

eternal (unoriginated), efficient First Cause of all things that exist and of their conservation in existence as well. In a word, the Bible does not teach a Creation absolutely *ex nihilo*, although it does teach a Creation without the use of pre-existent matter. It teaches Creation out of the Thought-Power and Spirit-Power of God.

Moreover, the Creation itself was essentially that act of Pure Thought which embraced all the events of what we call Time. As St. Augustine puts it, in reference to the Creator:

Thy years are one day; and Thy day is not daily, but Today, seeing Thy Today gives not place unto tomorrow, for neither does it replace yesterday. Thy Today is Eternity, therefore didst Thou beget the Co-eternal, to Whom Thou hast said, This day have I begotten Thee.¹

And again: "In the Eternal nothing passeth, but the whole is present."¹ And with respect to the author of *Genesis*, Dr. W. E. Hocking writes:

For him mentality is aboriginal. It does not enter a physical world already running on its own. On the contrary, it is the physical world which enters the realm of mind. It is the Eternal Mind who in the beginning created the raw materials of the world, and whose word evoked order from chaos.²

Hence it may be truly said that in God, all things—including ourselves—"live, and move, and have their being" (Acts 17:28).

4. The Spirit and the Word in the Creation of the Physical Universe

According to Scripture, the Father plans, the Word ordains or decrees, and the Spirit effectuates every Divine work. So it was in the Creation of the physical universe. In the first verse of *Genesis*, Elohim the Absolute, the Father of spirits (Heb. 12:9), is introduced to us as the originating Cause, in verse 2 the Spirit of God is introduced to us as the effectuating or realizing Cause, and in verse 3, the Logos is introduced to us as the decreeing Cause, of the whole initial phase of the Creative Process. "And God said, *Let there be light: and there was light.*" (Literally, "God said: Light, be! And Light was.") From this

1. *Confessions*, Everyman's Library Edition, Pusey translation, 262.

1. Augustine, *op. cit.*, 260.

2. William Ernest Hocking, "A World-View," in *Preface to Philosophy: Textbook*, 436, by Hocking, Blanshard, Hendel, and Randall.

point on, throughout the whole Genesis cosmogony, the formula, "And God said," introduces the account of each successive advance in the physical or natural Creation. That is to say, whatever God willed—and the Logos decreed—at the beginning of each "day," was done, that is, it was effectuated by the Spirit. Just how it was done, or how long a time the doing of it required—these seem to have been matters of little or no concern to the inspired writer. His purpose was to emphasize only the religious fact of the Creation, namely, that it was God who did the creating, according to the ordinations of His Word, by the agency of His Spirit. The problem of the *how* of the process was left for human science to spell out slowly and laboriously throughout the centuries. Hence, under the brooding (energizing) of the Spirit, the Logos, we are told, interposed Himself into the Creative Process some eight or nine consecutive times, to execute the Will of God in the form of eternal ordinances or decrees. (For the Biblical doctrine of the Logos, see my textbooks on *Genesis*, Vol. I, 239; 285-294; 322-324; Vol. III, 130-1; also my *Eternal Spirit*, I, 468-534)

Verse 1, as we have seen already, introduces the *Era of Matter*. Verses 1-10 give us the account of the early and late stages of the Era of Matter, terminating with the organization of the earth into lands and seas.

V. 3—"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Was this light radiant energy, regarded by many physicists of our day as the primal "physical" energy? Or was it some form of molecular light—light resulting, let us say, from heat produced by the motion induced (by the Divine Energy) into the now gradually shaping cosmic mass, which by this time probably was molten? There is no certain answers to these questions, of course. That it was not the light of our sun, but some form of cosmic light, seems evident: solar light did not penetrate the vapors which enveloped the earth until the fourth "day." Lange says:

The light denotes all that is simply illuminating in its efficacy, all the luminous element; the darkness denotes all that is untransparent, dark and shadow-casting; both together denote the polarity of the created world as it exists between the light-formations and the night-formations, the constitution of the day and night.¹

1. J. P. Lange, *op. cit.*, 165.

However, whatever may have been the nature of the light described in this sententiously sublime passage, the religious truth remains the same, namely, that the entrance of the Divine Word always brings Light, whether that entrance be into the impenetrable darkness of the primordial Chaos or into the dark recesses of the human soul. Where the Word and the Spirit go, where the Spirit of God operates through the Word, or to effectuate the decrees of the Word, there the darkness flees before the incoming Light; so in the Creation, there was at first darkness, non-being, but when the Spirit began to energize there was light and being. Hence, "there was evening and there was morning, one day" (v. 5). On Day One, then, occurred the beginning of ("physical") energy, motion, light, and finally matter in its various forms. (Force is energy applied to the overcoming of resistance, and presupposes the exercise of a directing intelligence and will.)

Vv. 6-8: "*And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.*" On Day Two, as described heretofore, the earth (and no doubt the other heavenly bodies as well) separated, at the decree of God, from the parent cosmic mass ("sun") and became enshrouded in the elements which constitute the *atmosphere*. Need it be pointed out that there had to be light (in some form), and there had to be an atmosphere (especially carbon dioxide) before there could be any vegetation upon the earth. Again in this section, moreover, the religious truth which the inspired writer seeks to impress upon our minds is that all this was effectuated by the Spirit of God in accordance with the decree of the Logos.

Vv. 9-10: "*And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good.*" The partial condensation of the vapors enveloping the earth's surface, together with the cooling of the earth's crust, resulted first in the outlining of continents and oceans. The Earth now took definite form as the Earth. The Realm of Matter was now fully developed. God had now, by

His immutable Will and Purpose, through the decrees of His Word, and by the effectuating agency of His Spirit, constituted, brought into existence, not only the earth, but the whole Cosmos and its physical processes.

Hence, verse 11 marks the beginning of the *Era of Life*. At this point something new—a new increment of power—entered the Creative Process; the appearance of the first forms of life, those of the plant world, marked the crossing of the “great divide” between the world of physiochemical energy and the world of living things.

V. 11—“*And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so.*” This statement simply conveys to us the truth that plant life—the first form of life—had its beginning at this time; that the first plant forms appeared at this stage of the Creation. V. 12—“*And the earth brought forth grass, herbs, yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind: and God saw that it was good.*” This verse tells us that what God commanded with respect to plant life, was done: decreed by the Logos, it was effectuated by the Spirit. There is nothing here, however, that tells us just *how* it was done. Nor is there anything here that compels us to believe that all plant forms—all which we know today—appeared just at this time or even in this particular era. Indeed there is nothing in this passage to militate against the scientific view that plant life, although beginning its process of development in this period, continued to develop from primitive to more highly organized forms throughout succeeding eras: let us say, from (1) seaweeds and lycopods (2) spore-bearing plants, to (3) gymnosperms (naked seed plants), to (4) angiosperms (the most complex form, with seeds in a closed ovary). The religious truth emphasized by this section of the *Genesis* Cosmogony is that when God commanded plant life to appear and to begin its development, it did appear and it did begin its development. This forward step in the Creative Process marked the beginning of the *Era of Life*. Something was added to the Process at this time; a new increment of power was added by the agency of the Spirit, effectuating the cellular processes which are characteristic of plant life, a something which by the ancients was designated *vegetative psyche*. What this new element was—

the mystery of life itself—scientists do not know even to the present day. Finally in this connection, it should be pointed out that the appearance of plant life was *necessary* at this particular stage in the Creation, that is, prior to the appearance of animal life, for the obvious reason that all higher forms of life—both animals and men—depend upon plant life and photosynthesis for their sustenance, indeed for their very existence. V. 13—“*And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.*” On Day Three, then, occurred (1) the outlining of the physical features of the earth, and (2) the appearance of the first forms of plant life.

Vv. 14-19: “*And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*” During this entire period the atmosphere was gradually being purified and the vapors which had enshrouded the earth were being cleared away. Undoubtedly plant life and growth, too, hastened the dissipation of these vapors, and finally the light of the sun, moon, and stars broke through the enveloping clouds for the first time. And so on the fourth day, at God’s command, we have the beginning of time-measurement or *chronology*. The religious truth which the inspired writer would impress upon us in this section is that the sun, moon, and stars in their courses are all the handiwork of our God. “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork” (Psa. 19:1). “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3-4).

V. 20—“*And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*” This statement simply informs us that, at the command of God, the first animal forms appeared at this

stage of the Creation, in the water and in the air. Vv. 21-23: "And God created the great seamonsters, and every living creature that moveth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day." This entire passage again enforces the religious truth that what God commanded with reference to the water and air species of animals, was done; decreed by the Logos, it was effectuated by the Spirit. Again, however, there is nothing in this passage to tell us *how* this was done. Nor is there anything here that compels us to believe that all water and air creatures—all which we know today—appeared at this time or during this one great period. There is nothing in this passage to militate against the view that animal life, in accordance with the decree of the Logos, now began its process of development from lower to higher forms. It is interesting to note too, that according to this account, animal life appeared first in the water. This, I think, is in harmony with the latest science. On Day Five, then, the first forms of water and air species of animals—the first forms of animal life—came into existence. This forward step in the Creation marked the beginning of the powers of consciousness and locomotion in God's creatures: new increments of power came into the Creative Process, by the agency of the Spirit of God, specifying that form of being which the ancients have designated *animal psyche*.

Vv. 24-25: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth, after their kind: and it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good." Here we have a description of the bringing into existence, at the decree of the Logos and by the agency of the Spirit, of the higher *land* animals, which are divided into three classes: (1) *cattle, hehemah*, literally "dumb animal," that is, the larger grass-eating quadrupeds; (2) *the land-creepers, remes*, literally "moving animal," the smaller animals that keep close to the ground; and (3) *beasts of the earth, chayyah*, of the earth, the wild, roving carnivorous beasts of forest, jungle, and plain. This passage merely describes the continuation of the development of animal life into its

higher forms of *herbivora* and *carnivora*. Again the fundamental religious truth which the inspired writer seeks to impress upon our minds is that what God commanded, *was done*, and was *good*. But again there is nothing in the passage to tell us definitely *how* it was done, whether instantaneously or by a process of development. The first event, then of Day Six was the appearance of the higher land animals. With their creation, everything was ready and waiting for the appearance of God's noblest handiwork, the lord tenant of the whole creation, man, and his counterpart, woman.

Hence, in verse 26, we have the beginning of the *Era of Personality*. At this point again something new—a new increment of power—entered the Creative Process, by the agency of the Divine Spirit. The appearance of the first man, *homo sapiens*, marked the crossing of the wide gap between *conscious animal* being and *self-conscious personal* being.

Vv. 26-28: "*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" Thus the events of Day Six included (1) the creation of the land animals, (2) the creation of man and woman, and (3) the appointment of man as lord tenant of the earth. And so, with the creation of man as the image or likeness of God, and his Divine ordination as steward (proprietor) of all the lower orders of being, the initial phase of the Creative Process was consummated. It had all been effectuated by the agency of the Divine Spirit, in harmony with the decrees of the Logos. Hence we read that having finished the work of physical or natural Creation, God entered into rest. "*And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made*" (Gen. 2:1-2).

Now, looking back over this cosmogony as a whole, it becomes obvious that God the Father is presented throughout as

the planning or originating Cause, the personal Logos or Word as the decreeing or executing Cause, the Spirit of God as the effectuating or realizing Cause, and the impersonal Word, or Word spoken outwardly, as the instrumental Cause, of the entire physical Creation. *God's Spirit and God's Word go together*, in every phase of the total Creative Process. As a matter of fact, in all Divine works, Spirit-power is exerted through Word-power, or in conjunction with Word-power, which is in turn the expression or revelation of the Thought-power and Will-power of the Godhead. And so, at the beginning of each successive epoch or stage in the first phase of the Creative Process, God is pictured as having *said* (i.e., willed and decreed) something, and in each case, whatever God said, we are told, "was so," that is, it came to pass, it was done. Some nine times in succession this formula appears in the *Genesis* Cosmogony. Thus in the creating, fashioning, arranging and adorning of "the heavens and the earth and all the host of them," the brooding (incubating) of the Spirit effectuated, realized, the decrees of the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Godhead, the Logos who in the fulness of the time became flesh and dwelt among us as God's Only Begotten Son.

[Cf. again *Psa.* 33:6, 9]: By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. [*Heb.* 11:3]: By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear. [*Heb.* 1:1-2]. God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds, etc. [*1 Cor.* 8:6]: to us there is one God, the Father, *of whom are all things*, and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *through whom are all things*, and we through him. [*Col.* 1:16-17]: For in him [the Son, the Word] were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. [*John* 1:1-3]: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. [*John* 1:14]: And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.

All this means, of course, that in the process of the physical Creation, the brooding of the Spirit did not cease with the bringing into existence of such first physical phenomena as energy, motion, light, atmosphere,—in short, the ingredients of

the physiochemical world. It was continuous throughout the entire process, indeed as it is continuous throughout the entire Time Process. Moreover, as a result of the Spirit's brooding, new increments of power came into the process, from the Being of God, at successive stages of development. As it has been pointed out heretofore, this is clearly indicated by the three successive appearances of the Hebrew word *bara* in the *Genesis* cosmogony. In the Hebrew, *yatsar* means to "form" or to "fashion," and *asah* means to "make." Both of these terms indicate a forming, fashioning, or arranging out of, or with the use of, pre-existing materials. The word *bara*, however, in the some forty-eight instances in which it occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, conveys the idea of a *creation absolute*, that is, without the use of pre-existing materials; and in every text in which it appears, whatever its object may be, it invariably has God for its subject. Now *bara* is the word used in Gen. 1:1, translated "created": "In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth." Its use here clearly points to the fact that the first step in the Creative Process—perhaps the engendering of the first form of physical energy—was a creation absolute. Again, *bara* is used in verse 21, to indicate the step forward from the *unconscious* to the *conscious* order of being: "And God *created* the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moveth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind." In this text the beginning of animal life (in the terminology of the ancients, "animal soul") is described. Finally, *bara* is the verb used again in verse 27, to indicate the step forward from the *conscious* to the *self-conscious* (personal) order of being (in the language of the ancients, from "animal soul" to "rational soul"): "And God *created* man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Here the verb *bara* is used three times in succession, as if for emphasis.) Thus it is obvious that the inspired writer intends for us to understand that a *creation absolute* took place at (at least) three successive steps forward in the development of the natural Creation, producing for human science the seeming impenetrable mysteries of physical energy, conscious life, and self-conscious life or personality. It would seem, moreover, that a *creation absolute* must have taken place also in the advance from the inanimate order to the first living thing, the first form of plant life, although the author of the *Genesis* cosmogony does not explicitly so indicate. Certainly,

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unless spontaneous generation can be established as a fact of nature, this conclusion would seem to be unavoidable. The mystery of life has not yet been penetrated by human science, and unless it can be determined that matter *per se* can produce life, we must continue to think that life force is something added to, or superposed on, the basic physiochemical processes. We must conclude, therefore, that as a result of the brooding of the Divine Spirit, new increments of power came into the Creative Process, at successive stages, to produce the first forms, respectively, of physical energy, the unconscious life of the plant, the conscious life of the animal, and the self-conscious life of man. These are the phenomena which mark off the various levels in the total Hierarchy of Being. And the use of the word *bara* in the *Genesis* cosmogony indicates clearly, with the single exception noted, the beginning of each of these successively higher orders. It is also most significant that the words *bara* and *asah* are both used, by way of recapitulation, in Gen. 2:3, evidently to mark the distinction between absolute beginnings on the one hand, and on the other subsequent "natural" continuations or developments (through secondary causes): "And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had *created* and *made*."

According to the Scriptures, the brooding of the Spirit—the Breath of God—is responsible for every form of life in the universe—natural, spiritual, eternal. And so at the Creation the brooding of the Spirit generated every form of natural life there is,—the unconscious life of the plant and the conscious life of the animal, as well as the self-conscious or personal life of man. And so the Scriptures teach throughout.

[Cf. Acts 17:24-25]: The God that made the world and all things therein . . . he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. [Gen. 7:21-23]: And all flesh died that moved upon the Earth, both birds, and cattle, and beasts, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was on the dry land, died. And every living thing was destroyed that was upon the face of the ground, etc. [Ecl. 3:21]: Who knoweth the spirit of man, whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth? [Job 34:14-15]: If he [the Almighty] gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; All flesh shall perish together, And man shall turn again unto dust. [Psa. 104:27, 29, 30]—These wait all for thee, That thou mayest give them their food in due season. . . . Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; Thou takest away their breath, they die, And return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; And thou renewest the face of the ground.

As George Matheson has written:

Who are the "all" here spoken of? They are the living creatures of the whole earth. What! you say, the creatures of the animal world! can *these* be said to be in possession of God's Spirit? I can understand very well how *man* should be thus privileged. I can understand why a being of such nobleness as the human soul should lay claim to a distinctive pre-eminence. But is it not a bold thing to say that the human soul is in contact with the beast of the field? Is it not a degradation of my nature to affirm that the same Spirit who created me created also the tenants of the deep? No, my brother; if you shall find in God's Spirit the missing link between yourself and the animal world you will reach a Darwinism where there is nothing to degrade. You are not come from them, but you and they together are the offspring of God. Would you have preferred to have had no such link between you? It is your forgetfulness of the link that has made you cruel to the creatures below. You do not oppress your brother man, because you know him to be your brother; but you think the beast of the field has no contact with the sympathy of your soul. It *has* a contact, an irrefragable, indestructible contact. You are bound together by one Spirit of creation; you sit at one communion table of nature; you are members of one body of natural life. The glory of being united to thy Father is that in Him thou shalt be united to everything. Thou shalt be allied not only to the highest but to the lowest, thou shalt be able not only to go up but to go down. Thou shalt have the power that the Lord had—the power to empty thyself to the lowermost, to the uttermost. Thou shalt feel that thou owest all things thy sympathy when thou hast recognized this relationship through the same divine Spirit.¹

Perhaps the notion of a natural kinship between man and the lower orders, so widespread among primitive peoples, was, after all, but a universal intuition of an eternal truth.

5. The Spirit of God in the Creation of Man

In Gen. 1:26, we read the following:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Certainly the plural pronouns here—"Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness"—indicates a Divine inter-communion; the bringing into existence of the being who was designed to be lord tenant of the whole natural creation; the final achievement of the initial phase of the Creative Process, and the crowning glory of the Divine handiwork, merited just such a sublime con-

1. *Voices of the Spirit*, 50-51.