

ARTICLE X.

PRIMEVAL MAN.

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THE Hebrew Bible fixes the placing of Adam in Eden at about 4000 years before the Christian era. The current Usher chronology has it 4004 years; but the most reliable reckoning of the Hebrew increases it to 4102 years. So that 6000 years from Adam expire in A. D. 1893. This expiration, within four years from now, of *the six week days* of human history (since "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years," 2 Pet. iii. 8), is drawing some attention to the speedy opening of the seventh thousand years, or *sabbatic day* of human history, as a supposed *millennial epoch* described in Revelation (xx. 1-7).

But in a different quarter there is an awakened interest in the scientific question: How are we to reconcile so short a period of human existence as the six thousand years of Hebrew chronology, now about expiring, with the accumulating geologic facts, which go to show, by human fossils and relics of human handiwork, that man has existed on the earth much more than six thousand years? The Septuagint, or earliest Greek version of the Old Testament, translated from the Hebrew about 200 B. C., allows some fifteen hundred years more than the six thousand; but this is thought not sufficient for the geologic demands. What more can be done about it?

In order to *forestall* this alleged difficulty of science, some biblical scholars are trying to invalidate the early chronology of the Bible, from Adam to Abraham, as given in Genesis v. and xi.; so as, by having *no Bible chronology* of early times, to allow science full sweep for speculation as to the antiquity of man.¹

The present writer is fully convinced that these endeavors to do away with the Bible chronology cannot succeed; and, further, does not entertain that apprehension that any greater antiquity for man than the Bible chronology allows, will be *positively proved* by science; so that he does not feel that need of "hedging" (to use a term current in worldly business), in behalf of the Bible, which is stirring many scholars. For we believe that the geologists of our day are somewhat infatuated with the idea *that they know the rate* with which nature's changes proceeded in prehistoric times. Whereas, we have no witnesses (except God) to testify at what an amazing pace vast developments might leap forward in the young gush of nature under new

¹ See the Bibliotheca Sacra for April, 1873, pp. 323-331; April, 1890, pp. 285-303.

conditions,—such developments as require ages under the settled environment of the present.

Nevertheless we are ready, in our life-long research of Scripture, to lend a helping hand to those that feel it needful to be prepared against any emergency, with *time enough* on hand to allow modern science full sweep in its venturesome theorizing. It can do no harm to be fore-armed, even though we expect modern science to grow more sober and modest as it increases in age; it may finally withdraw its challenge against God's testimony as to the time of his own handiwork, at least in primeval eras, where there is no other witness to speak. Yet we are the more willing to aid in discovering time enough for every exigency, in harmony with God's word, in order to check (if possible) the present tendency to undervalue and undermine the chronology of the Bible, which we consider one of the main bulwarks of its strength.

OUR METHOD.

What, then, is our method of finding time enough for all geologic emergencies without impairing in the least the Bible chronology? We find the ample time desired in the very place where reverent geology has all along been finding it,—not within the Adamic limit of Bible chronology, but before that Adamic limit (at the garden of Eden) begins, in the *six unmeasured days* of creation. It is now universally allowed that there is time enough in those six untimed periods to meet all the demands of geology. Each "day" may be thousands of years in length; and the "sixth day" may be as long as any day before it. And the last half of the sixth day, wherein *man was being created*, from his physical manhood on to his full spiritual manhood in Eden, may have occupied many thousands of years, with successive generations of incipient, decaying, *physical men*, before the completed *spiritual Adam* emerged (for aught the Bible contains), if science should insist on claiming human fossils so old as that.

In short, our claim is, that Gen. i. 27 may cover any amount of time that the discovered facts of human palæontology may require.

All advocates of the evolution theory will at once accept this view. And they are welcome to find, if they can, their needed "missing links" among the fossils of that palæolithic age of unfinished physical man which we here concede to have possibly existed. But we ourselves reject the idea of a long *evolutionary process*, and hold to immediate creation, in only two steps: first, the physical or animal man; and second, the spiritual or godlike man,—with an undefined length of time between,—as recorded in Genesis (i. 27—ii. 7).

It was all in "the sixth day" of creation. But the human *body* or physical being may have been "created" at mid-day; and the inbreathing of the higher divine *spirit*, whereby the individual Adam became "a living soul" complete, may have been at the close of the day; with possibly many generations of time and physical propagation between, as intimated at the start (see i. 27, 28).

That man at first was *mortal*, like other creatures, giving opportunity for

human fossils in that pre-Eden era, is rendered quite plausible by the fact, that it was not till *after* the completed Adam appeared (ii. 7), that an Eden-enclosure was fitted up for him (ver. 8-15), and a "tree of life" furnished to him, as if to guard him from outside perils and to keep him from a mortality before inevitable. When he sinned, he lost the "tree of life" which had saved him from death, and fell back to the outside reign of mortality.

Of course, any attempt to explain the particulars of such an unaccustomed view must be of the nature of hypothesis. And while we venture to name a few points of conjecture, and our reasons for them, we want to be understood as only theorizing, not giving positive opinions or doctrines to be maintained either by ourselves or others. Mere Scripture theory here serves to offset the mere geologic theory calling for it. Let us try, then, to answer hypothetically two or three questions that will at once be asked.

UNITY OF THE RACE.

I. If a race of men, physically such, existed for generations long before the perfected spiritual man Adam, what became of that race, when "the first man Adam"—the first complete man—began? Must they not still survive? and does not this necessitate a denial of *the unity of the human race*? By no means, we answer. If God so chose, he could readily bring about an extinction of all else of that race at about the close of the sixth day, when he used the individual Adam for development into a new race. And this could occur as simply and as naturally as in previous extinctions of species, which all geology teaches, whether at the "evenings" following the "mornings" of creation, or at other points of time.

In A. D. 1655, the French scholar Peyrerius broached the theory of "Preadamite Man." But that view made the preadamites to be our still surviving human race complete as we are now; while Adam and his family were regarded as merely the selected Jewish race, preserved afterwards in part from the flood, which was looked upon as only a limited disaster confined to the Jewish or Adamic family. Such a crude theory we of course utterly repudiate. Our hypothesis is, on the contrary, that of an *extinct* prehistoric race, physically but not spiritually human, and only namable as preadamite man in the sense, that they were the unfinished race of men,—the bodily mould for our humanity; which *mould was broken* (so to speak), in the common fate of other lost fossil species, when the consummated perfect Adam was reached.¹

¹ If any one, accepting our hypothesis in general, should proceed to imagine that some at least of the primeval imperfect race may have survived, and furnished the much-inquired-after *wife of Cain* in the "land of Nod" (Gen. iv. 16, 17), as well as the "daughters of men" put in contrast with the Adamic "sons of God," producing "giants" bodily, and *monsters* morally (as told in vi. 1-4);—such a speculation is of no practical account, since the *universal flood* (vii. 21-23) soon swept away all races except a remnant from Adam and Eve. Not until scientific research shall have positively found some human race actually without a conscience or spirit-soul, can any question be raised against the presumption of *universal extinction* for all humanity save the family of Noah.

There is nothing contrary to reason or to science in the claim of such a loss of an imperfect human species. Indeed, the indications of geology suggest *two stages* of advancement in the most ancient human fossils discovered. Says Professor G. F. Wright in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*:¹ "Between the polished-stone period (or Neolithic, according to Lubbock's classification) and the Palæolithic period, or the period in which flint implements show no signs of having been ground, there is a wide separation, which no student of the subject can fail to recognize as of great significance. It is the evidence of the great antiquity of the Palæolithic period that now attracts the principal attention of students of this subject." Moreover, the certainty that there was some cataclysm or crisis extinguishing species between the earlier, or Palæolithic, and the later, or Neolithic, age of human remains, appears from the geologic fact mentioned by the same writer, thus:—

"The explorations by a committee of scientific men—of whom Mr. Evans and Sir John Lubbock are members—of, among others, Kent's cavern, in Torquay, England, fully substantiate the evidence that had been before adduced in proof of the fact that the cave was inhabited by men of the Palæolithic period, at a time when the mammoth (*elephas primigenius*), the woolly rhinoceros, the cave bear, the cave hyena, the reindeer, and many other *extinct* gigantic mammalia, abounded in England. These remains are separated from later species and more recent marks of man's presence above them by a continuous layer of stalagmite, from one to three feet thick; and bones of existing species are conspicuous for their absence from the lower deposit."

Now, since various other species of animals became extinct after man in some condition was present, as seen by the Palæolithic fossils; there is no reason known why the then-existent species of animal man may not also have become extinct, between the Palæolithic and the Neolithic age, that is, at the end of "the sixth day,"—being succeeded by the now-existent and newly created or perfected human race of Adam, the fossils of which are those found in the new, or Neolithic, age of geology. Our view of "the six days" of creation as *actual days* of "light" followed by *actual nights* of "darkness" (their length being undefined), will corroborate this view, of darkness (and consequent crisis in nature) as following "the sixth day."

Nor is there wanting in the Bible narrative some intimation of a possible cataclysm or crisis in creation at the close of the sixth day, as well as of the previous days. *After* the full perfecting of Adam (at ii. 7), and the establishing of Adam in the Eden fitted up for him (at ii. 8-17), we are next told (at ver. 18-20), "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them. . . . And Adam gave names to all cattle. . . . But for Adam there was not found an

¹ April, 1873, p. 382.

helpmeet for him." Here are two singular points given, which need to be accounted for.

(1) An *interval of time* between the existence and action of the complete Adam, on the one hand, and the strange originating of Eve, on the other hand. Whereas, the earlier account (at i. 27, 28) represents the creation of male and female as if simultaneous, with an immediate direction for propagating the race. This seeming discrepancy is at once adjusted, if we suppose that the sexes of the unperfected man at once existed and propagated as in chapter i., which is according to the teachings of natural science; but that after a time, at the close of the sixth day, some crisis obliterated the unperfected race,—except that the physical form of one drowned individual was providentially rescued and used for perfecting a new and complete humanity, as in the second chapter.

In this view, chap. i. 26–28 is a first exhibit of the divine *plan* and its execution *summed up as a whole*,—so as to complete the "six days" and bring out the Sabbath institution (at ii. 1–3); while chap. ii. 4–25 is a second exhibit of the executed plan, with fuller details (especially of the sixth day's work); the creation of man being shown in its *two stages* at ver. 7, and the new and strange production of woman being shown afterwards (as a necessity of the race extinction), coming in the "deep sleep" that naturally closed the sixth day of creation.¹

This view is not affected, whether we consider the two chapters as two different *documents* used by the writer (Moses), or as merely two recitals,—one in general, the other in detail,—prepared by one and the same writer. But such a view as presented by our theory throws light on the peculiar and non-scientific creation of Eve, which has always puzzled students of the Bible. Only a *single human body* was recovered from the extinct race, as the man-form which God had "formed"—through undefined lapse of time—"from the dust of the ground"—this being the record of a first stage given at ver. 7. And this one human form, when perfected into Adam, seems to have contained the elements of both sexes; so that woman came forth by separation, not by simultaneous double creation, as at the start (in chap. i.). Perhaps the anomalous re-creation of Adam required this anomalous non-scientific evolution of sex.¹

(2) A second difficulty in the account is the fact that at ii. 19, *in the midst* of divine planning as to a needed "helpmeet" for man (begun at ver.

¹ Gen. ii. 2 says: "And on the SEVENTH day God ended his work which he had made." The Samaritan copy avoids this seeming discrepancy by reading here "on the SIXTH day." But may it not rather be true, that *the work of creation* ended with the sixth day at ii. 7, with *the work of providence* going on the seventh day through chap. ii. (as it still goes on); so that, the furnishing of the Eden residence, the instructions given to Adam, and the providing of a helpmeet (which items finish up that chapter), were indeed a providential ending on the seventh day of the created work of the sixth day? If so, man's first day of life being the seventh day of creation, the first day of Adam and Eve together was the eighth day, or *the first day* of a new week.

18 and continued to the close of ver. 20), we have the statement: "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field," etc.,—as if here came in the creation of animals, *after* the completed formation of man in ver. 7. This looks like a contradiction of chap. i., which finishes the creation of animals before the creation of man. But the Samaritan Pentateuch has a different reading,—"the Lord God ONCE MORE formed every beast," etc. So also, the Septuagint has "*ἔτι*," still or *yet further formed*. As if there had been a crisis or wasting of animals, now followed by a new furnishing of species here at the close of the sixth day. However, this is not decisive; for, instead of the Samaritan reading, we may suppose that our Revisers should have translated the Hebrew as a *pluperfect*, "had formed," as in ver. 8.

The striking feature here is, that the interposed arraying of all the animals in sight of Adam, for him to inspect and to name, was evidently meant to convince Adam that there was no creature to be found as a fit companion to him. This review and naming of creatures is begun by God's statement, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him." And it closes with this statement, "Adam gave names to all, . . . but for Adam there was *not found* an helpmeet for him." Whereupon, God proceeds at once to the formation of Eve. In view of this account, how plausible the idea, that God, having chosen for completion but one individual from a perished race, thought best to impress upon this perfected individual the fact that he was the sole survivor of his kind, and that only Sovereign Power could give him a suitable mate, as he saw that all other creatures had. This then is a rational ground for the hypothesis of a *perished race*, as here presented.

FURTHER QUERIES.

2. Another question may be asked: Is not our theory inconsistent with 1 Cor. xv. 45 (Revision), "And so it is written, THE FIRST MAN Adam became a living soul"? We reply: He who when finished "BECAME a living soul," was indeed "the first man Adam" COMPLETE. The Bible was given for the use and benefit of our present historical human race; and it knows nothing and cares nothing about pre-existent races. Our theory does not pretend to be Scripture teaching; it is extra-biblical, and only asks to be received as *not forbidden* by the Scriptures. As to Gen. v. 1, 2, it is certainly true, that God called their name Adam IN THE DAY WHEN THEY WERE CREATED"; namely, in the sixth day wherein *both stages* of their creation were completed.

If any one should deem our theory too great a modification of the current literal understanding of Adam and Eve's creation, we would simply

¹ "Adam was created, and his wife in his side, and (afterward) he showed her to him."—Book of Jubilees, A. D. 100. "That is, she was created at the same time with Adam, but in and within him, and it was only afterward that she became a separate creature."—Professor Schodde, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Jan., 1886), p. 58.

suggest,—that the other scheme, for lengthening the antiquity of man by destroying the chronology of Genesis, looks far more like a wresting of Scripture, and a rending of its plain import in chap. v., xi., than does anything here proposed concerning the account of double formation in chap. i., ii.

3. There is a still further question: Since the primeval man is here treated as a mere unfinished or animal race, before the first complete man Adam existed, could the primeval creature be rightly called "man"? No, we answer, not in the biblical sense, as denoting the present race of morally accountable beings, possessed of a spirit from God as well as a body from the dust. But for the uses of geology, and in the discussion of fossils as indicating the age of races and of species, the title "man" applies simply to the physical creature of that structure, with no great capacity required. And in the sense of words as used by modern science, no higher than *the highest animal* nature is requisite to express the geological status of man. For, animal intelligence in its fullest development greatly resembles human thought.

Indeed, many of our most distinguished scientists are agnostics and sceptics, denying that man has any higher or spirit nature, or that he is anything more than the highest species of the animal races. Of course, all such thinkers must regard the unfinished primeval man that we speak of as being full manhood complete; with no new creation or new nature given to Adam, but only an evolution of primeval faculty. With such unbelievers we can have no contention. If *they* have not been able to find out that they have a spirit-soul, and insist on ranking themselves as merely the highest grade of animals, they put their origin just where we put it,—in the times of the earliest human-like fossils; and our theory remains unimpaired.

We simply add to their materialistic view our spiritualistic biblical doctrine; declaring, as in Job (xxxii. 8), "But THERE IS A SPIRIT IN MAN, and the breath of the Almighty hath given them understanding." And we see this higher bestowment announced in Gen. ii. 7 as *the second stage* of human creation:—"AND (God) *breathed* into his nostrils *the breath* of life, and man BECAME a living soul" in God's image, no longer merely human but also divine. The perfect man is *later* than the first formed physical humanity; and, according to the theory here broached, there may have been a long interval between.

Our view is exactly the scientific view; only we carry the development a step farther on, and insist that ever since Adam (if not always before) man has a soul as well as a body, a spirit-substance as well as a matter-substance. And we are sure that whatever physical humanity may have existed before Adam, it was with the finished Adam and Eve of the Bible that accountable *human spirits* began.