

A Happy World

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon explores the creation story in Genesis 2, highlighting God's love, holiness, and rest, and how these principles are reflected in the formation of man and his relationship with God.

Scripture: Genesis 2:1

Topics: "Creation", "God's Love and Holiness"

Description

Horatius Bonar reflects on the beauty and completeness of God's creation as described in Genesis 2, emphasizing that God finishes what He begins and delights in His work. He highlights the significance of the Sabbath as a day of rest and blessing, illustrating God's love and authority through the creation of man and the garden of Eden. Bonar points out that man's formation from both earth and heaven signifies a unique relationship with God, and the provision of a companion underscores the importance of community. He concludes that evil is not of God, and that God's works are rooted in love and holiness, which He desires to see in His creation.

Transcript

Genesis 2

WHAT a poem, what a picture was the first chapter! Unrivalled in magnificence. The work done, and the words which describe it, are both of God. Now we get some details of the work.

I. Its completion. Thus the heavens and earth were finished, and the whole host or array of all that they contained. God finishes what he begins. He leaves nothing imperfect. And he delights to speak of it as finished. So with creation; so with the tabernacle; so with the temple; so with the great work on the cross. "It is finished." So at the close of time. "It is done."

II. The rest. The seventh day saw the work done. Hitherto it had been continuous work. Now it is rest. God rests. Creation rests. The morning stars begin their song, and the sons of God their shout. What rest means in Him who "fainteth not, neither is weary," we cannot say. It means more than mere cessation from work. God's rest must be as real a thing as His joy and His love; though what it is we cannot say. He calls it rest. It must be something in him exactly corresponding to what rest is in us. The day on which He rests He "blesses;" and blessing with Him is no mere word. It must be a day more fraught with blessing to us and to creation than the rest. More blessing flows out on that day. There are deeper things in this than we think. We shall one day learn that neither earth nor man could have done without this day of blessing.

Invisible blessing flows out from it even to those who are profaning it. God sanctifies it; sets a fence round it; makes it a holy thing, like the altar when sprinkled with blood. He has done this, because He rested, and because He shall rest. It is the sabbath, the rest-day. Shall we not love the name?

III. The details (4-6). God graciously recapitulates; and gives us a glimpse of the process of creation. All plants and herbs were his handiwork; not chance; nor nature; nor man. As yet the ground was unfilled; and rain had not fallen. But now God interposes. He covers earth with a refreshing mist, and he creates man. Probably the state of the atmosphere then was such as to produce mist instead of rain; and it may be that this was the state of things up till the deluge. How wonderful are his works; in wisdom hath he made them all, the finished or the unfinished!

IV. Man's formation. Man is said to be "formed," to be "made," and to be "created." All by God; and out of the dust. His origin is partly of earth and partly of heaven; his body from beneath, his soul from above. God breathes the "breath of lives" into him, and he becomes a living soul. Thus his body is "made" or "formed;" but his soul is "created." The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven. In Him we live and move and have our being. We are his offspring.

V. Man's dwelling (8-15). God plants a garden for him, in a region which he names Eden (delight). This garden is the eastern part of Eden; afterwards called Paradise. He stores it with all that is beautiful and fruitful: a tree of life he puts there; a tree of knowledge also. Down from the heights of Eden there comes a river, which waters the garden, and then parts into four streams, in four directions, each flowing through some goodly land. Thus the garden is doubly watered by the mist and the river. It is a dwelling fit for man; and worthy of God. God is not ashamed to be called their God; seeing He has provided for them such a habitation. This habitation man is to keep and dress. It needs his care; yet the care is slight. No sweat of the face; no anxious toil. Easy and pleasant labour! Such is the love of God.

VI. The test (16,17). A right to every tree but one! Large scope and free welcome to every tree but that of knowledge. Herein is love. Yet here is a link fastening man to God. Man is not to be allowed to go at large, without anything to remind him of God or divine law, or divine sovereignty. Even in this pleasant garden God's authority must be acknowledged. Thou shalt, and thou shalt not; thou mayest, and thou mayest not, is the formula in which God presents his authority, and lays down a test of obedient love. Here is love on the largest scale of beneficence; here is obedience reduced to the smallest possible point; liberty as wide as possible; restraint almost nothing; one little piece of forbearance.

VII. The help-meet. Man cannot do alone. It is not his nature; it cannot consist with his happiness. He will not need much to remove the gloom of solitude; one companion will do. God forms this one for him,--a help-meet; taken, not out of the dust, but out of himself; not out of his head, as if superior; not out of his feet, as if inferior; but out of his side;--where lies his heart;--his equal in one aspect; and yet he is the head,--the first Adam the representation of the second, out of whose wounded side, when He slept the sleep of death, his Eve, the church, was brought;--the offspring of his heart, the object of His love,--altogether one.

VIII. The purity. Naked, yet not ashamed. This is holiness; the perfection of innocence. No fear; no blush; nothing to hide. They can look to one another without shame. They can look up to God without fear. For sin is not there. It is sin that gives an evil conscience. It is sin that spreads blushes on the face. Conscious guilt; how this makes one hang his head!

Let us learn,--

(1.) That evil is not of God. God creates nothing sinful. Sin comes from the creature, not from the Creator; from beneath, not from above.

(2.) That God's works in connection with earth and man are those of love. He made the world and its fullness so excellent, because he loved man. God is love.

(3.) That God loves holiness. He made man holy, because He is holy, and He loves what is holy. He loves to see holiness in the world which He has made; and He is to see it yet when all things are made new.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/horatius-bonar/a-happy-world/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net