

## The Two Headships

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*"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15: 45-49).*

First of all I want to ask, Do you know that there are two races in the world? — two peoples of quite distinct origin, having quite different heads, and travelling in quite different ways. That great fact lies clearly on the face of these verses. There is a first Adam, and there is a last Adam; there is a first man, and there is a second Man.

Adam is the man who was the great progenitor of our race; mankind springs from him; he is the source and fountainhead, and upon the race his impress is clearly seen. Through the ages Adam has been simply disclosing himself, unrolling himself in the history of his descendants in detail. So when we think of Adam, we think of him as the great head, the head that dominates this poor fallen race, and to which everyone of us by nature belongs. And when we think of Jesus, we think of the last Adam, *last*, mark you, for there is not a third. I am very glad it says *last*, because evidently that infers that in the second Man who is the last Adam, God has reached finality. He is the last, — no successor, no need for a successor. First came the natural, then came the spiritual, and we may extract a little remark from its setting in the 10th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second".

If you have a fairly general knowledge of the contents of the Old Testament, you will note on reflection that God gave indication of this by again and again choosing not the first but the second, — not Cain but Abel, not Ishmael but Isaac, not Esau but Jacob, not Aaron so much as Moses, not Manasseh but Ephraim. I have only just given to you a few cases that instantly come to my mind, and probably you could add some more. Again and again God makes it manifest that His thought was first the natural, and then the spiritual, and that the second is what God had before Him. And so the Lord Jesus Christ is the last Adam, the great Head of a new race, humanity truly, but new and altogether according to God. So perfect is He that never to all eternity will there need to be a third, the second is the last. Cain was only Adam reproduced in the first generation. You and I are Adam's representatives, perhaps, somewhere about the 150th generation. You travel down the stream of time, and you never meet "the second man" until you come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now here lies the great importance of that truth which was previously alluded to in these meetings, the truth of the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. People sometimes say unthinkingly, "Well, what does it matter whether we accept this or not? Have we indeed to enshrine this as a great cardinal fact of the Christian faith?" My answer is, indeed you have; let go this, and you let go everything.

To make my meaning clear, turn to the first of Genesis one moment, will you? I am not at all surprised that the infidel leaders now-a-days, the religious infidels in particular, are very keen against

the 1st of Genesis, for it gives the lie direct to four of the most popular heresies of the present day. First of all it gives the lie direct to UNITARIANISM, inasmuch as the word used for God throughout the chapter — Elohim — is in the plural. Now Hebrew, unlike English, has not only a singular, but a dual, and then also a plural. That is, we find its nouns in three forms: a singular form to indicate one, a dual to indicate two, and a plural to indicate three or more. The Spirit of God has not used the singular, He has not used the dual, He has used the plural thirty-two times in the 1st chapter of Genesis concerning God. There is also what we would consider a grammatical error in the first verse of the chapter. We have God in the plural, and then the word 'created' in the singular. How do we explain that? Quite simply. There we have the Trinity in unity — one God — therefore the verb may be indeed in the singular. Yet the very name of God is in the plural, signifying at least three, so that Unitarianism is clearly negated.

Another thing that is negated is the very popular idea of PANTHEISM, that God is not to be thought of as outside nature and above it, but as only dwelling in nature, somewhat as the electrical current dwells in insulated cables. God is immanent — that is the word they use — and they do not believe in a transcendent God, a God that stands outside of and distinct from nature. You must merely think of Him as a Supreme Mind, a Sense dwelling in all things; that is the 'New Theology'. This Pantheistic idea is plainly denied. You have God before creation, and God outside of nature. The 1st of Genesis clearly presents Him not as an immanent God, but as a *transcendent* God, One that stands outside of and distinct from creation.

Another thing: you have the root idea of CHRISTIAN SCIENCE denied in the 1st chapter of Genesis. That idea is that matter is evil. Spirit is good, and matter, according to that false religion, is but an illusion. Why, again and again in the 1st chapter of Genesis we read of material things, and God saw that it was good" — the lie direct to Christian Science.

And lastly I particularly want you to note, that it gives the lie direct to that great idea that has done so much mischief, even in the minds of Christians — EVOLUTION. Over and over again, as a matter of fact, *ten* times over, in the 1st of Genesis we have the immutable law of God's creation that all things reproduce themselves "after his kind". Ten times over it says "after his kind", and there is not one fact known that denies it.

Now I want you to fix your mind on that for a moment. It is the immutable law of God's creation that everything reproduces itself after its kind, and when Adam became a fallen sinner that law worked with deadly operation in all his descendants. We may be, as I said, the 150th generation from Adam, but we are just simply "after his kind", and we might go on reproducing ourselves, and thus project the first man and his race indefinitely into eternity, we should still only have fallen *man*. When the fifteen hundredth or the one hundred and fifty thousandth generation was reached it would still be "after his kind". You see — I think — what I am driving at. The awful entail of sin and death connected with the first man has ruined everything it touched with its blighting hand; and there never was a real and original second man until Jesus was born, and then the entail of sin and death was broken. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost's power. Discard the Virgin birth, and you have lost this great foundation truth of the Gospel.

Another, then, has appeared — the second Man is the Lord from heaven — and He appeared here truly a Man, but a Man of another order, a Man of a heavenly order, a Man not after Adam's kind, perfect, spotless, undefiled. He stepped into the scene, and in Him, thank God, there is salvation for such as ourselves. He is the Founder of a new race, and I want you all to get hold of this, and thus learn to regard the Lord Jesus Christ in this light.

You may ask how do we come to be of His race? Well, we are told in the very verses that I read, "The first man Adam was made a living soul". As a matter of fact he had a spirit by the breath of the Divine nostrils, as we read in the 2nd chapter of Genesis; but what characterized him was that he was a *living soul*, though possessing spirit, whereby he was put into intelligent and personal intercourse with God. When we turn to the last Adam, we read not that He is a living soul, but that He is a quickening or life-giving Spirit. The Lord Jesus steps into the scene, a life-giving Spirit, and if you and I are brought into contact with Him, thank God we have been quickened by Him. We have been made to live by Himself, and in Himself as the one who has suffered and died and risen again. In resurrection He has become the life-giving Head of a new race. Oh! to realize that this is actually a fact! We are not taking flights into dreamland; we are talking about things which have actually come to pass on the basis of the death and resurrection of Christ, and by the energy of the Spirit of God. How little we know their transporting power in our souls!

You and I, then, who have come to Him as the Saviour, have come under the life-giving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the last Adam, and we live now in Him and we belong to His race, and to His order. True it does not yet appear on the surface. No halo of glory surrounds your head, nor does it surround mine. We go through the streets of Edinburgh with nothing distinctive about us to manifest at the present moment that we are the children of God. The apostle John himself tells us that now are we children of God, but what we are going to be does not yet appear. We are like the caterpillar crawling on the edge of the leaf and eating it. There comes a dainty butterfly and perches beside the caterpillar. Could she pour into the caterpillar's ear how she too was once creeping on a green leaf, the caterpillar would hardly believe it, but it is true. There you have the caterpillar, and there you have the butterfly. We may be in the caterpillar stage, but we have got the life that is coming out in butterfly colours in a day that is coming. It is not yet manifest what we are going to be; what we do know is that we are going to see Him as He is, and then we shall be like Him. We have got the life of Christ who is the last Adam, and so we are told in these verses that ultimately we are going to bear the image of the heavenly.

In verse 47 we get the first man and his character — he is of the earth 'earthy' or 'made of dust'. Then he says, as is the earthy such are they also that are earthy. We partake of Adam's life and fallen condition. The ugly features that are latent in the Adamic nature come out more powerfully in some than in others, but all of them lie dormant, to be developed into one set of ugly features in one person and another set in other persons; but we all possess that condemned life, and its condemned nature. But it then says, "The second Man is the Lord from heaven", and it adds that, "as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly". Those who are of the heavenly race partake of the character of their great Head. Then there is further added that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly". The infinite grace of God has given us a place and portion in the heavenly Man. A day is coming when we shall come out in our true character, when we shall leave behind us this caterpillar stage, and we shall be the butterfly with all its glorious colours. The grub is essentially an earthy creature; it belongs to the earth; it crawls on the earth; it eats the leaves, and it probably buries itself in the earth, but it comes forth as the perfect insect and the air is its sphere. That is only a rough illustration, mind you; you must not attempt to make it run on all fours; but here we have the great fact that we Christians who have believed upon Jesus and who know His love, and who have had all our sins put away have also got His life; we stand in His risen life; He is our glorious and exalted Head.

If you want to see what the Christian is going to be, look at Christ, risen, exalted, and already glorified as the heavenly Man. As we have borne the image of the earthy, so are we also going to bear the image of the heavenly. We should bear the impress of His character now. We shall perfectly bear it

then, even as to our bodies. In this, as in all beside, Christ is everything.