

# Emblems From the Story of Creation

by A.B. Simpson

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*A.B. Simpson's sermon draws profound spiritual lessons from the creation narrative, emphasizing the new creation in Christ and the significance of the Sabbath.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:26-27, Song of Solomon 4:12, John 6:51, Romans 5:19, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:10, Hebrews 4:9-10, 1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 21:1-5

**Topics:** "Creation", "New Creation in Christ"

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## Description

A.B. Simpson explores the profound spiritual meanings embedded in the story of creation, emphasizing that while the Scriptures recount historical events, they also convey deeper truths about the new creation in Christ. He illustrates how the creation narrative parallels the spiritual transformation of believers, highlighting themes of light, order, and the divine image in humanity. Simpson draws connections between the creation of man and woman, emphasizing their roles and the relationship between Christ and the Church. He concludes with reflections on the Sabbath as a symbol of spiritual rest and the garden as a representation of paradise restored, ultimately pointing to Christ as the source of life and renewal.

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## Transcript

While the Holy Scriptures are a literal and historical record of things, that have actually occurred, yet underlying the narrative there is for us a deeper spiritual meaning, which it is the province of faith, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, reverently to interpret and apply. While there is danger of excess and extravagance in this direction, yet this must not drive us to the opposite extreme of hard and cold literalism. The Holy Scriptures have given us the true principle of such spiritual interpretation, and there we learn both by divine statement and innumerable examples, that "All these things were types, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." These underlying spiritual teachings are not confined to those things which may be strictly termed types, but in a measure are linked with all the events of the sacred record.

In the following addresses and reflections we will not attempt to elaborate any rigid or complete system of typology, but will with simplicity and freedom, endeavor to draw the most practical and spiritual lessons which the Divine Spirit may enable us from the leading types and events of the inspired record which have more or less precisely a symbolical character and scriptural suggestiveness.

SECTION I. -- The Creation.

The first is the story of the creation. Recognizing, of course, the literal and historical reality of the record, we have the authority of the scriptures themselves to regard it as the figure of the new creation, which the Divine Spirit is working out in the hearts of God's people, and ultimately will consummate in the Kingdom of Glory. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." The first chapter of Genesis is repeated in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Underlying the whole record of the first creation we can trace the story of grace in figure and spiritual foreshadowing. Like that ancient process, the new creation begins in wreck and chaos -- a wreck, like that of primeval order. The new creation like the old emerges from a scene of darkness and desolation. Like that, also, it is preceded and introduced by the overshadowing presence and brooding wings of the heavenly Dove, and brought about by the power of the personal and Almighty Word. Then also, the first type of Christ in both creations is the dawning Light. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Light is followed by order and the separation of the things that differ, and this word 'separation' is almost a keynote of the entire spiritual life, and has a radical reference to the principle of sanctification itself.

In the old creation there is much light before the celestial luminaries appear in the firmament. This is not until the fourth day. So in the spiritual life the manifestation of Jesus in His personal indwelling and glory, comes often at a later stage, and perhaps the three days that preceded it in the creation narrative suggest, if they do not typify, the resurrection experience which must ever precede it. Salvation brings us the light of the Holy Spirit, but our deeper consecration and union with Him introduces us to the full glory of the Sun of Righteousness, and to the dawn of that day whose "Sun will no more go down -- but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory." This is followed in the old creation by the introduction, in all its wonderful forms and fullness, of life in the entire animal kingdom; and so in the new creation the revelation of the indwelling Christ quickens into life the whole spiritual being, and fills it in every part with fruitfulness and fullness of life, until it reaches its climax in the new man in his full maturity reflecting the glorious image of God Himself.

In both the old creation and the new there were successive stages with marked intervals like the great strata of our globe, bearing the traces of intense convulsions and mighty upheavals; so, with the transformation in our spiritual life, God has to break us off from the old experiences, and bring us out into new aspirations and higher planes by forces often as convulsive as those which molded earth's earlier ages.

And in each case it will be noticed in the records of Genesis, the progress is from the lower to the higher, from the darker to the brighter, from the "evening to the morning."

Every new stage begins in comparative evening and ends in a clear morning, and it is as true now as in the creation days, "It was evening and it was morning, one day." So the transformation is going forward in every Christian heart, and "the path of the just is like the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day." So too, the kingdom of God is going forward through the ages of time, and by and by "it will be evening and morning," one eternal day. "And he that sits on the throne will say, behold I make all things new."

SECTION II. -- The Creation of Man.

The crown of the first creation was man himself. The story of his formation is accompanied with greater emphasis and fullness of detail than the entire universe. It is determined in the counsels of the Eternal Trinity, "Let us make man," and it is patterned after nothing less than the Creator Himself, "in our image and in our likeness." It is fitting that such a majestic being should be the sovereign of the lower creation, and therefore He is invested with the lordship of nature, "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." It is natural, therefore, that if the material creation is symbolical of redemption, much more is the creation of man the type of the Holy Spirit's chief work of grace, namely the renewal and restoration of the human soul. Hence, we find in the New Testament epistles such language as this: "Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" "Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation: old things have passed away, behold all things have become new."

As before, so here we find many exquisite points of correspondence and resemblance. The natural man was created by the forming hand and breathing breath of his Maker, so the spiritual man is not only externally reformed, but internally renewed and regenerated by the very breath and Spirit of the living God. "The Lord God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The Holy Ghost breathes into us the spirit of life, and the new man becomes a quickened spirit. So it is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," "and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we will also bear the image of the heavenly." Again, the first man was created in the likeness of God, so the new creation reaches forward to this glorious ideal, namely: "to be conformed to the image of His Son," "for both He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" for, "We know that when he will appear, we will be like Him; for we will see Him as He is." Further, the old creation invested man with kingliness and lordship; so the new creation makes us kings and priests unto God. Its consummation will be reached when in the millennial world we will reign with Christ over the material earth, and the picture of the eighth Psalm will be fully fulfilled, that, "He has put all things under His feet."

Man must first regain his lost dominion in the kingdom of his own heart, and then he will receive again the crown of nature and the lordship of creation, when he will be prepared to administer it with the righteousness and beneficence of a perfect nature, and a divine wisdom, and holiness.

There is a still higher emblem in the creation of man which the Apostle Paul has developed with great power and beauty in two important epistles, namely, those to the Romans and to the Corinthians. That is the relation that Adam sustains to the Lord Jesus Christ as the type of His Headship for redeemed humanity. Adam was created not merely as an isolated individual, but as the father and representative of the entire race, and his fall has involved his entire posterity in its bitter and baneful consequences. In like manner the Lord Jesus, the second Adam, stands not for Himself alone, as an isolated individual, but as the representative of His entire people, for whom His suffering and death are accepted as an atoning sacrifice, a complete expiation, and His holy obedience as their imputed righteousness and the ground of their complete justification before God. Therefore we read in the passages already referred to, "as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one will many be made righteous; as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." "As in Adam all died; even so in Christ will all be made alive."

The extent of Christ's representation is as universal, in the real principle, as Adam's. Adam's headship and its painful consequences, extend to all his posterity. Christ's headship and its glorious blessings extend to all His spiritual posterity; that is all, and only those who are born of Him. Therefore the whole human race will not be saved, but the whole Christ race will; and the new birth is the indispensable condition and the vital link between Christ and His constituents. The true reading of the passage already quoted in 1 Cor. 15, is in beautiful accord with this teaching. "As all who are in Adam die, so all who are in Christ will be made alive." The great question therefore, for each one of us, is: have we passed out of the Adam life into the Christ life? Salvation, consequently, is not in any sense a culture or improvement of our natural life, but it is the renunciation and crucifixion, not only of the sin, but of the self. The entire nature must die, and all that will live forever must be born of Christ, who comes down from heaven through the Holy Ghost into our hearts and lives. Salvation, therefore, is a radical and inexorable death sentence upon the flesh, both in its grosser and higher parts, and a supernatural and divine creation, more wonderful than the birth of the universe, and equivalent to the resurrection of the dead. Stupendous fact! God's mightiest handiwork! Reader, have you experienced it, and can you say, behold, all things are made new?

### SECTION III. -- The Creation of Woman.

The story of the birth of Eve is more exquisitely beautiful than any dream of ancient poetry or conception of art or imagination. The nearest approach to it is the celebrated description of Socrates in Greek literature, representing the human form as originally double, facing both ways, and afterwards divided by the gods into the sexes, so that every man and woman forms but a half of his or her former self, and which is constantly searching for its counterpart. But this is clumsy and coarse compared with the sacred idyl of woman's lovely birth, which represents her as originally in the man, and then gently taken out of him while he slept, created into beauty and fitness for his fellowship, and then given back to him as his partner and helpmate for life.

The exquisite signification of this in connection with the human and social relation of man and woman; the tender unity, the perfect equality, the mutual independence, and the sacred affection which should ever link them together, does not belong to our present theme. But its spiritual beauty and teaching are even finer and more wonderful, for we have here the parable of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and His relation to the Church, His heavenly Bride, which really contains the germ of the entire mystery of redemption.

First, we see Eve in her original creation in Adam; so the Church was in Christ. Adam was not merely an individual man, but rather man in the general sense, containing in himself in his original formation the woman as well as the man; so the Lord Jesus was not merely one of the sons of men, but the Son of Man, humanity summed up in one complete personality, containing in himself the germ and substance of all the spiritual lives that are to be born of Him; therefore we are identified really with Him, and so His life and death, His sufferings and obedience are actually ours, and for us as well as for Himself.

Secondly, Eve was taken out of Adam while he slept and really formed of his physical substance; so, while Jesus slept in the sepulcher in death, the Church was born out of His substance, and every believer is created anew in Christ Jesus. Our life is part of His very being. "We are partakers of the Divine Nature." Christ is actually "formed" in us, and we are part of His resurrection life as truly as Eve was of Adam's. We are described as "risen with Christ," and our life is hid with Christ in God. Christ is our life. This is the great mystery of the spiritual life; it is a miracle of life; it is not mere life, but Christ life. The Hebrew expression which describes the formation of Eve, is the word "builded." He builded the rib into the woman. How perfectly it describes the whole process of the completion of the body of Christ. The same word is used by

the Apostle in describing it: "In Him you are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." The language of Adam to his partner, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," was literally true, but just as strikingly true is it now that "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

Thirdly: Eve was given back to Adam to be his partner and bride, and an helpmate for him. Her very life by its origin and intention was for him, and not for herself; therefore woman by her very constitution is made not for selfishness, but for service and love. She finds her true destiny in living for man, and losing her life and personality in the one she loves; so the soul born of Christ belongs to Christ; so the Church taken out of His life is given back to Him as the bride of His love and partner of His throne. The soul born of God must rise to God and live for God, and every impulse and element of its spiritual life and consecration finds its rest in losing itself in God and living only for His glory. This wonderful truth runs like a bridal wreath all through the Holy Scriptures. We see it not only in the marriage of Eden, but in the wedding of Rebekah, in the love of Jacob and Rachel, in the Song of Solomon, in the vision of Hosea, in the marriage feast of Canaan, in the parable of the Ten Virgins, in the strange figurative language St. Paul has used of Christ and the Church, and finally in the majestic vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb. Not only is it true of the Church as a whole, but it must naturally be just as real in the experience of all who are members of that mystical body. Of each of us, as individuals, He says: "Your Maker is your Husband." "You will call me Ishi." "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear, forget also your own people, and your father's house, so will the King greatly desire your beauty, for He is your Lord, and worship you Him." "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." "We are members of His body, and His flesh, and His bones." Have we learned this holy, tender, ineffable secret of the Lord and of the heart, and within the chambers of His presence has it been true of us:

"Precious, gentle, lovely Jesus,

Blessed Bridegroom of my heart.

In thy secret inner chambers,

Thou hast whispered what thou art."

#### SECTION IV. -- The Sabbath.

The creation of the world and the family is followed by the appointment of the Sabbath, which, with the home, forms the only relic left to man of Eden. While undoubtedly intended to be literally understood and observed as a day of holy rest, and while the creation Sabbath is really the basis of all subsequent legislation regarding this day, and even the Mosaic institution was but a re-enactment of the Sabbath of creation, and the words of Christ concerning it look back to the very beginning -- while all this is literally true and can never be set aside by the passing away of Judaism, yet below and beyond the natural day and its obligations there lies a deep spiritual symbolism. In the Fourth chapter of Hebrews the Apostle implies that it is designed to be the figure of the deeper spiritual rest into which He would lead his people. The source and nature of this rest are finely expressed by the words suggested by the meaning of the day: "He that has entered into His rest, has ceased from his own works as God did from His." It is the true secret of entering Christ's rest. Struggling for our own righteousness, striving for our own will, will never bring it. "Come unto me all you that labor, and are heavy laden," is his cry, "and I will rest you." When we cease from our attempts to justify ourselves, and accept His righteousness, we have the rest of pardon. When we cease from our attempts to sanctify ourselves, and accept His indwelling life and holiness, we have the rest of holiness. When we cease from our self-will, and accept His will and take His yoke upon

us, we have the peace of God that passes all understanding. Evermore will it be true:

"I struggled and wrestled to win it,

The blessing that setteth me free,

But when I had ceased from my struggling,

His peace Jesus gave unto me."

It is very remarkable and beautiful that although afterwards, as a time of measure, until Christ's resurrection, the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, yet actually it was the first day of Adam's life. The first sun that ever rose on his vision was the Sabbath's sun, because he was created on the evening of the sixth day; so that Adam's sabbath was in this respect the foreshadowing of the Christian Sabbath. The beautiful teaching of this fact is that we need to begin with rest, and not wait to end with it. We are not fitted for service until we are rested first with God's peace.

Christ will not lay His burden on an overloaded heart any more than a human person would overload a weary beast of burden; therefore the Christian Sabbath begins the week, teaching us that we must enter into rest before we are prepared for any service. The heaven that most people are looking for when they die should come as soon as they begin to live and prepare them for all life's labors and burdens. Therefore our dear Lord has said, "Come unto me," first, and "I will rest you." Then "take my yoke upon you," and "with rested hearts go forth to serve me." Have we entered into His rest -- His glorious rest? Have we not only the peace, but the "peace, peace" in which He will keep the heart which is stayed on Him? O, let us listen to the calm voice that comes down to us from that sweet Eden morning, and from that other garden and morning by Joseph's empty tomb, where restlessness and weariness find repose in His rest and all-sufficiency.

Over an English cathedral door, in the Isle of Wight, rests a marble figure of a woman lying with her beautiful head on an open Bible, at the words: "Come unto Me all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is the memorial of a royal princess, who languished for years in the prison hard by, and at last was found one morning with her lovely head resting on that verse, and the tears still moist upon the page. Her weariness had found its pillow on His breast. So let us rest before the icy hand of death will still our throbbing pulses, and leaning there on His strength find:

"His fullness lies around our incompleteness,

Round our restlessness His rest."

#### SECTION V. -- The Garden.

The word "Eden" signifies in the Hebrew, "delight," and the word garden has passed into the term "Paradise," which represents an enclosure of natural beauty and culture, combining exquisiteness of scenery and all the delights of climate and production which natural conditions can secure. It was not intended as a scene of indolence and sensual delight, but as a congenial home, and a scene of occupation and service for a holy and happy race. God always meant his intelligent creatures to be employed, and Heaven will be a scene of active and continual service.

This primeval paradise stands as a symbol of our future home, and is reproduced with higher conditions of felicity and glory in the closing chapter of Revelations, and the vision of the future state of the glorified. That it will be a scene of delight in the physical beauty and perfection of the millennial earth and the new earth and heaven, there can be no question. Not forever will the soil of earth bring forth its piercing thorns and poison plants, rugged rocks and barren wastes. The blood of Calvary has redeemed and brought back an inheritance, infinitely more than Adam lost. "Instead of the thorn will come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier will come up the myrtle tree." "For you will yet go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields will clap their hands." Man's highest dream of beauty and God's divine ideal of blessing will be fully realized, and earth will smile in all the loveliness of Paradise restored. Let us therefore look upon the picture and hasten its realization by laboring and praying for His coming. Without Him earth never can become a paradise again.

The figure of the garden is strangely linked with all the scenes of redemption. Not only does it recall the happy memories of Eden, and the sad story of the fall, but it was in a garden that the tides of sin and judgment were rolled back by a suffering Redeemer, when with agony unutterable and sweat-like drops of blood He canceled our sins in Gethsemane, and planted in the garden of our life by those blood-drops the seed of hope and promise. It was in a garden, too, that he was buried and that the seed of His own precious body was planted as a corn of wheat which fell into the ground to die according to His own sublime figure. And it was in a garden that He rose again; it was forth from the spring blossoms and vernal sunshine of that Easter morning that the seed of promise sprang into immortal life and light, and the hopes of our salvation and glory emerged in the resurrection life of Jesus. The garden of Gethsemane, and the garden of Joseph have undone the wrong of the garden of the Fall, and opened the gates of Eden and its innocence and happiness again. So the figure of the garden is carried in the rich symbolism of the prophets and poets of the Bible into the region of our spiritual life. "A garden enclosed, an orchard of pomegranates" and precious fruits and heavenly flowers, is the metaphor by which the Master describes his work of grace in the consecrated heart. The graces of the Christian life are exhibited under the figure of all the fruits of nature; the care of the husbandman is illustrated by the methods and forms of human culture; and even the rivers of Eden became a suggestion if not a symbol of the streams of grace which make glad the City of God. The crown of the restored earth and the glorified heaven is the last garden of the divine panorama. There all the blessedness will be more than restored; the river of the water of life will flow through its midst from the very throne of God and the Lamb; all trees of beauty and fruitfulness will cover its banks and yield fruit not only according to the seasons of earth, but every month, in a perpetual fullness and fruitfulness of life and delight; and there will be no more curse, nor night, nor death, nor even the occasional visitation of God, for it will be his personal abode and the metropolis of all creation. The tabernacle of God will be with men, and earth and heaven will be the eternal home of Christ and His redeemed, and the scene of a blessedness which our highest thought cannot even conceive.

#### SECTION VI. -- The Tree of Life.

This is described in literal terms as one of the actual productions of the garden. It was in the midst of the garden, and perhaps its crowning production and glory. It is evident that it was the means of sustaining and perpetuating the physical life of man, for after the fall it was withdrawn from his reach for the express reason that it was not now fitting with his fallen nature that he should still partake of it and thus live forever. A perpetual physical life in his new condition would not only be contrary to the curse already pronounced, but would itself be a curse to him. It is therefore plain that even in Eden his physical life was not

self-sustaining, but dependent upon supplies from sources beyond himself. Was it not designed thus to teach us that our physical life is not self-constituted, but needs to be divinely sustained? If the tree of life is a type of Jesus Christ, if he is the source and center of all life to fallen man, then the lesson is most emphatic and blessed that He is to us the source of our physical as well as our spiritual strength and well-being. Did he not teach this expressly in His own words in the temptation: "Man will not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; "and still more clearly and vividly in his discourse concerning the living bread, "He that eateth me will live by me; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him"? It may be objected that the tree of life was withdrawn after the fall, and that this teaches us that we have no right to look for supernatural physical strength on account of our fallen state and moral curse. But in the revelation of mercy made after his fall, we are told in language which we will more fully expound in the next chapter, that God placed at the gate of the garden cherubim, &c., "to keep the way to the tree of life;" not to close the way, but to keep the way. Now, if these cherubim were, as we will find, types of Christ and His redeeming work, the meaning is very beautiful and clear, that while the fall has shut us out from Eden and the old sources of life, and we can no longer approach the tree of life through Eden, yet there is a new way to it provided through Christ, and that we can approach it by way of the cherubim, that is, by the way of the Lord Jesus, and through Him receive its life-giving strength in the measure of our need for this mortal state; and then by and by partake of His fullness in the resurrection glory of the Eternal Future.

Have we understood these things? "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, who brings out of his treasure things new and old." Have we received not only the truth, but "the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God"? We are in the Palace Beautiful; the Interpreter leads us, and as he shows us all its treasures, he stops and adds, "These things are all your own." Have we received them? -- the new creation, the bridegroom's love, the rest of God, the flowers and fruits of His spiritual husbandry, and the life of Christ to be made manifest even in our mortal flesh? Then, indeed, for us is it true even now, "He that sits upon the throne says, behold I make all things new. And he said it is done; I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son."

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