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dare not presume to say. But our love to Him, our love to one another, is so weak and poor, that it needs large and perpetual augmentation. St. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians must be our prayer for ourselves: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men."[1] And again, though it is to be feared that this is far above our level: "As touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. But we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more."[2]

"*Mercy, peace, and love,*"—this trinity of graces seems to direct our thoughts to the sacred Trinity of the Godhead. Mercy flows freely from God the Father, peace has been secured to us by God the Son, love is diffused in our hearts through the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen."

J. S. HOWSON.

ART. IV.—GENESIS AND THE BIBLE.

DOCTRINAL RELATIONS.

THE place of the Book of Genesis in the Bible implies a corresponding office in the scheme of revelation. So they must think who believe that there is a revelation, and that the Bible is the Divine exposition of it. In fact, the relations which the first book has with the rest are vital and manifold, and these short papers cannot pretend to offer any adequate account of them; but they may serve to direct attention and suggest topics of thought.

In the former paper the distinction was noted between the method and the matter of revelation, how we are taught and what we are taught, the means taken to inform us and the truths of which we are informed. On the first of these questions enough has been said for the present purpose in the observations there made on the *historical relations* of Genesis to the rest of Scripture.

We now turn to the *doctrinal relations*, from the method to the result, from the onward flow of the story to the solid deposit which it leaves. These doctrinal results are to be here considered, not simply in regard to their reality, their amount, or their value, but in their *relation* to subsequent and ultimate teaching, to the revelation on the whole and in

[1] 1 Thess. iii. 12. [2] 1 Thess. iv. 10.

the end. We ask, then, whether the doctrine in Genesis is such as to prepare for that which later books will yield, and especially for the Christian doctrine towards which (on the supposition of inspiration) all is tending? Is it of a piece with this later doctrine, and a distinct foundation for it? Does it give, not only principles of thought, but principles which, in fact, are afterwards used and developed?

Yes; the elementary truths embedded in this book are of the nature of foundations; they are purposely and firmly laid, and their lines indicate by anticipation the character of the fabric which they are designed to support. We, inspecting these doctrines from the standpoint of the present day, and under the influence of our settled habits of thought, scarcely see this fundamental character as distinctly as it deserves to be seen. We should dismiss, as well as we can, the familiar ideas, which in fact we have mainly derived from these very pages, and place ourselves in the world of thought which was round them when they were indited, and which, beyond the circle of their influence, is round them still. In regard to the origin of things, to God and the universe, to the nature of evil, to the mystery of this present world, to man, to nature, and to human life, what a chaos of opinion do we survey! what confused traditions! what subtle speculations! what rival philosophies! what confessions that nothing can be known! In the midst of all this, without argument and without hesitation, by simple statement, by a narrative childlike in style and profound in meaning, the Book of Genesis has on these subjects deposited the enduring foundations of thought.

Take the primary questions, which underlie all religions and all deeper philosophies; and first the question of *God and the universe.*

(1) Man wakes up to consciousness in the midst of the heavens and the earth, a visible material scene, which at once manifests and conceals its Author. What is to be thought of it and of Him? Is it self-existent, or did it come into being? Is there a Power which made, or shaped, or sustains it? Is that Power one with the material universe, a substratum of phenomena, a background of things that are? Is it to be thought of as a Law? a Force? an Energy? Is it an impersonal all-pervading Life, a soul of the universe?

> A motion and a spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things?

Or have these things been generated from the Infinite and Absolute by successive emanations? Is the "Demiurge" Him-

self such an emanation; and is the limitation of His being a cause of imperfection in His work? Are there many subordinate Powers manifested in the forces of nature, intermediate rulers of things, and therefore objects of worship for man? What mean these evidences of opposing forces in production and destruction, good and evil, life and death? Is the universe a dual empire, a scene of conflict between two rival Powers?

Let a man only glance at this ocean of thought, more particularly Oriental thought, surging chiefly in the two directions of Pantheism and Manicheanism; let him observe the powerful attraction and wide prevalence of these opinions, and their large development in religious and moral consequences; he will then better understand what is secured by the first line of Genesis:

> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

There it lies, still and immovable, beside this ocean of bewildered thought, like "the sand which God has placed for a bound to the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it."

All the questions on this subject which invade the mind of man are answered or anticipated by this single line. God is separate from the universe, which is His creation, and therefore His possession and dominion. The creature cannot be identified with the Creator, nor the Creator absorbed in the creature. Dualistic division is excluded: He lives and reigns alone. "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." "Thou hast made heaven and earth. There is none beside Thee." This one truth underlies all else that will be told; it is the ground which sustains and the life which pervades the entire fabric of revelation.

The living consciousness and practical uses of this truth are the glory of the Old Testament. In the New Testament it opens out yet further in the revelation of the living and eternal Word, Who is the mediating power in creation as in all the other work of God. "Through Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-begotten of all creation: for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through Him and unto Him."

Thus the final revelation is an outcome of the first announcement, giving it a fresh distinctness in itself and a more intimate relation to all later work of God. So "for us there is one God,

the Father, of Whom are all things and we of Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we through Him." The Son, in Whom "in the end of the days God has spoken to us," is the same "by Whom also He made the worlds (αἰῶνας)." Creation and redemption, the formation and restitution of things, are by the same agent as well as from the same author, and the scheme of the Gospel is a part of the scheme of the universe.

(2) As with the Creator, so with the *creation;* the view to be taken of it is fixed by the opening story. This has for its subject, not the universe, but "the heavens and the earth," as they appear to man, as fitted up for man, and as made the scene of human history. We see at once where we are; in a world which had a beginning, and may therefore have an end. We are on a temporary platform, suited to our present existence, assigned for the time to our possession and dominion. "The earth hath He given to the children of men." It is so given to them as to share their fortunes and to suffer for their deserts: for the ground is cursed for man's sin, and the fountains of the great deep are broken up because of his corruption. Thus the material is subjected to the moral, and the destiny of the creation is linked with the destiny of its inhabitant. Hence it is that, while in human religions man is subjected to nature, and is either overawed or seduced into idolatry by its imposing aspects and irresistible forces, revelation asserts at first and maintains throughout the contrary relation between him and it, through the conscious relation with the Creator of all, which is his prerogative and glory.

The doctrine of the creation thus given in the opening chapters of Genesis and continued throughout the Bible is also one to which the later revelations correspond. Ever more and more distinctly we see this world-period (αἰών) running to its end. Its present state is to terminate "at that day," when present human history shall close. Destruction and restitution are appointed for it, as death and resurrection for man. For his sin "made subject to vanity," "groaning and travailing in pain together until now," it is still expectant of the time when, purified by a baptism of fire, it "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." So the end of the Bible answers to its beginning; showing the first heaven and the first earth as passed away, with the old human life for which it was prepared, and succeeded by new heavens and new earth, destined for a new human life, to endure through "the age of ages."

(3) From the doctrine of the book on the Creator and the Creation we pass, naturally, to its doctrine on *Man* himself. What a mystery is man! So great, so little! A being "of

large discourse, looking before and after!" An atom in creation, yet surveying its heights and depths. In thought, wide-ranging, far-reaching, yet so impotent, so ignorant, so soon extinguished! He is flesh—is he also spirit? He is mortal—is he also immortal? A part of the material world—is he also part of an unseen universe? Conscious of a complex but disordered nature, he is to himself a subject of perpetual study, wonder, and debate. And the debate is of serious consequence, for the view which man takes of himself is above all things practical. On his habit of thought about himself, the aim and character, the worth and value of his life depend. Moral judgment, moral purpose, and moral action must be elevated or depressed in proportion to the recognised estimate of the capacities and destinies of human nature, of its place in creation, and of its relation to the animal world below and the spiritual world above it.

The whole question is settled at starting in the Book of Genesis:

> God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion, etc. And God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them.
>
> And 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.
>
> Out of the ground wast thou taken. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Gen. i. 26-27; ii. 7; iii. 19).

So man is the dust of the earth and the image of God, mortal and immortal, the meeting-point between the animal and the spiritual, lord of the creatures and a creature himself. He has dominion by investiture, not by right; he gives names to all things round him; he receives communications from God; he is free, but responsible; with self-determining will, but under a law of consequences which he cannot evade. Where else is human nature defined with the same firmness of outline, truthfulness of aspect, and insight into its essence? In the first appearance of man and in his first action all his future is contained. His history, as recognised and developed in revelation, grows naturally out of this beginning, and the very terms of the account live on in the later language of the sacred writers. That elementary lesson taught them to see the vain life which is spent as a shadow in the dignity of its moral seriousness and the glory of its relations with the eternal. Thus the key-note struck at first gives the tone to the judgment and treatment of man, and to his own consciousness and experience, throughout the Bible, and not least when these rise to their highest strain in the mystery of the Gospel of Christ.

The incarnation of the Son of God and the gift of the Holy Ghost are consequences (so to speak) of the first chapter of

Genesis. The worth of the human being, as there asserted, makes him the proper subject of redemption, and the means which are used for it are justified by his original relation to God. Why was it fit that the Word should be made flesh? Because He was the light of man in the order of nature, before He became so in the order of grace; and, when that light only lingered in a darkness which comprehended it not, it became needful that the true Light, which lighteth every man, should personally come into the world. Only because man had been made in the image of God, was it possible that God should be "made in the likeness of men." The whole doctrine of Christ as "Goël," (kinsman-redeemer,) rests on the same basis. So also does the doctrine of the issue of that redemption, in the new man raised up in Christ, and, not only in the sense of capacity, but in the sense of actual character, "created after the image of God in righteousness and truth of holiness;" made the habitation of His Holy Spirit, and the heir of His kingdom and glory.

(4) From the constitution of man to his condition, from his original nature to his actual state, the mind passes rapidly, and so does the story. It goes straight to the *mystery of evil*, and lays the foundations of the *doctrine of sin*. There is a pressing and immediate need for this: for the mystery of evil is a question which cannot be overlooked or adjourned. It oppresses and bewilders thinking men. How came evil? Why is it suffered? What hidden power is at work in it? What is the nature of moral evil? What is its connection with physical evil? What is that character of it which we express by the word "sin"? How is it regarded by God? What are we to think of it in ourselves? What is this necessary hold which it seems to have on our nature? What are its laws and consequences? Is it possible to modify or counteract them? If so, by what means? A thousand such questions have agitated and must agitate men's minds; and the answers to them will give the character to philosophies, to religions, and to human life.

The answers, or the germs of answers, to all such questions are contained in the story of the Fall. The narrative, which arrests the conscience of a child, yields to the considerate reader the most definite and pregnant principles of thought.

What is the *origin* of evil? If the question means, in the universe, there is no answer; for the revelation is not to the universe, but to the inhabitants of earth. They are told what is its origin *here* and for their own race. It was not coëval with creation. When that was finished "God saw that it was good." Evil came *from without*. The story discloses, though it does not account for, its existence in time anterior to this

world and in regions of being exterior to it. In the entrance of sin into the world we see it introduced from elsewhere, and learn that the evil which we know has a living connection with wider and darker evil beyond. And that evil appears among us, not by chance or necessity, but by the will and purpose of an enemy seeking to mar the work of God, and to infect and subjugate the fresh and fair creation.

But if sin is imported, it is also adopted, and is realized in man not by force but by consent. It is his own doing, and if he is a victim he is also an accomplice.

In this also is shown the true *nature* of sin; for in yielding to the enemy he renounces fealty to God. Sin is a breaking away from God, that is, from the living law of our moral being; as is taught by that profound saying of St. John, which no translation can adequately render: *ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.* The *process* of this separation is also laid bare; first, questionings of mistrust ("Yea, hath God said," etc.); then disbelief of His word ("Ye shall not surely die"); then desire for independence and rising of pride ("Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil"); after which, personal judgment and inclination alone remain to decide ("She saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes, and good for food, and a tree to be desired to make one wise"). Then there is decision by act and deed: the choice is complete, and the consequences follow. They follow in the sense of being stripped and despoiled; in the shame, the fear, the flight; which prolong their experiences in the future consciousness of man. They follow in the sentences which proclaim the connection of outward with inward evil, and associate in our common fall the material state of the world with the moral condition of man. Marvellously do those few words of stern but compassionate sentence involve and concentrate the whole subsequent character of life upon earth.

Then what a discovery follows of the law of sin in respect of growth and expansion, as we pass to the episode of Cain and Abel; then to the violence and corruption that fills the earth; and so to "the flood brought in upon the world of the ungodly."

'Twas but one little drop of sin
We saw this morning enter in,
And lo! at eventide the world is drown'd.

The nature and the law of sin as thus outlined are in strong contrast with what we encounter in other systems—in Brahmanism, for instance—which eliminates the idea of guilt by making everything (sin included) the action of Deity in man; or Buddhism, which has no living God against whom sin can be committed; or Mahommedanism, which chills the

conscience by obscuring the moral attributes of God under a bleak ascription of sovereignty; or the speculations of modern thought, which reduce sin to an offence against society, or to the mere imperfection of the creature.

It were long to show, but it is plain without showing, that the historical and prophetical treatment of sin in the rest of the Old Testament, and the Christian treatment of it in the New, are in direct continuation of the doctrine of Genesis, which in this respect, as in others, lies at the foundation of revelation. For revelation, in one chief aspect, is a scheme to meet the case created by sin, and so at starting the case is made clear. As there exhibited it is critical in the extreme, but not desperate. Had the evil been generated from within, perhaps it might have been so; but it has come from without: and if man as an accomplice is the proper subject of judgment, as a victim he is the proper subject of redemption. If "an enemy has done this," a Friend may undo it, supposing that One with right and power for the purpose can be found: and the hope of this is given at once, in the well-known prophetic sentence; and there is a perceptible suggestion of hope in the dealings which follow.

In the subsequent course of revelation, the development both of the doctrine of sin and of the Divine plan to meet it is an expansion and interpretation of our first lesson on the subject. The teaching grows ever more distinct; till in the New Testament the author of the evil appears stripped of the disguise of parabolic figure. The Evil One is before us. The revelation of Satan is a consequence of the manifestation of the Son of God, Who comes "to undo the works of the devil;" and the issues are to be decided between "the prince of this world" and the Prince of Life.

As in regard to the author of the evil, so in regard to its nature, the last teachings are in line with the first. Sin is, in its essence, revolt and separation from God. It then becomes a substantive principle which infects the members and the mind and constitution of man. It becomes a Power which has a hold on him, reduces him into servitude, and claims him as of right, as one who has sold himself. It is, in the language of St. Paul, a *law*, working itself out, in the processes and with the results which belong to law; a law of sin which is also a law of death. So the subject is expounded by one who had most deeply studied it, and who saw clearly what had really happened, when "by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

(5) But the doctrine of sin would be one of utter and hopeless ruin without a *doctrine of redemption;* and Genesis, as has been said, is far from depicting an utter and hopeless ruin.

The remedy is not to be announced there: it remains in the foreknowledge of God, and is hid from the foundation of the world. Yet its purpose lurks in the sentence which intimates a reversal of the victory of the serpent, and its influence is felt in the tone of kindness to the fallen and even in the remonstrances with Cain, and generally in the terms on which, throughout the book, we see men permitted to live with God; while the onward-bearing story is explicitly directed to an issue in which "all families of the earth shall be blessed." The rising of the Sun of Righteousness and the full light of the Gospel only discover to us what had been the source of that faint dawn in the morning. And yet further, the very method of the redemption is foreshadowed in the notice that the victory of the seed of the woman is to be won by suffering, and in the altars of sacrifice seen on the horizon of the world, and more distinctly in the mystic act commanded on Mount Moriah. If the shadow of the coming Christ is perceptible in the Book of Genesis, it is the shadow of a Christ crucified, who "puts away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

(6) From the particular purpose and act of redemption we may pass to the *general relations of God with man.* This is the subject of the Bible at large; and the doctrine to be taught has already become familiar in the pages of the first book. We have not here a Supreme Being indifferent to things below; or a capricious sovereign issuing arbitrary decrees; or a stern lawgiver inaccessible to man. Affections like our own are ascribed to Him with fearless freedom. He is in perpetual and various relations with men's lives, consciences, and feelings. He watches the growth of violence and corruption. He "repents that He has made man upon the earth; it grieves Him at His heart." He "goes down to see" what men are doing. Wrath and judgment, pity and kindness, favour and friendship towards men, directions for their conduct, reproofs for their faults, and interventions in their affairs, express the Divine interest in their characters and histories. Certainly the language belongs to the earliest efforts of expression, and, as proper to religion in its childhood, it gives too human an aspect to the Divine. But it achieves its end, by a representation which is fundamental to all succeeding revelation, of a God "very nigh unto us," a God "with whom we have to do."

(7) As to the *doctrine of judgment,* whatever may be taught in subsequent revelation of actions that are weighed, and of receiving the things done in the body, and of the certain visitation of sin; whatever of wrath to come, and the world "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men;" whatever also of discrimination and

separation and of deliverance and safety in the day of visitation—it all has its first earnests and examples in these pages. To them distant writers revert to confirm their own teachings; citing the destruction of the old world and the saving of Noah the eighth person, or the cities which suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, out of which just Lot is delivered, as testimony through all ages that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

(8) Not less plainly is written in the book the *doctrine of Divine counsel.* So we may call that method of dealing with man by appeals to his reason, to his conscience, to his heart, which characterizes the whole Bible and distinguishes it from all other sacred books. "Adam, where art thou? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I charged thee that thou shouldest not eat of it?" Or to Cain: "Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." These questions are the key-note of a teaching which treats man as the responsible judge of his own conduct, one which aims to awaken him to conviction, and to "guide him with counsel," and which is best expressed by the words, "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." As He counsels, so He comforts. The voices of Divine sympathy and seasonable support to Abraham in critical moments, or to Jacob in the failings of his heart and the day of his distress, are earnests of the comfortable words which, by the voices of prophets and from the lips of the Son of Man, in various tones and through various exigencies, sustain and assure the hearts of the people of God.

(9) Akin to this subject is the *doctrine of prayer*, a main topic of the Bible, and deeply needed by those who, apart from such teaching, "know not what they should pray for as they ought," or, indeed, whether in the way of distinct petition they have the right to pray at all. In this Book of Genesis the throne of grace is already set up, and it is made plain that we have a God "Who heareth prayer." So we are taught in the repeated assent to the intercessions of Abraham, who "takes upon him to speak unto the Lord, though he is but dust and ashes;" in the answer to the petition of Eliezer, asking "good speed that day," and guidance in the work that is given him to do; and in the name of Israel, which tells the anxious pleader that he "has striven with God and has prevailed." These are our introductions to that long course of examples, instructions, and assurances, which culminate in our Lord's own teaching as to the spirit and the power of prayer,

and in the revelation of the provision made for its assured success in the mediation of the High Priest in heaven.

(10) One more doctrine ought to be mentioned as more particularly taught in the last portion of the book. The great *doctrine of Providence*, as working in the world, and secretly ordering events for ends not yet discovered, in the lives of men, in the history of nations, and in the course of God's kingdom in the earth—this is surely a principal and pervading lesson of the Scripture records. It begins at once in the first book, and is nowhere more conspicuously authenticated or more exquisitely illustrated than in the story of Joseph. The doctrine which he sees in the retrospect of his own life, he himself expounds to his brethren and to the Church for ever (Gen. xlv. 5-8), and the narrative remains to throw its light on many dark dispensations, to reprove many sad cries of "All these things are against me," to reassure the faith which trusts when it cannot see, and to typify with a strange exactness that greatest instance in which evil passions are over-ruled and mysterious events directed "to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done."

There are other doctrines on which the like observations might be made; but those which have been mentioned are the main substance of revelation. They are so, at least, if doctrine be distinguished from ethics; and on the ethical relations of Genesis to the Bible, a few words may perhaps be added in another paper. The doctrinal relation here pointed out between the teaching of Genesis and that of the later and the final Scriptures is one of *continuity of development, not one of conformity of dogma.* This last has at times been sought for in a somewhat unreasonable manner. The most has been made of such adumbrations as could be found of the Christian doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, Regeneration, etc. Such hermeneutics may be interesting; but they are of little consequence. What is wanted is a due apprehension of the advancing plan of revelation, in which the earlier teaching provides what the later teaching presupposes, and the rudimentary lines of doctrine show by their curve or inclination that the shape obtained at last was the shape intended from the first. Thus we trace the evidence of primeval design in the first steps of the elementary education of man, and in the Bible as a whole we recognise one presiding and foreseeing Mind as being (if we may so apply the expression) both "the author and the finisher of our faith."

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(To be continued.)