

the "deep or the material from which the sea and atmosphere were afterwards formed." This, we think, an error into which our author has been led by the view he takes of the relation of the first verse to the whole narrative. That verse he considers as delineating the first step in the great work of creation. In page 61, he says: "The history opens at once with the assertion of a great fundamental truth,—the production from non-existence of the material universe by the eternal self-existent God." Now we are constrained to say with feelings of profoundest reverence for the text itself, that fascinating as the above doctrine may be, and nobly eloquent as the expressions are which our author, in page 339, has founded upon it, we yet cannot see that it directly expresses the doctrine of creation from non-existence which the above quotation alleges. In our view the *first* verse, but states in general terms that which the subsequent narrative gives in detail—that, in short, it is a brief prologue or proem. The conjunction "and" of the second verse does not present any grammatical hindrance to this idea, for there the *vav* (and) is, as Gesenius remarks "continuative of discourse." It indicates a consecution of sentences more than a relation of words. This consecutive use of *vav* is very remarkable in the whole of the narrative; it stands at the beginning of every verse but the first and in the twenty-sixth verse has been rendered "so" by our translators. There is therefore no grammatical reason why we may not regard the first verse as the proem of the sublime record of creation.

If further we look upon the first verse as an answer to the question: Whence came this earth and that heaven? What form of speech could be a more natural reply than that, "In the beginning, God made the heaven and the earth,"

Viewing the first verse in this relation, it cannot be alleged that the words "heaven and earth" are there used in a sense, different from that in which they are defined in the eight and tenth verses. The meaning of the verse would then be that God, in the beginning made this dry land and that expansion which were at first in a void and formless state. In this view the words succeeding the prologue will be the first step of the narrative in which the prophet describes the first aspect of those elements which by the power of the Divine Word, afterwards became "heavens and earth." If we, for example, were describing the process which, as geology informs us, stratified rock is formed, we would say that