


The Bible Lesson Quarterly.

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Generation

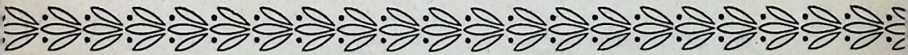
...and...

Regeneration.

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens.—Gen. ii. 4.

In the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory.—Matt. xix. 28.

By SAMUEL WILSON.



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IN CHRIST JESUS.

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Report of the Meeting of the Executive Board.

The conference met at Lanark, March 31st, 1900. All members were present except the Secretary, Bro. Lyman Booth.

The meeting was opened by prayer by Bro. S. J. Lindsay, of Oregon, Ill.

The question of purchasing a tent for evangelist work was thoroughly discussed, as funds had already been subscribed for that purpose. The amount being insufficient however, on motion of Bro. Fahrney of Chicago, the tent plan was abandoned and the amount subscribed turned into the general evangelist fund.

The chairman of the evangelist committee read a letter from the church at Dixon asking for an evangelist to conduct meetings in that city for a few weeks. The church asked permission to select their own evangelist, but that the board should assist them financially. On motion of Bro. Fahrney, duly seconded, their request was granted. On motion the evangelist committee was authorized to employ Bro. Hudler as evangelist and send him to Monroe, Wis., Effingham, Ill., and other points where his services were desired, or where, in the judgment of the committee, his work would be most effective.

Bro. S. J. Lindsay, on behalf of the church at Oregon, invited the next quarterly conference to be held at that city. On motion of Bro. Gesin the invitation was accepted, and the date of the conference set for August 30th to continue over Sunday.

On motion duly seconded Bros. Lindsay, Fahrney and Wilson were appointed a committee to prepare a program for the conference.

Financial Report.

The Treasurer, Bro. Glotfelty, of Lanark, reported as follows:

Cash on hand, December 1, 1899	\$60.15
Collected since	69.55
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Total	\$125.70
Expeditures	10.45
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Cash on hand	119.25
Tent fund	61.75
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Total cash on hand, March 31, 1900	181.00

On motion the treasurer's report was approved and accepted and ordered placed on file and incorporated in the minutes.

The meeting then adjourned until the general conference, August 30.
 J. M. GLOTFELTY, Sec'y Pro Tem.

Generation and Regeneration.

CHAPTER I.

GENERATION OF THE EARTH.

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens.—Gen. ii. 4.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.—Gen. i.

LOOKING backward in our pilgrimage towards eternity and counting the mile-posts of time, our mental vision finally rests at a period that can only be described by the words, "In the beginning." These are therefore, very appropriately, the opening words of the first chapter of the first book in the Bible containing that glorious hymn of creation. Were the New Testament rearranged, placing the gospel of John before that of Matthew, the opening words of the marvelous story of the new creation or regeneration would be the same, "In the beginning."

Between this year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine and that remote "beginning," all the marvels of human experience, and the majestic wonders of the creative week as revealed in history and geology have passed in review. Whence? How? Why? are problems that science is vainly striving to solve. Some have taught the possibility of a creation without a Creator, but the evidence of design and infinite wisdom in the book of Nature compel all honest students to "look through Nature up to Nature's God;" and none has yet been able to propound a reasonable theory that is in advance of the statement of Genesis, that "God created the heaven and the earth." The laws of Nature cannot account for their own origin.* The magnitude of the universe speaks to us of omnipotent power; the perfection of its mechanism and the certainty of the operation of its laws point to infinite wisdom; and the motive in every detail, and the ideal that is worked to completion in the individual parts, as well as the completed whole, give assurance of an

*Dr. Croker—"Theistic Conception of the World,"

unconditioned will. This compound of power, wisdom and will we term God, "That made the world and all things therein, . . . He is Lord of all." "The Eternal Will is the Creator of the world, as He is the Creator of the finite reason.†"

HARMONY OF GENESIS AND GEOLOGY.

The two records, Genesis and Geology, harmonize not only in the general features of the generation of the earth, but also in the order of their arrangement. Each teaches a gradual development or evolution beginning with the nebulous condition when the earth was without form and void; through the appearance of light; the development of land and plants; the manifestation of the luminaries; creation of aquatic animals and birds, then of land animals and finally of man. This agreement in arrangement is positive evidence of the common authorship of the two records. How else except by direct revelation from the Creator could the author of Genesis have learned this wisdom? It could not have been guess-work or chance. To illustrate this point, let any person write the numerals from one to six on separate cards, mix them, and then by drawing attempt to produce their original formation. It is practically impossible to do so. The table on opposite page illustrates the harmony that exists between the two records.

All theories regarding the method of the generation of our earth and of life agree that there was a gradual unfolding, development or evolution of the earth and the life that inhabits it. "We see many footprints, each in advance of the print behind it and on a higher level."* Thus we can trace backward to the time when man did not exist; when there were no mammals; still backward when no birds flew in the heavens; when there were no trees, no fishes, no plants; back beyond water and vapor and fire to darkness and nebulae. Thus we come by both pathways of Genesis and Geology to the "beginning," face to face with God the Creator, the first cause by whose will, wisdom and power all things exist.

LENGTH OF THE CREATIVE DAY.

Some zealous advocates of literal interpretation insist that the entire work of creation was completed in exactly one hundred and forty-four hours. To such permit me say that there is nothing in the record to justify such a conclusion. The term day in the Scriptures is used to designate periods of variable length. There are three separate kinds of days mentioned in the creative record: The period from

†Fichte. †J. S. Mill. *Hugh Miller.

Genesis ch. 1.		Brief announcement of Chief Events in the History.			
	Verses 1-2. Exordium.	I. God the Creator of the Substance and Form of the Universe. II. Terrestrial Chaos. III. Darkness on the Face of the Deep. IV. Vivification of the Waters.			
Days.		Geology.	Geological Ages		
I.	Verses 3-5. Creation of Light.	Igneous Vapor Condensing.	Age of Fire.	Ariotic.	Azotic.
II.	Verses 6-8 Creation of Firmament or Expanse.	Gathering of Clouds. Descent of Rain. Earliest Sediments.	Age of Rain.		
III.	Verses 9-13 Creation of Dry Land and Plants.	Uplift of Continents. Appearance of Marine Vegetation.	Age of Land and Plant-Making.	Proto- phytic.	
IV.	Verses 14-18 Creation or Appointment of Luminaries: Sun, Moon and Stars.	Dispersion of Clouds. Appearance of Sun, Moon and Stars.	Age of Plant Growth.		
V.	Verses 20-23 Creation of Aquatic Animals and Birds.	Appearance of Marine Animals (mollusks, fishes, etc.) and Aquatic Birds and Reptiles.	Age of Mollusks, Fishes.	Palæozoic.	
			Reptiles, Birds.	Mesozoic.	
VI.	Verses 24-31 Creation of Land Animals and Man.	Appearance of Mammals and Man.	Age of Mammals.	Cænozoic.	
VII.	Gen. ii. 2-3 Sabbath of God.	Reign of Man. Sabbath of Creation.	Age of Man.	Phrenozoic.	

sunrise to sunset; the period termed the "evening and the morning," or the time from the beginning of one day until the beginning of the next; and, finally, the entire six days as a whole is spoken of as the "day when God created the heaven and the earth." Test the idea of a twenty-four hour day with the following texts: "The day of the Son of Man"; "The day of salvation"; "The terrible day of the Lord"; "A day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Another fatal objection to this interpretation is the fact that, according to the record, the Sun, by which the twenty-four hour day is measured, did not appear until the fourth day. Skeptics have seized upon this twenty-four hour day theory to demonstrate the unreliability of the record; and some have gone so far as to teach that the discoveries of science have driven biblical scholars to devise the indefinite period theory, as a subterfuge or equivocation. Such cavillers only display their ignorance of the subject, for this interpretation is much older than the science of Geology, and has been taught for over fifteen hundred years. St. Augustine, born A. D. 354, propounded the question, "What mean these days—these strange sunless days? Does the enumeration of days and nights avail for a distinction between the nature that is not yet formed and those that are made, that they shall be called morning and evening?"* Hence he terms them natures, births or growths, also teaches that the measurements of the creative days are marked by delays, or solemn pauses in the work of creation. This was also the doctrine of Origen, Basil and Irenaeus, as well as many learned Jewish teachers; and in more recent times Lord Bacon, Poole, Henry More and others have presented like views, all long before the science of Geology existed.

CHAPTER II.

REGENERATION OF THE EARTH.

Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth. The heaven even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath he given to the children of men.—Psalm cxv., 15, 16.

This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden.—Ezek. xxxvi., 33.

In every detail of creation there is evidence of design, and the purpose has invariably been or shall be accomplished, leaving no room for improvements. Witness the wing of a bird, the armor and fins of

*"De Genesi ad Literam." lib. ii. ch. 14.

a fish, the eye of a fly, the protecting shell of a mollusk or a seed, the wonders of the human brain or nervous system and a thousand other details. So with the earth—it was made as a home for man, and he was given dominion over the earth and over every living creature subordinate to himself. (Gen. i., 26, 28.) The fact that man has failed to fully possess his dominion does not change the design. The fault is in man, and if there are conditions in the earth to-day that are unfavorable, they may be attributed to the blasting and warping tendencies of human failure to reach up to the divine ideal, and when the cause of the evil is removed, the evil effects will as certainly pass away.

IMPORTANCE OF THE EARTH.

There is a tendency among theologians to belittle the earth and to claim the heavens as man's eternal abode. This is an assumption contrary to the teachings of both nature and Revelation. The earth, even under the curse, is better than degenerate man deserves for his habitation, for we may truthfully say that,

"Every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

Following the degeneracy of man came the curse upon the earth for man's sake, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field."*

In the garden of Eden we have a miniature of what may be expected when the original design of creation shall have been realized. To-day sin rests upon the earth as a deadly miasma, poisoning alike man, and beast, and plant, and atmosphere. When we learn all the laws governing the workings of nature, with the interworkings between the physical, the mental and moral, we can better understand how the friction between the ruler of the earth and the divine laws shall have so seriously affected all his dominion. This we do know, that harmony is heaven's first law; and when the will of man became at enmity with the Divine will the result was inevitable discord and confusion wherever the domain of man extends. The adjustment of the mechanism of the Divine laws is so perfect, and so delicate, that confusion must necessarily result from such an obstruction deflecting the blessings of God which otherwise would have brought gladness to the earth. Thus we can understand how it is that "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of

*Gen. iii., 17, 18.

God," and that "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now."*

THE NEW EARTH.

The Scriptures are luminous with promises regarding the perfection of the "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." As the degeneration of earth followed the degeneration of man, so the Regeneration shall follow his new birth. The time of Regeneration of the earth shall be synchronous with the personal reign of Christ and his saints upon the earth; for, says Jesus to his disciples, "In the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of his glory ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."† That this kingdom shall be upon the earth is evident from Daniel's prophecies (Dan. vii., 14,27.) The seat of authority shall be in Jerusalem, from whence the laws shall go forth that shall bring blessings to all peoples, nations and languages.

PHYSICAL CHANGES.

There will be numerous physical changes of the topography of the earth during this period. In Palestine an earthquake shall level the mountains and make a great plain from Geba to Rimmon, and shall open a valley from the Mediterranean sea to the Dead sea, letting in the waters that shall cleanse the Dead sea. This valley shall pass the very gates of Jerusalem, making of that city a seaport and highway of commerce.‡ Where now are barren wastes shall be fertile fields; "for the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose . . . and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water . . . no lion shall be there or any ravenous beast."§

In that regenerate earth the Lord God "shall open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys; He will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. He will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree and myrtle, and the oil tree, and will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine and box tree together."||

There shall be no more curse upon the land, for "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree."¶

In the Regeneration of the earth a blessing shall reach also to the

*Rom. viii., 19-22. †Matt. xix., 28. ‡Zech. xiv.; Eze. xlvi. §Isa. xxxv., 1, 7, 9. ||Isa. xlv., 18-20. ¶Isa. lv., 13.

brute creation restoring them to the original harmony of Eden, when "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock."*

Universal peace shall reign, and the heavens shall smile upon the people. The fields shall be plenteous with harvest, and free from noxious pests; and "The plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed." In short, "The whole land shall become as the Garden of Eden," a blessed Beulah land. In this Regenerated earth peace, prosperity and happiness shall reign under the beneficent guidance of the Prince of Peace and his glorified saints.

There is nothing unreasonable in any of these scriptural statements. They simply argue that there shall be changes; and, certainly, change is no novelty with this earth. The work of change that began with the first glimmerings of light in the Abiotic age has never ceased. The streams are still wearing away the mountains and building up the plains; glaciers are to-day grinding down the mountain sides, storms and floods and earthquakes are rending, destroying and changing the surface of the earth. The tides are wearing into the face of the continents, and new islands are building. The seasons are different each year. Civilization is reclaiming the wilderness and producing changes in climatic conditions. Reasoning from these facts we are justified in concluding, with Hugh Miller, that "We must regard the expectation of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, as not unphilosophic, but, as on the contrary, altogether rational and according to experience."†

A HEAVENLY EARTH.

What better heaven can mankind desire than this glorious earth over whose birth the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? This old earth which God has builded for our home and which he pronounced very good shall be a paradise when the curse of sin shall have been driven away; when universal peace shall obtain; when justice, mercy and love shall reign; when there shall be no rich and poor, no haughty and humble; no tyrants and slaves, no hypocrites and liars; when war shall no longer devastate; famine waste, plagues destroy or rum blast and deprave; when the terrific struggle for pomp and glory, for pleasure and bread shall be over; when "there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him"; "when

*Isa. xi., 1zv., 25. †Testimony of the Rocks.

the tabernacle of God shall be with men and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Rev. xxii., 3, 4.

CHAPTER III.

GENERATION OF THE NATURAL MAN.

"The first man is of the earth, earthy."—Paul.

"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. ii.. 7.

In the study of man by mankind not infrequently our egotism elevates the race to a plane higher than that to which we are entitled by nature and Generation. The qualities and powers that are common to the race through natural Generation should not be confounded with the possibilities to which individuals may attain through spiritual Regeneration. In general features the lives of a Digger Indian and a Wall street millionaire are alike. They were alike naked and helpless at birth; alike they breathe, walk, talk, eat and drink; alike they are influenced by hopes and fears, and rear families; and alike they "die and waste away"; alike they "give up the ghost, and where are they?" The gulf that separates these two lives is only a matter of environment and degree. One is a savage, the other a lineal descendant of savages, and not infrequently manifesting the wolfish, greedy instincts of his ancestry through a thin veneering of civilization.

The Generation of the father of the human race is clearly stated in Genesis ii., 27: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

This man, Adam (red earth the name implies), was created wholly from material substance. As Paul says, he was "of the earth, earthy," and the same fact is emphasized in the words of the curse, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." These statements agree entirely with all human experience, which proves that after the work of dissolution only a handful of earth remains of what had been a king or a philosopher.

BREATH OF LIFE.

The second step in the creation of the natural man was the vitaliz-

ing of the earth-made body by "breathing into his nostrils the breath of life." This apparently relates to the atmospheric breath which is conveyed through the nostrils into the lungs supplying oxygen to the red corpuscles of the blood, without which putrefaction would immediately begin. Thus, when man's "breath goes forth he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish." In his general features of life, dependence upon food and drink and air to breathe, the natural man is animal, and in no way different from other members of the animal kingdom. He has higher qualities in many respects, especially in brain power, but in his dependence upon material substances for his being "man hath no preeminence above the beast."

Theologians have taught that the breath of life mentioned in Genesis was a special emanation from the Creator, instinct with his own nature and that thereby a part of the immortality of God, "a vital spark of heavenly flame" was conveyed to man. It is also taught that this breath of life is an independent, self-existent entity that can never die and after death of the body this spirit with all the intelligence and powers of the man, will live eternally. After a very careful analysis of this claim I fail to find the slightest foundation in either nature or revelation upon which to build it. This breath of life, or spirit, is a most wonderful force, and beyond the power of man to understand; but its influence in giving life to man is no more wonderful than in the case of a bird: "All have one breath." Whatever qualities it has in the elevation of man is equally true of the lower animals. Revelation teaches exactly the same. The same writer who used the term breath of life, as the vitalizing power in creation of man, uses it also for the rest of the breathing creation. Read Gen. vii. 21, 22: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died." It is clear therefore that not only man, but also bird, and beast and creeping thing had breathed into his nostrils at creation this same life giving neshamah, or breath. That which proves too much is no proof, and I think that no theologian is willing to follow his claim that this breath of life is immortal self-existent entity to its logical conclusion, and admit the immortality of the spirits of all of the breathing creation.

THE LIVING SOUL.

The next lesson that we have in this story of the generation of the

natural man is the designation of this being, compound of matter and spirit as a "living soul". Paul uses this same term in 1 Cor. xv. in speaking of the nature of the first Adam in contradistinction to that of the second Adam, who is a life-giving spirit. There is no word in the English language that has had more liberties taken with it than this word of four letters, soul. It is very simple in its real sense, its synonym being person, or being, and a living soul is simply a person that lives, a breathing being. But the questioner asks, The lower animals are breathing beings, have they souls? No! they have not souls; but they are souls, in exactly the sense that man, the chief of the animal kingdom is a soul. The Hebrew word here translated soul is *nephesh*, and in the Greek, *psuche*, meaning animal soul, or breathing being. The same terms *nephesh chayah* translated in our text, living soul, are used in Gen. vi. 19, translated living thing.

Paul says that Adam was a living soul, and also that he was of the earth earthy; and he goes farther to take the conceit out of the descendants of Adam by teaching that, like their distinguished ancestor, they are also earthy. This belittling of the natural, or animal, man is done in order that Christ may be glorified as the source of spiritual and eternal life. It is a law of physics that a stream cannot rise higher than its fountain unless it is lifted, and it cannot lift itself. No man has power to lift himself over a fence by pulling on his boot-straps, and no human being has power to elevate himself to a higher plane of existence than that of his blood inheritance. No amount of culture can change a species, no matter how much it may modify its qualities. The gulf is not wide that separates the prince from the pauper, the pigmy cannibal from the proud beauty equipped with all the graces

"Which stamp the caste of Vere de Vere."

All have the blood of a common ancestry.

Neither does the possession of great intellect link the descendent of the earthy man to the spiritual realm. There is no racial difference between a Shakespeare, who grasped every human emotion and placed on record nearly everything in human experience, and Markham's Man with the Hoe,

..... "dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not, and that never hopes;
Stolid and stunned, a brother of the ox."

That which lifts the one so far above the other is simply a matter of a few ounces more of gray matter within the skull; and greater

delicacy and refinement of nervous system, the result of heredity and culture for centuries. The species is the same; and the "brother of the ox" through changed environment, education, and refining influences for generations may be the ancestor of another Shakespeare, while the descendant of the bard of Avon through degeneracy may become one who bears

"The emptiness of ages in his face."

The line that separates the natural man from the spiritual realm is as distinct as that which separates the animal from the vegetable or the mineral kingdoms. It may hurt our vanity, but it is well to face the truth that our inheritance through our natural generation is simply that of the highest type of the animal kingdom, but with possibilities of bridging,

"The gulf between us and the seraphim,"

through regeneration: and it is well that it is so, for if the animal man is eternally self-existent, knowing as we do how degraded, vicious and sensual nine-tenths of the human family are, and ever have been, we have forced upon us the awful thought, Where do these untold millions spend eternity? It is this false philosophy that has given birth to that most revolting of all conceptions—the heathen's Tartarus and the theologian's Hell. Perish the thought! and thrice welcome the biblical alternative for the unregenerate! "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish. Man that is in honor, and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish." They which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall fly away as a dream and shall not be found; yea he shall be chased away as a vision of the night."—Psa. cxlvi., 3, 4; xlix., 10, 20; Job xx., 8.

CHAPTER IV.

REGENERATION OF MAN.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—Jesus.

"As ye have borne the image of the earthy, so shall ye also bear the image of the heavenly."—Paul.

The expression, Children of God, is not a mere theological form of words. It describes a real, vital relationship that exists between the Heavenly Father and certain of the human race who have by the

process of begettal or regeneration been transformed by the renewing of their minds into a spiritual household. Regeneration is therefore the key that unlocks the mysteries of the hereafter, and opens to the natural man the door that leads to the Kingdom of God. A son of God is by virtue of his divine paternity a member of a distinct grade or species in the order of the development of life upon this planet. As there are almost numberless grades of species below man, so there are grades above him in the angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim, principalities and powers in heavenly places. He cannot himself bridge the gulf and it is only by means of the higher power reaching down that he may hope to be lifted to the higher plane of existence. When Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again", or more properly rendered, "Ye must be begotten from above", he stated an imperative law that is obligatory upon all who would enter into the Kingdom of God, for flesh and blood that is natural (animal) man cannot inherit a spiritual kingdom.

The aphorism of Harvey, *Omne vivum ex vivo* (all life from life), is now an established truth in the scientific world, as all efforts for the spontaneous generation of life have resulted in failure; and even Tyndall has been compelled to admit that "no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independent of antecedent life." To generate life there must be contact with antecedent life; and the new life will be in species the same as that of the parent.

In the previous chapter was presented the question of the life of the natural man with its limitations. Peter very forcefully presents the question of the condition of the natural man, necessity for, and method of regeneration in these words: "Being born (begotten) again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is, as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth forever; and this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

This statement not only contains good theology, but equally good philosophy. We might truthfully paraphrase it as follows: Corruptible seed produces corruptible life; for that which is begotten of flesh is flesh, and all flesh is fleeting as a flower; but the child of God is not so, for he is begotten of incorruptible seed which produces an enduring incorruptible body. This incorruptible seed is the Word of God, which is a direct emanation from God Himself, which is living

and powerful, and comes by means of the gospel, which as the bearer of God's Word becomes the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

THE WORD OF GOD.

The Word of God which is thus the regenerating force for the spiritual life is not a book, neither is it a creed or confession of faith, or any other formalism. It is any expression of the mind or will of the Almighty, whether for creation, for blessing or for regeneration. "In the beginning was the Word." All things were made by the Word, says John. This statement finds its explanation in the story of the generation of the world. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" and the method of creation by the Word is illustrated in these words, "And God said, Let there be light;" "And God said, Let there be a firmament;" "And God said, Let the waters under heaven be gathered together;" "And God said, Let us make man." The command of God was an expression of his mind or will, and with omnipotent power, and infinite wisdom back of the Word it became the Law of God which started the forces of the generation of the world, and still rules and controls the universe.

The value of a word rests wholly upon the will, power and integrity of the speaker. A word of command from Commodore Dewey released forces that sank a Spanish fleet; a word from Abraham Lincoln transformed four millions of slaves into freemen; a word from the Governor of this State could carry pardon and life from the dead to a convicted murderer. How then can we measure the value or power of the Word of our God, which is "living and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword?"

Another expression of the Word of God comes to us in His Son Jesus, the Word made flesh. Jesus interprets to us in His own person the mind and will of the Father, and is thus, God with us; God manifested in the flesh.

How harmoniously do all the statements and synonyms in the Scriptures adjust themselves when we once find the key. We have seen that it is imperative that all who enter upon the spiritual plane of existence shall be touched with the Divine life; we have seen that this life-giving seed is the Word of God, which is part of the very being of the Divine Father, and which shall never return unto Him void; we have seen how Jesus became a complete expression of the mind or will of God, and is therefore his embodied Word: now what a flood of light is shed upon such testimonies as the following,

"I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly;" "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die;" "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life;" "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life;" "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."*

There is another most important expression of the mind or will of God, and that is the word spoken through angels, and the word given through holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Here we have a treasure house of blessings from on high: words of faith, words of hope, words of promise, words of instruction, words of warning, words of consolation spoken for our learning that we through their guidance may become thoroughly furnished unto every good work; also that through these "exceeding great and precious promises we may become partakers of the Divine nature.

A NEW CREATURE.

The son of Adam who has been regenerated by the incorruptible seed, and in whom the Word of God dwells richly, is a New Creature from whom old things have passed away, and for whom all things have become new. The good seed, the Word of the Kingdom, does not always find good soil in which to lodge to bring forth fruit unto God. It is only in the heart prepared by faith that it can germinate. In such soil the Word is planted, and with the genial warmth and broodings of Divine Love the regeneration of the new creature in Christ Jesus takes place; "Which are born (begotten) not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

EVIDENCE OF REGENERATION.

The evidence of regeneration is a changed life. There must be new ideals, new aspirations, new paths for the feet and a new song in the heart. The child of God must grow and not remain a babe to be fed with milk. It must grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ. The evidence of growth is character development. Many at Corinth were classed as babes after years of Christian profession because they were yet carnal in their characters, because they manifested envyings and strifes and divisions. The mistake should not

*Jno. xi., 25, 26. Jno. v., 11, 12. Jno. iii., 36. Jno. iii., 16.

be made that the evidence of development and of the indwelling word is an ability to quote Scripture or to talk learnedly about Bible eschatology. The evidence of our sonship is not what we know but what we are. God is training a family for His glory, and the only way in which we can show the glory of God in our lives is to manifest godliness, that is God's likeness in our own characters. The child who does not develop in body and mind as time passes would be a terrible disappointment to its parents; and so I fear there are too many cases over which Infinite Love is yearning because of their stunted lives. Grow! "Add to faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity: for if these things be in you they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* From such a character the fruits of the Spirit will be scattered along the pathways of life: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness and charity. These are not attributes of the natural unregenerate man: He lives for self, whereas the regenerated man radiates blessings wherever he goes, as did the first of his class, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A PRESENT POSSESSION.

It is not only after the resurrection that the child of God bears the image of the heavenly. His change into the Divine likeness begins with his first cleansings from his old sins, and continues through life with each step of character building, putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man. Thus we are "Changed into the same image from glory to glory." This new life is therefore real and he who possesses it may with full assurance know that the "Law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death." The Scriptural evidences of the present possession of this life are numerous. Jesus says, "He that hath my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."† There are no doubts of fears in this unequivocal statement. Again He says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."‡ John also gives the assurance that "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."§ The regenerated son of Adam therefore may safely claim with Paul that, "There

*2 Pet. i., 5-8. †Jno. v., 24. ‡Jno. v., 47. §1 Jno. iii., 14.

is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Their spiritual life which as a gift of God is a present personal possession coming with the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. This seed liveth and abideth forever. In every fertile seed there is life that contains all the qualities in embryo of the fuller manifestation that will be developed when favorable conditions present themselves.

RESURRECTION AN EFFECT OF REGENERATION.

The full manifestation of the spiritual body in resurrection glory is dependent upon this indwelling Word, or spirit, or incorruptible seed, for says Paul, "If the spirit (life) of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."*

In one of the dry tombs hewn in the rocks along the banks of the Nile many years ago a sealed vase was found. It contained seed that had been placed there thousands of years before. It was taken to the British museum, and with great care planted and nurtured, and in due time the new life appeared, and a beautiful flower opened its petals and exuded fragrance and delighted the eye just as its parent had done in the presence of the Pharaohs. The life was there. So there is a mighty multitude that no man can number of the "seed of Abraham" through relationship with Christ, waiting for the time for the manifestation of the sons of God; waiting for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with His genial warmth; waiting for the showers of blessing that shall accompany His presence when they shall rise to meet Him; unto every seed shall be given his own body, and it will be not terrestrial, that is "earthy", but celestial, that is "heavenly".

DEFINITION OF ETERNAL LIFE.

The expression eternal life, or everlasting life as we have it in the New Testament is Aeonion life. The adjectives eternal and everlasting conveying the idea of duration do not fully define its character. It refers to the life of the aeon, or age, and is intended to contrast the qualities of the life of the celestial body with those of the terrestrial body. Duration, that is, length of days forever and ever is one of the chief qualities of that life because it will be the life of an incorruptible body, but the term also implies the innumerable

*Rom. viii., 11.

advantages of power, glory, beauty, virtue, etc., that are its environment. Jesus has given a definition of eternal life that is comprehensible in these words, "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."* To know God is to have intimate relations with the Father, and with the Son. We cannot have such intimate relations without being changed beings. John throws a beam of light upon this testimony that interprets it perfectly: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born (begotten) of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love."† The evidence therefore that we are walking as children of light; that the Word of God dwells in us richly; that we have received the incorruptible seed; that the spirit of Christ with resurrectional power dwells in us; that we have passed from death unto life is the manifestation in our daily lives and dealings with our fellows of that same spirit that God manifested when He sent His Son into the world, that same spirit that characterized every word and action of Jesus, the spirit of unselfishness, the spirit of sacrifice for which there is but one name, Love, an attribute of Divinity, a germ from the celestial life transplanted to earth that is yet to transform the lives of all who dwell upon the earth; the great controlling law of the Kingdom of God.

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE.

Thus we have traced the stream of eternal life back to its source and we find it to be in God who is the fountain of life, and that it is a fountain of love. Infinite Love saw man sunk beneath a load of sin, faithless and hopeless, and reached down from the heavens for his relief; Infinite Love sent the Son of God into the world that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life. It was Infinite Love that in the gospel brought the Word of promise and awakened his desires for better things; Infinite Love softened his stony heart by faith, and there it rested and brooding, developed and changed the old life, filling it with hope and joy and peace; and then spoke through his regenerated life in a thousand beautiful acts to which he was heretofore a stranger: and when death came to claim him as a son of Adam, Infinite Love whispered: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and with faith his heart replied, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of

*Jno. xvii., 2. †: Jno. iv., 7, 8.

death I shall fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." When Infinite Love shall again send His Son to claim His own, as the magnet draws the needle, so shall all in whom this spirit of Christ dwells spring to meet Him; whether they be sleeping or waking: for the Lord knoweth them that are His. "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

The life of the regenerated son of Adam, as we see it now in shadow is beautiful; but it is only a faint image of what it shall be in the resurrection glory when the sons of God shall be manifested: "Raised in incorruption;" "Raised in power;" "Raised in glory;" "Spiritual body;" "Equal unto the angels;" Like Christ;" "Awakened in His likeness;" are a few of the expressions descriptive of His power in the Age to Come. To these privileged beings shall be given to "Mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary." They shall be permitted to "Eat of the tree of life that is in the midst of the Paradise of God." Theirs it is to "Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." It is their right to "Sit with Him on His throne." They are called to be His very Bride, His intimate companions in dispensing blessings to all the families of the earth. They shall be "Joint heirs with Jesus Christ" in all things. It shall be theirs to lift up the down-trodden; to alleviate the distresses of the suffering; to rebuke tyrants; and as kings and priests to reign on the earth in the Kingdom of God, sharing in all the honor of Christ in bringing about that condition of millennial blessedness—the "New heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

*Rom. viii., 38, 39.