

THE SEER.

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, See Ye, when He
lifteth up an Ensign on the Mountains.—*Isaiah* xviii, 3.

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THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF MAN.

(Continued.)

51. Whether the spirit of Adam or Michael stood next in age to the first born, and by virtue of his age was entitled to the chief command, revelation does not determine. It may be that he attained that exalted station through his good works independent of his age. Whatever may have been the cause that placed him at the head, it is evident that he honored his calling and gained a complete victory and was counted worthy to be the first spirit who was permitted to have a body upon the new world. He thus became the first father of the fleshly bodies which were to be inhabited by the numerous hosts of spirits who were once marshaled under his command. In the spiritual world all the spirits were brethren and sisters, springing from the same Father; but in the temporal world Michael became a father to his own brethren, according to the flesh.

52. When Michael was put into his earthly tabernacle, the inspired translation informs us that he was "the *first flesh* upon the earth;" the tabernacles of the fish, fowls, and beasts were not yet formed, neither were there any herbs, or grass, or trees, or vegetables, of any description upon the earth when Adam's body was formed. The earth, air, and ocean were truly empty and desolate of both vegetable and animal

life. It is true, as we have already stated, that all these things had been created spiritually in Heaven, but as yet had not been placed upon the earth. Man, therefore, stood alone in the midst of this vast solitude. The description of the creation, as given in the Book of Abraham, confirms this idea and shows most clearly that the vegetables and animals were not placed upon the earth on the third, fifth, and sixth days or periods, as has been generally supposed. The history of the third day's work reads as follows: "And the Gods ordered, saying, Let the waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the earth come up dry; and it was so as they ordered; and the Gods pronounced the earth dry, and the gathering together of the waters pronounced they great waters; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed. And the Gods said, Let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness upon the earth; and it was so even as they ordered. And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth grass from its own seed, and the herb to bring forth herb from its own seed, yielding seed after his kind; and the earth to bring forth the tree from its own seed, yielding fruit, whose seed

could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed. And it came to pass that they numbered the days; from the evening until the morning they called night; and it came to pass, from the morning until the evening they called day; and it was the third time."

By attentively reading the above quotation, it will be perceived that the Gods, instead of actually sowing the seed or setting out the plants, only prepared or organized the earth to bring forth vegetables at some future time, when they should see proper to plant them. It may be asked, What preparation the ground needed? The answer is not given; but we may naturally suppose that the different ingredients necessary to a soil adapted to vegetation were not united in their proper proportions. It is altogether likely, then, that the preparation of the earth to bring forth vegetables consisted in bringing together, combining, and uniting the elements and their compounds in such proportions as should form a soil adapted to the growth of vegetables of every kind; this preparation of the ground took place during the third day or time; but on that day there were no herbs, grasses, trees, or vegetables of any description planted. The sowing of seed and planting was postponed until some future period.

53. It has generally been supposed that the fish and fowls were made on the fifth day, but the Book of Abraham gives entirely a different idea; a description of the fifth day's work is as follows:

"And the Gods said, Let us prepare the waters to bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that have life; and the fowl that they may fly above the earth in the open expanse of Heaven. And the Gods prepared the waters that they might bring forth great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters were to bring forth abundantly after their kind; and every winged fowl after their kind. And the Gods saw that they would be obeyed and that their plan was good. And the Gods

said, We will bless them and cause them to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas or great waters; and cause the fowl to multiply in the earth. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and it was the fifth time."

It will be seen from this description that the fifth day's labor consisted not in the formation of the tabernacles of fish and fowl, but in preparing the waters and the elements to bring forth these creatures, or in other words, to sustain them after the Lord should make them and place them therein. What this preparation was we are not informed, but we may reasonably conclude that there needed to be a union or combination of other substances with those of water and air in order to prepare them for the creatures who should in due time dwell therein. Perhaps there was not a proper proportion of heat, light, electricity, and other substances in union with the air and water to sustain the animal life, destined to occupy those elements. The fifth day's labor, therefore, instead of forming these animals, merely prepared a place for them so that they might be sustained when they should be formed.

54. From the uninspired translation of the book of Genesis it has also been supposed that the cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth were formed on the sixth day; but the Book of Abraham gives a more full description of the sixth day's work. It reads as follows:

"And the Gods prepared the earth to bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind; and it was so, as they had said. And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after their kind; and the Gods saw they would obey. And the Gods took counsel among themselves and said, Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness;

and we will give them dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female, to form they them; and the Gods said, We will bless them. And the Gods said, We will cause them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And the Gods said, Behold we will give them every herb bearing seed that shall come upon the face of all the earth, and every tree which shall have fruit upon it, yea, the fruit of the tree yielding seed to them we will give it, it shall be for their meat; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, behold, we will give them life, and also we will give to them every green herb for meat, and all these things shall be thus organized. And the Gods said, We will do every thing that we have said, and organize them; and behold, they shall be very obedient. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and they numbered the sixth time.

And thus we will finish the Heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them. And the Gods said among themselves, on the seventh time we will end our work which we have counselled; and we will rest on the seventh time from all our work which we have counselled. And the Gods concluded upon the seventh time, because that on the seventh time they would rest from all their works which they (the Gods) counselled among themselves to form, and sanctified it. And thus were their decisions at the time that they counselled among themselves to form the Heavens and

the earth. And the Gods came down and formed these the generations of the Heavens and of the earth, when they were formed, in the day that the Gods formed the earth and the Heavens, according to all that which they had said concerning every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Gods had not caused it to rain upon the earth when they counselled to do them, and had not formed a man to till the ground; but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit, (that is, the man's spirit,) and put it into him, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

And the Gods planted a garden, eastward in Eden, and there they put the Man, whose spirit they had put into the body which they had formed. And out of the ground made the Gods to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food: the tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge, of good and evil. There was a river running out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four heads. And the Gods took the Man and put him in the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it: and the Gods commanded the Man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the time that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kojob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning.

And the Gods said, let us make an help meet for the Man, for it is not good that the man should be alone, therefore, we will form an help meet for him. And the Gods caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and he slept, and they took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in the stead thereof, and the rib which the Gods

had taken from Man formed they a Woman, and brought her unto the Man. And Adam said, this was bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, now she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man; therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the Man and his wife, and were not ashamed. And out of the ground the Gods 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 whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that should be the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, to the fowl of the air, to every beast of the field: and for Adam there was found an help meet for him.* From the description here given of the sixth day's labor, it will be perceived that the Gods on that day merely "*prepared the earth to bring forth*" cattle, living things, beasts, creeping things, and Man. The Gods also counselled among themselves, on that day, what should be given to Man and every species of animals for food: they also determined on the dominion which they would give to Man after his formation; and many more things were determined on the sixth day, in the grand council of the Gods, in relation to the future creation of vegetable and animal existence on the earth. But the sixth day's labor seems to have been accomplished before either vegetables or animals had any existence on the earth. During these six days, or periods, the Heavens and the earth seemed to have been undergoing a series of changes, preparations, and organizations, preparatory to the introduction of animals and vegetables which were to constitute the finishing or ending of this temporal creation. But when were the animals and vegetables formed temporally, and placed on the earth? From the description

* Book of Abraham, translated from Egyptian Papyrus through the gift and power of the Holy Ghost by Joseph the Seer.

given, they were formed out of the ground during the seventh day or period.

A still further evidence, that the temporal body of Man was formed on the seventh day, is given in the "Key to the Revelations of St. John," which was revealed to JOSEPH the SEER. In this Key, the following question is asked: "What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of the Revelations?" The Lord answered the question as follows:—"We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed Man out of the dust of the earth; even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things: and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels, are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years; the preparing of the way before the time of his coming."

Here we are plainly told, that "God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work and sanctified it, and also formed Man out of the dust of the earth." Man, therefore, was formed out of the dust, not on the sixth day, but on the seventh.

55. As the tabernacle of Adam was formed out of the dust on the seventh day, so were the tabernacles of every species of animals, birds, and fish, together with every variety of vegetables, all formed on the seventh day. This idea is clearly revealed in Joseph Smith's inspired translation of the second chapter of Genesis, from which we have already made an extract in the 18th paragraph; by reference to which it will be seen that Man was "the first flesh upon the earth, the first Man also," and as he was made on the seventh day or period, all the rest

must have been made on the seventh. The garden was planted on the seventh, and Man was placed in the garden on the seventh. Every beast and fowl was made out of the ground and brought to Adam to be named on the seventh day. Eve also was made out of one of his ribs on the seventh day. All the grass, and herbs, and trees, according to their kinds, were made to grow out of the ground on the seventh day or time. And before the seventh day there was no vegetable or animal existence on our earth. Even the English version, or the uninspired translation of the 2nd chapter of Genesis, conveys the same idea, namely, that the man was made first, and afterwards the animals and vegetables, and that all these organized living beings were made naturally, out of the ground, on the seventh day. The first chapter of Genesis, so far as these living beings are concerned, is only a history of their spiritual creation as we have explained in a former part of this treatise.

56. What was the length of each of those periods, called days in the history of the creation? Revelation has not definitely answered this question. But from what is revealed, we may infer that time was not reckoned in relation to the events of creation, in the same manner as it is now. We are not sure that the earth was made to revolve on its axis in the period that it does now. If the earth had, at the first formation, a swifter rotation than at present, then a part of the waters which are now around the two polar regions, would, by the centrifugal force, have overspread the equatorial regions, and the whole solid nucleus of the earth would have been immersed in the great deep. This was the condition of our globe, during the first two days of the creation. But on the third day, the waters were gathered together, and the dry land or the solid portions of the earth appeared. This could all have been accomplished by merely checking the velocity of the earth's rotation, which would cause the

equatorial ocean to flow into the polar regions, leaving an equatorial continent of dry land. But the velocity of the earth's rotation would have to be greatly diminished below its present standard in order to produce an equatorial zone of dry land, encircling the whole globe. If the earth should rotate upon its axis once in a thousand of our present years, such a zone would necessarily be produced, unless prevented by opposing causes: the length of each day may have been regulated by the different periods of rotation; and these periods may have been much shorter or longer than at present. And again, the alternations of light and darkness for the first three days, do not appear to have been regulated by the sun, therefore they may have been of much longer or shorter duration than what we behold at present. There is a clause in the Book of Abraham, from which we may infer, that the length of each of these days was one thousand years as the inhabitants of the earth afterwards reckoned time. In speaking of the curse which should fall upon Adam in case he should partake of the forbidden fruit, the Gods said, "For in the time that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning." The time on Kolob, as given in the Book of Abraham, may be understood from the following extract:—"Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement, according to celestial time; which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years, according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians, *Jah-oh-eh*." One day of celestial time, or of the Lord's time, is equal to one thousand years, according to our measurement of time. Adam, therefore, if he par-

took of the forbidden fruit, was to die within a thousand years. It is possible that the seven days of creation were reckoned, according to celestial time; if so, the whole period must have been seven thousand years. If Adam were made at the beginning of the seventh period, he must have lived till near its close. There is, however, no certainty how long these periods were.

57. The Heaven, earth, animals, vegetables, and all things, pertaining to this creation, being finished, the Lord pronounced the whole "very good." Sorrow, misery, sickness, pain, and death, were unknown. Immortality was enstamped upon man and the whole animal kingdom. If any living creature, had been subject to death, or any manner of pain, it would not have been perfect in its organization; it could not have been pronounced good; neither would it have been consistent, as the work of an all-wise and supremely good Being. Perfection characterizes all the works of God, therefore, all the tabernacles which he made from the dust, must have been capable of eternal endurance. There must have been something connected with these fleshly tabernacles which was capable of preserving them in immortality. What was this something? It was doubtless a fluid which circulated through the system in every part thereof, preserving it from decay, and from being impaired by age, renewing, if necessary, any part thereof, that disease, sickness, pain, and death, could have no dominion. The circulating apparatus for the conveyance of this fluid, was, no doubt, the veins and arteries, as they extend forth in innumerable branches, and in minute ramifications to every extremity of the organization. The fluid, now circulating through this apparatus, is the blood: but the blood does not renew our systems and give immortality to our present bodies; blood is our natural life as the Lord said to Noah:—"Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. 9: 4.) Blood, instead of im-

parting eternal life to the system, only imparts a natural or temporal life, and contains within itself all the ingredients of decay and death or dissolution. It is reasonable to suppose, then, that a fluid of a more refined and life-giving nature, flowed through the bodily organizations of our first Parents, and all the other animal creation—that this fluid was the life-preserving agent, that imparted immortality to all flesh, so long as they retained it in their systems. As this fluid could not have been blood which contains the seeds of death, What kind of substance was it? We reply, that it must have been a spiritual substance or fluid, which is the only kind of substance capable of preserving any organization in immortality. Were there any trees, or fruits, or vegetables of any kind which the Lord had planted, that were calculated, if eaten, to counteract, or subvert the operations of this spiritual fluid, and introduce into the system a fluid of a different nature! There was only one tree which would produce these deleterious effects—only one tree whose fruit, if taken into the system, would change it from immortality to mortality—all other fruits and vegetables were so constructed as to produce no harm; hence they were the only food which God gave to the immortal animals which he placed upon this earth. We may suppose that the vegetable creation, with the exception of this one tree, contained, at that time, no poisons—no ingredients of decay and death—no injurious combinations unadapted to immortal flesh and bones. The bodies of Adam and Eve, and of all the fish, fowls, and beasts which God made directly out of the dust, would have been still living as fresh and as fair as when they first came from the hand of their Maker, if Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit. All other fruits were good for them, and they might have feasted upon them to all eternity without destroying the immortality of their bodies.

58. Let us next inquire, Whether Michael, after taking a tabernacle un-

der the name of Adam, lost or forgot any of his previous knowledge? It is quite evident that Michael, when he had charge of the armies in Heaven, must have known *good and evil*, to some extent, at least; for if he were ignorant of good and evil, he could not have received any merit for keeping his first estate. If he did not understand the nature of evil, he would not have fought against one-third part of the hosts of Heaven for doing evil. If Michael stood forth as a bold champion for the rights of his brethren, and for that which was good, he must have understood the nature of good. If spirits, in their first estate, did not know good from evil, Why were they thrust down and bound with "everlasting chains of darkness" for doing that which they did not know to be evil? Would any parent, here in this world, banish his children everlastingly from his presence, without any hopes of recovery, for doing those things which they did not know to be evil? Our hearts would revolt at the very idea of such injustice in an earthly parent. Shall we then represent God as more unjust than man? Shall we say that he will punish with everlasting punishment the rebellious angels without a sufficient cause? Shall he doom them to endless misery for acts which they did not know to be evil? It is evident, then, that the angels in their first estate knew good and evil; and therefore, were subjects of reward and punishment for their acts. But when Adam was placed in the Garden, he did not know good and evil; therefore, the knowledge which he once was in possession of, in regard to good and evil, was lost and forgotten. To what extent he had lost the knowledge of other subjects, we are not informed. It is very probable that he remembered nothing in relation to the events which transpired in his previous state. Possessing an intelligent spirit capable of being instructed, he, doubtless, received information by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God, and from God, Himself, who was personally with him. He had sufficient intelligence imparted to him, to give names to all beasts, and cattle, and the fowls of the air, when the Lord brought them unto him; he had intelligence enough to know that Eve was made from one of his ribs; hence, he said "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." God imparted to him a language by which to express his ideas. It is not at all likely that Adam acquired the knowledge of the language which he used, in his spiritual state. Though spirits make use of language, it is very probable that their ideas are not conveyed by sounds through the medium of an atmosphere similar to ours. Their communications to one another are through signs and media adapted to a spiritual state and a spiritual world: while our verbal communications are by sounds, conveyed through the air. The language, therefore, which Adam spake must have been given to him by the immediate inspiration of the Almighty, the same as he gave a variety of tongues to the people who were building the tower. The same power that gave him the language, gave to him the ideas expressed by the language. Therefore, we may reasonably believe that when the spirit of Michael entered his tabernacle he was deprived of all his previous knowledge, not only in relation to good and evil, but in relation to all other subjects, and that all the knowledge he acquired previous to his fall, was obtained by observation, reflection, and immediate inspiration: that he had to lay aside his former information and begin at the first principles of knowledge and ascend by degrees from truth to truth until he should regain all the light and intelligence he possessed in the spirit world, and even more, inasmuch as he was placed in a condition to learn things by experience that could not have been learned in the spiritual existence.

59. Why was man deprived of all his former knowledge when he left the spirit world and came here? It

was in order that he might have a second trial or probation under new circumstances and conditions to which he had not previously been subject. If he had entered this world, retaining his previous knowledge, many things which would be a trial to one, possessing a small degree of information, would have been no trial to him, and many temptations which would not overcome one who had been faithfully tried through every successive grade of knowledge from its first principles upwards, would prevail against, and completely triumph over a man who had great knowledge but yet, had never been tried and learned by experience the necessity of resisting temptation through all the different grades or degrees of intelligence from the first principles thereof. Man therefore, had taken from him his past knowledge, in order that he might begin again, under a new set of circumstances and show himself approved or disapproved for his use of every degree of light and truth that should be imparted to him. The condemnation of man is in proportion to the degree of light and truth under which he transgresses. If he came here with all the knowledge he had in the spirit world, and yet, being inexperienced in regard to many temptations which would beset his pathway in this life, he would be as likely to be overcome as one having less knowledge, and, therefore, would be in greater danger of coming under a heavier penalty. It was wisdom, therefore, that man should lose, in his second estate, his former information, that he might be strengthened by degrees, and learn, little by little, how to overcome his imperfections and resist all evil.

60. If man had descended from the spirit world and had taken flesh and bones with all his previous knowledge, and had not been tried under these new circumstances, his Father could not, with confidence, have entrusted him with the blessings, authority, and power which he designed to bestow upon him in a future state; for a being that has not

been tried in all things may not endure the trials, if they should at any time come upon him. It is better that he should fall in a state of partial ignorance, than to fall after being entrusted with power; for, in the latter case, he would, not only injure himself, but injure all those over whom he had control. It is for this reason, that man is tempted and tried in all things, through all the successive degrees of knowledge from the first principles thereof until he receives a fulness of truth and knows all things, and then he is entrusted with all power, and all beings will have full confidence in him; but if any temptation prevail against him, and overcome him, he is not entrusted with all knowledge and power, and therefore cannot inherit the fulness of the Father's glory.

61. Man being without the knowledge of good and evil would be in a state of innocence; and being immortal, not subject to pain or death, he would be entirely ignorant concerning the nature of pain or misery; it could not be described to him, so as to convey to his mind the least idea of its nature. Nothing short of suffering pain could impart to him a knowledge respecting it. As a blind man who has never seen light or color can form no conception of its nature, or as a deaf person who has never heard sound, is entirely ignorant of the nature of sound, so likewise Adam and Eve could never form the most distant idea of pain or misery, without experiencing in their own persons this curious sensation. A knowledge of pain never could have been derived from the reasoning faculties, neither could they have derived it from observation, for there was no creature upon the earth which suffered pain; and even if they could have been permitted to observe other beings enduring pain, it could not have imparted the idea to them; hence if they had lived eternally they never would have gained this knowledge only by suffering it themselves.

(To be continued.)