

# Creation and New Creation

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(Extracted from Scripture Truth Vol. 33, 1941, page 102 & 118.)

The word creation is often used in Scripture for the vast universe of which our Lord was the maker and is the upholder (John 1: 3; Col. 1: 16; Heb 1: 2), but it is sometimes used to describe the earth only. Proverbs 8 speaks of the creation of the earth in some detail, and it is evident that it was one of the later works of God, for certain spiritual intelligences were there as we read in Job 38: 6, 7. When the foundations of the earth were fastened and the corner-stones thereof laid, the stars of the morning sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. We do not hear of singing over any other part of the universe, and of no other creature than man do we read of consultation within the Godhead as to his creation (Genesis 1: 26).

We must mark the difference between the physical creation and the moral order of life placed therein. The first gives the sphere in which God's eternal counsels are worked out and the latter those whom those counsels concern. The higher intelligences — angels — are purely spirit beings, but man is complex in his being, partaking of both spirit and matter. Immortal in his spirit and mortal as to his body, he joins in himself both the moral and the physical parts of creation. Man is unique in the creation of God. As a spirit being he is the lowest in the scale of the moral order, the higher intelligences being much greater in power and glory. As to his physical being he is above the whole range of the animal creation.

These things excite our interest and lead to enquiry, and we have not far to go for answer. The whole creation was the necessary outcome of the thoughts and feelings within the Holy Godhead which appear throughout the pages of the New Testament, as the eternal purposes of God, and these purposes show that man, the feeble creature of the earth, the being created last, and come into the scene but yesterday, was to be the first and highest in the spiritual and eternal order. The simple proof of this being the coming of THE SON into manhood.

An important point was reached in the activities of God at the creation of man. Great ranges of intelligences had been created long before and certainly great and important questions had been raised. This we know from the fact that the conflict between good and evil was raging at the time. But in Adam, as he came from the hand of God, we see the type of the Man destined of God to settle every question that had arisen or could arise. It is written that Adam was "the figure of Him that was to come" (Romans 5: 14), and we learn that all was foreseen and that the Incarnation of the Son and His death upon the cross was before God as the settlement of the sin question long before sin began.

Revolt against the Creator had taken place before man had being. Satan had been the first to challenge the supremacy of God, others were in league with him, or followed him, and the moral creation was divided into two camps, the unfallen and the fallen. How long man remained in the condition of innocence in which God created him we do not know, but by disobeying the one Divine prohibition he joined the ranks of the rebels. This brought the conflict of good and evil into the human race, and in the purpose of God made way for the Redeemer. "The woman's Seed," the Eternal Son, who in Manhood would take up the whole question of sin and all it involved, not only on man's behalf but for the vindication and glory of God in the whole creation.

By His Incarnation the Son stood in direct contact with man, but the whole creation was also in

view, for all things are to be made subject to Him as Son of Man (Ps. 8: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 27, 28; Heb. 2: 6-10). By His death He glorified God about the whole question of sin, going beyond the fall and need of man, and reaching out to the whole creation, laying the basis for its redemption and deliverance from the bondage of corruption, and putting it finally beyond the reach of the defilement of sin in the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 8: 21; 2 Peter 3: 13).

Though man came last in the first creation, he takes the first place in the new creation. Our Lord linked Himself with the first order of man when He took part in flesh and blood, in Him without sin. After glorifying God in that state He brought it to an end in death and began in resurrection a new order of Man entirely. This new order is called in Scripture "new creation." But before we could be brought into it in Christ the judgment that lay upon us had to be borne and removed. This was done at the cross. There, not our sins only, but our sinful state also, was dealt with according to God's own righteousness. His Name, His throne, His majesty were vindicated in the Son. This accomplished, He rose up from the dead and ascended on high and sent down the Spirit, who in His operations transfers us from Adam — the fallen head — to Christ, the new Head of a new race, and sets us before God in Christ. In this way the believer is said to be created in Christ Jesus (Eph 2: 10),

This reflects on man's first created condition as contrasting him with the higher created intelligences Angels, however glorious, ever remain units. Adam was set up as head of a race and his moral state, fallen and sinful, was transmitted to all his posterity. This though seeming to work for ill is far more than compensated for in the wisdom of God in the new creation. In it Christ the Head communicates His life to the new race, they become a new generation in Himself. Well may we adore Him who has planned and wrought out such wondrous things for His own glory and our eternal blessing.

As brought into this new creation the believer is one with Christ and therefore heavenly in character and origin. "As is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly" (1 Cor. 15: 48). And this stands in contrast to what we were as having our part in the first created state. Man was created for the earth and as such is earthly. This wonderful transfer is therefore not only from our fallen condition, but goes back to the original creation. "If any one be in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5: 17 (N.T.)). Man is not only recovered from the place into which he fell, but is brought to a new place marked out for him in the eternal purposes of God.

As set in Christ before God the transmission of moral qualities, namely, the features of Christ are reproduced in him by the Holy Spirit who dwells in all who believe, so that the once despised and rejected Christ is now continued in His body on earth. So divinely true is this new thing, this new creation, that believers are seen linked up in the life of Christ organically as His body, that glorious organism to which the Head gives impulse and in which His life circulates and radiates in its beneficent sweetness in this poor world.

In considering our subject, care is needed in the use of the words "old" and "new." Old is generally used as the antithesis of new as in "old man" and "new man," "old covenant" and "new covenant." But while Scripture speaks of the new creation, it does not call the first creation old, nor the first birth old. The "new man" displaces the "old man," and the "old covenant" gives way to the new, but the new birth does not displace the first birth, nor the new creation the old. The first creation was a divine act, the first birth the human medium, these produce the person upon whom the Spirit of God operates in the new birth, and transfers him from Adam to Christ, in the work of new creation, but this work of the Spirit does not undo or set aside the original creation or the first birth. The need of these remarks will be understood when we realise that there is a tendency to view new creation as though

God had been defeated in the fall of man and had to create a new race in his place outside the possibility of sin. The words old and new as applied to the physical creation may engage us later.

But some one is sure to say, what is the gain of all this abstract reasoning to me? Much in every way, let it be said, for we are in touch just here with the richest things of heaven. As united to Christ in glory believers have access to the Father in the holy relationship of sons; and the wealth of divine revelation is available and enjoyed on the principle of faith. Part with Christ in glory as His companions assures an entrance into the richest and deepest things of God. No words can fully describe the grand range of blessings that are made ours in Christ. Having the birthright all is ours and the Lord Himself ever seeks to lead us into the appreciation of these things. They are unseen things; things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Cor. 2: 9).

While subject to many and varied changes, both mentally and morally, there are three distinct conditions of manhood which should be noted. First, man stood in innocence, knowing neither good nor evil; second, as fallen he stood a guilty sinner alienated from his God; third, he stands recovered and brought back to God; reinstated because reconstituted, but brought into an infinitely higher position than he was in as first created. In a normal way his walk and conversation are the outcome of the new nature and coloured by the grace of heaven, but alas! it may not be for he may act in the flesh. In the former case he identifies himself with the work of grace in his soul and you have the "I" of purpose — "I delight in the law of God after the inner man." But in case of failure, instead of acting in the dignity of his renewed being he is simply walking and acting as man in a carnal way. "My little children," says John, "these things write I unto you that ye sin not."

The above consideration shows the individual in relation to the widely different characters of life flowing from the two Heads, namely, Adam and Christ. This necessitates the use of the personal "I" in a threefold way as is shown in the Apostle Paul in Galatians 2: 20, "I am crucified with Christ." That is as a man in Adam. "Nevertheless I live." This is the "I" of creature personality which must be kept distinct in our minds from both the "I" of responsibility and the "I" of purpose. "Nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me," shows the consciousness of the completeness of his identification with Christ the new Head in life and nature. In this threefold use of the personal I, all hangs on the individual himself as seen between the "I" of responsibility on the one side and the "I" of purpose on the other. The rest of the verse shews the man in his life in bodily condition with Christ on high as his Object.

New creation then, has begun and it must spread till it includes the whole vast creation. It takes time, however to work out these things and so far as it has gone man only is brought in, and that in a faith state as an abstract reality waiting its completion at the coming of the Lord. In its working out the moral order takes precedence as we have seen. When every family has been set in the place marked out under the Head, all moral values adjusted and every problem solved, the physical order, as having served its purpose, will be changed. It came in first as a necessary part of the whole as suited to the character of life intended of Him and the marvellous moral issues involved. As having served its Creator as everything must (sin, Satan, death and hell must serve the great Creator's end), it is spoken of as become old (Ps. 102: 26; Heb. 1: 11).

All being finally rectified, the Name, Throne and Majesty of God triumphant, the physical order of creation, too, passes through its change; shall we say death and resurrection in view of serving its Creator in the moral life of a new eternal scene? There we hear the words, "Behold I make **all things new.**" There had been tears, and death with grief, crying and distress, as alas! there is plenty of these

things today. Planting our feet in that holy scene by anticipation we can look back into the time scene where all the sorrow was. While these **the former things** are passed away, those who were in them are now **in the New Things** in God's eternal day. Praise His Holy Name for evermore.

This is a blessed theme as concerning the glory of our Lord. It fits in properly with the great scheme of Reconciliation in its bearing on the higher ranges of intelligences. If the Lord permit we may be permitted to trace it out a little as sketched out for us in the Book of God. The Lord graciously add HIS blessing.