

LESSON I.

GENESIS I.—II. 4.

“HE SPAKE AND IT WAS DONE.”

The Name Genesis.

The Jews called this book “Bereshith,” in the beginning; the Greeks called it “Genesis,” the origin—and by this latter name it is known to us.

The Jews have always ascribed the authorship of this book to Moses, and although recent critics have disputed this point there seems to be no good reason for not accepting the historic belief of the Jews and that of the Christian Church that Moses by Divine inspiration wrote this history of “the beginning.” In writing a first history of the world he would doubtless, under the guidance and illumination of the Holy Spirit, avail himself of the traditions and learning of his day. The story of Genesis becomes clearer when we think of Moses and of the Israelites, for whom, in the first instance, it was written. Moses was himself an Israelite, a poet and a scholar, brought up in the court of Pharaoh and educated in all the learning of Egypt. As a student and as a courtier in Egypt he saw that men worshipped the beauty and wonder of the works of creation, the sun, the stars, the rocks, and living creatures. Moses could not join in this worship, for he had been taught in his home about the God of the Israelites, and in consequence looked further than the Egyptians, and saw beyond things created the great Creator. Moses had gone up into the Mount, into the