

Hints on the Book of Genesis

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores the profound themes of creation, man's responsibility, and the moral implications of being made in God's image as presented in Genesis.

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Genesis 1:26

Topics: "Creation", "Responsibility of Man"

Description

John Nelson Darby explores the Book of Genesis, emphasizing that it begins with God's creation of the heavens and the earth, without detailing His counsels or plans. He highlights the significance of man's responsibility, the distinction between the first Adam and Christ as the second Adam, and the implications of sin and redemption. Darby critiques theories like Darwinism, asserting that God's creation and the fall of man reveal deeper truths about humanity's relationship with God. He also discusses the nature of man, the institution of marriage, and the importance of understanding God's judgment and grace in the context of creation and the fall.

Transcript

Genesis does not begin with any counsels nor even with the existence of God, though both are given in the New Testament.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": this is the opening of the creation. There is nothing of counsels, but you are before the world, and also get more in the New Testament. Time begins with the responsible earth, the creation of that in which the first Adam was placed; but there is nothing of the plans of God here. Promises and ways come afterwards, and the existence of God is assumed very naturally. His counsels are not brought out. This is not unimportant to notice: the whole plan of God is not here at all. There is the sphere first created in which the man was to be put, and the broad fact that God created everything; but even so we do not get everything, for the angels are not here. Yet we know from Job that, when this took place, "the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy."

The subject is really the responsible man, though you must have the earth where the man was, and the dust to take and make him out of it. And when we come to know the truth, this is really important. The whole of "our glory" belongs to God's counsels. We had the two things in the cross: Christ made sin for us, which looked back on the responsible or first Adam; and also the foundation for bringing out God's counsels laid in the second Man. The first part only, as to responsibility, is here, promises come after. Even of creation it is only in respect of man, and not of angels. We see how different a sphere grace is

from the creation, in that God takes up the first creature of the revelation here, and goes down through his sin below any creature, for it is unto death, and then takes him up far above all creatures in His Son, and so makes a totally new and different thing altogether.

What a petty thing is all the Darwinian theory of progress! The author of it goes through all the lowest things up to the highest; God takes man, and puts him (in the person of His Son) down lower than all. This is far more wonderful.

55 The first fact is, God created the heavens and the earth, that is, the universe. Nothing is said about what then happened.

In verse 2 we get the earth in a state of chaos.

In verse 16 "the stars also" come in by the bye; for God had created them when He made the heavens. Afterwards the earth "was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep," that is, the formative agency of God.

The word "created" (v. 1) is right, that is, originally (though used of "great whales," and also said of "man," when it is progressive formation). But in verse 2 the action is only where the darkness was, on the face of the deep. The mention of the darkness sweeps away a whole range of geological infidelity, because they say light began here. But you find ichthyosauri had eyes, and they were created long before. All that is said is that darkness was upon the face of the deep, and not that there was no light; the contrary rather is implied. Where the ichthyosauri were, there must be light: and they are found in strata, which, if you take them for anything at all, would shew that thousands of years had passed since they lived. If you get a thing with eyes, it is fair to suppose that there was light for it. The deep was chaos, an unformed state of things. And this was subsequent to a state of light. I have no difficulty about the light. As for geology, it is not the object of scripture to teach it.

It is not that God formed the heavens and the earth (v. 1) in a chaotic state; but we here find (v. 2) the earth so, "without form and void." It is not said how long elapsed. However I do not at all believe the dates that are given, though we need not allude to this here.

The scriptures do not tell me about these early animals. Why want the Bible to tell me about fish that eat other fish? There they are; and I can go and see the fossils, if I want it. As for death too, it may have existed long before among these animals; there is nothing to intimate that it did not. If it be urged as the general thought that death came on animals because of sin, the answer is that so it did in this present state of the world.

Geologists pretend that a given sandbank must have taken so many thousand years to form, and so on. Without believing them, one can let them take any length of time they like; and still the word of God is sufficient for the believer. There is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and then, all that scene of them being there left out, this earth is without form and void.

56 Who could tell what God ought to create?

The passage in Isaiah 45:18, "he created it not in vain (chaotic)," is conclusive that the earth was not created chaotic at first.

The earth got into the state of chaos - it may be by what destroyed the animals; but we know nothing about it: what I do know by faith is that God created everything.

Then follows a detailed account of this earth, as we have it God makes a place to put man in (Gen. 1:3-31).

Not a word is heard that beasts were created immortal. Rather, I suppose, animals were made to be destroyed, because Peter says they were made to be taken and destroyed. Yet the expression, "beasts that perish," is merely a fact stated; and Peter may possibly only refer to the present state of animals.

But it seems to me a much more laborious thought that God created all sorts of dead animals lodged in strata and stone, and elsewhere, though I do not care to take up the question myself

As a general fact there is an order from the positions relatively of these animals, shells, fishes, etc. There is a proof of order in these, though I have no interest in it myself one way or another. Clearly too scripture leaves a gap, and that gap is ample for any such purpose. We find God creates things "good."

There had been pitch darkness; and then it is not that the evening and the morning make a day, for they would not. But after the darkness, which did not count, we get the light, and then the evening and the morning make the day. The pitch darkness did not count for time. God causes light to be; that is day, and He calls it day: then came the evening and the morning with the light again, In Israel it is clear they counted any part as a whole; if a king reigned as from December 30, they would count in a whole year, and the king that had reigned through that year had that year too, and this creates many difficulties in chronologies. You must count the day first, and then get the evening and the morning to complete the day. The morning is the coming back of dawn. It comes from the revolving of the earth now; but when God said, Light be, it came at once, and that is day, not morning. It is broad day, it lights all up; and it is said, "He called it day." Light was. The sun is not mentioned here, though I have no doubt it was created long before. But as to the earth, there was light before the sun was set to give light by day. This is revealed. Think now, if I had been making a book, should I ever have thought of making a difficulty like this on purpose?

57 They say by light there is no gold, or silver, or lead in the sun, but plenty of iron and other things. When observing a total eclipse, they were astonished to see like little red mountains round the sun; by enlarging the spectrum they lessened the light as the sun shines, and then they saw all this without an eclipse.

If the question be asked whether God created everything in the earth in maturity, such as the coal measures, I answer that, if God had said it, I should have believed it directly, in spite of all the geologists in the world.

Observe, in verse 20, "and fowls that may fly" should be, "and let fowl fly." It is not that the water brought them forth, but God formed them out of the ground (see Gen. 2:19).

"The firmament" is the expanse. God made a heaven, so to speak, to this earth.

I believe myself that they were six days of twenty-four hours each, having no scripture reason against it.

Now we get after the six days' work, in verse 25, "and God saw that it was good"; and what is important for us to notice is, that the creation of that day is finished like the others (except the first two), "and God saw that it was good." He has done with creation, as creation, and now begins counsels in the most solemn

way: "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness, and let them have dominion," etc. Thus the creation as the sphere and scene is quite complete, and then God makes man in His own image, and sets him over it all. But you have it in the most formal manner: the subject creation is completed, and then the lord of it is brought forward in this way. I get, over fish and fowl and beast and everything that is created, something in God's counsels that is lord over all. Man stands quite alone: all is finished; and then he has dominion over it.

58 "Image" is different from "likeness." In the image he stands as the representative of God. If I say, image of Jupiter, it is not likeness merely, but the image stands there to represent him. And so did man. He was there the centre of all the affections of the whole world, and he ought to have stood so. You never have an angel set over anything so, but here man is the central object of all, and he represented God too. But he was also made after God's own "likeness." He was not righteous and holy, but sinless and innocent. Righteous supposes a judicial estimate of right and wrong, but man had not this at all until he had eaten the forbidden fruit. Till then there was nothing evil in him: when fallen, he got conscience to judge good and evil.

Likeness is moral. Man was made like God morally; he was made upright.

There is a figure here in man and woman before the fall for the apostle uses it so. But Eve came out as a distinct thing.

It is well to notice that God takes counsel "let us," etc. If you make the distinction of the persons of the Godhead, I am not aware that creation is personally attributed to any but Christ and the Spirit. Every operation is the direct work of the Spirit, not that He is an independent Spirit, but God. The three are united in scripture. The Son was working, and He says, "the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works," and again, "if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils." But you do not find stated in scripture that the Father created; it says God; and this is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is so far important to see that we have the divine agency. The particular operation of miracles was by the Spirit. "If I by the Spirit cast out"; by "his Spirit garnished the heavens"; and when Christ was raised, He was "quickened by the Spirit." I can allow nothing, therefore, that attempts to lower our thoughts of the Son and of the Spirit.

Holiness supposes good and evil, and the hating the evil and the loving the good; innocence does not know of evil. In righteousness I see judicial authority about it, but holiness is the nature repelling or delighting in. Righteousness is the judgment formed either in mind or in act.

So God created man in His own image. Verse 27 states the fact, though they were created afterwards. The animals were there, and now God says, I am going to have something higher; and man stood there representing God in the earth, made with no evil in him. He still has that character, though it is all in ruin. 1 Corinthians 11:7 says he is the image and glory of God. James 3:9 speaks of men having been made after God's likeness.

59 Then God gives the seeds to man, and the green herbs to animals,

We shall see in chapter 2 that man's responsibility rested entirely on the forbidden fruit, the eating of which was evil only because God had forbidden it.

"To every beast of the earth I have given every green herb for meat." This would imply that animals were not carnivorous. There is a difference between cattle and beasts; but in that statement the cattle are left

out; the "beasts" are what we call wild beasts. It is perfectly competent to God to have restricted them for the time, or to have changed them.

Chapter 2. It is striking to notice that, except in setting the seventh day apart, you never have holiness mentioned in Genesis, nor do you get it anywhere until redemption is accomplished. And you never get God dwelling with man until then. He visits Adam and Abraham, and no more; but the moment we find redemption, holiness and a dwelling-place for God are spoken of. God created them in innocence, but there is no habitation for Him on earth then. Immediately after redemption, He says, "make me a habitation," and He did dwell among them. So, the moment the people were redeemed, He says, "be holy."

Here we have a day set apart to God, to which I attach no small importance, and to what the day means also. In connection with the question, I believe the sabbath-day is an essential part of man's nature and of his rest in God. I remember saying, outside a town in Germany, when looking at some crows flying, "Well, there is a creature that has nothing to say to God, and to it one day is the same as another." But the fact that man has something to say to God proves that he must have a day set apart from the remainder. It was God's rest here, and man was to have part in it. According to the commandment, everything men had was to enjoy that day (Gen. 2:1-3).

Man ought to have enjoyed it before Exodus 16, but did not, because the first thing he did was to sin. The point of this is, that it is the rest of the first creation; and, now that sin has entered in, you cannot have a rest in the first creation. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." How can a holy God have rest in the midst of sin and misery? What kind of rest can God have here? That is Christ's answer. God could have destroyed them as sinners; but if not, He must work.

60 If revealed to Adam, he did not enter into it. There are signs of it from Adam to Moses in a way, but no sign that man really kept it. Man had fallen away from God, and all was wrong, There is nothing to shew that he did not know of it.

It is referred to in Hebrews "As I have sworn in my wrath if they shall enter into my rest, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." Then he quotes this passage, and says after, "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"; and you get this too, that our Lord says, "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." But then He takes it up in the Gospel of Mark in this way: that He, Christ, was the head of it, and so was not bound by it.

Christ was dead and gone into the grave on the Sabbath this indicates a great deal.

The sabbath is given in Exodus on the ground of creation, but in Deuteronomy because they were brought out of Egypt. Exodus is a typical book, and Deuteronomy consists of direction for what they were to do in the land, Exodus applying only to the wilderness in its latter half.

Then there is a very important thought - God was resting, and man does not enter into it but still there is a rest. The next point is, God sanctified it He set it apart from all the rest of time. The reason was God had rested, and, sin having come in, man could not rest in sin.

Now we come to "Jehovah God" (chap. 2:4). Some have made a great talk about the difference between God and Jehovah, His nature as such, and His relationship with Israel. He was specifically revealed to the Jews by that name, because it is a term of relationship, and it was important for the Jews to know that their

national God was the eternal true God, and no God beside Him, Jehovah Elohim.

First in creation you have God, Elohim, made this, and that, and the other. Now we find Him having to say morally to a particular part of His creation; and the moment we come to relative things we get Jehovah, as in chapter 2:4. The whole chapter becomes relative now. Read verses 4-7. There is the history of the character of man in his great moral elements - man not made like the beasts of the field, but formed out of the dust of the ground; and when He has done that (and there one sees what death simply is, "dust thou art," and death is going back to it), then I get something that is not dust, something directly from God, and this makes all the difference.

61 The beasts were formed out of the earth, and the man is formed into shape first, and then God says, "I am going to connect this with myself," and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. By "connect" I do not mean that the man might not fall away from God in will, for he could; but the breath of life which made him a living soul was directly from God; He was capable of dying, but still he had the breath of life from God immediately, which was a thing distinct from every other animal.

"A living soul" means anything that lives by blood and breath. I say this because it says, "whereinsoever was the breath of life, died"; all animals were living souls. Man was, and the animal was; but the essential difference was that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living soul. This might be separated from his body, and the body return to the dust. That is what is referred to in "for we also are his offspring." As I said to an Annihilationist, Do you mean to call a pig God's offspring? Neither would Adam have died if he had not eaten of the forbidden fruit. His body is formed first without life, and the way he gets life is by God's breathing into his nostrils the breath of life; he receives it as a creature, but direct from God. Adam was not made as other animals were.

"This mortal," or "mortal body," leaves the soul by implication immortal. "Mortal" is always used of the body; and it is clear that death does not touch the soul, for you have the wicked man in hades after death. I am quite satisfied that it is true to say "immortal soul." The opposite thought is founded on the words, "who only hath immortality," spoken of God, of course (that is, who only hath it in Himself); but this does not mean that He cannot communicate it. So the angels are only immortal by God's making them so, and we the same. If I were immortal in spite of God, then I might do as I like without fear of death. In the rich man and Lazarus is a perfectly clear case: the one goes to torment, the other to Abraham's bosom, after death. But they say "these are only figures." "Yes," I reply, "but figures of what?" I am not going to Abraham's bosom, but I am to Christ. I asked them this, "Could God give eternal life to a dog?" Yes. "But would the dog be answerable for what he had been doing while he was a dog?" and if he would not be, Christ had not to die for him, and so they destroy atonement. Put it in another way: if I am a mere brute, only a clever brute, until I get Christ as my life, my responsibility is gone.

62 But man was put in his place of responsibility not to eat the forbidden fruit, a thing in which there was no evil, save that it was forbidden.

And you get a striking thing here, one which has been a question even with heathens, and it is also a ground of discussion between Calvinists and Arminians: the tree of life, which is free gift; and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which is responsibility. Man has been trying to unite these in himself, and never can. Man did take the responsibility-tree, and was lost.

Then the promise came to Abraham to shew that grace was really the thing after all - the tree of life; and then came the law, the other tree. People have made the life dependent upon the responsibility-tree,

which is utter folly.

But we find in Christ the two principles united; for He is the man who charges Himself with our responsibility, as He is Himself the life. If I have Christ for my life, with whom also I have died, I can bring the two together. But if taken out of Christ, it is impossible to unite the two things, any more than they were one in the garden.

If Adam had eaten of the tree of life, he would have been an immortal sinner. As he was, we have got the responsibility-man, not the man of God's counsels; but to faith the first or responsibility-man is set aside for Christ, the Second man. We have Christ as our life, and are bound to live in that life, and not in the old man. When it comes to a question of responsibility and judgment, I say I am not in the old man, but in Christ, And in my actual condition I say, Christ is in me, and I am to manifest Him as my life.

But there is more than this. God took the man, and put him in the garden to dress and keep it, gave him one commandment, and then said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." So He gives him a wife, and also puts him in the place of authority, which is shewn by bringing everything to Adam to be named. Giving a name is an act of authority all through scripture. And Adam says of his wife, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman." There we get the institution of marriage, but, above all, Christ and the church. We see dominion which is entirely in Adam, not in the woman. Dominion belongs to Christ; but, being rejected, and accomplishing redemption, He is exalted on high, and instead of dominion He gets the church, which He associates with Himself now, as well as when He is in the dominion. This is the place of the church, which is neither the Lord nor the subject creature, but is associated with the Lord over the creation. God's plans are here in imagery. Adam was "the figure of him that is to come" (Rom. 5:14) He was head over all things to Eve, who was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. We have in this relationship two states, the actual responsibility as created (which Christ was in a certain sense), and then what was historically true, the image of Him that was to come. Christ gave up everything, leaving father and mother (that is, Israel, if you take it as a figure). How often we hear it said, that Christ was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh! No doubt He did become incarnate; but really it is when He is in glory that we are made bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh; the other is never said in scripture.

63 Thus we have the responsible man set up, but still a figure of Him that is to come; and as Eve out of Adam, we are all taken out of Christ, in a sense; we are quickened together with Christ when He has gone down into death, and we are set aside in the place He has taken. just so the deep sleep fell upon Adam, and the rib is taken and made a woman, and is brought to him.

But observe in chapter 3 that the point is not knowledge of good and knowledge of evil, which is a mere blunder. The question of the tree was not conscience. If it had not been forbidden, he was just as free to eat as anything else. Thus we acquire the knowledge of good and evil, and hence conscience. You see it as early as anything in a child. It slaps its mother, say, and you hold up your finger - it understands very well that it has done wrong. God says, "the man is become as one of us"; that is, he has got intrinsically the knowledge of good and evil. If a boy at school steals one of his companions' marbles, he hides it, for he knows he has done wrong. It is no question of commandments here; though it was by the breach of a commandment that conscience was got.

64 Adam was enjoying good in the garden, although the knowledge of good would not have been so full. I quite admit my knowledge may be corrupted; still, I do a thing because it is right. I may think I am doing a

very good thing to put my father in the Ganges at a certain time of life, because then he will go to Buddha or some one; but it is only the difference of good and evil I know; it is not knowledge of good and knowledge of evil. The thing for Adam was not an intrinsic knowledge of good and evil, which was not required, but only a question of obedience. Man got a conscience by the fall, and he never got a conscience till it was a defiled one. But it may get hardened or seared.

Observe, in the account of the fall, that, before a lust comes in, there is another principle shewn, which is, that Adam, like Eve, lost confidence in God. The devil suggested that God kept something back from her because it would make her like God. "God doth know" - this is the reason you "may not eat this" - you will be as God, "knowing good and evil." At this suggestion, that the Lord had kept back the very best thing, Eve lost her confidence. But mark, when Christ comes into the world, I see Him walking through the world where all the evil is, to shew to man that, no matter how defiled it all is, we can have the fullest confidence in God. He comes to win back man's heart to God. There He was reconciling man to God. Were you, a woman, ever such a sinner, who could not shew your face to a fellow-creature, come to Him, and God will receive you. But this loss of confidence is just the same in all of us. If I trusted God to make me happy always, I should always do God's will. Suppose I do not trust Him to make me happy, then I must turn to myself. This is just what we see: men do not trust God to make them happy, and so they try to make themselves happy, This is the world.

We were speaking of the beautiful character of Christ's coming into the world in humiliation, God coming to win back man's heart to Himself. This goes beyond the chapter, but it is produced in souls at times before forgiveness is known. When there is a clear gospel, forgiveness comes out first, but many are like the poor "woman that was a sinner," who had her heart towards God or Christ, though she did not know forgiveness yet. There was faith in His person. She was attracted by the grace in Him, and broken down about her sinfulness (Luke 7). So many a pious soul now does not know forgiveness.

65 It is all a mistake to confound trust with faith, though no doubt faith produces confidence. You can hardly separate the two things, but there is this in faith: "he that believeth his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." In Luke 7 it was a living word. But when I have the Spirit of adoption, I am a son. Christ revealed the Father: "I have manifested thy name"; "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it." The moment the Son was there, the Father's name could be revealed; but it was not until the gift of the Holy Ghost that they had the Spirit of adoption. But in Christ here below, God was coming into the midst of sinners in love, and winning back their confidence; and one sees in the poor woman that was a sinner a heart trusting Him, though His work was not yet completed.

The temptation was, "ye shall be as God," not gods, "knowing good and evil." Eve takes, eats, and gives to her husband, who eats: thus their eyes were opened. The counterpart is seen (Phil. 2), and intended as such, in Jesus, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore also God hath highly exalted him." That is, Christ in taking the place of the second Adam went exactly opposite to the first one. Adam was in the form of man, and set up to be as God; Christ is not only a man, but God, and did not set up, like Adam, to take what did not belong to Him, for He was God, but, having laid all aside, He became obedient unto death, the death of the cross. He goes down all the way, till He comes right down to death, death, yea, death of the cross - the exact contrast of what Adam did. You see the progress in Eve, When confidence is lost, the woman saw that the tree was good for food: lust comes in. It was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one

wise. Accordingly she eats, and then Adam eats. He was not deceived; the woman Eve was, and so was in the transgression.

66 The devil came hiding himself in that serpent, using it as an instrument of mischief.

"Dust" means utter and entire humiliation, as "lick the dust" "Arise ye that dwell in the dust," and so on. It is constantly used in this way. In Daniel 12 it is the same, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth." In the text it is used to express the judgment that shall be upon the power of Satan.

It is curious in the olden times that they used to eat serpents to get wise. And it is wonderful how widespread was the idea of wisdom in the serpent. AEsculapius had a serpent in his temple. A serpent with his tail in his mouth was the image of eternity, the whole circle was in that. The Agatho-demon, or good demon, in Egypt was a winged serpent, They found represented in Mexico (though I do not know how far you can trust pictures) a woman under a tree, and the serpent offering the woman an apple. It was found as a picture. There was a great collection of such things: but it is all dispersed now. There were traces of similar things among the Druids, but evidently the Druids came from Persia.

Fallen, they knew good and evil, and that they were naked; they are under the shame of sin; and then we learn how utterly powerless all human means are to hide sin. The moment they hear the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, all the fig leaves are simply nothing. They were used to cover themselves from one another; but the moment God was there, they say that they are naked. Afterwards God made them coats of skins; it was a very different thing when God did it.

We do not know in what words the command was given; it is merely told us generally. It was pressed upon Eve's mind that she was to have nothing to say to it; she does not give exactly the words of God, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It was probably her own impression, not the exact words of God - just the main effect produced on her mind.

It is well to remark that, before ever God turned Adam out, he had got away from God: I do not mean his heart merely, but he had a bad conscience; he went and hid himself in the trees of the garden, and that is the first of it. But the great question, besides what had been done, is, "Where art thou?" This is a far wider question than that to Cain - "What hast thou done?"

67 There is no history of man in innocence. The first thing we find in the history of man is the fall. Children were begotten after the fall, and all else follows. The fall comes in first both historically and morally; and so it has always been. The first thing Noah does is to get drunk. The children of Israel made a golden calf even before they had really got the law, though they had just promised obedience. It was the same thing with the priests, Nadab and Abihu: they offered strange fire the very first day; and then Aaron was forbidden to go into the most holy place in the garments of glory and beauty. Was not all this serious? It is not a question of the "first day" exactly, but of their first act noted in scripture. And it is just as true of the church. Peter says, "The time is come that judgment should begin at the house of God"; Paul, that "all were seeking their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's"; and then John says, "even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know it is the last time." All the apostles tell us so, though they stemmed the torrent while there. So Jude says, "of these Enoch prophesied, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment," etc. There they are, he says; more morally there, perhaps, than historically.

We see then that man departed from God before ever God turned him out; that is, his conscience drove him away from God, and in the end God drives him out. How God detects everything! "I was afraid because I was naked." . . . "Who told thee thou wast naked?" Now it comes to what he has done; the first point was, "Where art thou?" To Cain it was, "What hast thou done?"

As a matter of doctrine, I was led distinctly to notice this in the Epistle to the Romans. There first it is, "all have sinned"; then, "by one man sin entered." Thus it is our condition: what we have done is proof and fruit of it. Adam cannot be with God at all. Such is his condition; and then God asks, What have you done?

It was God looking for man, perhaps I should hardly say in grace; it was God coming in. Of course God knew everything; but, speaking as to His manner of dealing, He is expecting Adam to have intercourse with Him. God could go and walk there, and, according to the principles of His position, expect that Adam would receive Him as his benefactor. It is, "What has come of you?" so to speak. If one expects a person to be there, one says, "Where are you?" This brings out of Adam what the real state of the case was and when God asks, "How did that come about?" Adam does a base thing, for he says, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." It is "whom thou gavest." If you had not given me the woman, I should not have done it! as much as to say, "You may settle with the woman." And God says, "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten": this is what He condemns Adam for. And whenever we make an excuse, this in fact is what we are condemned for. Adam listened to the woman instead of to God. People say, "I was tempted," and this is true; but why did you yield to the temptation? It was not a lie, in the outward sense of a falsehood; but he had followed the woman instead of God.

68 Then what the woman said was true, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." When the woman of Samaria said, "I have no husband," it was true; but the object of it was to conceal the truth for all that. It was legally true, but ethically false; true in fact, but truth told to conceal the truth all the while.

It is important to remark here, that all the judgment stated is in this word simply. There is none of the truth that comes out afterwards, when life and incorruptibility are brought to light. Men try to spin this out into what is more (and there is an immense deal more to a spiritual mind): but the actual judgment is in this world. Thus the serpent is not here cast into the lake of fire; God says, "because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust thou shalt eat all the days of thy life." There is nothing about the final judgment of Satan, "and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." You may see something more there, figuratively and mysteriously prophetic; but that is no present thing: the actual judgment on the serpent is in the former verse.

Another thing to notice here is that there is no promise to man. As regards a great deal of the Arminian system, much of which is infidelity, all of it is cut up by the roots. There is no promise to man. The promise is a future judgment pronounced on Satan, which has no application to Adam; for it is clear he was not the seed of the woman. Then on the woman it is merely the sorrows of childbirth, and she is made, not simply a companion, but subject, to her husband.

69 All depends on whether this distinction is made: it is no question of restoring the first man. The promise brings in another man instead of the first, And it was not even by the seed of the man, by any descendant of man as man, though He is the Son of man, but it was by the woman it came in; as we read in Galatians, "made of a woman," and "under the law" too - the two things, one applicable to man, and the other special

to some.

What is here is this: God cast out the man; yet Adam fled away from God before he was turned out. But when God turned him out, this was judicial, and God put cherubim there, and a flaming sword, turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life. That is, Adam was not only going to dust, but could not get at life again; it would have been horrible if he could. He was an outcast from God altogether, and this is everlasting misery. Once partaking of the tree of life would have immortalised.

But it is no question here of judgment being everlasting. It is separation from God. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also, and thistles, shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." What was to happen to his soul, there is not a word about. The question of the inner man is quite untouched. When God drove him out, the soul did not die; neither was it dust to go back to dust, for soul was not made of dust. But to be driven out was eternal misery, though one must have a spiritual mind, in a sense, to know really that it is infinite misery to be shut out from God.

As to original sin, it is well to say what we mean by it, as men's thoughts differ widely. We read that "by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world": there we find that the sin of Adam put him in this position. There are two things in what is commonly called original sin. It does not consist in following Adam, but that I am alienated from God, and also that I have an evil nature. The two go together, just as reconciliation and a new nature go together. My heart is renewed from and to God.

70 The first is that man departed from God. I have sometimes said, when they have talked about the race damned for eating of the tree, that it is not God shutting man out for an apple, but that man shut out God for an apple. His heart was separated from God, and then he got lusts and self-will instead of subjection. Then follows the judicial part, "Where art thou?" - where? that is, as to my state (not what? a question of my deeds), though men are judged according to their works. When there is spiritual intelligence in me, the first thing that strikes my conscience is my deeds. Ordinary evangelisation takes up what man has done; but this alone never sets one clear with God. A soul still has to learn another thing, and that is where he is; that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. But the preacher who dwells on this does not reach the consciences of people. If I take the "What hast thou done?" and the "Where art thou?" then I have all. From this point of view men as men are alike bad, and the prodigal son was as great a sinner when he just crossed his father's threshold as when he was eating the swine's husks, because he had from the first turned his back upon his father. Nor is the work done in a soul, until it finds out how bad it is in itself, the tree bad, the root bad, itself away from God. My works refer on to the day of judgment; but by what I am I am lost already.

Both are perfectly true of every man. It is works rather in Adam's breaking the law, and still more distinctly in Cain, in whom it is sin against a neighbour or a brother. Adam sins against God. Cain's terrible act brings the inquiry, "What hast thou done?" But the what or where we are is a great deal deeper in the testimony of the thing than what we have done.

Nothing is more important than to have these two clear before the mind. "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." This is not what I have done. "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin": this, too, is not what we have done; but we "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," this is what we have done, that is, it is sins.

71 The right translation of Romans 5:12 is, "for that all have sinned," not "in whom."

The judgment in Genesis 3 was upon Satan, though it was there for Adam to lay hold of. There was no promise to the fallen Adam, no promise to man in sin any more than innocent. Evil came in by the devil; with man, by temptation. God was over it: this is the reason why He suffered evil and the fall - in view of a greater good to come in. My answer to him who asks it is, "why, you foolish man, if you had not been a sinner, you would not have had Christ at all." And this is a true answer too, because it was in God's counsels to introduce and reveal Christ in glory ultimately.

God created not merely stones, but moral beings, beings with responsibility; and if responsibility be a fact, there is liability to good and evil, as it means having to answer to Him. To a man in the state described in Hebrews 6 there is no restorability; the passage says so. Again, there is no restorability to angels, because they fell when they were in the good itself. Jude tells us of angels who kept not their first estate.

So Ezekiel 28, from verse 11, is commonly, and, I have no doubt justly, applied to the fall of Satan. It is not the same as the prince of Tyrus, who is judged historically in the beginning of the chapter. "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God: every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God, thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Then in verse 17, "thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness," and so on. Under the figure of the king of Tyre clearly, but under figure, we see this, which goes far beyond the idea of a mere king of Tyre, and, I doubt not, it is Satan. The prince of Tyre who was there was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. On the other hand, I see no foundation for the king of Tyre representing Adam. Satan "was a murderer, and abode not in the truth," so that he is a fallen being. The meaning of the word "covereth" refers to a cherub, and gives the idea of protection, I suppose. There is power and beauty in the creature. These precious stones are here in creation, as again in grace in the priesthood, and yet again in glory in the new Jerusalem. All this diversified beauty from God was upon him, and the light shines from the creature as from the precious stones. We have no detail, for God was not teaching men about Satan. He abode not in the truth, he was not kept in dependence by God's power; and angels fell with him, because it says "the devil and his angels." Where Adam sinned in the presence of good, it was only natural goodness received from God; he was not in the glory of God in the upper creation.

72 But other angels fell apart from the devil. Of some scripture says, they are "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day"; whereas Satan roves all about the world now, and others with him, so that they are not in chains under darkness. Jude says, those that "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day; even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." They, doing evil, are set forth for an example, their condition now being an abiding testimony to their judgment. "In like manner" refers to giving themselves over as the cities did. "The sons of God," in Genesis 6:2, were angels, just as in Job, "the sons of God" presented themselves before God.

All is confusion everywhere, except what grace has done, whether it be angels or anybody else; no creature stands when left to itself, and so as to angels, we read of "the elect angels." The good angels are looking on, and therefore a woman is to have her head covered. All creatures have a sphere of responsibility - I do not mean Satan, of course, but moral creatures. Verse 24 is to be taken literally: why not? The infidel would refuse it, and improve man. You do get relief in a way afterwards: so Lamech named his son Noah, and said, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed." It does not say the curse was taken away; but there was a comfort concerning it. There was a certain testimony to the state of things. The curse is not gone; but it was mitigated in its effect. On the other hand, in chapter 4, Cain was cursed from the earth. He got an additional curse: "The earth shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength." In the garden Adam did not toil to get food: he ate the seed, and the animals ate the grass; but when driven out, he had to toil to get things to eat - "in the sweat of his face." Then after the flood seed-time and harvest are secured, agriculture in a way is blessed: not the curse gone, but man comforted, so that I should think it is less work to get things out of the earth now than it was before the flood. It would seem that the end of chapter 8 implies a change; for there is a promise that, though there might be toil and difficulty, yet "neither will I again smite [that is, in the flood] any more every thing living, as I have done: while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease. He gives sufficient for agriculture, but the seasons remain. In Israel it was not the labour removed, but the amount of blessing on the labour increased. Adam had to dress and keep the garden, and he might well enjoy it.

73 In the millennium the labour will continue; but they shall not plant and another eat the fruit, and so on. Still, the works of their hands go on. The labour does not cease, nor will it be in sorrow that they eat. The earth shall yield her increase, but men must toil to get it. Scripture shews that some part of the earth will be barren, as marshes shall be given to salt. The actual judgment goes no farther than death in this world, and no farther than the body - this mortal body. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The question of the soul is utterly untouched. Those who oppose the truth as to this identify eternal life with immortality; but when we have eternal life in Christ, we do not cease to be mortal. The whole thing is really a stupid blunder.

I consider that Eve is called "living" there as being Adam's faith, though you may not lay it down as a dogma. It is remarkable, coming in just after the curse and after the judgment on Satan too. After death has come in, she is called the mother of all living, not of the dying. But it was no object of God to tell us whether Adam was saved or not.

The cherubim are connected with a judicial throne and judicial power, and so always judicial. I speak of it practically so - what judges a thing right as well as what judges a thing wrong. The cherub is always God's judicial authority and power. There were cherubim on the veil in Exodus 26, as over the ark and elsewhere. On the veil it is the symbol of judicial power, so in Ezekiel when he sees them. So it is on the tabernacle: only on the mercy-seat it is judgment for us. It is not merely a throne judging what is wrong, though this is true, but a judgment on my behalf, according to what the blood of atonement is. Law takes up man on responsibility; and this is met for me by Another at the mercy-seat. The difference between them and seraphim appears to be that cherubim are judgment, according to the responsibility of man - judgment from God, of course; and the seraphim have to do more immediately with God's nature. The only place they are expressly mentioned is in Isaiah 6; and there they cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts." The only other being that is called a seraph is the fiery serpent in the wilderness. [See Num. 21:6,

8; Deut. 8:15].

74 There are two elements of judging with God. The first thing is, Have I maintained that which was set up to be? and the other is the Lord's coming, when I shall be in God's presence, Can I then stand in the glory of God? can I abide this test then? In Isaiah, we have the first in chapter 5, "What could I have done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" that is, as a vineyard, what has it borne? And then, in chapter 6, Jehovah is seen high and lifted up, and how could a man stand in His presence? "These things spake Esaias when he saw his glory, and spake of him," John 12.

In chapter 4 of Revelation, the four living creatures are seen full of eyes before and behind, crying, "Holy, holy, holy," having the cherubic and the seraphic characteristics too. It is extremely instructive. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal, and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind." So stood the seraphim. "And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle"; this is cherubic. "And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come this is seraphic again. Farther on we find the judgment of the beast and of the false prophet, and then God coming out in His holiness at the end. In Israel we have the cherubim all through; and when Nebuchadnezzar comes, the judgment on man according to his responsibility. The only thing in which we see the holiness and righteousness of God in itself is the altar outside in brass, and inside the blood put on the golden altar. Thus we have the two obligations (or measures rather) of righteousness. Israel meets God on the ground of what man ought to be outside at the brazen altar; and then when the blood is upon the mercy-seat, the golden mercy-seat of God, there is the righteousness of God as it is in itself. "The Son of man is glorified, and God is glorified in him." The two attitudes of righteousness in the cherubim are at the gate of Eden, and then upon the mercy-seat. At Eden they bar the way against Adam in judicial righteousness; whereas God was sitting on the mercy-seat, and, though He was not approachable because the veil was there, yet He dealt with man; and, if righteous, He accepted man there; and when the blood was on the mercy-seat, there was that which met the character of God. Therewith God Himself was satisfied, for this was Jehovah's lot. There is more known now, because the veil is rent. Christ's work not only took away my sins, but glorified God in His judicial character. It is His righteousness to justify the believers.

75 In the garden it was the exclusion of man, but in the cross we find not only the sins borne, but much more; for there is such a work of Christ as glorifies God, besides putting away our sins. There is Jehovah's lot in full. Towards the poor thief on the cross the Lord will not wait for the kingdom to be set up in grace in the world, but there is a positive going to God where He is. And we have more than sin put away; we have also that which lays the ground for the accomplishment of God's counsels in bringing us in His Son into His presence. This is no part of responsibility; it is nothing of me - putting me into the glory, but the fruit of God's counsels accomplished in Christ. Christ does meet my responsibility by dying; but there is a great deal more than that. His delight was with the sons of men, and He is going to have them in the glory with Himself. Christ glorifies God, and the answer to that is that He goes into the glory, and this as our forerunner.

It is only in the kingdom, I take it, that the cherubim pass on into any connection with the church. We get inside the heavenly city; what is judicial would be outside. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, that is, they dwell in their own glory; but the nations of the millennial age walk in the light of it.

We inside, we have the glory of God lightening us; and they outside walk in the light of the city itself. Christ is glorified in His saints, but they who are outside will never see it as we see it inside. So, in the transfiguration, the disciples fear when they see Moses and Elias enter into the cloud (Luke 9:34).

76 To understand better Psalm 99, which speaks of sitting between the cherubim, let us look at the Psalms from 93 to 100. They are descriptive of the bringing in of the First-begotten into the world. It is a most beautiful series from the commencement in Psalm 93 to the accomplishment in Psalm 100. Psalm 93 gives the thesis. In the rejection of Christ there was judgment in Pilate, and righteousness in Christ. Taking the world as such, we find the one righteous man absolutely on one side, and judgment in the place of authority on the other; but when Christ comes to reign (Ps. 94:15), judgment returns to righteousness, and they go together. Then it is asked, "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?" There is the cry of the remnant then. In Psalm 95 is the summons to them to return while it is still called "to-day." In Psalm 96 the heathen are summoned. In Psalm 97 He is coming. In Psalm 98 He is come. He hath shewed His righteousness, He hath remembered His mercy. In Psalm 99, having come and made known His salvation, He sits between the cherubim, taking His place in Jerusalem. Then Psalm 100 summons the nations to come up and worship in peace. Moses being the lawgiver, and Samuel the first prophet, the psalmist takes the originators of things in Israel to call upon the name of the Lord.

Notice the psalms also that go before. Psalm 90 opens with "Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." Israel goes back to Jehovah, having been their care-taker all through. In Psalm 91 "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Most High" was first stated to Abraham. It is God's millennial name. So what the psalm says is really that, if you dwell in the secret of Abraham's God, you shall have all Abraham's blessing. It is a beautiful conversation, so to speak, in the psalm.

77 In Proverbs 8 it is the wisdom of the counsels of God. "Jehovah 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 foundations 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 I was by him as one brought up with him," (as His own beloved nursling), "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." Wisdom personifies Christ there. In Luke the heavenly host say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in man": the proof of this was that His Son became a man. We could not have a part in counsels until redemption was wrought, but when it was, we are brought in. Now in Proverbs we see Him always rejoicing in the habitable parts of His earth before the earth was made; and so when He comes He does not take up angels, but sons of men.

But in Genesis it is not what wisdom was before the foundation of the world, but the foundation of the world, and man put in his responsibility, In Proverbs 8 His delight was not in creation itself and (therefore we have "habitable"); it was in the men themselves. But we have no counsels brought out until Christ died. In the first seven chapters are good and evil, corruption and violence; and then in chapter 8 God's wisdom in His counsels. And in the former chapters you have too the divine mind expressed in the relationships

that God has formed; it is "my son, hear my voice," and so on. It is remarkable it is nearly always Jehovah in Proverbs, while you do not find Jehovah in Ecclesiastes at all.

When fallen, Adam got Christ for the tree of life. So Augustine exclaims, "Oh, happy fault!" that Adam sinned. God never would have been known as He is if it had not been for sin. There would have been no need for grace, redemption, righteousness, that is, as to man. But now all that God is has been displayed, and this in the cross, righteousness of God against sin, the holiness of God, and the love of God. These would not have come out at all if man had not sinned and they are the things that the angels desire to look into.

78 "Prudence," in Ephesians 1, is wisdom in putting it all together.

God does not shut the man out until He has covered his nakedness - sovereign grace at the very beginning. It is the intimation that God covers him in mercy.

I have no doubt that death had come in, because it is skins, and animals must have been killed; how, it is not said, but this is the case with many things, because it is not the object of revelation. They had made themselves aprons of fig-leaves, and still were conscious that they were naked as ever, for they hid themselves in spite of it. But God clothed them, and then they were not naked at all. It was grace coming in, but only, of course, the sin thereby covered. And I think there was faith too, because it comes immediately after Adam calling his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living.

But we read, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life because God would not let him take of it and live for ever: that would have given him life in sin. Man might have attempted to countervail the whole thing, and to set up the old man thoroughly.

Thus the turning out of the garden was more than judgment; it was mercy, when we come to think of it. It could not be allowed that man should not die in spite of God. So it was judgment, but mercy at the same time in another way. There would have been no possibility of a flood to destroy, or anything else to put an end to man's wickedness.

Now came Cain and Abel (chap. 4). The question is early raised, whether a man can worship God without Christ. Cain was a wicked person; but, as appearance went, he was doing what was right in paying what he owed to God. But really it was bringing the sign of the curse; it was going to God as if nothing had happened; it was the most perfect hardness of heart, because, if I come to God at all, why have I such toil and labour? why give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul, except I am away from God, and something as happened? The whole thing tells its own story. Man has been driven out, and he cannot come to God on the same footing as if he had not been put away. When in the garden there was any feeling of God, he goes and hides himself; but now, when outside, he goes hardened to God. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." But how did he know that this was right? He knew of these beasts slain for skins, and he may have had more for aught we know. "By which Abel obtained witness that he was righteous," was by sacrifice as well as by faith. Both are in the verse, "God testifying of his gifts"; but sacrifice is the least thing referred to. We see that the man is pronounced righteous. In Hebrews the point is not God giving a thing to us, but faith carries Christ in hand figuratively, and God says, "you are righteous." What is the value and character of my righteousness? I say, Christ. Abel is pronounced righteous: but the measure and character of his righteousness is Christ.

79 Cain came as the expression of horrible hardness of heart; to him and to his offering God had not respect. So Cain was wroth, and Jehovah says, "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?"

Should it be "sin," or "sin-offering," lieth at the door? I am disposed to think it a sin-offering; only that the sin-offering is never mentioned historically until we come to Leviticus, under Moses. It is in this kind of way, "If thou does well, shalt thou not be accepted? and unto thee shall the desire of thy younger brother be, and thou shalt rule over him; but if thou failest to do well, there is a remedy, and therefore thou oughtest not to be wroth," "Lieth at the door" means crouching. It is not the expression, "It is at your door," as we say; and therefore I was inclined to take it, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" ("and if thou doest not well," there is a remedy, in parenthesis) "and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." I have no quarrel with the other view, because sin did lie at his door.

"And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? and he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done?" It is not only now the testimony of sin against us, to say what have we done as sinners. But we hear from God, "Where is Christ?" The Holy Ghost is come, and convinces the world of sin, but more than this. He comes and says to the whole world, on God's part, "Where is my Son?" Then there is haughtiness too in Cain's reply, "Am I my brother's keeper?" as though why should God ask?

80 Besides this and more, another important principle comes out - the practically self-righteous man rejecting Christ is then turned out; he leaves the presence of the Lord, and dwells in the land of Nod (that is, "vagabond") where his son is called Enoch, and he builds a city, calling it Enoch too, after his son. Thus he stretches himself in the world, and gives a family name to the town, and the history shews us artisans, and arts, and sciences, all in the train. He goes out from God, and settles himself in the place of judgment, to do his best with it, in open defiance of God. God neglects nothing, and Cain cannot get out of the reach of His hand, of course; but in his own will he was entirely outside. Cain sets to work to make the earth as comfortable as he can without God; Adam did not want all that in paradise.

As to lake dwellings, and caves with stone hatchets, and many similar things, we have to remember that in New Guinea people are doing the same thing now: how would London like to do so? In Switzerland and Italy they have been finding, covered with bog, and in the lakes, a hundred villages, and all kinds of remains - what the people were eating, and what clothes they wore, as round the Lake of Geneva and elsewhere. And they have learnt the natural history of those times. There was a stone in a hole that they could not make out, and at last found it was what they wove with. Occasionally they have discovered a thing that came from Phoenicia, which was civilised at the very time these villages appeared to have flourished. In North America, lying under some magnificent trees, seven hundred years old, was a piece of native copper, or a square cradle, put ready to be carried away, with other distinct marks of an earlier civilization than the present.

Civilization does die away in places; but I know of no case of light from God going away, and bringing in barbarism.

It was God's providential government when Satan made the Chaldeans go and take Job's goods. If we refer to the sentence on Cain, there was no direct government at all in that, it did not kill him. Man is now left to himself until we come to the second world. God protects him, putting a mark on him, lest any finding him should kill him. This I believe to be a figure of the Jews unto this day.

81 Cain is "I have gotten," Abel is "vanity," because he went to nothing. Eve fancied she had gotten this man from the Lord - that this was the promise, while it was only from nature. Cain means "gotten," Seth means "appointed," and Abel means "the dying man." Eve thinks she has the man that can inherit the blessing. It was not so, as we well know. If you take flesh, the Jews were [Cain] the men from the Lord, and it only resulted in their killing the Lord; first that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual.

Chapter 4:23 may be taken historically, and it is true but typically it refers to the Jews at the end. There is self-will in it every way. Typically it is the remnant of Israel in the last day; but we must not dogmatise about that. Cain is a figure of Israel having killed Christ, and made a vagabond on the earth. At the end the remnant of Israel will own, like Lamech, they have killed this man to their wounding. In the historical sense

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