

The Seven Days of Creation

A SERIES OF LECTURES

by

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THE STORY OF CREATION IN GENESIS THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION

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The understanding of truth by the enlightenment of the human mind. The creation of the World of mind and its relation to the world of matter.

Every study which one undertakes involves not only new ideas, but also new words, in a sense a new vocabulary appropriate to the subject. Therefore, if we are to enter more profoundly into the things of religion, we, of necessity, have to master new ideas, and acquire an appropriate usage of words, which to a degree departs in meaning from the same words as used in common speech. In regard to the subject which we will consider, the difficulties of understanding it are not so great as is the case in many

technical subjects which the man of medium intelligence readily masters if he is interested in the subject. But when it comes to religion many expect to arrive at essential things without the kind of effort that they would put into the study of some other subject. Yet everything worthwhile requires effort; apart from effort a subject soon grows flat and stale. The kingdom of God is not for the mentally lazy.

The reason that few are willing to spend the energy required in acquiring a knowledge of religion that they would readily spend on other subjects is that their love is weak. While the things of this world grip their interest, the things of eternal life do not grip them sufficiently, wherefore on encountering the first difficulty, they give up.

One seeking truth wishes a calm presentation, and not a highly emotional or oratorical presentation which deprives the mind of the quietness of mood necessary for an unbiased judgment. Religious talks often arouse the emotions to such an extent that one can not see whether what is said is true or not.

The object of these lectures is not to persuade, but to present certain things for your calm consideration.

In this country most persons believe in a God, that is, they are theists and not atheists; but generally speaking, the idea of God is decidedly vague, and there are many shades of opinion varying from those who hold to the strict traditions of our grandparents to the scientist who finds an unknown force or intelligence behind the natural phenomena with which he deals and which he calls God.

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Even in the churches the idea of God with the great majority has become somewhat vague. There are few who accept the Bible in the same way as our forefathers did.

Our idea and thence thought of God may be based on three types of approach to the subject:

First, the approach through a written revelation: with the Christians through what is called the Bible. This is sometimes called the historical approach.

Second, the approach through the objective world. This approach may be divided into two kinds: the approach of the scientist who as it were sees God behind the order of the universe, or as the active force within the atom; and the approach of the artistically inclined who see God behind the harmony of creation.

Third, the approach through the subjective world of mind. These feel the presence of God as inspiration from within, as the source of love and wisdom.

With those who believe in God there is generally some thing of all these methods of approach and each has its place; but in the world such as it is at this day, the scientific approach tends to dominate and take a place of importance beyond its due.

The reason for this is that men have fallen into an intensive pursuit of material ends. They have been overcome by an all-pervading desire to satisfy first their material wants at the expense of all else. This pursuit has concentrated the thought on science as the means to this goal with the result that the thought of God has become largely a scientific idea of God.

Science with the exception of psychology deals with the objective world, and even psychology is based largely on objective experiments, which can be scientifically demonstrated on the plane of physical sensation.

To form our ideas according to the objective world, the world around us, is the easiest course, the course requiring the least reflection.

A child, if it were not pointed out to him, would have considerable knowledge of his surroundings before he realized that he had an eye that sees; and when he knows he has an eye he still cannot see his own eye. After growing older a child has a far more extensive knowledge of his environment before he comes to realize that he has a mind which is the means of his being conscious of the world; and even when he grows up, it is

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hard for him to realize that the actual consciousness of the world around us is within us and not as it appears outside of us, for we appear to see a tree at a distance and are not aware that the sensation is in the eye.

The tendency is to carry something of this childish attitude over into adult life, with the result that the world of material things around us seems to us more real than the world of mind.

It also appears as if the mind were formed and received its activity from the sensations which come to it from the outer world; but that this is a fallacy can be seen from the fact that a more internal activity cannot be caused by a lower type of activity. This may be seen illustrated by the following example:

If a soft iron bar is held in a north and south direction and hammered while so held, it becomes magnetized, that is, it becomes a magnet. The reason for this is that all iron consists of magnetic particles. These particles are normally facing in every direction, so that they neutralize each other; but when the bar is hammered, the earth's magnetic field brings these particles into alignment with the result that the bar becomes what is

called magnetized. The appearance is that the hammering gave to the bar its magnetic force, but the truth is that the hammering merely permitted the magnetic particles so to arrange themselves that their force becomes evident to us.

Another illustration is the electric generator. The turning of the wheels appears to be the source of the electricity, whereas in reality the turning of the wheels so arranges the electrical particles in which the electrical force resides, that the force may be felt and used.

The same is true of the mind. The sensations from the outer world impinging upon the brain do not cause mental activity such as thoughts, affections, things of love and wisdom, but sensations are the means of the things of the mind so arranging themselves that we become conscious of our mind. The case is analogous to the hammer on the iron bar, where the hammering was not the cause of the magnet, but merely the means of the magnetic force, intrinsically present in the particles of the iron, manifesting its activity as magnetic force.

The highest form of activity we know is mental activity, the activity of affection, thought, love and wisdom, things of which we are subjectively conscious, if we reflect upon them.

It is obvious that the most appropriate thought concerning God is thought which primarily is based on the highest activity

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We can become aware of, that is, the activity of the human things of love and wisdom, and secondarily on the creation of the objective world of matter with its various forms of activity. In a word, that the primary thought of God be a Divinely Human idea, and not primarily a scientific non-human idea; that we think of God as Divine Love and Wisdom and, being such, that he is primarily the origin of mind, and thence of the material world; and that we view the world of matter as the means by which the world of mind manifests itself.

All people have viewed God as being in a human form. This concept was first brought into question by one of the ancient Greek philosophers, who said that if cows were able to portray their gods, they would portray them as cows, etc. This line of thought led to the disparagement of what is called the anthropomorphic idea of God, the idea of God in the form of man. In the Genesis account of creation it is said that God created man in His image and likeness; and if we see that man is primarily man from the form of his mind, and only secondarily from the form of his body, and see the body as a manifestation of the soul on a lower plane, we can see that the idea of God as a Divine Man is the highest concept possible to man, and the only one which is truly appropriate. God is indeed infinitely more than man, but it is only by means of a Divine Human idea,

that we can have any appropriate idea of Him, and thus be conjoined to Him by love.

We indeed do not think of God as being spatial, as being a spatial figure seated somewhere in the universe, but if we see Him as Divine Love and Wisdom, and see the body as a representative or manifestation of the soul, we can visualize God as a Divine Man.

If we can see this, it no longer appears strange that man is described as being created in the image and likeness of God. Nor does it appear so strange that the Logos, the Word, the Divine Truth, which was in the beginning, should be made flesh and dwell among us; and we behold His Glory as described in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, where also it is said, that He was the light of the world which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Was not this light the same light of which we read in the first chapter of Genesis, where the first day of creation is described: "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light, and God saw the light that it was good"?

The first chapter of Genesis appears to treat of the creation

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of the physical universe, the world of the physical creation, the objective world, This in the wisdom of God was so provided in order that children, and all peoples who are in a childish state, may think of God as the Creator of the wonderful world in which we live. For to a child, and to all who are in a childish state, this is the only world which has any reality to them.

Yet the Word of God is also for the wise, for the adult who realizes that the world of mind is just as real and more essential than the world of matter, and that the primary creation is the creation of the world of mind.

That the seven days of creation, essentially, are not a literal description of the creation of the physical universe, is evident from the fact that light is described as being created on the first day, while the sun, moon and stars are said to be created on the fourth day.

That there is a light of the mind in which men see truth, as well as a light of the body in which men see physical objects, is a matter of common thought and speech, as well as of common expression in the Bible or in the Word of God. We have an instinctive feeling that this form of expression is not a mere simile, but that there is a correspondence between the seeing of the eye, and the seeing of the mind, and that the light of the mind is as real a light as the light of the sun.

Concerning the first day of creation we read: "And darkness was upon the faces of the

deep and the spirit of God moved upon the faces of the waters. And God said, Let there be light." Genesis 1:2. Anyone who is willing can feel that the darkness here spoken of is the darkness of the man who is in doubt and obscurity, who is searching for the light of truth, but cannot find it, and therefore feels himself as in a deep, or in an abyss of ignorance, and that the spirit of God is the mercy of God, the mercy of our Lord, leading him into the light of truth.

The spirit of God is said to move. The word in the Hebrew also means to brood. As a hen broods over her eggs, the spirit of God moves or broods over the waters.

That waters mean truths is evident from the words of our Lord in the New Testament, but of this we will treat more fully in our next lecture. Here the faces of the waters are the knowledges of the truths of religion we learnt in our childhood, but which appear obscure and dark when we become adult and find that none can satisfactorily explain to us the things we have been taught. It is the Lord's mercy moving and brooding

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upon these knowledges of truth that brings to man the first light, which brings him to the first day of the re-creation of his spirit, the first light that God really is, that God is the All in all of life.

The Bible commences with the words: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Are we to think here merely of the sky, or where the word "heaven" occurs, are we to think of what our Lord called "the kingdom of heaven within you"? Does "the beginning" merely refer to some ancient time, or does it mean the beginning of man's awakening when a vision of the kingdom of God is granted to him?

As "heaven" stands for the "kingdom of heaven within you", so earth stands for the kingdom of earth in man, for the earthly things of the mind, earthly thoughts and affections.

If the Bible is the Word of God, it cannot treat, as to its spirit, of any thing but the things of the spirit.

What importance would many things written in the Bible have if they did not have hidden within them the things of the spirit?

We read "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life".

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