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The Link

NORTH ROAD CHAPEL

BIDEFORD

THE LORD'S DAY

Part 1

“And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” (Genesis 1:31-2:3)

The Book of Genesis means ‘The Book of Beginnings’. The dictionary defines the word ‘genesis’ as ‘the mode of production’, ‘the creation or formation of’, ‘the act of giving origin to’. The first book of the Bible reveals the source, or prime cause, of all that exists – namely the supreme Creator of all things, God. *“In the beginning”*, before time; preceding matter; in an eternal state without beginning, without end, *“God...”* (Genesis 1:1). That is the starting point, from which it is observed that **by Him** were all things created: worlds, heavens, principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, things visible and invisible (cf Colossians 1:16). In some small way the Scriptures show what is meant by this staggering statement.

Going deeper into the Word of God, it soon becomes clear that its content is totally beyond human comprehension, and it can only be accepted by faith: *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”* (Hebrews 11:3). Faith is the key to the understanding of all Divine revelation: ‘God has said it; therefore, I believe it’ (cf 2 Corinthians 4:13). The very first thing that Almighty God reveals to mortal man in His Word is the creation of the earth, and the Solar System, the formation of all that exists upon earth, and its mode of

production, followed by the heavens, “*and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth*” (Psalm 33:6). This included the creation of man, and also the angelic beings. With regard to mankind, the human race commenced with just two: man and woman. There are many other things which trace their beginnings to the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. In these early verses can be found the origin of work, sin, the Sabbath, marriage, the family and other essential principles that are absolutely fundamental to humanity.

In this article, we commence to look at the subject of ‘the Sabbath’; particularly in the context of ‘Genesis’ – its beginning and origin. Like so much else of the content of this book – Creation, Sin, Marriage – the topic of the Sabbath is a contentious one, among unbelievers and Christians alike. The theories and opinions of worldly men will prove as unhelpful to this subject as in the matter of Creation; for they cannot discern truth; spiritual things are foolishness unto them (cf 1 Corinthians 2:14). The theories and notions of theologians and preachers however, are a matter of concern and consideration, for their teachings are abroad in the church. To some Christians, to start talking of the Sabbath is like dangling a ‘red rag in front of a bull’, and ‘asking for trouble’; but their criticisms will not shackle us (cf Proverbs 29:25). Let God’s Word be the only source of doctrine, and starting at the beginning, trace our subject through Scripture.

Firstly, what does ‘Sabbath’ mean? Forget ‘Saturday’, ‘Sunday’, ‘Monday’, and so on. These terms are of man’s invention and dubious origin. God did not issue these names in Genesis; they do not appear in the beginning. ‘Sabbath’ does not necessarily correspond to Saturday or Sunday, since the ‘seventh day’ depends only upon which day counting commences. At the beginning, God established a principle of six days for working, and one day of rest. This seventh day, or ‘one day in seven’, was blessed and sanctified by God. This means, it was set apart **for** God;

dedicated **to** God; it was consecrated as a holy day, completely distinct from the other six. Here we find the beginning of the Sabbath.

Observe that it is not Jewish, as so many infer. Neither is ‘Sunday observance’ of pagan origin as others have claimed. The principle of one day in seven for God was instituted by God Himself at the very beginning. It was **not** something that God devised and gave to Moses two-and-a-half millennia later on Sinai. No – the Sabbath principle pertains to creation, and to the entire human race. It was not to the Jews only, and it precedes the giving of the Decalogue by more than 2,500 years. It cannot be emphasised enough that the Sabbath is a Divine Institution, and goes right back to the beginning – Genesis – ‘the act of giving origin to’. *“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it”* (Genesis 2:2-3).

In a very special and peculiar way, the glory of God is concerned in the observance of the Sabbath. It is the day which He calls ‘His own’. As soon as ever He had created man, He said, ‘six days are yours for labour, but the seventh is Mine’. Thus it may correctly be called ‘the Lord’s Day’ in the New Testament age. To profane that day, which is of Divine ordination, is to dishonour God in a blatant and extreme manner. What is more, Sabbath observance is one of the greatest visible tokens on earth of the authority of God’s Word, and true Christianity. Strip the Church of the Sabbath, and she has lost one of the best means of openly testifying to faith and to obedience. Make all seven days alike, with Christians living, working and indulging all the same pursuits as other men, and one of the strongest bulwarks to God and to truth is demolished.

This day is set aside; it is dedicated; work is to cease on this day. The worship of God is its object. It allows time for reflection and meditation. It gives special opportunities for the instruction of children, visitation of the sick, and ministering to spiritual needs. It has its appointed hours for

prayer, the preaching of the Word, and the observance of sacred ordinances. It is a holy day of rest indeed, in which the heart is prepared for that ‘rest which remaineth for the people of God’ (cf Hebrews 4:9), namely, the rest of Heaven itself, of which the Sabbath is a pledge and foretaste. Yes, this subject can be traced through the Bible; for it commences in Genesis, and does not end before we come to Revelation.

Dare any man interfere or infringe upon this holy institution? It is the **Lord’s Day** – remember that, and keep it holy. Thus reads the commandment of Almighty God.

It is a fact of history that, when the true people of God, living within a given nation, backslide, become lax, or apostatise, that nation rapidly becomes godless, lawless and vile. Conversely, if a true work of sovereign grace and power be wrought in revival, and the people of God repent and return to the old paths, then what happens? “*Righteousness shall look down from heaven*” – an awareness of God restored – and, “*Truth shall spring out of the earth*” (Psalm 85:11); doctrine and true values will come to the fore. The people of God will rightly value the public means of grace, of which one of the most precious is the Lord’s Day. Yes, history will bear out that, when God moves in reviving power, His people are not behind in Sabbath observance then! This in turn has a profound effect upon the nation.

The church has failed miserably upon this point. Truth has fallen in the street (cf Isaiah 59:14) because it has first fallen in the pulpit; it is ‘like people, like priest’ (cf Hosea 4:9). Generally speaking through history, the matter of the Sabbath and its observance was a primary truth held by all the true people of God. Its institution at Creation and subsequent inclusion in the moral law gave it final authority upon the consciences of men. But with the advent of liberal theologians, then the promotion of ‘dispensationalism’, things began to take a turn – about 150 years ago in the case of England. The Devil was especially subtle in that period.

Seeds were sown then amongst evangelicals, which today are producing a tragic harvest. It is not that men of that time decried Sabbath observance particularly, but they were responsible for ‘wresting’ and distorting the Word of God. They put strange interpretations upon the Scriptures, which, when viewed from a certain angle appeared justifiable and perhaps quite enlightening. They carved the Bible into sections; human history was put into different compartments, with certain portions of Scripture applying to one section of humanity, and other portions to another.

This approach, while facilitating their spurious prophetic ideas, absolutely shattered the foundation of other fundamental truths. These men perhaps did not realise their errors at the time, but while majoring on certain theories, they lost their hold on the ‘unity of the faith’. Consequently, those following these modes of interpretation soon ran into difficulties with other teachings of Holy Scripture; vital doctrine could no longer be defended, so upon these matters there settled a silence.

It is not that the Sabbath has been totally rejected, but it is deprived of its firm Scriptural footing, as the authoritative command of God, to all men, for all time. This description rightly applies to all the ‘Creation institutions’. But the best defence that a modernist theologian can offer is that ‘to stand by them is the ideal’; ‘it is a good and pious practice, but because of the Fall, man can’t be expected to abide by these institutions any longer’; and it is claimed that the New Testament makes exceptions and exemptions from the Old, and Scripture is set at variance with itself. The results of such faulty interpretations are now glaringly apparent – both in the church and the world. Those who have sinfully forced man’s thoughts onto God’s truth are left with no sure ground to stand upon. They have denied themselves the very means of defending essential doctrine and practice, for they have departed from that which was ‘at the beginning’ (cf Matthew 19:8, Romans 1:20).

The minister who is true to the Word of God must examine these pernicious but popular errors, expose them, and herald forth again the doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning this vital matter of beginnings. This by God's grace and help we shall do here over coming months, God willing. May it be used to His glory.

W. H. Molland (1920 – 2012)

“Can you find in all the history of mankind that keeping the Sabbath day has had any other effect than a blessing? ... The opposite of course, must be true. Where the Sabbath day is treated with lightness, scorn or indifference, and broken either in whole, or in part by professors or profane, it must of necessity bring with it, in proportion as the day is desecrated the curse, anger, judgment and wrath of God, whether a nation, community or individual. God not only rested on the seventh day, but He sanctified it, which means, He set it apart for all time. He put it on one side as a portion of time reserved from common usage for His own use and purpose. Just as God sanctified the people of Israel by setting them apart from mankind generally, and just as He sanctified the vessels of the Sanctuary by setting them apart for holy use and purpose, so God sanctified this portion of time which we call the Sabbath day – one day in seven, by putting it on one side, consecrating it to holy use; and for this – His own sovereign will and pleasure, that in it His name might be honoured and glorified. The Sabbath is an ancient institution ordained of God (the same as marriage) in Paradise, before man fell. It was ordained of God before sin entered, and how much more needful it is for it to be kept since man has fallen. In their sinless condition they walked with God; they communed with Him; and yet God said, ‘you are to set apart the seventh day, it is specially ordained by Me for the purpose of refraining from all your daily toil, that you may worship Me’.”

J. Kemp (1850 – 1932)

*from a sermon preached on the occasion of the second reading
of the Sunday Performances Regulation Bill, 12 April 1931*

CREATION IN SIX DAYS

First of all... let us see that the early chapters of Genesis, especially chapters 1 – 3, are to be taken literally. I am going to adopt three lines of proof here, and the first one is concerned with the language of Genesis 1 – 3. When we read this passage we should see that the language is that of a narrative – we are not reading Hebrew poetry, neither are we reading the vision of a prophet. What we read here is sober history. If we were to read these chapters without bringing to them any preconceived notions of our own and without thinking, ‘Well, I believe this and therefore I must turn the Scriptures to fit in with what I believe’ – if we set that on one side and come to the Scriptures with an open mind, then we could only come to one conclusion.

If we were honest, we would have to admit that the writer, Moses, is describing just what happened. Listen to the following, taken from the first chapter of Genesis, as examples of what I mean. First of all – “*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day*” (Genesis 1:3-5). Then, at the end of the chapter, Moses says “*And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day*” (Genesis 1:31). In these passages one gains the impression that we are privileged as we read them, to be spectators of the creative power of God. The very simplicity of the passages that I’ve mentioned emphasizes that this is just what happened, and this is just how it happened, given in just as much detail as is good for us. The first line of proof, then, that the first chapters of Genesis are to be taken literally, is from the language of the passages. It is the same language as the language which is used when we read about Abraham, when we read about Isaac and Jacob. We are reading about things that actually happened.

The second line of proof that I want to take is that the fourth commandment about the seventh day demands that we take Genesis 1 literally. God commanded Israel to labour six days and rest the seventh. The reason given was that God made the world in six days and rested the seventh. The very reason that men should work six days and rest one is that God worked six and rested one at the creation. If we make the day in Genesis 1 to be something indefinite, for example, then the fourth commandment loses its authority and becomes something which is meaningless and rather grotesque. Imagine it, if the day of Genesis is an indefinite period of time, the commandment would be to work six indefinite periods of time because God made the world in six indefinite periods of time, and rested for a seventh indefinite period of time. If we look at it in this way, then we see that the fourth commandment, for it to have any authority at all, demands that we must take the days of Genesis 1 literally. Since the days must be literal, it follows that everything that goes along with them must be literal also.

Our third line of proof is that the Lord and the apostles take the early chapters of Genesis literally whenever they refer to them in the New Testament. There are many examples, but I have taken just three – one from the gospels, one from the epistles of Paul and one from the epistles of Peter. If you turn with me to these examples, I think you will see what I mean clearly enough.

The first one is Mark 10:6-8. The Lord here uses the very words of Genesis 1:24 to prove His point against the Pharisees. Listen to what He says in verses 6,7 and 8: “*But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh*”. It is evident from this that our Lord is using Genesis in a way which is authoritative. He is quoting the passages from Genesis perfectly factually and the Lord is not making any mental reservation to fit in with the prejudices of His hearers. The Lord is taking

Genesis as it is, literally, and the very quotation of the words is the end of all controversy.

A second example is in 2 Corinthians 4:6 which says “*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*”. In this passage, Paul is teaching that the spiritual enlightenment of the child of God is as much a creative act of God as the original creation of the light at the beginning of the world. Notice that Paul does not say ‘The enlightenment of the Christian is like God causing light to shine into darkness’ but rather “*God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath...*”, etc. The apostle Paul here refers us to Genesis 1:3 to remind us Who it is that is working in us – the Creator of all things. So God, when He opens the eyes of His children, is exerting the same creative power as He exerted at the beginning, when He caused the light to shine out of darkness. The apostle Paul here is pointing back to Genesis 1:3.

The third example from the New Testament is from 2 Peter 3:3-6. “*Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished*”. Peter here says that the world destroyed by the flood was the very world created by God. In describing the earth as standing out of the water and in the water he obviously has in mind the words “*Let the waters that are under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so*” (Genesis 1:9). It is also clear that Peter is understanding Genesis 1 as literally true – otherwise he would not be able to comment as he does.

There are many other passages in the New Testament which show the same view of Genesis 1. Always, the chapters are referred to in such a way as to show that the New Testament writers regarded them as being literally true...

In Genesis 1 we find that God spoke several times and that each time the result was the same. Whatever God commanded sprang into being immediately. Throughout the whole of the chapter we read, “*God said*” and then, “*And it was so*”. This happens time and time again. We have a good exposition of Genesis 1 in Psalm 33:6 and 9 where the Psalmist says “*By the word of the Lord 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*”. Now the words, “*For He spake and it was done*” are very important in helping us to understand Genesis 1, for they mean that, in the very act of speaking, whatever God commanded sprang into being. God did not ‘start a process’, but rather whatever was commanded by God came to be at the instant of the command.

Also, we are told that God used no means in creation. Created things are here in obedience to God’s command. Think of it! Can you order something to appear out of nothing in obedience to your will? This is what God did – He said, for example, “*Let there be light: and there was light*” (Genesis 1:3). He said it, and in the act of saying it, it came into being. The lesson that we must learn from this is that **creation is instantaneous**. The idea of ‘process’ is entirely foreign to what the Bible teaches us concerning creation and it is a flat contradiction of words to say that evolution is the process that God used to create the world. It is equally false for us to say that God made the world in six days, if by it we mean that God **needed** the six days in which to create the world. That is the same idea of process again. What we **should** mean is that during the very first week of time God uttered His commands and what He commanded obediently came into being instantaneously. So, during the creation week, rather than having the idea of God taking six days to

make the world, we should instead understand that during the first six days of time it pleased God to bring the world into being and to furnish it by a series of instantaneous creative acts, all by His word...

It is because creation is instantaneous and by the word of God that the writer to the Hebrews says it is, “through **faith** that we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3). Nothing could be more contrary to the reason of natural man, who is in rebellion against God, than to believe that the worlds were not made out of some raw material, but rather by the word of God. So then, creation is instantaneous. Not only the original matter, but also the sea and the land, the sun and the moon, the plants and the animals and man also...

...the teaching of Genesis is very much in conflict with evolutionary theory at every point. Not merely over the six days of creation, but in everything else as well... I am going to leave it at this point with a challenge: **Do you believe God’s word in its entirety and do you set your face against intellectual worldliness?** Trying, as a Christian, to play with the theory of evolution is a form of worldliness. It is a manifestation of the lust of the mind, and is worldliness in the sphere of our thinking. Are you willing to set your face against this, or are you going to try to serve God and the devil by believing what God says about salvation, but rejecting what He says about His creative activity? We cannot have it both ways. If God reveals how He has saved us from our sins, He has also revealed how He created us. Well, that is the challenge!

Dr J. W. Milner (1969)

This article forms part of lecture given at a meeting of the Trinitarian Bible Society at Leicester in 1969. It is available in its entirety in booklet form from North Road Chapel, at the usual address.

THE DOCTRINAL VALUE OF GENESIS

The Book of Genesis is in many respects the most important book in the Bible. It is of the first importance because it answers, not exhaustively, but sufficiently, the fundamental questions of the human mind. It contains the first authoritative information given to the race concerning these questions of everlasting interest: the Being of God; the origin of the universe; the creation of man; the origin of the soul; the fact of revelation; the introduction of sin; the promise of salvation; the primitive division of the human race; the purpose of the elected people; the preliminary part in the programme of Christianity. In one word, in this inspired volume of beginnings, we have the satisfactory explanation of all the sin and misery and contradiction now in this world, and the reason of the scheme of redemption.

Or, to put it in another way: The Book of Genesis is the seed in which the plant of God's Word is enfolded. It is the starting point of God's gradually unfolded plan of the ages. Genesis is the plinth of the pillar of the Divine revelation. It is the root of the tree of the inspired Scriptures. It is the source of the stream of the holy writings of the Bible. If the base of the pillar is removed, the pillar falls. If the root of the tree is cut out, the tree will wither and die. If the fountain head of the stream is cut off, the stream will dry up. The Bible as a whole is like a chain hanging upon two staples. The Book of Genesis is the one staple; the Book of Revelation is the other. Take away either staple, the chain falls in confusion. If the first chapters of Genesis are unreliable, the revelation of the beginning of the universe, the origin of the race, and the reason of its redemption are gone. If the last chapters of Revelation are displaced the consummation of all things is unknown. If you take away Genesis, you have lost the explanation of the first heaven, the first earth, the first Adam, and the fall. If you take away Revelation you have lost the completed truth of the new heaven, and the new earth, man redeemed, and the second Adam in Paradise regained.

Further: in the first chapters of the Book of Genesis you have the strong and sufficient foundation of the subsequent developments of the kingdom of God; the root-germ of all Anthropology, Soteriology, Christology, Satanology, to say nothing of the ancient and modern problems of the mystery and culpability of sin, the Divine ordinance of the Lord's Day, the unity of the race, and God's establishment of matrimony and the family life.

We assume from the start the historicity of Genesis and its Mosaic authorship. It was evidently accepted by Christ the Infallible, our Lord and God, as historical, as one single composition, and as the work of Moses. It was accepted by Paul the inspired. It was accepted universally by the divinely inspired leaders of God's chosen people ... It has validated itself to the universal Church throughout the ages by its realism and consistency, and by what has been finely termed its subjective truthfulness. We postulate especially the historicity of the first chapters. These are not only valuable, they are vital. They are the essence of Genesis. The Book of Genesis is neither the work of a theorist or a tribal annalist. It is still less the product of some anonymous compiler or compilers in some unknowable era, of a series of myths, historic in form but unhistoric in fact. Its opening is an 'apocalypse', a direct revelation from the God of all truth.

Whether it was given in a vision or otherwise, it would be impossible to say. But it is possible, if not probable, that the same Lord God, who revealed to His servant as he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day the apocalypse of the humanly unknown and unknowable events of man's history which will transpire when this heaven and this earth have passed away, would also have revealed to His servant, being in the Spirit, the apocalypse of the humanly unknowable and unknown events which transpired before this earth's history began. It has been asserted that the beginning and the end of things are both absolutely hidden from science. Science has to do with phenomena. It is where science must confess its

impotence that revelation steps in, and, with the authority of God, reveals those things that are above it. The beginning of Genesis, therefore, is a divinely inspired narrative of the events deemed necessary by God to establish the foundations for the Divine Law in the sphere of human life, and to set forth the relation between the omnipotent Creator and the man who fell, and the race that was to be redeemed by the incarnation of His Son ...

[However, many] more or less orthodox [Christians] ... not only deny them to be the product of the reverent and religious mind of the Hebrew, but assert they were simply oriental legends, not born from above and of God, but born in the East, and probably in pagan Babylonia. We would therefore postulate the following propositions:

1. The Book of Genesis has no doctrinal value if it is not authoritative.
2. The Book of Genesis is not authoritative if it is not true. For if it is not history, it is not reliable; and if it is not revelation, it is not authoritative.
3. The Book of Genesis is not true if it is not from God. For if it is not from God, it is not inspired; and if it is not inspired, it possesses to us no doctrinal value whatever.
4. The Book of Genesis is not direct from God if it is a heterogeneous compilation of mythological folklore by unknowable writers.

If the Book of Genesis is a legendary narrative, anonymous, indefinitely erroneous, and the persons it describes the mere mythical personifications of tribal genius, it is ... an insufficient basis for doctrine. The residuum of dubious truth, which might with varying degrees of consent be extracted therefrom, could never be accepted as a foundation for the superstructure of eternally trustworthy doctrine ... Mythical and legendary fiction, and still more, erroneous and misleading tradition, are

incompatible not only with the character of the God of all truth, but with the truthfulness, trustworthiness, and absolute authority of the Word of God. We have not taken for our credentials cleverly invented myths. The primary documents, if there were such, were collated and revised and re-written by Moses by inspiration of God ...

The Book of Genesis is the foundation on which the superstructure of the Scriptures rests. The foundation of the foundation is the first three chapters, which form in themselves a complete monograph of revelation. And of this final substructure the first three verses of the first chapter are the foundation.

In the first verse of Genesis in words of supernatural grandeur, we have a revelation of God as the first cause, the Creator of the universe, the world and man. The glorious Being of God comes forth without explanation, and without apology. It is a revelation of the one, personal, living, God ... Here we have in this first verse of Genesis ... three great truths which have constituted the glory of our religion:

1. **The Unity of God**; in contradiction to all the polytheisms and dualisms of ancient and modern pagan philosophy.
2. **The Personality of God**; in contradiction to that pantheism whether materialistic or idealistic, which recognises God's immanence in the world, but denies His transcendence. For in all its multitudinous developments, pantheism has this peculiarity, that it denies the personality of God, and excludes from the realm of life the need of a Mediator, a Sin-Bearer, and a personal Saviour.
3. **The Omnipotence of God**; in contradiction, not only to those debasing conceptions of the anthropomorphic deities of the ancient world, but to all those man-made idols that the millions

of heathenism today adore. God made these stars and suns, which man in his infatuation vain would worship. Thus in contradiction to all human conceptions and human evolutions, there stands forth no mere deistic abstraction, but the one, true, living and only God. He is named by the name Elohim, the name of Divine Majesty, the Adorable One, our Creator and Governor; the same God who a few verses later is revealed as Jehovah-Elohim, Jehovah being the Covenant name, the God of revelation and grace, the Ever-Existent Lord, the God and Father of us all.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Here in a sublime revelation is the doctrinal foundation of the creation of the universe, and the contradiction of the ancient and modern conceptions of the eternity of matter. God only is eternal ...

That single sentence separates the Scriptures from the rest of human productions. The wisest philosophy of the ancients, Platonic-Aristotelian or Gnostic, never reached the point that the world was created by God in the sense of absolute creation. In no cosmogony outside of the Bible is there a record of the idea that God created the heaven and the earth, as an effort of His will, and the fiat of His eternal, self-existent Personality ... The highest point reached by their philosophical speculations was a kind of atomic theory; of cosmic atoms and germs and eggs possessed of some inexplicable forces of development, out of which the present cosmos was through long ages evolved ... The first verse of the Bible is a proof that the Book is of God.

... Further, we have in this sublime revelation of Genesis the doctrinal foundation of the unity of the human race, the fall of man, [and] the plan of redemption ... the third chapter of Genesis is the basis of [salvation]. If there was no fall, there was no condemnation, no separation and no need of reconciliation. If there was no need of reconciliation, there was

no need of redemption; and if there was no need of redemption, the Incarnation was a superfluity, and the crucifixion folly ... The rejection of the Genesis story as a myth, tends to the rejection of the Gospel of salvation. One of the chief corner stones of the Christian doctrine is removed, if the historical reality of Adam and Eve is abandoned, for the fall will ever remain as the starting point of special revelation, of salvation by grace, and of the need of personal regeneration. In it lies the germ of the entire apostolic Gospel.

Finally, we have in Genesis 2 the doctrinal foundation of those great fundamentals, the necessity of labour, the Lord's Day of rest, the Divine ordinance of matrimony, and the home life of mankind. The weekly day of rest was provided for man by his God, and is planted in the very forefront of revelation as a Divine ordinance, and so also is marriage and the home. Our Lord Jesus Christ endorses the Mosaic story of the creation of Adam and Eve, refers to it as the explanation of the Divine will regarding divorce, and sanctions by His infallible imprimatur that most momentous of ethical questions, monogamy. Thus the great elements of life as God intended it, the three universal factors of happy, healthy, helpful life: law, labour, love, are laid down in the beginning of God's Book ...

In an age, therefore, when the critics are waxing bold in claiming settledness for the assured results of their hypothetic eccentricities, Christians should wax bolder in contending earnestly for the assured results of the revelation in the opening chapters of Genesis ... [and] take our stand ... with Him who said, "*Had you believed Moses, you would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe My words?*" (John 5:45-46).

Dyson Hague (1857 – 1935)
from 'The Fundamentals', Vol. VIII, Chapter 6

EDITORIAL

Christians in the present day have reasons to be thankful for the rise in ‘Creationist’ teaching that has occurred in the past four decades. In particular, for the way in which the tacit acceptance of evolutionary theory by the church has been rebuked; and the widespread evidence for the veracity of Scripture re-emphasised. Though it ought not to have required the publication of new books and magazines, or the establishment of dedicated organisations to achieve these ends. A once-flooded planet still seventy percent covered in water; examples of the antediluvian ‘world that perished’ preserved in rock beneath its surface; the universal observance of a seven-day week; all these things testify to the accuracy of Genesis. Whilst at the same time:

“Nature with open volume stands,
To spread her Maker’s praise abroad;
And every labour of His hands
Shows something worthy of our God.” (Watts)

It is the responsibility of ministers and teachers within local churches to defend and proclaim these principles, and to ensure that, through the consistent exposition of the Word, such vital matters are raised and addressed.

The Scriptures themselves afford all that a preacher will ever need to illustrate and substantiate the truth of creation. He may, however, feel inclined to make recourse to secular science in support of the claims and statements of the Bible. This is hazardous territory, for science belongs to this present, transient world. It is not inspired, inerrant or immutable. As such, it cannot add any weight or authority to the Word of God, and is of an inferior standard. The first duty of the Lord’s servants is to: “*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season*” (2 Timothy 4:2), that is, regardless of the prevailing climate of scientific

opinion – whether it be with the corroboration of secular science, or without it, or if necessary, in direct opposition to it. This latter situation often arises.

Controversy regarding the origins of human existence did not begin with the evolutionary hypotheses of the nineteenth century. Popular theories opposed to the Biblical account are at least as old as the Greek philosophers. Peter’s Epistle refers to scoffers who wilfully ignore the record of Genesis (cf 2 Peter 3:3-6). It is a pattern of denial begun by that arch-deceiver the Devil, who, within a few verses of its first utterance, cynically questions the authenticity of the second chapter of the Bible, “*Yea, hath God said...?*” (Genesis 3:1).

In this age-long conflict, the true child of God has only one sure support. It is not zoology, geology or palaeontology; it is not logic, philosophy or apologetics; it is not legislation, education policy or legal challenges. It is **faith**. The Scripture categorically states: “*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*” (Hebrews 11:3). It demands God-given faith to believe in a Divine creation. Scientific evidence will never be made to conclusively prove ‘special creation’, or unequivocally demonstrate a young age of the earth – because if it did, faith would no longer be required. For if a man can be made to ‘see’ by way of material arguments, he need no longer exercise faith (cf Romans 8:24).

The central tenets of Christianity concern things that are spiritual, eternal and invisible. They cannot be seen with the eye, or appreciated with the senses; they cannot be measured or tested by a scientific process. Such subjects as – the Deity of Christ, His miraculous virgin birth and incarnation, the existence and immortality of the soul, the realms of Heaven and Hell, the physical resurrection of the dead, and the ultimate God-appointed termination of the world – these things stand on the authority of the Word of God alone. No data will ever be

collected to support them, nor any artefacts gathered to attest to their reality. Human reason and research will always be opposed to them. *“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Corinthians 2:14). Supernatural creation belongs in this category. It can only be received by faith.

On this point, the modern Creationist movement (currently receiving considerable media attention in America) has lost its way – adopting a philosophy that, if an unbeliever can be sufficiently persuaded by the physical evidence for creation, he will then be obliged to accept the truth of all Scripture, receive the Gospel, and thereby be saved. A process that might almost be described as ‘sight become faith’ – contradictory to the pattern shown in the Bible.

Furthermore, this intense focus upon the natural world has come at the expense of a consistent spiritual and doctrinal application of the book of Genesis. In a serious though telling contradiction, the much-publicised ‘Creation Museum’ in Kentucky is open for business on the Lord’s Day. The Seventh Day of Creation, with all its significance, has been sadly overlooked.

The sole eye-witness to the commencement of time and existence has given a record of those events in these terms: *“I laid the foundation of the earth ... I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it”* (Job 38:4, 9). Let God be true, and every man a liar. For, despite the Fall, the Flood and the intervening millennia, the Lord has not left Himself without witness – sin and its consequences have not eradicated the hallmarks of Deity, which are impressed upon all that He has made – the Sabbath Day included. ‘All His works praise Him’ to this day (cf Psalm 145:10). May God grant His people the faith (not the ‘creationism’) to believe and defend this vital truth.

WEBSITE

In the goodness and providence of God, the church has been enabled to launch a website, which can be accessed at the following address:

www.northroadchapel.org

As well as practical details and information concerning North Road Chapel, it contains current and past editions of the Link magazine, free literature published by the church, and recorded sermons in MP3 format, for streaming or download. Approximately 500 sermons have been made available, and the remaining catalogue (numbering around 2,500) will be added in the process of time, God willing, alongside the ongoing weekly ministry. The desire and prayer of the fellowship is that the Lord will use this means for the further dissemination of truth, to the benefit of those who receive it, and the ultimate glory of His name.

A memorable and happy day, attended with the Lord's presence, was enjoyed by members of the church on Tuesday 19th July, which was the occasion of the marriage of Mr R. J. Steward (Minister) and Miss J. M. Broome. Their wedding ceremony took place at Zion Baptist Chapel, Trowbridge, near to the bride's family home. Mr G. D. Buss of Chippenham officiated and gave an address, drawing parallels between the Ark of the Covenant in the house of Obed-Edom (cf 2 Samuel 6), and the responsibilities and blessings of the ministry in the life of a married couple. Mr R. D. Steward (groom's father) led in prayer, and Mr D. C. Wort (Elder) read the Scriptures. The sermon was preached by Mr P. Mehrshahi (Providence Chapel, Cheltenham), upon the text: "*Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb*" (Revelation 19:9), in which a clear and powerful presentation of the Gospel was made. May the Lord be pleased to bless this union, and make it a blessing to the church at North Road.