

New Generation.

PART II.

“I WILL COME AGAIN, AND RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF.”

“WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN YE LOVE.”

“BE PATIENT THEREFORE, BRETHREN.”

“WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS.”

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NEW CREATION.

PART II.

HAVING examined—oh, how little! —the divine fiat upon which the full display of New Creation rests, and its announcement of grace and proclamation of inheritance, let us answer two questions, even though we may have already alluded to them anticipatively. (1) Why was this fiat, with its announcement, and proclamation, reserved to the last chapter but one of an obscure and little-understood book? (2) How is it that it begins to be operative nearly three thousand years before it appears to be chronologically due?

Mighty questions; not however too mighty for faith to solve completely by the word of God, laid open by the Spirit of God. Let every reader of these holy mysteries bow his heart before God that the word of truth and the Spirit of truth may glorify Him who is the Truth.

In reference to our first question we say that (1) while the word of God from cover to cover gives no sanction or suggestion to God's having two worlds in display at the same moment, that same Word is pregnant with suggestion and sanction from the earliest moment of the primal display of "the world that *then was*" (2 Peter iii. 6), that there were larger and fuller displays contemplated. We are not surprised therefore to hear in the very

next verse (2 Peter iii. 7) of “the *present* heavens and earth.” “By the word of God” the former, “deluged with water, perished.” “By the word of God the present heavens and the earth are laid up in store; kept for fire unto a day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.” But there is “the world *to come*, of which we speak” (Heb. ii. 5), which would be more correctly translated “the habitable earth to come”—the millennial world, where the Son of man will rule,—the “things on earth” (Eph. i. 10). But even this will give place (1 Cor. xv. 28) to New Creation (see 2 Cor. v. 17, 18), and then the fiat, announcement, and proclamation of Revelation xxi., will have their actual accomplishment.

(2) We said that, while the word of

God sanctions not the thought of two worlds being in *display* at the same time, there was sanction and revelation that the moral principles—the formative elements—the preparatory discipline—for a succeeding world, formed the staple of the divine instruction from the earliest stages of its existence. We have not perused the third chapter of Genesis before we find the first world of innocence gone for ever (ii. 17), the second provided for (iii. 14–21), and the third alluded to (iii. 24).

(3) But allusion—in the third chapter of the word of God—is all that could be made. It was reserved for the last chapter of that word of God to show the putting aside for ever of the sword that kept the way of the

tree of life, and that same tree of life yielding its bounties in a curseless and nightless scene. It could not be introduced but here—in the city, the bride,—the heavenly people in New Creation blessing—for the simple reason that the second world has not yet run its course, nor will it have done so until it has perished by fire, as the first did by water.

(4) We must ask each child of the kingdom of God to get these grand terminals “water” and “fire” well before his soul in the presence of God, who has spoken definitively by Peter, and we press it the more because we are on the eve of a mighty change, which, astounding as it is, is in no sense the terminal by fire. What is going to happen sets us bodily free from that

from which we have been in spirit free ever since we believed on Christ, namely, this *present* evil world (Gal. i. 4), but what is going to happen is this. David's Son and Lord has been here, and this *present* world (Jew or Gentile) would not have Him. It is therefore under judgment—sentence not carried out yet—for David's Son and Lord has been raised from the dead, according to my (Paul's) gospel (2 Tim. ii. 8), and salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with *eternal* glory is the portion of every believer. The elect (Jew), if he would have it (2 Tim. ii. 10); but as he will not have it, the word of God is not bound, and the Gentile gets it.

(5) But in point of fact Gentilism disappears, and indeed Judaism also,

under the Pauline gospel. We have to make our distinctions after another sort. Neither is it now a question of circumcision nor uncircumcision (Gal. vi. 15). Here we see four grand distinctions cleared away—gone—wiped out—done with—so much so that our apostle says, Don't let any one trouble me about them any more (Gal. vi. 17). I know but two distinctions—NEW CREATION and GOD'S ISRAEL.

This leads us to our second question. How is it that it begins to be operative nearly three thousand years before it appears to be chronologically due?

(1) Nothing more simple. As to chronology since the Holy Ghost came from heaven (Acts ii.), talk of it in the things of man if you please, but not in the things of God. "Let

not this one thing be hidden from you, beloved, that one day with [the] Lord [is] as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter iii. 8). Time is nothing with God—the Eternal God. Why not to be hidden? Because it is just what hinders saints who deal with these [to them] long periods. If Jesus died, and rose again on the third day, is it strange that we who owe our life, our Lord, our all to those three days should ourselves be perfected on the third day [or thousand years]? Let not this one thing be hidden from you, beloved!

(2) Chronology need not trouble us. “Concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that ye should be written to” (1 Thess. v. 1). Still, why should New Creation come

in directly David's Son and Lord had gone to His seat at God's right hand ?

Ah! Now you have touched the spring that reveals the whole secret, or perhaps it is more correct to say, the whole circle of secrets, for they are all hidden (not to faith by the Holy Ghost) in Him, and could not be disclosed until He as MAN (son of David—David's Lord) had taken His seat there, having been "declared Son of God in power by resurrection" (Rom. i. 4)—"Who is the beginning, the first-born from among the dead" (Col. i. 18),—"the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. iii. 14). As soon therefore as He had taken His place there, according to the divine decree of Psalm cx., three things became plain, namely :

(1) While He sat there, the Father

would send down the Holy Ghost—gather to His name—and in every respect superintend the New Creation, not restricting His operations to any class or classes on the *earth*; but using a term leaving out earth altogether, viz., “The whole creation under heaven” (Col. i. 23).

(2) This was to go on—and has been going on, and will go on—until the Father’s word goes forth to terminate the decree of Psalm cx., which will be in judgment, putting His [Christ’s] feet on the necks of His enemies, in respect of their total subjugation.

(3) One of the secrets is, that none of the gathered ones are to be on the earth when this footstool of His feet is set. They are part of Himself, as being

members of the body, of which He personally is the Head.

Now let us put our thesis again, and see what progress we have made in the comprehension of it. How is it that the New Creation begins to be operative nearly 3000 years before it appears to be due? Well, think for a moment over the statement we here make. It may seem an absurdly simple one to make, and yet, simple as it is, mankind at large are ignorant of it—many of the children of the kingdom of God are oblivious to it. It is simply this, that New Creation is no part of the six days' work of creation, nor of the blessed, hallowed seventh that followed [and is to follow] them. Take the world from the moment of its being waste and void, to the time when the

elements of which it is composed melt with fervent heat, and we state boldly that in it, as a created world, the New Creation has no place whatever, either in figure or in fact. This will most probably be disputed by some, but that in itself would reveal the extent to which such disputant was entangled, either in thought or deed, with that which our Lord Jesus Christ came to deliver us out of. The issue is of such deep importance that we will state the authority of such a sweeping remark: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, so that He should *deliver us out of* the present evil world [or age,—course of this world], according to the will of our God and Father: to whom be glory to the ages of ages. Amen" (Gal. i. 3-5)

Stronger statement could not be made. Glory to our God and Father is His due to the ages of ages [eternity]. His will is, that we should be delivered out of this present evil world. To this end He gave His Son—and *His* will being identical with that of our God and Father, He [the Son] gave Himself—for our sins, our link, alas! with this present evil world.

“So that He should deliver” is a consequence of His mighty act—the theme of eternal song—“He gave Himself.”

But did He not give Himself “that He might bring us in,” as well as “deliver us out”?

Not into the Old Creation again that He has delivered us out of. What He brings into, is in connection with Him-

self (quickenened together with Him Eph. ii. 5), in all the intrinsic excellencies of His own nature. Hear the Scripture. "He hath chosen us in Him *before* the world's foundation" (Eph. i. 4). Marked us out beforehand [purpose] for adoption by Jesus Christ to Himself [God] (Eph. i. 5). To the praise of the glory of His grace He [God] has taken us into favour in the Beloved [not *by* Him as an instrument, but *in* Him]. Think of this for a moment. So vast—so inestimable—the Beloved, that the Divine will found its good pleasure in exalting the infinite glory of His grace, by making us an inclusion in the Beloved, a mark of His [God's] appreciation of Him [the Beloved]! Then follows the work of the Beloved through which this

astounding inclusion is made effective—operative. (1) Redemption through His [the Beloved's] blood, and the consequence flowing from it, namely (2) the forgiveness of offences.

If Ephesians shows us God's *purpose* in respect to His new creation *before* the old one was set in order, and reaching *forth* to the cross, Revelation xxi. shows us God *effectuating that purpose* of New Creation *after* the old one—Sabbath and all—has disappeared, but reaching *back* to the cross. The thirsty soul drinks of Him who hung there, the Just for the unjust, and overcomes by Him who hung there in its shame and humiliation.

The New Creation, being part of the mystery hidden,—but after Pentecost made known — and made known

specially to an apostle raised up specially to be its minister—we must not expect to find more than passing reference to it in the inspired writings of Peter, James, or John. Nevertheless, now we have the key from Paul, we are not at a loss to understand what Peter means when he tells us that we are waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God. That, according to His promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness “dwells.” That we, waiting, are not to think there is any delay, but that the longsuffering means increased display of the salvation. Then he tells us that Paul in *all* his epistles speaks of these things, wisdom having been given him for that purpose. They might be hard to understand, and they would be dislocated as

other scriptures are, still the warning was given that saints might be preserved from error and from falling, and, on the other hand, might grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—to whom be glory now, and to that day of which Revelation xxi. treats—the day of eternity.

John, as usual, who sees nothing but the Person of Christ, or those who are His in Him, makes the following short but pointed remarks. He says that, as Christ is [at present at God's right hand, beyond death and judgment], we also are in this world. That the fact of being apparently dis-united on account of dissimilarity of body is no matter in stating fact, as "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11).

That *now*—here in this world that we do not belong to—we are the children of God, and he uses the term “beloved” to us, to remind us of the fact. It may not be possible to say what we shall be like; but as we shall be in His presence and see Him as He already is, it suffices to say we shall be like Him, and more cannot be said.

James, we can hardly expect to have much to say; seeing that his letter is to the twelve tribes in the dispersion, but what he does let fall, shows, that he only accredits wisdom that has *come down* (i. 17; iii. 15),—speaks of God as the Father of lights, not connected with this present world—says we are born by the word of truth, so as to occupy a unique place in His creation, of the nature of “firstfruits,”—and holds out

the crown of life as the reward of those who love Him. Jude, who has to utter fearful things respecting ungodliness, ends his epistle with a pæan of praise to the only God our Saviour, to whom he ascribes Glory, Majesty, Might, and Authority—taking a vast sweep from eternity right through the ages into eternity again. **A MORE STUPENDOUS SWEEP IN A DOZEN WORDS, WAS NEVER PENNED.**

But Paul is the one who brings out all the lights and shades of the New Creation in its application to the saints of light—children of day,—sons of God. Space does not permit us to speak at length of the practical use he makes of the fact that the old man is put off and the new man put on. As in Philip-
pians, the children of God,—as stars

on a dark night, relieve the extreme darkness ;—so they appear as lights [phōstēr,—light-bearer] in the world, holding forth the word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they circulate. But one thing is remarkable as identifying these eras of God with Rev. xxi. ; and that is, that “lights” in Phil. ii. 15, and “light” at Rev. xxi. 11, are both expressed by the same word, which is never used in scripture but at these two places.

Another very interesting point in Philippians is the way the apostle takes pains to write up all the good things he could say of himself as an out-and-out model religious man of the old creation order. It is so contrary to his usual course to boast, that

we wonder at such a long array of flesh-religion-excellencies. He says, he was circumcised the eighth day ; therefore there was no question about his being an Israelite by the external mark ; but then he tells us he was a born Israelite, and a member of the most influential tribe—one that remains to this day. Hebrew of Hebrews ; that is, by both parents, and without admixture of Gentile or proselyte blood. As to the law a Pharisee, just as we should say, “an orthodox religionist.” As to zeal, a persecutor of that which professed to see in Christ the end or purport of the law ; and as to the law itself, as far as he personally was concerned, blameless ;—all its requirements as laid down and understood by the authorities—without fault. And yet,

as soon as he knew Christ, what did he write against those seven excellencies which so many would have been proud of possessing? Loss. I do count them but loss. Presently he begins to count the value of being in the new creation. There is his adorable Lord and Master who had conquered him and brought him a delighted captive to His feet! Oh! he says, Now I count my seven excellencies to be FILTH. Now Christ is all my gain.

We hope, at a future time, in a third part, to set forth Paul's distinctive doctrine on this subject, as it is the special feature of his ministry.

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