

Confessions - Book Xii - Chapter XX

by St. Augustine

Transcript

29. From all these truths, which are not doubted by those to whom thou hast granted insight in such things in their inner eye and who believe unshakably that thy servant Moses spoke in the spirit of truth--from all these truths, then, one man takes the sense of "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" to mean, "In his Word, coeternal with himself, God made both the intelligible and the tangible, the spiritual and the corporeal creation." Another takes it in a different sense, that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" means, "In his Word, coeternal with himself, God made the universal mass of this corporeal world, with all the observable and known entities that it contains." Still another finds a different meaning, that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" means, "In his Word, coeternal with himself, God made the unformed matter of the spiritual and corporeal creation." Another can take the sense that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" means, "In his Word, coeternal with himself, God made the unformed matter of the physical creation, in which heaven and earth were as yet indistinguished; but now that they have come to be separated and formed, we can now perceive them both in the mighty mass of this world." [489] Another takes still a further meaning, that "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" means, "In the very beginning of creating and working, God made that unformed matter which contained, undifferentiated, heaven and earth, from which both of them were formed, and both now stand out and are observable with all the things that are in them."

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