earth, the variety and distribution of plant and animal life including man, all without reference to God. The mental refuge in this attempt to eliminate God as Creator was an unstinted number of millions of years. Given a figure of sufficient magnitude, it was assumed that almost anything could have happened in such a period of time without requiring a First or Continuing Cause. Of course the real scientists were careful to explain that the vast number of millions of years of which they wrote were merely speculations, and their ideas only theories. When however their time periods and theories were disseminated in popular form, they were often believed by the general public to be scientifically ascertained facts. But it has transpired that scientific research, instead of strengthening, has often weakened these theories, and some scientists have made it plain that they retain their antipathy to Genesis, not on scientific grounds, but just because they cannot reconcile their unbelief in the existence of God, or their idea of what the six days mean with their scientific findings. An instance of this may be seen in Professor D. M. S. Watson's statement to a British Association meeting in 1929, that "the theory of evolution is a theory universally accepted, not because it can be proved to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible".

Although the reaction against the idea of an instantaneous creation, which had grown up during the medieval ages, reached its climax in the nineteenth century, its gradually diminishing acceptance was in part due to a more scientific understanding of the heavens and the earth. When Galileo explained that the earth moved round the sun and not the sun round the earth, the opposition was due not to any time factor, but to false astronomical assumptions not derivable from the Bible. When Newton published his ideas about gravitation and the movements of the heavenly bodies, the criticism was not on grounds of Scripture, for the believer in a Creator could then with even greater meaning use the words of

the Psalmist and say that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork" and Newton, devout believer as he was, also took this point of view. However, some interpreted his discovery in such a way as to say that "the heavens now declare the glory of the laws of mechanics, and the firmament showeth that they are held together by gravitation". It was this substitution of scientific laws, as though they could take the place of a Creator, which prompted Laplace to say that he could explain the movements of the heavens without reference to God. When Herschel made the nebular hypothesis popular as an explanation of the formation of the earth, it seemed to some that it implied an accidental origin and therefore that it was contrary to Scripture. That theory supposed that the sun while in a gaseous state threw off a section which had protruded from its rim, and that this detached portion, while still travelling at a distance from the sun, condensed over an enormously long period of time, gradually forming into the planet earth. Modern astronomers, however, declare that this theory is scientifically untenable, but at that time it served its purpose in some minds as an account of the origin of the earth without mentioning God. Meanwhile those engaged in the study of geology wrote of the enormous length of time necessary for the formation of the various layers in the crust of the earth. When Lyell produced his *Antiquity of Man*, it was the time element which was regarded as a direct challenge to the Genesis narrative. Soon after Darwin published his *Origin of Species*, insisting on millions of years for the processes of selection and variation, it was this time note again, in addition to its merely mechanistic explanation, which was seized upon as a direct contradiction to the six days of Genesis.

Those who maintained that the days in the Genesis record were literal twenty-four-hour periods found their interpretation increasingly difficult to defend, for the current of scientific opinion was flowing strongly against them, but strangely enough it never seems to have occurred to them that they should test and verify their assumption that God had confined all His creative actions to a period of less than a week. An instance may be seen in the way Philip Henry Gosse, an

eminent zoologist and Fellow of the Royal Society, and a convinced believer in the integrity of the Genesis narrative, tried to stem the rising tide of criticism by a book he wrote in 1858 called *Omphalos* in which he maintained that creation was accomplished in 144 hours. His son, Sir Edmund Gosse, describes its contents as follows: "It was, very briefly, that there had been no gradual modification of the surface of the earth, or slow development of organic forms, but that when the catastrophic act of creation took place the world presented, instantly the structural appearance of a planet on which life had long existed." The popular press of the time said that this book assumed "that God hid the fossils in the rocks in order to tempt geologists into infidelity", and his friend, the celebrated Charles Kingsley, wrote to Gosse that he could not "give up the painful and slow conclusion of five and twenty years' study of geology and believe that God had written on the rocks one enormous and superfluous lie".

It will be seen therefore that the divergence of thought between the Bible and science is almost entirely concerned with the problem of *the time occupied* by the Creator in *His* creation. It is true that some scientists have produced a far greater divergence by attempting to account for all things without any Creator at all. But it is this time note, and not any question as to the order in which things appeared, which has created the main conflict, for the order is remarkably accurate. The disagreement is between the fallible interpretation which alleges 'speed' on the part of God in His creation and to the findings of science which assert that these things occurred over immensely long periods of time.

We have already noted that Christian thinkers agreed that the creation of the universe did occupy an immense period of time, but their solution of the days of Genesis was not convincing.

It is significant that just at the time when science was producing its evidence of a slow succession of events—the very year that Darwin published his *Descent of Man*—Mr. George Smith issued his *Chaldean Genesis* in which he explained as much as was at that time known of the literary methods of writing used in the then recently discovered fragments of

tablets recording the Babylonian story of the creation. Had the literary information which archaeology has brought to light been applied to the problem of the 'days', no scholar would have continued to interpret the first chapter of Genesis other than as a six days' *narration or revelation* and not as a six days' *creation*.

It would take us too far from our purpose to discuss the philosophic ideas of time in relation to God. The ninetyeth Psalm already quoted makes it plain that man's ideas of time can have no place in regard to God's creative work.

In the light of the evidence already given that the 'days' refer to the *period of revelation* and not of *acts of creation*, and if we bear in mind that 'a miracle is not necessarily something quick', all difficulties vanish. No one can doubt that God could create instantaneously, that is not the point at issue; the question is, did He so act? Some of the older theologians assumed that He did; if however we discover from the record that this assumption is incorrect, and if accurate scientific research shows that this is not the way He so acted, there cannot be any conflict between His work and His Word, the clash is between our interpretation either of Genesis or of Science.

Does Genesis imply that God created instantaneously or gradually? I submit that the Bible narrative gives clear evidence against the former view. In the first place the record certainly implies that God created things successively in time as well as in order; next the statements, "Let there be . . . and there was," do not in any way imply an instantaneous completion. Light, for instance, is swift in its movement but it takes nine hours for the light of the sun travelling at 186,000 miles a second to reach the earth. When we read, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly", there is not the slightest suggestion of a time limit, no hint that the teeming abundance was accomplished in a flash, or in other than God's normal way of working.

Those who hold that each of the days commenced with an ordinary night got into serious difficulties at the very beginning. When did the darkness of that first night begin seeing that before light was created there had been nothing but darkness? Yet if it is impossible to say when the ordinary

night began on this first day, it is not possible to determine the beginning of the first day. When we read, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place and let the dry land appear and it was so", or, "Let the earth bring forth grass and herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind", there is not the slightest reason for supposing that it all took place in a few hours; there is no suggestion of a miraculous drying of the earth, so that grass and vegetable life could be full grown within twenty-four hours of the time when the earth had been covered with waters.

Fifteen hundred years ago Augustine wrote in his *De Genesi ad Litteram*, "Let us, therefore, consider the beauty of any tree you like, in respect of its trunk, branches, leaves, fruit; this species did not, of course, suddenly spring up of this character and size, but in that order with which we are familiar. For it rose from the root which the first sprout fixed in the earth, and from this all these formed and distinct parts grew. Further the sprout sprung from seed."

There is very definite evidence that speed was *not* an element in the creation for instance of the man and woman; both were not created on the same day. In the 27th verse of the first chapter of Genesis, it is said, "Male and female created He them." Had this verse stood alone it might have been assumed that this creation of the first pair was something done together and quickly. But it is very obvious from the second chapter that a great deal happened between the creation of the man and the creation of the woman. After the account of the creation of man and before the creation of woman, we read that "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom He had formed, and out of the ground made the Lord God to *grow* (no suggestion of haste here, but the very reverse) every tree", etc., "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it". It was not until after these events that we read of God saying, "it is not good that man should be *alone*, I will make an help meet for him". Still another incident is recorded before woman was made for man. "God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air" to him "to see what he would

call them and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found any help meet for him”.

So in regard to the creation of man and woman—about which there is more information than concerning the making of the heaven and earth—instead of any statement which would imply a completion in one day, there is definite evidence to the contrary. It is therefore quite obvious from this one instance that the acts and processes narrated on the days had not been completed on ordinary days, so that the twenty-four-hour day creation or recreation is *contrary to Scripture*. How God made man we are not told, apart from the fact that he was an exceptional creation made in the image and likeness of his Maker. Body and soul were so made that the completed product was in God’s image, a person to whom God could talk, and who could talk to God.

It is surely significant that nowhere in the Bible is any event dated from the beginning of creation of the earth. Yet some have assumed that ‘suddenness’ is an essential element of it. Sir William Dawson, the geologist, referring to Psalm civ, which is the poetic version of the first chapter of Genesis, says (Expositor 3rd Series, Vol. 3, p. 289), “The work marches on in slow and solemn grandeur without any reference to the days. Again there is not anywhere in the Bible a hint that the work of creation was remarkable as being done in a short time. Some of us have no doubt been taught in childhood that God’s power was wonderfully shown in His creating the world in a short space of six days, but there is nothing of this in the Old or the New Testament.”

Precisely how long ago God created the heavens and the earth we do not know. Astronomers and geologists have made suggestions as to times and methods. Except in the case of man the narrative of Genesis does not tell us any detail of the process, or state what period of time was involved. Genesis tells us something that scientists cannot; science can know little or nothing about origins; in the very nature of the case they are quite unable to say what happened ‘in the beginning’. Genesis however does tell us that God was the Originator and Controller.

CHAPTER X

SCIENCE AND THE NARRATIVE OF CREATION

HISTORIES have been written about the alleged conflict between the interpretations of the narrative of creation and the opinions of scientists. Most of these volumes make melancholy reading today. It is now more generally realised that the conflict is not between the Bible and science, but between some popular interpretations of the Bible and the speculative theories of science. When three quarters of a century ago Dr. Draper wrote *The Conflict between Science and Religion* he prophesied that religion would be expelled by scientific thought. Yet, within purely scientific limits, the relations between them are more satisfactory now than since scientific research began. There is a clearer understanding that each has a right to be heard in its own sphere. Much of the controversy was due to the clash between the tentative conjectures of science and the speculative interpretations of the creation narrative. On both sides rapid generalisations were advanced only to be as quickly abandoned. It is now realised that the Bible and science are not necessarily alternative methods of explaining origins. It is not that the one must be real and the other false; neither is it rational to reject the one in order to accept the other. Science can render valuable service by discrediting an explanation of the text of the Genesis narrative which is based upon unjustifiable assumptions and consequently not valid; and Scripture can rescue scientists from a false philosophy, which, venturing beyond the bounds of true scientific research, would deny that the universe had a Creator and Sustainer.

Yet it would be foolish to suggest that the point of view recorded in Genesis and that of some scientific writers about origins is one and the same. Often it is contradictory, but this contradiction is sometimes due to science leaving its proper sphere by indulging in philosophic speculations about origins, and asserting either the non-existence of a Creator, or that the process of creation owes nothing to a Creator. If a scientist

takes this attitude, then the conflict is absolute and the two views cannot but wage an endless war.

We owe more than is generally acknowledged to scientific research, for there is an element of truth in Sir John Seeley's remark "that the God worshipped by the astronomer and the geologist, dwelling as they do in the immensities of space and time, is greater and more wonderful than the God of the average Christian". Doubtless the scientist who acknowledges God as the Creator, has a more adequate conception of His works of creation; it is however very questionable whether he has a greater knowledge of the Creator than, say, David or Paul. We owe more than can be told to those scientists, who by patient research, discover the methods by which God has been working, and few things are more noticeable in the present day than the acknowledgment by leading scientists that there is a sense of mystery beyond the bounds of any explanation which can be given by physics or biology or chemistry.

It will perhaps be useful to take the Genesis statements about creation and to see what modern science has to say about them.

"In beginning."

Strangely enough there has never been any difference of opinion over these opening words. Science as much as Scripture bases its belief on a beginning (though recently when talking with an eminent scientist, he told me that a few days before his friend, J. B. S. Haldane, had remarked to him, that as he had no belief in God, he had no reason to think that there ever was a beginning). Yet it must have been as difficult to the ancient as to modern man to conceive of a time when no part whatever of the universe existed. A few scientists, because they have denied the existence of God, have also toyed with the idea of 'no beginning', but there has never been any serious controversy about this first statement in the Bible. Scientists generally agree that if they are certain about anything, they are sure of this, that the universe had at a point in time a beginning. Sir James Jeans writes of "what we may describe as a 'creation' at a time not infinitely remote". The

alternative is the infinite regress, at which the mind falters. Current theories of modern science confirm this opening statement of Genesis. When the beginning occurred the narrative does not say, but scientists assert that its beginning must be dated an immense time ago.

“God.”

It is here that the first possibility of a clash reveals itself, but any disagreement does not come from science as such. Genesis asserts that the universe is not self-existent, that it had a start, and with this science generally agrees. But Genesis goes further and says that it had a Starter, and there are many scientific discoveries which confirm this. Perhaps the most impressive piece of scientific evidence is that given by the second law of thermo-dynamics, entropy. According to this law, the universe must have been wound up like a clock and it has since been gradually running down. In other words the organisation of the energy of the universe is diminishing. Sir Ambrose Fleming states (*Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, Vol. LXVIII), “Such effects as the dissipation of energy, the increase of entropy, the transformation of matter into radiation, and the spontaneous change of radio-active matter into non-radio-active matter, all support the truth of the conception that the physical universe had a beginning in Acts of Creation and was not self-produced nor infinite in past duration. Also that, left to itself, it will have an end. Moreover this ‘running down’ which is thus disclosed is the very opposite of any Evolution in the sense of a spontaneous advance. It gives denial to any assertion that the universe is the result of a set of ‘happy accidents’ or freaks or casual combinations or any mode of operations which dispenses with the necessity for belief in a creation and therefore in a Creator.” Sullivan, in his *Limitations of Science* writes, “But the fact that the energy of the universe will be more disorganised tomorrow than it is today implies, of course, the fact that the energy of the universe is more highly organised today than it will be tomorrow, and that it was more highly organised yesterday than it is today. Following the process backwards we find a more and more highly organised universe. This backward

tracing in time cannot be continued indefinitely. Organisation cannot, as it were, mount up and up without limit. There is a definite maximum, and this definite maximum must have been in existence a finite time ago. And it is impossible that this state of perfect organisation could have been evolved from some less perfect state. Nor is it possible that the universe could have persisted for eternity in that state of perfect organisation and then suddenly, a finite time ago, have begun to pursue its present path. Thus the accepted laws of nature lead us to a definite beginning of the universe in time." This is the truth expressed in Hebrews i. 10 and 12, "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish; but Thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up and they shall be changed."

We have considerable evidence of purpose and design in the universe and these imply a Person, a Designer. But some scientists having discovered something of the method by which God has caused things to be, seem to imagine that the discovery of the method eliminates the necessity for a Creator. It will be remembered that Darwin once wrote, "I well remember my conviction that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body, but now the grandest scenes would not cause any such convictions in me. It may be truly said that I am like a man who has become colour-blind." Romanes in his *Candid Examination*, referring to those who held the philosophic theory of Evolution which attempted to explain the existence of everything without God, wrote, "I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the new faith is a desirable substitute for the waning splendour of the old. I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God, the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness . . . when at times I think, as at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is capable."

It is generally assumed by scientists that the universe is purposeful, though Eddington has hinted that it might prove to be irrational, and some atheistically-minded scientists assert that it is purposeless; but if this were so it would be the end not only of Theism but of science. The fact is that science can only give a partial explanation, as Sir Oliver Lodge said, "It is impossible to explain all this fully by the law of mechanics alone." It is now more clearly recognised that the universe cannot be explained by such branches of science as physics, chemistry and biology alone; these can often suggest how things came to be, but not why.

"Created."

How did the stuff of which this universe is made originate? Science is unable to answer this question. That it had an origin, and that it was created, is affirmed in Hebrews xi. 3, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Sir James Jeans wrote, "Everything points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of creation at some time or other, not infinitely remote. The universe cannot have originated by chance out of its present ingredients and neither can it always have been the same as it is now."

"The heaven and the earth."

Heaven is placed before the 'earth', so this narrative does not imply, as some have suggested, that the earth is greater in bulk than the sun or that astronomically it is the centre of the universe. How did the heavens, especially the planets to which the earth is related—the sun and the moon—originate? and how came the earth? Science readily admits that any answer it can venture is very speculative. We have already noted that Kant's theory, as developed by Laplace, assumed that a rotating mass of gas, which ultimately became the sun, threw off those parts which protruded at the rim and these consolidated into the planetary system dependent upon the sun. Modern astronomers and physicists say that this theory is an impossible one, because the rim which could

be thrown off in this way would not condense but disperse. The present idea, known as the 'tidal theory', supposes that some 2,000 million years ago a wandering star approaching dangerously near the sun caused a large cigar-shaped filament to be pulled out of it, and, throwing off fragments, these subsequently became the planets now circling round the sun. Sir James Jeans says (*Stars Around Us*, pp. 45 and 46) that a jet of matter pulled off the sun formed "a long filament of hot filmy gas suspended in space", that this "filament of fiery spray" condensed much as a cloud of steam, condenses into colossal drops of water on an astronomical scale, and "finally, these drops of water begin to move about in space as separate bodies".

Genesis indicates little of the method by which the heavens and the earth were created, and that little in no way conflicts with the findings of scientists, except where they speculate as to the cause and assert that it was merely 'accidental'. It is almost unnecessary to add that science is not in a position to assert that such an event (if it can be assumed to have occurred in the way they think it did) was an 'accident'. With the exception of the first verse (and what we are told in verses 14-18 about the relation of the sun and the moon to the earth, and the slight reference to 'the stars also') the narrative is mainly concerned with this planet earth, notwithstanding that it is but one of the 30,000,000,000 bodies in existence. As however it is the planet on which man lives, it is obviously the one with which he is mainly concerned.

"And the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

It would be difficult to put into so few and simple words, or to state in a more profound way what scientists believe the earliest stage of this earth to have been, than is done in this verse. Sir Arthur Eddington in his *Expanding Universe* uses this word 'void' in explaining original "gradual condensation of primordial matter". The description represents earth before it had reached its present form. Scientists believe that its early state was gaseous, and gradually over a considerable period of time it solidified, that the temperature was once

great, is shown by the presence of volcanoes which pour out molten rock and hot gases. Some geologists think that the interior is still in a fluid condition. It used to be thought that the time taken for solidifying from the gaseous state was immense, but more recent speculations suggest that the gases became liquid in 5,000 years and solid within 10,000 years, but some scientists think that even these figures are excessive. In its early stages the surface of the earth is said to have been densely covered with vapour. It was certainly void, empty of life, as yet without form, no continents, mountains, lakes or rivers, no plants, no trees, no fish, no animals or man. The words used are therefore as descriptive and accurate as they possibly can be.

While in this condition, it is stated that the Spirit of God moved upon "the face of the waters". Modern science asserts the principle of the inertia of matter. Newton's law states that a body (i.e. a piece of matter) removed away from all other bodies would continue in a state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line. It was on this planet earth that the Spirit of God moved, and throughout all the subsequent activities was preparing a home for man. Sir Arthur Eddington calls this planet an "oasis in the desert of space".

The record now moves on from the general to the particular.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE FIRST DAY.

"And God said, Light be and light was."

Up to the present there has been no complete and satisfactory definition of light. Modern scientists admit that they do not know its ultimate nature, although it has been the subject of continuous research ever since scientific methods have become known. The theory at present in vogue is that it is 'an electro-magnetic phenomena'; but the first theory of importance was that light is a succession of material particles propelled in straight lines. The substance so propelled was thought to be imponderable, and its powers of penetration of different substances variable. Later it was thought to be constituted by the propagation of waves. All radiation may consist of corpuscles of energy. Sir Ambrose Fleming has said

(*Victoria Institute Transactions*, Vol. LXI, p. 23), "It would not be inappropriate to speak of Radiation as disembodied Energy in motion." And Sir James Jeans writes, "These concepts reduce the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of creation can be told with perfect accuracy and completeness in the six words, 'And God said, Let there be light'." In his *Expanding Universe* Sir Arthur Eddington says, "In its earliest days, when the universe was only just disturbed from its equilibrium and the rate of expansion was slow, light and other radiation went round the universe until it was absorbed. In the course of the expansion there is a definite moment after which circumambulation ceases to be possible. It seems certain that we are well past this moment, so that a ray of light emitted now will never get round to its starting-point again. On the other hand, light, which we now see, was emitted in the past." Sullivan, in his *Limitations of Science*, says, "About thirty years ago an exceedingly penetrating kind of radiation was discovered traversing the atmosphere. This radiation does not come from the earth, for balloon expeditions showed that it is more penetrating at great heights than at sea-level. Also, it does not come from the sun, for it is more abundant at day-time than at night-time. The sun is quite an average, typical star, and therefore, as the radiation does not come from the sun, there is no reason to suppose that it comes from the stars. It must come from outer space. What is its origin?" There appears to be no scientific answer to the last question.

Ordinary yellow light has a wavelength of nearly one fifty-thousandth part of an inch with a frequency of about six hundred billion vibrations a second and a speed of rather more than 186,000 miles a second. We need to realise how restricted is the range constituted by *visible* light. The wavelengths and range of visible light are so small that scientists have to use a unit known as the *Ångström* unit, which is one hundred-millionth of a centimetre.

This narrative says that light was originated by the volition of God. Sir James Jeans says, "the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine," and commenting on the words "let there be light", says, "If the

universe is a universe of thought then its creation must have been an act of thought". Oersted, referring to the laws of nature, says these are "only the thoughts of God".

THE NARRATIVE OF THE SECOND DAY.

On the second day 'God said' in a sufficiently simple way so that man could understand how He had made the 'firmament' or atmosphere to divide the waters below from the waters above. This word translated 'firmament' means 'expanse'. Sir James Jeans commences his *The Stars in their Courses* with these words, "We inhabitants of the earth enjoy a piece of good fortune to which we give very little thought, which, indeed, we take almost as much for granted as the air we breathe—I mean the fact that we have a transparent atmosphere; some of the other planets, for instance Venus and Jupiter, have atmospheres which are so thick with clouds as to be totally opaque. If we had been born on Venus or Jupiter, we should have lived our lives without seeing through the clouds, and so should have known nothing of the beauty and poetry of the night sky."

Science can now explain the effect and importance of the 'atmosphere' around our planet, for it is this which has so much to do with the temperature at surface level. The atmosphere surrounding this earth has a remarkable 'glasshouse' effect. If it is sufficiently dense it will raise the temperature. Were it not for this atmosphere and its glasshouse effect, life, as we know it, would not be possible. The heat available would produce an average temperature of minus 26°C.; instead, the average temperature is 14° C. or 57°F. The value of this firmament or atmosphere may be seen when we consider the moon which has none, and because of this it has no water on its surface. Consequently it must become intensely hot by day and bitterly cold by night, and the days and nights of the moon are fourteen times as long as ours. In such conditions life as we know it could not exist. Jeans (*Mysterious Universe*) says, "For the most part empty space is so cold that all life in it would be frozen; most of the matter in space is so hot as to make life on it impossible."

Life is only possible within an extremely narrow range

of temperature, yet the range in the universe is immense—so high in some instances that metals are in fluid state and in others as low as 270°C . below zero. All life ceases at -56°C . Yet within the very limited range of temperature on the earth variation is essential to life, as well as for the fall of rain and dew on plants, and these variations are delicately and intricately balanced. The invisible violet rays are filtered by the upper layer of the atmosphere so that plant, animal, and man receive precisely the amount required. In his *Fitness of the Environment* Henderson writes, "There is, in truth, not one chance in countless millions of millions that the many unique properties of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, and especially their stable compounds, water and carbonic acid, which chiefly make up the atmosphere of a new planet, should simultaneously occur in the three elements otherwise than through the operation of a natural law which somehow connects them together. There is no greater probability that these unique properties should be without due cause uniquely favourable to the organic mechanism. These are no mere accidents." So the simple words of the second day's narrative is of the separation of the 'waters above' from the 'waters below'. Simple? It is calculated that over 50,000,000,000,000 tons of aqueous vapour is suspended in the air above the earth.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE THIRD DAY.

On the next day God said how the waters were made to recede so that dry land appeared.

Water now covers seventy-two per cent of the surface of the earth and fills depressions greater than the land above sea-level. The average depth of the sea is now two and a half miles. Were these waters evenly distributed over the surface of the earth (supposing the surface to be without mountains and valleys, but quite even) the water would cover the earth to a depth of about one and a half miles.

Genesis does not concern itself with geological terms, for there are no details or explanations; it does not relate how and when the great sedimentary rocks were deposited, or when the subsidences or 'foldings' occurred. That much of the land has

been under the sea for enormous periods of time in quite evident, the chalk deposits alone show this. Presumably it was during this process when the waters were receding that the well-known geologic strata, caused by the action of water, were formed. Moreover water moderates and regulates climatic conditions; it prevents excess temperatures and distributes the heat of the sun.

There was a second 'and God said' on this day, for that day's narration included an account of the introduction of plant life on the earth.

The greatest mystery of science is the mystery of the origin of life. During the nineteenth and the earlier part of this century scientists were hopeful, some were even confident, that they would be able to bridge the gulf between the living and non-living. But life still baffles explanation. Before the days of scientific investigation it seemed easier to imagine the emergence of the living from the non-living, for then it was supposed that decaying meat bred maggots and that mud produced worms. Francesco Redi in 1668 clearly demonstrated that larva were not originated by decomposing meat, for when it was protected from the eggs of flies, no worms appeared. Pasteur spent years of patient labour and at length proved in a decisive scientific way that current ideas about spontaneous generation of life were mythical.

When men were convinced that life could not arise spontaneously they hazarded some guesses; for instance it was suggested that life may have been carried to this planet by a meteorite. Of course this idea could not solve the problem of the origin of life, it only pushed the problem further away and made its solution even more difficult.

On this subject of the origin of life, there can be no disagreement between this narrative and science, for the simple reason that science can know nothing with certainty about its origination, though conjectures concerning it have been voluminous. Darwin in his *Origin of Species* (Chapter XV) wrote, "Science as yet throws no light on the essence and origin of life", and nothing that has happened since has modified that statement. Professor Sir D'Arcy Thompson, the eminent biologist, says, "Matter as such produces nothing,

changes nothing, does nothing." And Sir James Jeans wrote in his *The Mysterious Universe*, "In course of time, we know not how, when, or why, one of these cooling fragments (from the sun) gave birth to life." Sir Oliver Lodge wrote (*Man and the Universe*, p. 24), "Science, in chagrin, has to confess that hitherto in this direction it has failed. It has not yet witnessed the origin of the smallest trace of life from dead matter." Dr. J. S. Haldane has said that "he could not imagine anything happening in the laboratory according to our present knowledge which would bring us any nearer to life". And Sir D'Arcy Thompson writes, "How species are actually produced remains an unsolved riddle. It is a great mystery. Here at least is a conclusion which few men of our time will venture to dispute."

Scientists agree that plant life was the commencement of the food chain and say that mosses and liverworts, club mosses and ferns were probably the earliest representatives of plant life. In his *Origin and Nature of Life* Professor Moore has a chapter entitled "Building materials for Living Matter" in which he explains the processes by which molecules are built up, first he places the necessity and effect of light (first day's narrative), then of the requirement of atmosphere (second day's narrative), next of the necessity of rain and water (third day's narrative although he does not attempt to relate it to the Genesis narrative). Dr. Barnes says (*Scientific Theory and Religion*, p. 435), "The plants, probably when they were still in the unicellular stage, acquired the power to make chlorophyll, the substance which gives its green colour to foliage. Thus they were able to make direct use of the carbon dioxide of the atmosphere and thereby to build up in their tissues carbohydrates and still more complex organic compounds. In this way they still convert a simple inorganic substance into living tissue: in fact, they have gained power by the aid of sunshine to use carbondioxide as food."

So far the narrative has spoken of light, atmosphere, water, and green vegetation; just the essentials and order of appearance that science in modern days has by laborious research discovered to be necessary and therefore confirms the accuracy of the Genesis account.

Although considerable interest is shown in the geologic ages in which living things appeared on the earth, Professor Boxall in the *March of Science*, 1931-5, says, "Geological research has in recent times thrown little or no new light on the origin of life on the earth. We are still faced by the problem of the sudden appearance in the oldest Cambrian rocks of representatives of many of the present-day forms of life." One of the most outstanding facts relating to the history of life is the recent discovery that land-plants are more ancient than has hitherto been thought.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE FOURTH DAY.

On the fourth day, the functions of the greater and lesser lights were briefly explained in the most simple way conceivable. The greater light was to 'rule' the day and the lesser to rule the night. Their purpose is also stated, they were "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years".

There has never been any doubt that it is the sun and moon which are referred to here, though the names of these bodies are not given. As we have already seen, the absence of these names is evidence of the extreme antiquity of the narrative. It appears to have been written before names were in use for the sun and the moon. We must bear in mind that these successive days give the order of revelation, and the parallel structure shown in Chapter II gives the order of creation. Because this has been overlooked the interpretations which contrasted instead of supplementing the first, with the fourth day, have experienced considerable difficulties in attempting to explain how there could have been a 'day' and a 'night' on this planet earth without the functioning of the sun in relation to the earth.

The statements made on this fourth day have been criticised on the ground that they *appear* to make the earth the centre of the narrative. Do not scientists, as well as normal writers, do the same? For notwithstanding the new scientific explanation of the vastness and variety of the universe there is a general unanimity of opinion that life as we know it can exist only on this little planet earth, so that anything written about other bodies looks at them from the point of view of this

planet on which man dwells. The sun and the moon are referred to only in respect to their functions in regard to the earth. There is nothing whatever in this which conflicts with science. Nowhere in the Genesis narrative is it suggested that the earth is the centre of the universe or of this planetary system. Indeed it is rather remarkable in view of the early conceptions regarding the relationship of the sun to the earth, that there is an entire absence of any statement that the sun is dependent upon the earth, or is a mere satellite of it. The only slight, but important, reference there is, speaks of the sun 'ruling' the day on this earth, therefore the earth in this respect is stated to be controlled by the sun.

Mention has already been made of the conjectures made by scientists regarding the origin of the sun. The narrative contains no statement as to the process by which the sun became the light and heat control of this planet, or of its distance from the earth, or of its magnitude, or of its motions, or substance. Science has made discoveries and suggestions in regard to all these; but this Genesis narrative is just a simple revelation of the functions of the sun and moon, and obviously it is not a record in modern scientific terms. All that is said of the heavenly bodies, other than our own planetary system, is, God made "the stars also". Modern astronomical science has revealed the immensity of the universe. In early days only a few thousand stars were visible to the naked eye. The invention of the telescope increased man's knowledge beyond all previous conception; later the use of the photographic plate made us aware of the existence of millions of additional stars; yet it is known that many are so distant that they make no light impression on the most sensitive photographic plate.

Besides our galaxy, there are immense groups of stars, at distances too great to be measured otherwise than in 'light years', that is, at distances calculated by the time it takes for light travelling at 186,000 miles a second, to reach this planet earth. In 1914 Chapman and Melotte put the number of stars at 2,000,000,000, Sear and Van Rhyn have since stated it as 30,000,000,000, while Sir Arthur Eddington writes in his *The Expanding Universe* of 100,000,000,000 island systems each

believed to be an aggregation of thousands of millions of stars with a general resemblance to our own Milky-Way system. Sir James Jeans in his *Mysterious Universe* says, "the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the sea shores of the world". Some of these stars have a luminosity a thousand times greater than our sun, but these are so distant from the earth as to reveal only a faint point of light at night.

In this fourth day's narration, it simply says, God made "the stars". This statement is concerned not with the method of their origination, but with their Originator. It means that the starry universe was not an accident, God made it.

NARRATIVE OF THE FIFTH DAY

On the fifth day it was told in a simple and general way that marine and air life had been created by God. Again we need to bear in mind that no time limits are given as to how long ago this had taken place, or how long it was before the sea *swarmed* with the varieties of fishes, or the air with birds. There is no detailed statement, just a simple affirmation of the initiation of water and air life. On this day an account was given of a new form of life, on the third day it had been told that God had created plant and vegetable life, here it is said that God made animal life. There has been and there still is a cleavage between the material and biological sciences; it is often suggested that the gulf which exists between them is, to use a geological term, merely a 'fault'. Needham in his *Order and Life* argues for the hierarchical continuity of plant life from matter, and of marine and animal life from plants, and he cites K. Sapper, "We now stand before a problem which the supporters of the Gestalt theory have hardly yet answered, namely, how is the origin of pattern (*Gestaltcharakter*) in material objects in general and living things in particular, to be explained? . . . In my view there is only one way to picture the organisation of a material complex . . . and that is to assume that the qualitatively new in the pattern derives from the properties of the elements involved, but that certain of these properties can only come into operation in connection with certain specific stages of complexity. There is of course no proof available for

demonstrating the rightness of this view-point." Needham himself sums up his book with a statement about the way toadstools and fungi appear whenever the temperature and moisture are precisely right together, and continues, "In some such way, probably, it is best to conceive of the origin of life on the earth—when cosmic conditions permit, matter produces in actuality what it has always had within it in potentiality". This conjecture of Needham's assumes that it had nothing to do with "some supra material, hyper individual factors", in another word, God. The toadstool speculation is, it would seem, the best that a scientist without God can furnish as an explanation of origin of life.

The narrative refers first to marine animals, next to air life, and the following days' narration to land animals. The history of the rocks confirms this order. In fact the modern position has not altered in this respect from that of T. H. Huxley who wrote, "Undoubtedly it is in the highest degree probable that animal life appeared first under aquatic conditions."

There are, as yet, very big gaps in our scientific knowledge as to these. Dr. Barnes in his *Scientific Theory and Religion* says (page 470), "It might reasonably be expected, however, that there would be fossil evidence showing how the vertebrates arose from some invertebrate stock. This, the most sought-after of all the missing links, has not yet been discovered. Naturally, diligent search has been made; probably every palaeontologist dreams that one day he may discover some transitional form and become famous. In the meantime speculation rests upon a most meagre basis of fact." Again, "Further, experts are not agreed about the passage from amphibian to reptile."

In Genesis we read, "And God said, let the waters *swarm*." The extraordinary variety and fertility of sea-life is common knowledge. It is said that there are 120,000 different species now extant, so there is a greater variety among fishes than among birds and mammals. Most fish are very prolific in multiplying. Professor J. A. Thomson has written in *Biology*, Vol. I, 435, "A female ling six feet long may have in its ovaries over twenty-eight million eggs, a turbot of seventeen

pounds nine million, a cod of twenty-one and a half pounds over six million. The abundant herring has relatively few, twenty-one to forty-seven thousand. But even in this case it is plain that the sea would soon become solid with fish if there were not high mortality, especially in youth."

Some zoologists maintain that birds are a development from reptiles and stress certain likenesses, but this in no way means that God did not introduce the transition. To explain the change from cold to warm blood is a great difficulty to scientists. The Bible statement is that God created "every fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven". That these came after the water population is in complete agreement with science, but no early writer could have known this truth by mere guesswork. A zoologist would describe birds as "oviparous, warm-blooded, amniotic Vertebrates", and classify them as *Archœornithes*, and *Neothithes* but no one would expect any such description in the Genesis narrative. Science agrees that the position of birds in the animal kingdom is higher than that of *Reptilia* and lower than that of *Mammalia*.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE SIXTH DAY.

On the sixth and last day on which the story of creation was outlined, two separate acts were revealed. In the first part of the day's narrative it was told how God made "the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every living thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind".

As we have seen, this is simply part of the day's narration of what took place in the ages past when God created mammals; no time is stated as to how long this took, or any details given as to method; what is emphasised—and this is most important—is that God made the mammals, just as He had made the things related on the preceding five days.

Consequently there should be no disagreement between science and this simple record. Conflict only takes place where a theory is adopted which asserts that God was not the Creator, for there is here no statement as to the processes by which God produced the mammals. The main difference between them and the reptiles referred to on the preceding day

is that the former nourishes its young before and after birth, while the reptilian offspring is hatched from an egg. The present scientific theory—which is very popular—assumes that mammals were developed from reptiles, but the connecting link for which scientists have been diligently searching is, as we have seen, still missing. *Indeed it is most significant that the 'links' always seem to be missing just as the vital point where the mechanical evolutionary theory desires to establish a connection, and where the day's narrative makes a break.* For instance, no connecting specimen of the alleged transition from the invertebrate to the vertebrate has been discovered.

Scientists have explained that notwithstanding the immense variety of fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, there are considerable similarities. Each has a skull and a backbone, a brain and a spinal cord, a heart, stomach, liver, kidneys, etc. Because all are constructed on one fundamental plan, which is modified according to whether the creature lives in water, air or on the land, it is stated that all had a common ancestor, from which all including man descended, but as the alleged connecting links between them are missing this theory remains merely a surmise; moreover the positions of these organs are very diverse in fish, fowl, and mammal, and they are constructed on a different plan. It is certainly not possible to claim this similarity; as a long series of accidents, it looks more like good evidence of design and a Designer.

Science says that the age of mammals, relative to that of fishes and reptiles, is more recent, so agreeing with Genesis.

"And God said, Let Us Make Man in our Image, after Our Likeness."

Two separate actions were recorded on the sixth day. The second of these is the final and supreme act of creation. "God said, Let us make man in our Image, after our likeness." This making of man in the likeness of God, placed him in a unique position; this is emphasised by the statement, "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." Science agrees with this narrative that man is the culmination and

crowning point of creation, and that all other living things are subject to his dominion. It is also realised that (apart from God) the universe has significance only in the creation of man, for science is as certain as it can be that man exists only on this planet, and that only man has a mind which can conceive and understand something of the universe.

Man is more than something, He is a personality, someone qualitatively new.

Again it is noticeable that just where this record states that God spake of a new development, scientists have found the greatest difficulty in establishing any connecting link. As Dr. Barnes, who will not be accused of any bias in favour of the Genesis narrative, says (*Scientific Theory and Religion*, p. 528), "Where and when did man begin to be? What was the course of his development? To the second of these inquiries we can give some answer, but of the first, our ignorance is almost absolute"; "As we have said more than once, our ignorance of the beginnings of humanity is vast"; "we must admit that, in comparison with the help which palaeontology gives in reconstructing the ancestral history of the horse, or of the elephant, it offers but feeble aid to the discovery of man's evolution". Or again (p. 539), "How long is it since man began to be? No question is more natural, and yet no answer that may be given fails to excite the wrath of most of our experts. The fact is that we have no data on which to base a decisive answer."

I suggest that there is much loose thinking on this subject of how man originated. It is a question of immense importance and involves important conceptions of both God and man. There is much at stake in the two opposing views (and it would be idle to suggest that the two views do not conflict). These are (a) a distinct action on the part of God by which He created man, and (b) an almost imperceptible gradual development of man from some animal ancestry, without the special intervention of God.

Those who take the view that by almost imperceptible degrees an animal gradually evolved apart from God into man, hold that at one period the beast had become half man, an ape-like man, or a man-like ape. It is here that the loose

thinking mainly occurs. Few who hold this theory have attempted any reasonable and adequate explanation of the origin of the moral qualities of man, his conscience, and consciousness of immortality, of his mind, his ability to communicate his thoughts by the use of speech and language. Whence came these qualities? It is here that the problem of man's origin become significant, and demands an answer. The dissimilarity of animals to man in these respects is of much greater consequence than any question of his supposed similarity of body. It is not sufficient to shelve this problem by saying that the alleged development took 'millions of years'. *At what point for instance did man acquire immortality?* Dr. Barnes who sees this difficulty says, "I hold immortality in the form of eternal life can be predicted of man but not of the animals from which he has sprung" (*Scientific Theory and Religion*, p. 638). But he adds (p. 639), "Of course if anything resembling a mechanical theory of the universe is true no argument for human immortality can exist. The blind forces which, on the assumptions of naturalism, have made man will at his death destroy him and all that is of value in him." How can anti-Biblical theories of man explain his immortality? It seems obvious that only by accepting the Bible account can we account for the immortality of man.

The most notable thing about man is not his body, but his mind. The animal does not consciously turn to God as man can. Moreover man has what we call personality; he is able to detach himself from mere instinct; he is not only conscious but self-conscious and can reflect on the past and the future. It has sometimes been assumed that the brain is the mind; the brain is a mechanism, and needs a personality to work it. Dr. McDougall in his *Psychology* has written, "No single organic function has yet been found explicable in purely mechanical terms, even such relatively simple processes as the secretion of a tear, or the exudation of a drop of sweat elude all attempts at complete explanation in the terms of physical and chemical science." As Smuts has pointed out in his *Holism*, matter, life, mind, are all three quite unlike, and the difference appears to be final. Man has an awareness of the past as well as the future, he can appreciate the existence and beauty of the

'heavens and the earth', he alone has a mind capable of understanding what God has done.

It is precisely here that the atheist opposes the Genesis narrative; for instance, Haeckel attacked the ideas of God, freedom and immortality, as well as the essential distinction between mind and material. But even if it could be argued that the moral qualities in man, his mind, and his ability to communicate his thoughts in language, are only a matter of degree, surely this cannot be said of man's quality of immortality. On this matter there is a great gulf fixed. Whatever anyone may think of this first page of the Bible, it ought to be recognised that an entirely mechanistic view of the development of man cannot possibly be brought into unity with it. The Biblical statement is that these qualitatively new faculties, his sense of moral obligation, his awareness of a moral law, his cognisance of obligation to God, came direct from the Creator, and it is submitted that these qualities cannot be reasonably explained in any other way.

The gulf between the two may be seen in the following statements:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion." (Gen. i. 26).

"In the beginning there was fear; and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man. At every turn it whelmed over him, leaving him no moment of ease. With the wild souging of the wind it swept through him; with the crashing of the thunder and the growling of the lurking beasts. All the days of man were grey with fear, because all his universe seemed charged with danger . . . and he, poor gibbering half-ape, nursing his wound in some draughty cave, could only tremble with fear" (Lewis Browne, *This Believing World*). If this conception of things is called science, there will always be a conflict between the Genesis account and the mechanical evolutionist who denies the existence of God and then thinks he can account for the world, including man with his mind, as a merely mechanical development apart from God.

CHAPTER XI

TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

VERSE I. "*In the Beginning.*"

IN THE beginning, at the commencement of time. It does not say when this was, but does imply that there was a beginning. No date is given, it expresses the earliest time imaginable, and is equivalent to 'at the beginning of time'.

It is not to be understood in a merely relative sense as 'first of all', or 'first in order' to a second or subsequent thing, for 'heaven and earth' include all. It is not here used adverbially in the sense of 'first of all God', or 'in the first place God'. It is the beginning of all material things in the indefinite past. Compare John i. 1 where the words translated 'in the beginning' in the Septuagint version of Genesis and the Greek of the Gospel are the same, but there is an addition in the Gospel, the Word '*was in the beginning with God*'.

"*God.*"

There is no attempt to explain the existence of God, this is not considered necessary, His reality is simply stated.

Some scholars translate the Hebrew word 'Elohim' by 'The Eternal'. Elohim is always in the plural, but accompanied by a verb in the singular. God is before all time and all material; the heavens and the earth had a beginning but no beginning is of course suggested in regard to God. The emphasis is on the word 'God'; note the continued repetition of the Divine title in this narrative, it occurs 35 times. This first sentence implies that God is other than His universe and beyond it, it is the foundation of all Biblical philosophy of creation.

"*Created.*"

Hebrew 'Bara'. In its *primary* form it is used only of an act of God, never of a human production, or to describe the work of man. In this exclusive use, it is probably unique in any language of the world. The root of this word is commonly

considered to mean 'to cut', 'to hew', or 'to fashion by cutting', and its use in this sense may be seen in Joshua xvii. 15 and 18.

The word 'bara' does not invariably mean creation from nothing, this idea is not necessarily inherent in it, but may imply it and there is no other single word in Hebrew which could express creation out of nothing. No word is stronger in expressing absolute creation. Perhaps in its Biblical use it implies effortless (but not necessarily instantaneous) production. The word is sparingly used even in this chapter; it occurs again in verse 21 in connection with living organisms, and in verse 27 in regard to the creation of man.

The statement that *God created* shows that the universe is not an emanation from God as pantheists have taught. It implies that matter is not eternal and that the heaven and earth are not the result of an accident, or series of accidents, or 'a fortuitous concourse of atoms'. It obviously means that the heavens and the earth have not existed throughout all eternity past. In Hebrews xi. 3, we read that the "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear". 'Bara' is one of three words used in this chapter to describe God's work, the others are *ysar* formed and *ásah* made.

"The Heaven and the Earth."

In the Hebrew the word 'heaven' is in the plural form. This phrase is often used to describe created things apart from the earth, as there is no single Hebrew word which expresses the totality of all created things. Even in the New Testament the phrase is retained, "a new heaven and a new earth". Its meaning may be seen from Genesis xv. 5, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them." The heavens and the earth later became the acknowledged phrase for the universe.

The majority of scholars regard the first verse as an independent sentence, summarising the whole creative process narrated in this chapter. It has been stated thus:—"The verse gives a summary of the description which follows stating the broad general fact of the universe, the details of the process then form the subject of the rest of the chapter." Rashi, Schrader, and others, however, regard the word

'created' as a noun and not as a verb, and read it as follows: "in the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth, the earth was without form and void and then . . ."

VERSE 2. "*And.*"

The simple Hebrew conjunction; it cannot mean 'in contrast to'; it could mean, '*but* the earth was waste'.

"*The Earth.*"

The Hebrew word translated *earth* is emphasised by its position in the sentence. It is the common word for land or earth as contrasted with the sea or heavens. As the sequel shows, the reference is to this planet earth in its state before God brought about the condition successively described in verses 3-31.

"*Was.*"

Some have wished to translate this 'became' or 'had become'; but such a rendering is not permissible here. 'Was' is correctly given in both the A.V. and R.V. and is so translated by the overwhelming majority of Hebrew scholars. We should not assume that a thought, such as a catastrophe, has been dropped out or intentionally not mentioned, and that the subsequent words cannot be properly understood, unless we introduce it.

"*Without Form and Void.*"

Tohu-wa-bohu: *tohu* expresses formlessness, nothingness, something unsubstantial; *bohu* means void, empty, tenantless, unfinished. The words are almost synonymous, and in Hebrew this repetition is one of the methods used to express intensity of meaning. The like sounding Hebrew words can be rendered in English by 'formless and void'. Absence of form and order is conveyed by their use, rather than shapelessness and disorder. The word 'tohu' is used in the Old Testament of a desert and expresses emptiness. As Dr. Lange remarks, "The first word denotes rather the lack of form, the second the lack of content in the earliest condition of the earth; uncompleted as regards order, and bareness as regards life." The chapter

gives an account of God's creative work relating to this earth, and also of the heavens as they affect the earth. The opening words of this verse refer therefore to the earth in a state of emptiness and the A.V. and R.V. translation expresses the sense as nearly as possible. Spurrell translates the words as 'bareness and emptiness'. The A.V. and the R.V. use the latter word in Isaiah xxxiv. 11.

There is no reason (except as a theory in attempting to reconcile the narrative with science) for introducing the idea that something or someone wrecked the earth as created by God. Isaiah xlv. 18 expressly refers to the earth which God had made and established, that is, the completed earth referred to in the chapter as a whole. The prophet says of this completed earth, "he created it not in vain (*tohu*), He formed it to be inhabited". As Whitelaw wrote in his *Commentary on Genesis* (p. 4), "He created it not *tohu*, he formed it to be inhabited", i.e. the Creator did not intend the earth to be a desolate region, but an inhabited planet. There can scarcely be a doubt, then, that the expression portrays the condition in which the newly created earth was, not innumerable ages, but very shortly, after it was summoned into existence. It was formless and lifeless; a huge shapeless, objectless, tenantless mass of matter, the gaseous and solid elements commingled, in which neither organised structure, nor animated form, nor even distinctly traced outline of any kind appeared." Delitzsch (*New Commentary*, p. 80) says, "being only a means to an end only the substratum and not properly such a creative work itself; God made it the foundation of His creative agency".

"*And Darkness.*"

The absence of light.

"*Was Upon.*"

It is the same Hebrew word as is used in Deuteronomy xxxii. 11, of a bird 'hovering over'. On this formless and bare earth the Spirit of God moved in controlling motion.

"And the Spirit of God."

The idea is of a manifestation of an invisible power. It is the usual word for the Spirit of God. Just as God is mentioned in the first verse without any attempt at explanation, so here the Spirit of God (who throughout Scripture is represented as the Source of life) is not defined. It would be idle to suggest 'wind' as the creative agent affecting the change in the state of the earth. There is no indication whatever how long the earth was in the state described in this verse, during which the creative Spirit of God was active.

"The Face of the Waters."

The Hebrew word is 'Tehom'; it means, not merely the sea, but the undefined, unformed watery mass.

WHAT GOD SAID—THE FIRST DAY. Verses 3-5.

"And God Said."

These words are placed at the beginning of each day's narrative. On this first day there follows the narrative of what God said. God speaks and this implies that He speaks to some person. To whom? We do not know to whom God spake these words on the six successive days, but in Chapter VIII we have seen that the narrative bears unmistakable evidence of having been a revelation given and written down at the very earliest period.

"Let there be Light and there was Light."

These words constitute the creative fiat. Creation by fiat is referred to throughout Scripture. It implies the effortless realisation of His thought and purpose. "In the beginning was the Word . . . all things were made by Him" (John i. 1-3). In Hebrew only two very short words are used, *yehi 'or*, let light be, or 'let light exist'. The words used are as simple as it is possible for them to be; there is no reference to any scientific hypothesis regarding the nature or source of light and no astronomical explanation. Light is the indispensable condition to the life of the things which are stated in the succeeding verses to have been successively created.

In regard to the alleged contradiction of this verse with verses 14-18 see chapter ii and the comment on the fourth day's narration. "The exigences of the text, as well as the ascertained facts of physical science, require the first day's work to be the original production of light throughout the universe and in particular throughout the planetary system" (White-law, *Genesis*).

"And God saw the Light."

This phrase 'and God saw' occurs each day.

"That it was Good."

These words are also repeated regarding each day. The Hebrew word includes the idea of beauty with goodness.

"And God Divided the Light from the Darkness."

Better 'And God *separated*', we divide one thing and separate two. No mention is made of the origin of darkness because it is simply the absence of light, and here it is not regarded in itself as evil. In fact God had a specific use for darkness, and assigned to both light and darkness their own proper sphere, purpose and limits.

"And God Called."

Dr. Ryle says, "That God should give names to things is to our minds a strange and almost unintelligible thought", and commentators have hitherto been perplexed as to its meaning. When, however, it is realised that the names were being given for the sake of *man*, it is neither strange nor unintelligible, but obviously necessary for an intelligent being. Compare chapter ii. 19-20 and xxxi. 47. God gave things names in order to reveal, so that *these words indicate that God is telling the story of creation to man*. A name is given in order to communicate a thought by language. This narrative is therefore a record, in simple terms, of God's explanation of the origin of the heaven and earth. Naming is necessary as a notion for man's sake, not God's.

"The Light 'Day'."

That is the part of the day when light shone on a particular part of the earth.

"And the Darkness He called 'Night'."

'Night' was the name God gave to the period which preceded or succeeded daylight. Again the only conceivable reason for God giving names to such phenomena is for man's instruction.

"And the Evening and the Morning."

Or more exactly 'and evening came and morning came'. This phrase has been the subject of considerable debate. It occurs six times, dividing the narrative into six days. It has been wrongly assumed that it sets a time limit to the *acts* of creation described, consequently numerous attempts have been made to explain the 'day' as a sufficiently long period. As Bullinger says, "The word 'day' may refer to a prolonged period, when used without qualifying words. But when qualified by a numeral (cardinal or ordinal) it is defined and limited by it to a day of twenty-four hours. It is further limited here by its boundaries 'evening and morning' as well as by the seventh day." So Delitzsch, etc.

That a normal 'evening and morning' is intended may be seen by the words used; the word for 'evening', like the relative words in the Assyrian and Arabic, means 'to go in', that is the setting of the sun. While the root idea of the Hebrew word translated 'morning' means 'a penetration' of light of day into the darkness of night, a breaking forth, daybreak, the coming of dawn, sunrise, it is never used in the sense of the English forenoon or morning. As Delitzsch says, "The Hebrew word means without doubt properly 'the breaking', viz. 'of light', the first appearance, the early, is everywhere the fundamental notion". So that 'evening and morning' combined means the period between sunset and sunrise.¹

¹ "The Hebrew words *'Erebh* and *Boher* do not signify night and day, but the *early evening* (say between sunset and actual darkness) and *early morning* (say between dawn and sunrise). These do not make up a 'day' of twenty-four hours." (A. H. Finn, *Creation, Fall and Deluge*, p. 151.)

It was an ancient custom for the 'day', that is the twenty-four-hour period, to begin at sunset, but, of course, it does not finish at sunrise the next morning, but at sunset. As Skinner writes, "It is impossible to take the words as meaning that the evening and the morning *formed* the first (second, etc.) day. The sentence must refer to the *close* of the first day with the first evening and the night that followed"; so Delitzsch, Holzinger, Dillman, etc.

Was the earth, as yet, astronomically arranged for a normal sunset and sunrise? The source of the light is not stated, for until the relation of the sun and moon to the earth as described in verses 14-18 have been introduced there could have been no daily sunset or sunrise as required by these words 'evening and morning'. There can therefore be no question of an evening and morning dividing the *acts of creation*. These six days must have been days on which the revelation was given, the narrative of the creative acts of God long ages before, for the reason why God ceased as each of the six evenings, or sunsets came on, was for man's sake.

"Were the First Day."

More literally, 'day one', or 'one day', as in the R.V. The cardinal is used instead of the ordinal; this is customary to indicate the first of a series.

WHAT GOD SAID—SECOND DAY. VERSES 6-8.

"And God said, Let there be a Firmament, etc."

The Hebrew word is 'rakia', and its root meaning is 'to stretch out', 'to extend'. A more accurate translation would be, 'Let there be an expanse'. It refers to the atmosphere surrounding the earth which bears up the clouds. Compare Psalm cxlviii. 4. "Praise Him ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens," and Proverbs viii. 28 where mention is made of the 'clouds above' instead of the 'waters above'. Elsewhere scripture often refers to clouds as waters. (See ii. Sam. xxii. 12; Job xxxvi. 8; xxxvii. 11; xxxviii. 37.)

"And God made the Firmament."

The process is not stated, only the fact.

"And Divided."

Lit.: 'let it be dividing', expressing continuity of action and describing more fully its purpose.

"And it was so."

The Hebrew root means 'to be fixed' and thus indicates that it was right, honest, true. God's expressed will was truly accomplished.

"And God called the Firmament Heaven."

The word heaven is always in the plural and apparently comes from a root which means 'to be high'.

WHAT GOD SAID—THIRD DAY. VERSES 9-13.

"And God Said, Let the Waters under the Heaven be Gathered Together in one Place."

That is the waters on the earth; how this was effected is not stated, whether by elevation or a subsidence, nor is it stated how long the procedure took. There is a poetical description in Psalm civ. 6-8, "Thou coverest it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn again to cover the earth."

"And Let the Dry Land Appear."

Lit.: 'the dry', hitherto covered with water.

"And God Called the Dry Land Earth."

Lit.: God called 'the dry', earth. Again, God gives a name for the information of man.

"And the Gathering Together of the Waters Called He Seas."

The account is brief, there is no specific mention of rivers, lakes, etc.

There is a second 'And God said' on this third day.

"Let the Earth Bring Forth Grass."

Lit.: let the earth sprout 'green', a comprehensive term for all young verdure. God does not say 'let there shoot forth on the earth', but 'let the earth cause to shoot forth or sprout'. This is the beginning of life on the earth.

"The Herb Yielding Seed."

Plants, vegetables and grain crops, seed-forming plants.

"And the Fruit Tree Yielding Fruit."

Self-propagating or producing fruits whose seed is within them.

"After his Kind."

The word used is antique; it can very well mean 'specie'; the word is not used in the plural.

"Whose Seed is in Itself."

The distinction is in the method of seeding, the vegetation which produces seed and the fruit which contains the seed.

WHAT GOD SAID—FOURTH DAY. VERSES 14-19.

"And God Said, Let there be Lights in the Firmament of Heaven."

Luminaries, the word is different to that translated 'light' in verse 3. That word means light itself, this means 'bearers of light', or 'places of light', the 'instruments of light', though the word is a simple one referring to light derived from an instrument.

There is an entire absence of personification and deification which occurs in almost every other ancient account of the sun and moon and stars. Those best acquainted with the old accounts handed down from Babylonia and Egypt will recognise how pure this record is.

On this day God appears to have ceased to give names to the things He had created. No more is it stated 'And God called', no name is assigned to the greater and lesser lights, nor are

animals named in this narrative. In the second narrative there is an account how God arranged for first man to give the names to animals and birds.

There is no necessity, in view of what has been written in Chapters II and III, to discuss, as all commentators have felt bound to do, the mention of the sun and the moon on the fourth day, seeing that this narrative gives the order of *revelation*, and the things revealed on each of the last three days are parallel with the first three, so that the first and the fourth are connected.

"To Divide the Day from the Night."

This is the first time that the purpose is explained at any length. The 'greater and lesser lights' are the regulators of the day and night referred to in verse 5.

"And Let Them be for Signs."

Hebrew *toth*, means 'marks', or 'tokens', and presumably means to mark off the days. S. R. Driver says, "by their appearance betokening the future state of the weather", but surely in Palestine, and still less in Babylonia, where the weather is fixed, can this be the meaning here. In Babylonia neither the sun nor the moon indicate a change in the weather on 300 days in the year. The cloud formation before the rare rain is sufficiently noticeable apart from the sun and the moon. Neither can Spurrell's interpretation, "through eclipses of the sun and moon, the appearances of comets as showing extraordinary events," be accepted. The account is free from anything like astrology.

"And for Seasons and for Days and Years."

The word translated seasons means 'to appoint', 'to fix'. Although some have stated that the record was written in order to introduce the seven days ending with the Sabbath, it should be noted that there is no mention here of a week, as the sun and the moon has no direct relation to a week of seven days.

“And Let Them be for Lights in the Firmament of the Heavens to Give Light Upon the Earth.”

The reference is to the way the sun and the moon affect the earth; the account admittedly has the earth as its viewpoint; what other point of view would or should it have for man?

“And God Made Two Great Lights,” etc.

Note the extreme simplicity of the statement, there is no suggestion that these are the only or even the largest lights.

“And God set Them.”

It conveys the idea of ‘placing’, in such a way as to accomplish the purpose of giving light to the earth.

“To Rule,” etc.

To control, and so dominate. Compare Job xxxviii. 33.

“The Stars Also.”

The original is short, almost abrupt, being two Hebrew words only. There is nothing of the ancient superstition about stars and their supposed influence on persons and creatures.

WHAT GOD SAID—FIFTH DAY. Verses 20–23.

“And God Said, Let the Waters Bring Forth Abundantly,” etc.

Lit.: ‘let the waters swarm forth with a swarm of sea creatures’, to teem in abundance. A new form of life different in kind and degree to vegetation. The word ‘swarm’ conveys the impression of a great multitude.

“The Fowl that may Fly above the Earth,” etc.

Every flying thing; this probably included insects.

“And God Created Great Whales.”

More accurately reptile; the idea behind the word is of a long and big animal. It includes big land, as well as sea monsters.

And every living creature that moveth.

Lit. : and every soul of life or living thing ; the principal of life and sensibility, something which moves lightly along or glides, as the swimming movement of fish.

WHAT GOD SAID—SIXTH DAY. Verses 25-31.

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living thing after his kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth after his kind.”

Lit. : the earth shall cause to go forth living soul.

(1) Cattle, chiefly four-footed domestic animals.

(2) Creeping animals.

(3) Untamed animals.

“And God Said, Let us Make Man.”

There is a significant difference between the statements introducing the preceding acts of creation and this last and supreme act, the creation of man. Previously there had been a fiat such as, ‘let the waters go forth’ . . . ‘let the earth bring forth’ . . . Here there is no ‘let there be man’, or ‘let the earth bring forth man’. It is, ‘Let us make man’. If words mean anything they surely imply that God did a new thing when He created man; a new order of being was brought into existence by means which made him distinct from that of animals.

Let *US*. The first person plural is used. The Jews attempt various explanations to account for this plural. Maimonides and Ibn Ezra say that the angels are referred to, but angels are not mentioned in this record. Philo speaks of “the Father of all things addressing His own powers”, but such an explanation is far-fetched and generally unacceptable. Some have said that here the plural of majesty is used; just as some modern monarchs use the plural on official occasions. This explanation cannot be accepted seeing that it is not a usual Biblical custom for kings to do this. It is normal for the singular to be used, for instance, ‘is not this great Babylon which *I* have built’, ‘*I* am Pharaoh’, etc. This use of the plural

is in accord with the prologue of the Fourth Gospel which indicates the presence of the creative Word. (See Appendix II.) "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made." The 'us' is used also in Genesis iii. 22, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of *us*", and in Genesis xi. 7, "Go to, let *us* go down and there confound their language", and Isaiah vi. 8, "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for *us*?" It is a remarkable testimony to the care with which the text of Scripture has been handed down to us that this plural occurs. The Jews with their knowledge that 'the Lord our God is one Lord' had difficulty in explaining this plural, yet did not attempt to alter the text. The coming of Christ, and the opening statement of the Fourth Gospel makes the meaning plain.

"Man."

Hebrew, 'Adam', the name given by God. As there is no definite article, the word is here used in a general sense, and denotes mankind.

"In Our Image, After Our Likeness."

'Image' and 'likeness' are almost synonymous words. What in man constituted the image and likeness of God? Before this question can be answered we must ask what is God like? We are told that He is Spirit (John iv. 24), Light (1 John i. 5), He is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible (1 Tim. i. 17). No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son . . . hath declared Him (John i. 18). Paul speaks of him as "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see" (1. Tim. vi. 16). It is in the Word, the Son of God, that we have the answer, for He, before being made 'in the likeness of man', when He came to this earth at Bethlehem, was in 'the *form* of God' (Phil. ii. 6). First man saw and talked with the Word who 'Was in the beginning with God', and without Him 'was not anything made that was made' (John i).

He was the *image* of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation (Col. i. 15), and man was made in His image.

The image refers to the outward form, and usually expresses the idea of shape or resemblance as to body while 'likeness' is applied to immaterial resemblance or the things of the mind, but perhaps the distinction cannot be pressed. "By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by Him" (Col. i. 16). The Son being 'the express *image* of His person, and upholding all things' (Heb. i. 3) created man as an intelligent being with a capacity for communion with the Eternal God. Dr. S. R. Driver says of this image and likeness that "it can be nothing but the gift of *self-conscious reason* which is possessed by man".

"Male and Female Created He Them."

The creation of the female is more fully stated in chapter ii. 18-25, and it seems obvious that after the creation of man several events which occupied much time happened before the woman was created.

"And Let Them have Dominion," etc.

The impression conveyed is that the dominion or rule is consequent upon the creation of man in the image and likeness of God. We know that man's outstanding position is not due to his greater physical strength, or size; his superiority was due to the mental qualities with which he was endowed by God. The thought is repeated in Psalm viii. 6, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, Thou hast put all things under his feet."

"Replenish."

The root word means 'to be full', or 'to fill'; the same Hebrew word is translated 'fill' in verse 22.

"And Subdue it."

A strong word, man has been placed in a position of supremacy on the earth, and authority has been given to him (see Ps. cxv. 16). "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's, but the earth hath He given to the children of men."

"I have Given you every Herb," etc.

The word includes plants, vegetables and green crops.

"For Meat."

Means, 'for food': meat was an old English term for food.

"And Behold It was Very Good."

There is purpose in the world; matter and material things are not in themselves, as originally created, hostile to God. His creation is very good. Evil appeared on earth later.

"The Sixth Day."

Here, unlike the other five days, the article is used.

The colophon, or appendix to this record (ii. 1-4), has been dealt with in Chapter V.

TRANSLATION

IN THE beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was formless and empty and darkness was upon the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the surface of the waters.

And God said, let light be, and light was, and God saw the light that it was good. And God separated the light and the darkness, and God called the light 'day', and the darkness called He 'night'. And evening came and morning came, day one.

And God said, let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate waters from the waters. And God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were under the expanse, from the waters which were above the expanse, and it was so, and God called the expanse 'heavens'. And evening came and morning came, day second.

And God said, let the waters under the heavens be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so, and God called the dry land 'earth', and the gathering

together of the waters He called 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

And God said, let the earth sprout grass of green herbage, seeding seed, and the fruit tree making fruit, after its kind, whose seed is within it upon the earth, and it was so. And the earth caused to go forth grass of green herbage, seeding seed after its kind and the fruit-bearing tree whose seed is within it, after its kind, and God saw that it was good. And evening came and morning came, day third.

And God said, let luminaries be in the expanse of the heavens, to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, for set times, for days and years. And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth, and it was so. And God made the two great luminaries, the great luminary for the rule of the day and the small luminary for the rule of the night, and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light and the darkness, and God saw that it was good. And evening came and morning came, day fourth.

And God said, let the waters swarm with living swarming creatures, the flying creatures that fly about above the earth over the face of the expanse of the heavens. And God created great sea creatures and every soul of life that glideth, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged flying creature after its 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 the flying creature let it multiply in the earth. And evening came and morning came, day fifth.

And God said, let the earth bring forth living creatures, cattle, creeping things, and beast of the earth, after its kind, and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth, after its kind and the cattle after its kind, and every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, and God saw that it was good.

And God said, let us make man in our image according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the flying creature of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over the earth, and over all the gliding things that

glideth over the earth. And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and exercise dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the flying creatures of the heavens, and over every beast which glideth upon the earth.

And God said, behold I have given you every herb that soweth upon the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has in it the fruit of a tree which sows seed, to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of the earth and every flying creature of the heavens, and to every thing which glideth upon the earth in which is the soul of life, every grass of green herbage for food, and it was so. And God saw all that He had made, and behold it was exceedingly good. And evening came and morning came, day the sixth.

And were finished the heavens and the earth and all their arranged order (or series), and on the seventh day God finished His business which He had done and He desisted on the seventh day from all His business which He had done. And God blessed the seventh day and set it apart, for in it He ceased from all His business which God did creatively in reference to making these the histories (LXX, written account) of the heavens and the earth, in their being created in the day when the Lord God did the earth and heavens.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

WE HAVE endeavoured to marshal all the known facts about the first chapter of the Bible, and to ascertain why the narrative is divided by the six evenings and mornings, ending with a seventh day's rest. Having examined all the evidence available to us, it may be useful at this concluding stage to recall some of the main facts observed and discoveries made during our investigation. The several converging lines of evidence may perhaps be more clearly seen if these are summarised without detail.

The seventh day's rest—for whom? Unquestionably the most important and illuminating disclosure regarding the meaning of the days is that made by our Lord when He explained that the sabbath had, at the beginning, been introduced by God for *man's* sake. Men have always believed this theoretically, it is therefore all the more surprising that every interpretation, of which the writer is aware, has assumed that the seventh day's rest was originated by God *for His own rest*. Assured by our Lord's pronouncement as to the reason for the introduction of the seventh day's rest and seeing that the Fourth Commandment implies that for the six days immediately preceding the institution of that seventh day God had done work of some kind *with man*, it became obvious that the six nightly periods—the evenings and mornings—of cessation or rest were also *for man's sake*.

Consequently there was one thing our Lord was not doing on those six days, He was not creating the heavens and the earth and all life on it. Of this we can be quite sure, not only because man was on the earth during those six days and it was he who needed the nightly periods of rest as well as the seventh day's rest. But, in addition, we have the clear evidence of Scripture that woman was not created on the same day or time as man, seeing that many incidents of great importance are recorded as having occurred between these two events. Scripture therefore does not teach a six-day creation or re-creation. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that God *created* the heaven and earth in six days.

It is a record of what 'God said'. The creation narrative is a statement of what God said to man about the things He had created. This is quite evident from the incident where the first man and woman are addressed, "*And God said to them*". There is a conjoint repetition of what 'God created' and also of what 'God said'. On each of the six days God told man about some aspect of His creative work, much of which had been accomplished in the long ages past. We have to face a fundamental issue from which there is no escape; this first page of the Bible is either the guesswork of some man, or it is a revelation made by God to man. We cannot honestly shrink from

this issue, and every examination of its character has impressed us that we can do no other than accept the evidence that here we have the account of a revelation made by God to man, and made very early in the history of man. If anyone doubts this, I suggest that they read all the accounts of creation or the origin of things known to man which I have collected into Appendix III, and compare them with the first page of the Bible.

God gave names to the things He had created and obviously these names were given for man's sake, for names could surely have no other purpose. This is important, for it is evidence that what we have in this record is both God's revelation of the narrative and His explanation of it to man.

Marks of antiquity. In Chapter VIII we considered the marks of extreme antiquity which the narrative bears. Unlike any other account known to man, this first chapter of Genesis contains no reference whatever to any subsequent event. We observed that the account was universal in character and not limited in scope to any particular people or country, but refers to mankind as a whole. Next we noticed the child-like simplicity of its statements, even to the omission in the last three days of revelation of the giving of names for no names are assigned to the sun and the moon; in Genesis ii it tells how Adam gave names to animals. We saw that it has the marks of having been originally written down in some form at the earliest imaginable date.

The colophon states that it was written. In Chapter V we examined the final words of the narrative and observed that it is a colophon or appendix, which in accordance with ancient usage gives literary information concerning the writing. We saw that the title given to the narrative was 'the heavens and the earth' and that which was *finished* was the *writing of the narrative*. Similar instances were seen of the use in ancient times of these words 'the heavens and the earth' and 'finished', the former as a 'title' and the latter to mark the completion of a series of tablets.

Other ancient evidence. In the section on archaeology (Chapter VII) we reviewed the available evidence regarding the ancient beliefs and traditions of men and saw that at the time of our Lord the prevailing belief of the Jews was that the account of creation had been given in the earliest times by direct revelation from God, and that it had been written down. The Samaritan evidence, dated the third century before Christ, is of a written revelation to Adam which was handed down to Enoch and Noah. With this the oldest translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, agrees in that it clearly states that the account was written. We also saw that the Babylonians taught that on one occasion a Being *instructed* first man for the *daylight* hours of six successive days. But it is quite obvious that the Bible account was not derived from the Babylonian, but that the Babylonian tradition was due to the reality of the event.

It is hoped that we have succeeded in lifting the meaning of this first page of the Bible out of the rut of opposing and conventional interpretations into which it has unhappily fallen. There is a great difference between reading something into the Bible—this we have no right to do—and in discovering in the Bible things which are undoubtedly there but which have hitherto been overlooked. As Dr. Gwatkin has said, (*The Knowledge of God*, Vol. I, p. 11), "A theory is easily fitted to any one difficulty; the test of it is its explanation of other difficulties." Current interpretations only meet one difficulty. I submit that the following *seven* difficulties are eliminated by the interpretation I have given. (1) God giving names—we now see the reason for this. (2) 'God said'—the whole account was a revelation to man, just as the two final statements of what 'God said' are stated to have been. (3) The 'evenings and the mornings' are now seen to be, quite naturally, for man's nightly rest. (4) The seventh day on which God 'ceased' was for man's sake. While (5) all the days, including those in the Fourth Commandment and the seventh day's rest, are seen to be natural days, there is no need to give these days exceptional duration, and this (6) disposes of the idea that (a) the day of rest was instituted a few hours after Adam had been created, or (b) that it was at the end of a long

geologic age, or that this seventh day is one of some thousands of years. And (7) the old conflicting ideas about the 'light' of day one before the 'sun and moon' of day four and all its related problems disappears.

The first chapter of Genesis therefore does not say anything about the period taken by God in *creating* the universe, but it does tell us about the period taken in *revealing* to man the account of creation. Admittedly this has wide implications, for it rids the record not only of the perplexities produced by misinterpretations but what is even more important, it means that we have a God-given record of the origin of things imparted to man in simple language. It is a revelation of the things which man by his unaided efforts could not have known.¹

This first page of the Bible, disencumbered of its misinterpretations, stands in its sublime grandeur, its remarkable accuracy, its concise comprehensiveness, quite unique in the creation literature of the world.

I am aware that more might have been written relating to this subject, for instance, on the origin of the idea of God, on the problem of the way in which language and writing originated, but the scope of this book precludes anything approaching an adequate discussion of these important subjects. I hope however what I have written at least justifies the remark of Descartes that "the origin of the idea of God may well be God Himself". This first page of the Bible claims that this is so, it is very important that we interpret it aright, for it is the great fundamental basis of our knowledge of God as Creator. False interpretations bring it into disrepute; our investigation has, we believe, recovered the original interpretation current in ancient times; what seems to be a new and modern

¹ "Many scientific men have speculated about the first beginning of life and their speculations are often of great interest, but there is absolutely no definite knowledge and no convincing guess yet of the way in which life began. But nearly all authorities are agreed that it probably began upon mud or sand in warm sunlit shallow brackish water, and that it spread up the beaches to the intertidal lines and out to the open waters" (H. G. Wells, *A Short History of the World*). According to this statement 'all authorities' are agreed about the probability of something about which they have 'no convincing guess'.

interpretation turns out to be the one current millenniums ago.

When our enquiry began we could not attach ourselves to any of the prevailing schools of interpretation, our attitude was not unlike that of Irenæus (Ep. lxxxii. 3) when he wrote, "If in any one of these books I stumble upon something which appears to be opposed to truth, I have no hesitation in saying that either my copy is at fault, or that the translator has not fully grasped what was said, or that I myself have not understood."

Is it too much to hope that these pages may become an irenicon, reconciling the two types of explanation now prevailing, which contend the one against the other? That which explains the days as six long geologic periods with geological nights contradicts the other which insists that creation proper is not referred to in the six days, but only a subsequent yet entire re-creation of the earth and all life in six literal days. A house so divided against itself cannot stand, a rapprochement of both sides is necessary. It will be seen that the substance of what both opposing interpretations have been insisting upon is true; the days of Genesis are intended to be literal days, but not of creation, and the time occupied in the events described may well be as long as the 'geological' interpretation asserts.

Our study has shown that in the words of Psalm cxix. 160, "Thy word is true from the beginning", and we know "that the truth shall make you free".

APPENDIX I

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO CREATION

GENERAL.

Nehemiah ix. 6. Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone, Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all.

Job xxxviii. 4. Where wast Thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Psalms viii. 3. When I consider the heavens the works of Thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained.

xxxiii. 6. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

xxxiii. 9. For He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.

lxxxix. 11. The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine; as for the world and the fullness thereof, Thou hast founded them.

xc. 2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.

cii. 25. Of old Thou hast laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the work of Thy hands.

civ. 6. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment.

cxxxvi. 5. To Him that by wisdom made the heavens.

cxxi. 2. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

(See also Psalm cxxiv. 8.)

cxlvi. 6. Which made the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is.

Proverbs viii. 22-31. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He

set a compass upon the face of the depth; when He established the clouds above; when He strengthened the fountains of the deep; when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth; then was I by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Isaiah. xl. Behold the Lord (verse 10) who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (verse 12). It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in (verse 22). To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth (verses 25 and 26).

xlii. 5. Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.

xliv. 24. I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.

Jeremiah x. 12. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion (see also ci. 15).

Zechariah xii. 1. The Lord which stretched forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

John. i. 1-4. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

i. 10. He was in the world and the world was made by Him.

xvii. O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was (verse 5). Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (verse 24).

- Acts vii. 49-50. Heaven is my throne and earth My footstool.
Hath not My hand made all these things?
- xiv. 15. The living God which made heaven, and earth, and the sea and all things that are therein.
- xvii. 24-28. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing that He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.
- Romans i. 20. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.
- 1 Corinthians viii. 6. One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.
- Ephesians iii. 9. Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.
- Colossians i. 16-17. For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.
- Hebrews i. His Son whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds (verse 2). And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the works of Thine hands (verse 10).
- xi. 3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.
- 2 Peter iii. 5. By the word of God the heavens were of old.
- Revelation iii. 14. These things saith . . . the beginning of the creation of God.
- iv. 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.
- x. 6. Him that liveth for ever and ever who created heaven and the things that therein are and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein.

- xiv. 7. Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

DAY ONE.

- Psalm lxxiv. 16. The day is Thine, the night also is Thine, Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.
 civ. 20. Thou makest darkness and it is night.
 2 Corinthians iv. 6. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness.

DAY TWO.

- Job xxxvi. 32. With clouds He covereth the light and commanded it not to shine, by the cloud that cometh betwixt.
 Psalm xix. 1. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.
 xxiv. 1-2. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein. For He founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.
 cxxxvi. 6. To him that stretched the earth above the waters.
 cxlvii. 8. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth.
 cxlviii. 4. Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded and they were created, He hath established them for ever and ever. He hath made a decree which shall not pass.
 Jeremiah li. 15-16. He hath made the earth by His power. He hath established the world by His wisdom and hath stretched out the heaven by His understanding. When He uttereth His voice there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth. He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures.

DAY THREE.

- Genesis ii. 5 (R.V.). And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth.
 ii. 9. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.
 Job xxvi. 10. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until day and night come to an end.
 xxxviii. 8 and 11. Who shut up the sea with doors . . . and said hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?
 Psalm xxxiii. 6-9. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap and layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let

all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast.

xcv. 5. The sea is His and He made it and His hands formed the dry land.

civ. 6-14. The waters stood above the mountains, at Thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over that they turn not again to cover the earth . . . the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works; He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man.

cxlviii. 4. Praise the Lord . . . ye waters that be above the heavens.

Isaiah xi. 12. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand.

Jeremiah v. 22. Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it and though the waves thereof toss themselves yet can they not prevail, though they roar yet can they not pass over it.

DAY FOUR.

Deuteronomy iv. 19. Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto the heaven, and when thou seeth the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them and serve them which the Lord thy God divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

Psalms xix. 6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

lxxiv. 17. Thou hast made summer and winter.

civ. 19-20. He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness and it is night.

cxxxvi. 7-9. To Him that made great lights . . . the sun to rule by day, the moon and the stars to rule by night.

cxlviii. 1-3. 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.

Jeremiah xxxi. 35. Thus saith the Lord which giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night.

DAY FIVE.

Genesis ii. 19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air.

DAY SIX.

Genesis ii. 7-8. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul . . . the man whom He had formed.

ii. 18. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found an helpmeet for him.

iii. 22-23. And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil, and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

v. 1-2. God created man, in the likeness of God made He him, male and female created He them and blessed them and called their name Adam.

Genesis ix. 6. In the image of God made He man.

Job. x. 8-9. Thine hands have made me and fashioned me . . . Thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

xxxiii. 4. The Spirit of the Lord hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

Psalm viii. 4-9. What is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air; and the fish of the sea and whatsoever that passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth.

c. 3. Know ye that the Lord He is God, it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves.

civ. 23-27. Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are

Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches, so is this great and wide sea wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts . . . these wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

cxix. 73. Thy hands have made me and fashioned me.

cxxxvi. 25. O give thanks unto the Lord . . . who giveth food to all flesh.

cxlv. 15-17. Thou givest them their meat in due season, Thou openest Thy hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works.

cxlvii. 9. He givest to the beast his food.

Ecclesiastes iii. 11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time, also He hath set the world (eternity) in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

vii. 29. Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

xii. 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Isaiah lxiv. 8. But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father, we are the clay and Thou our potter, and we all are the work of Thy hand.

Zechariah xii. 1. The Lord . . . formeth the spirit of man within him.

Malachi ii. 14-15. She is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did He not make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That He might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit.

Matthew xix. 4. And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female (see also Mark x. 6).

Acts xvii. 25-28. He giveth to all life and breath and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . for in Him we live and move and have our being . . . for we are also His offspring.

I Corinthians xi. 7. For a man . . . is the image and glory of God.

xi. 9. For neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man.

xv. 45. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul.

xv. 47. The first man is of the earth, earthy.

Colossians iii. 10. The new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.

- 1 Timothy ii. 13. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.
 iv. 3-4. Forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good.
 James iii. 9. Men which are made after the similitude of God.

APPENDIX II

THE 'WISDOM' AND 'WORD' OF GOD AT CREATION

THERE are two other passages of outstanding importance to which reference should be made: one is in the Old Testament (Prov. viii) and the other in the New Testament (John i). The former refers to the 'Wisdom' of God, and the latter to the 'Word' of God, in connection with creation.

The Old Testament passage has been the subject of much comment, and has played a not unimportant part in the history of the doctrine of the Lord before His incarnation at Bethlehem. It refers to One who was designated 'Wisdom', who was with God at creation "while as yet He had not made the earth . . . when He prepared the heavens . . . when He established the clouds . . . when He gave to the sea his decree"; we read, "Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I (Wisdom) was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, and my delights were with the sons of men". He is said to be "from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was".

That these verses and the prologue to the Gospel of John relate to the same Person and events there can be little doubt. On one occasion our Lord, referring to the messengers sent in Old Testament times, said (Luke xi. 49), "Therefore also said the *Wisdom of God*, I will send them prophets."

The Old Testament writers did not indulge in metaphysical speculations about God and the universe. As Dr. Fairweather has written, "Wisdom is spoken of in such a way as to make it impossible to believe that only the Divine attribute of wisdom is meant." So that when we read, "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth" (Prov. iii. 9), the reference is to a Person. So in Psalm civ. 24, "O Lord how manifold are Thy works! by wisdom hath Thou made them all." And even Dr. Toy admits that "the description is completely non-national and universal".

If there could be any valid doubt as to the meaning of the 'Wisdom' passage, there can be none whatever regarding the

introduction to John's Gospel. This expressly refers to the creation narrative. The Apostle used the Greek word 'logos', translated 'Word', without attempting to explain it; he must therefore have assumed that those who would read his Gospel were well acquainted with its meaning. He is about to write the record of the earthly life of the Lord and, realising the importance of what he is to do, says that this life did not begin with His birth at Bethlehem; it extends back to eternity in the past. So he prefaces the narrative of His life on earth with this great and sublime statement, a declaration which above any other in the Gospels has been recognised as having no authority except as a revelation from God. He states that the One who was the Word of God at creation is the One who became incarnate at Bethlehem and writes "all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made". As Dr. Driver says (*Genesis*, p. 5), "The 'word' being the mediating principle of creation, the means or agency through which His will takes effect (cf. Psalm xxxiii. 6, 9; also cvii. 20, cxlvii. 15, 18) in which passages the word is regarded as a messenger between God and His creatures. This usage of the O.T. is a preparation for the personal sense of the term 'The Word' which appears in the N.T. (John i. 1)."

Luther said, "God has decreed that he will be unknowable and unapproachable apart from Christ"; and in his Bampton Lectures Dr. Medd writes, "The Father has ever worked through the person of the Son. The Son is the one *Mediator*. The thought of mediation becomes necessary, as soon as from the absolute thought of God we pass to the related thought of creation, and the Bible revelation distinctly attaches mediation to the person of the Eternal Son in respect alike of the works of Creation, of Administration, and Redemption."

The necessity of a mediator between God and man is seen from the fact that God the Father always has been 'the Invisible God' who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only Begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared him" (John. i. 18). The Son, the 'Word', is the *Image* of the Invisible God; an image is a likeness or representation. We read of Him in eternity past as "being in the *form* of God" (Phil. ii. 6). The 'Form' as Lightfoot says, denotes figure, shape, fashion; He "took on Him the *form* of a servant". The only other use of this word 'form' in the New Testament is in Mark xvi. 12 when, after His resurrection, "He appeared in another *form* to two of them" and talked with them as they walked along the road to Emmaus. The 'image', the 'form' which He had at creation, seems to be similar to that of His resurrection body. By means of this form He was the Image of the invisible God and so visible

to man. Man was made in the likeness of this 'Word', and the Apostle says this Word was God (not just God's word) and thus the Infinite God talked to finite man.

At creation He was the utterance, the Mediator. "In the New Testament the 'logos' signifies a verbal utterance, then discourse, speech, instruction, narrative, and when applied to God either a specific Divine utterance, or revelation in general or the Scriptures as the communication of God's mind and will" (Purves). Not only is He referred to as Creator, but as the Light and Life of *men*. As Dr. Purves says, "Hence to men, endowed with intelligence, the life possessed by the 'logos', and manifested in creation, was originally the illuminating truth (the light) by which they apprehended God and duty; but when man became immersed in darkness (by sin) the Divine light, though still continuing to shine, was not comprehended" (*Hastings Bible Dictionary*, Vol. III, 133). At creation the 'Word' was not only the 'Life'—God breathed into his nostrils the breath of Life—but also the 'Light', the True (or more literally 'the original') light which lightens every man coming into the world. It is this enlightenment that made man in the image of God. Mind, reason, understanding, came to first man as to all men subsequently from Him who was the 'Logos', the speech of God. Westcott quotes Theophylact, "Man as made in the Image of God stood in a special relation to the Word. He saith not the light of the Jews only, but of all men, for all of us, insofar as we have received intellect and reason from that Word which created us, are said to be illumined by Him. Without Him was not anything made or, more literally, 'not even one thing', neither man's body nor his mind."

In this prologue, which is a historical survey of the past, John writes, "the light shone in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not", or more accurately, the darkness did not overtake or overwhelm the light which had originally shone into man's mind. Periods of darkness soon came, at the very beginning man sinned and began to doubt God, "men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil". First man attempted to hide from God, yet notwithstanding his fall his reason remained. Even in the state of affairs which preceded the Flood the darkness did not succeed in overwhelming the Light; in subsequent periods of backsliding and idolatry He, "who hath put wisdom in the inward parts and who hath given understanding to the heart" (Job xxxviii. 36), never permitted the light to be eclipsed or extinguished. We have already noted that all the corruption of the Babylonian or Egyptian mythologies did not completely succeed in blotting out the idea of an original revelation from God. Nor have the false speculations of more modern days overwhelmed "the light which lighteth every man coming into the world", and

which illuminates the soul of man made in the Image and likeness of God. There is always more light breaking forth from His word. The original revelation of God to man is the basis of both the Old and the New Testament. This enlightenment was not something external but something immediate. This Light was the light of men; we are told that God *talked with first man*—not in a remote and uncertain way, but directly and positively face to face 'in the garden in the cool of the day'.

Some philosophical theories assume that man groped in the darkness over a period of thousands or millions of years, knowing nothing at first of God the Creator of the heavens and the earth. On the other hand, the prologue to this Gospel states that He who later came to be the Saviour of men was originally at creation both the Word and the Light of men. Genesis tells of God speaking to man and telling him about His purposes for him. In recent years there has been a serious and continuous degradation of the use of this word 'revelation'. As Dr. Hendry says (God the Creator) "the necessity of revelation, is formally acknowledged but it is deprived of its essential content because it is taken for granted that its substance is of the same order as the substance of philosophical knowledge, and that the God of revelation is identical with the philosophical idea of God and potentially knowable by human mind." Attempts are made to bend and mould this word into a semblance quite different from its Scripture usage, so we must define our terms. By revelation in this instance we mean a direct speaking to men by Him who is called the Word. If it is said that this is impossible then the person who says it is in conflict with the statements in the second chapter of Genesis.

Brunner says, "Revelation in the Biblical sense means that in this event of revelation something is said to me which, apart from this event, is and remains inaccessible to me, hidden from me, which accordingly does not reside in some depth of my being and which I can neither control nor judge." "Nothing can be discovered by man about God apart from the revelation of Himself by God to man, nor can anything be effectively revealed by God to man apart from the activity of human reason in apprehending it" (*Doctrine in the Church of England*, p. 44). The Bible says of first man that he was made in the Image and Likeness of God, a being sufficiently intelligent to whom God could speak.

The Bible consistently represents first man as the specially created crowning climax of the Creator's work; it has no place for the speculations which assume a time when there was an ape-like man or a man-like ape.

As Dr. Plummer has written in the *Cambridge Greek Testament* on John, "In the Old Testament we find the Word or Wisdom of God personified, generally as an instrument for executing the

Divine Will, as if it were distinct from that Will. We have the first traces of it in the 'God *said*' of Genesis i. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, etc. The personification of the Word of God begins to appear in the Psalms xxxiii. 6, cvii. 20, cxix. 89, cxlvii. 15. In Proverbs viii and ix the Wisdom of God is personified in very striking terms. The Wisdom is manifested in the *power* and *mighty works* of God; that God is *love* is a revelation yet to come. In the *Targums* or Aramaic paraphrases of the O.T. the development is carried still further. These, though not yet written down, were in common use among the Jews in our Lord's time; and they strongly influenced the growing tendency to separate the Divine Essence from the immediate contact with the material world. Where Scripture speaks of a direct communication from God to man, the Targums substituted the *Memra*, or the 'Word of God'. Thus in Genesis iii. 8, 9, instead of 'they heard the voice of the Lord God', the Targums read, 'they heard the *Word* of the Lord God', and instead of 'God called unto Adam', they put, 'the Word of the Lord called unto Adam', and so on." The usage may be seen in such a passage as Deuteronomy v. 5, "I stood between the *Word* (*Memra*) of the Lord and you, to announce to you at that time the word (*pithgama*) of the Lord." As Medd says (*One Mediator*, p. 62), "The human intellect is part of that image of God wherein man was created. It is the finite counterpart and miniature of the intellect of God."

APPENDIX III

OTHER ANCIENT ACCOUNTS OF CREATION

Babylonian and Assyrian.

The oldest accounts of creation (other than the Bible) which have come down to us are the Sumerian. The Sumerians were a dying race when Abraham lived at Ur, but we know that for a century or two before he was born the scribes had been occupied in reproducing on clay tablets the old Sumerian literature. Many of the ideas that the Babylonians and Assyrians had about creation came from this source.

I have cited in Chapter VI the relevant parts of the most popular of these Sumerian creation stories, and in Chapter VII have referred to the account which came down through Berossus relating to a primitive revelation made to First man.

Eusebius¹ has preserved another ancient story of creation. "There was a time when all was darkness and water and these gave birth

¹ The text can be seen in Schœne, *Eusebii Chronicorum*, Liber Prior, pp. 14-18.

to fearful creatures with strange appearances, for men with two wings were born and some with four wings and two faces, they had only one body but two heads, a man's and also a woman's. . . . And other men had goats' legs and horns and the fore parts of men looked like hippocentaurs. Bulls with human heads were born, and dogs with four bodies, with fish tails on their hind quarters, and horses and men with dogs' heads and other beings had the heads and bodies of horses but with the tails of fish, and others with the shapes of all kinds of beasts.

"In addition to these, there were fish, creeping things, serpents and many other wonderful beings that had appearances derived from one another. Images of all these are set up in the Temple of Bel. The ruler of them all was a woman named Omorka, which in Chaldean is interpreted 'Thallata', in Greek Thalassa (sea) but numerically equivalent to Salene (the moon). After the universe had come to be, Bel appeared and divided the woman into two parts, he made half of her earth and the other half heaven, and did away with the creatures in her. This, he says, is the material truth sent forth allegorically, for when the universe was watery and only animals had come to be, this god cut off his own head, and the other gods mixed the earth with the blood which flowed and moulded men, because of this they are intelligent and have a part in the wisdom of the gods."

Another account of the beliefs of the Babylonians about creation has come down to us from Damascius,¹ a Neo-Platonist.

"The Babylonians seem to pass over without notice the one origin of all things and make two, Tauthe and Apon, her husband, and named her the mother of the gods. Of these only one son was born, Moymis—which I take to be the world produced from two origins. From these came a further issue, Lache and Lachos, and from these a third, Kissare and Assorus. From these three children were born Anos, Illinos, and Aos. To Aos and Dauke, Belos was born who they call the Creator."

Egyptian.

Stories of creation were numerous in Egyptian literature, but it is very difficult to find any account which was generally accepted. They are often contradictory because almost every town had its own god or gods and these produced a great variety of stories. Maspero in his *Dawn of Civilisation* writes (p. 146), "It was narrated at Hermopolis, and the legend was ultimately universally accepted, even by the Heliopolitans that the separation of Nuit and Sibou had taken place at a certain spot on the site of the city where Sibou had ascended the mound on which the feudal temple

¹Damascii Successoris Dubitationes et Solutiones de Primus principii. Paris, 1889, p. 321, 322.

was afterwards built, in order that he might better sustain the goddess and uphold the sky at the proper height."

It was, he says (p. 155), the belief of the Egyptians that "Their forefathers had appeared upon the banks of the Nile even before the Creator had completed his work, so eager were the gods to behold their birth. No Egyptian disputed the reality of this right of the firstborn, which ennobled the whole race; but if they were asked the name of their divine father, then the harmony was broken, and each advanced the claims of a different personage. Phtah had modelled man with his own hands; Khnumu had formed him on a potter's table. Ra, at his first rising, seeing the earth desert and bare, had flooded it with his rays as with a flood of tears; all living things, vegetable and animal, and man himself, had sprung pell-mell from his eyes, and were scattered abroad over the surface of the world with the light. Sometimes the facts were presented under a less poetic aspect. The mud of the Nile, heated to excess by the burning sun, fermented and brought forth the various races of men and animals by spontaneous generation, having moulded itself into a thousand living forms. . . . It was not Ra alone whose tears were endowed with vitalising power. All divinities, whether beneficent or malevolent, Sit as well as Osiris or Isis could give life by weeping, and the work of their eyes, when once it had fallen upon earth, flourished and multiplied as vigorously as that which came from the eyes of Ra. The individual character of the creator was not without bearing upon the nature of his creatures; good was the necessary outcome of the good gods, evil of the evil ones."

Phoenician.

The Phoenician story has been given to us by Eusebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*, i. 10. Eusebius' source was Philo of Byblos, who learned it from Sanchuniathon. "The beginning of all things was dark air and slimy dark chaos, and these were boundless and limitless for limitless ages. The dark air flamed into love for the prime principle and a connection came about, and from the embrace the dark air produced Mot or muddy slime. From this all creation was produced. Then came beings without consciousness, then reasonable beings and they were called Zophesamin or beholders of heaven, and their shape was that of an egg. And Mot gave light to the sun and moon and the great heavenly bodies.

"When the air became radiant through the burning of the sea and the earth, there arose winds and clouds and great outpourings of waters. After these had been separated they were torn away by the burning heat of the sun and met together again creating thunder and lightning. The din of the thunder awoke the living beings and they moved on the earth, male and female."

Chinese.

The main legends are of a world egg, and there are many of them. In the third century B.C. Kūh-Yuan, a Chinese poet, says that "in the beginning, above and below had no form only pictures. In the earliest times a Chinese Emperor warred against Kung Kung and thrust towards the Pillar of heaven, destroys it and cuts the cords of earth, then the Empress Kū-Kna, who has the body of a serpent, made good the damage done to heaven and earth."

Persian.

Ahuramazda created the world of light and Ahriman the world of darkness, "and the world of darkness threatened the world of light".

The oldest Avesta traditions have been lost but the Benduesh says that "Ahuramazda has settled 12,000 years for the reign of the hostile powers. In the first 3,000 years he created pure spirits, in the second 3,000 years he created six Amashāspands who sit on golden thrones. Six demons of fury oppose these six Amahāspands. Amuramazda then created heaven, then water, then earth, plants, animals, and then he destroyed everything but the sun's light, made the seed clean, and there emerged from death animals and man."

Indian.

Here again there is much uncertainty and the accounts vary. There are over 120 so-called creation hymns in the tenth book of the Rig-Veda, but it is very difficult to get any clear conception of Indian ideas from these very contradictory stories. One is that a woman gave birth to heaven and earth. Another that "At first all was dark and indistinguishable, then the eternal One thought 'I will create worlds' and at once water came into existence and water contained the germ of all life. This light came and the water gradually became a wonderful egg in which Brahman (the creator) created himself. After hundreds of millions of years he split the egg into two parts making heaven out of one and the earth out of the other."

Greek.

One of the earliest attempts to state the Greek view was made by Hesiod in his *Theogony*. "At first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth, the foundation of those who do not know death, who hold the peaks of snowy Olympus and dark Tartarus in the depths of the Earth and Eros, fairest among the gods, who unnerves the limbs and overcomes the mind and counsel of wisdom of all gods, and all men within them. From Chaos, Erebus came forth and black night, but night gave birth to Aether and Day whom she

conceived and bare from union in love with Erebus. And Earth gave birth to the starry heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, and to be a sure place of abode for the blessed gods. And she gave birth to long hills, the haunts of the goddess Nymphs who live in the valleys of the hills. She also gave birth to the fruitless deep and his stormy swell," etc. etc.

It is difficult after reading these stories to account for the very widespread belief that the ideas which were current among other nations in regard to creation do not differ substantially from that in the Bible. I submit that the difference is not merely one of degree but of kind. To use Professor Sayce's words in his Gifford Lectures on *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, "Between Judaism and the coarsely polytheistic religion of Babylonia, as between Christianity and the old Egyptian faith—in spite of its high morality and spiritual insight—there lies an impassable gulf. I can find only one explanation, unfashionable and antiquated though it be. In the language of a former generation, it marks the dividing line between revelation and unrevealed religion."

Although occasionally one can catch glimpses of truth in these accounts, obviously they have been so corrupted as to appear grotesque. So great is the difference between them and Scripture that we are compelled to acknowledge the first page of the Bible as a revelation from God.

But it is sometimes said that there is another alternative to revelation which can account for the purity of the Bible record; it is the 'religious genius of the Hebrews'. I submit that this is only begging the question, for was not the 'religious genius of the Hebrews' due to the revelation made by God to them of His nature and thoughts?

Supposing that any of the so-called stories of creation which have come down to us from any source (apart from the Bible) had been found on its first page, would we have learned anything about creation? I submit that a careful reading of these accounts which contain all that men knew about creation will impress us with the unique character of the Biblical record. To my mind this ignorance about creation outside the Bible is a challenging testimony to the reality of revelation.