



LESSON II.—JANUARY 13, 1907.

MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Genesis i., 26; ii., 3.

Golden Text.

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.—Gen. i., 27.

Home Readings.

Monday, Jan. 7.—Gen. i., 26; ii., 7.

Tuesday, Jan. 8.—Gen. ii., 8-25.

Wednesday, Jan. 9.—Ps. xiii., 1-9.

Thursday, Jan. 10.—Ps. vc., 1-11.

Friday, Jan. 11.—Ps. c., 1-5.

Saturday, Jan. 12.—Isa vi., 5-25.

Sunday, Jan. 13.—Acts xvii., 16-31.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

Genesis is essentially pictorial. It is a radiant panorama. For the end intended, its scenic method could not have been surpassed. The motive of the book is to reveal the reality, personality, and power of God: to show the material universe as an expression of His mind and a creation of His will; to make plain to him, man's own constitution and his relation to nature and to God. For the purpose to be conserved the form is singularly effective. When all is said and done by way of criticism, the book will still command respect. Theories concerning authorship and inspiration may be altered or discarded, but Genesis will never lose its hold upon the universal human heart.

The most remarkable content of the book is the thought of God in the creation of man. The radiant enunciation of this is the rarest jewel in this casket of gems. It is of practical and priceless value. With dramatic vividness the Father of the world is pictured as coming to a halt in His creative work. In the last of the great and long epochs, He pauses as if to separate and give special distinction to what He is now about to do. The fact that it is the last in order indicates that it is pre-eminent and climatical. The change in the creative formula is also significant. The 'let be' used seven times is now changed to 'let us make'—it is the plural of majesty.

It is as if God is solemnly announcing to Himself His intention of creating a vicar who shall visibly represent Himself upon the earth. A being is now to be made who shall be like God. One with whom he can commune at pleasure, and one who by his intelligence and will shall bring everything, animate and inanimate, to its best estate. It pleases Him to create man in a dualism: made and female creates He them. He ordains their multiplication and commissions them to 'have dominion.' With the solicitude of a father He indicates the kind, quality, and abundance of food prepared for them. And now for the seventh time God spreads His hands in benediction over all His works. In the seventh epoch there is cessation from creative work, and God Himself gives an object lesson and example of respite from toil.

ANALYSIS AND KEY.

1. Genesis pictorial.

Effective method:

To reveal God; the world as His handiwork, and man's relation to world and God.

Theories concerning Genesis discarded, while for substance book is retained.

2. God's thought in man's creation chief content.
3. Man God's vicar.
4. Benediction.
5. Exemplary respite from toil.

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

All that precedes in this story of Creation is preparatory to man. Separation of light and darkness, waters above and beneath, creation of sun and moon, of life animal and vegetable, all is an orderly approach to man as the crown of all.

This is assurance of the dignity of man's station and the worth of his being. It is his coronation at the hand of his creator.

What constitutes man's likeness to God? It can not be anything in physical nature, for God is Spirit without body. The likeness inheres in man's moral and intellectual faculties. He thinks, wills, loves. This power, not shared by any other creatures, makes him to 'lack little of being God.'

Comradeship was in the mind of God in the making of man. God wanted company.

'Likeness and image' is simply rhetoric. It is not two different meanings but duplication of the same meaning for emphasis.

Man's dominion over nature was never so great as at the present day. With retort, spectrum, and telescope he is wresting nature's secrets from her and subduing her forces to his use. The universe affords a limitless arena for man's skill and prowess.

We have to talk of God as if He were a man. Such is the limitation of language. So the narrative speaks of God as resting, although He can never be weary. His rest was exemplary.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Jan. 13.—How God's image is preserved in us—or lost. Gen. i., 26; Col. iii., 1-10. (A temperance meeting.)

On Taking Aim.

You have seen a boy handle a gun so that you could not tell what he was aiming at. You have seen another boy with a gun who was evidently uncertain as to what he ought to aim at. And you have seen lots of boys fooling with guns who were not aiming at anything at all. It is just like this in some Sunday schools you know. There are teachers who do their work so that you cannot tell what they are trying to accomplish. There are other teachers whose work indicates that they are uncertain as to what they ought to try to accomplish. And there are still others who show quite as plainly that they are not trying to accomplish anything at all. It is not safe to say that if we never aim at a thing we will never hit it, but it is safe to say that a teacher has no business with a class who does not know what he is trying to do, just as a boy has no business with a gun who does not know what he is aiming at. There are teachers whose actions make me as uneasy as a foolish boy fooling with a gun. You never know what is going to happen. It is not worth while to assume that if the aimless teacher does no good he will at least do no harm. 'What did your teacher talk to you about to-day?' I asked little Miss Flaxen-hair yesterday. 'She told us an awful yarn about a baby that weighed a hundred pounds,' said the little Miss. 'But what did that have to do with the lesson?' 'Oh, nothing at all,' she replied with a toss of her flaxen head; 'she just hears the Golden Text and then talks about anything that comes up.' That

aimless teacher is certainly doing no good. But is she doing no harm?

The first thing a teacher needs is a pure heart. The second is a clear aim. And the second is as essential as the first. It is not enough that a teacher should be good: he must be good for something. He must aim at something, and he must know what he is aiming at. We need to stop short now and then and inquire not only into the purity of our hearts, but also into the purity of our purpose. What am I trying to accomplish? Am I trying to build up a reputation for my class, or am I trying to build up my class? Am I trying to win souls, or am I trying to win the record for the best attendance? Am I trying to mould my pupils into the image of Christ, or am I merely trying to mould them into an orderly set of pupils that will give me the name of having the most orderly class in the school? Is my heart set upon the real work of the school, or only upon its millinery?—Dr. Pell.

'Think yourself empty.

'Read yourself full.

'Write yourself clear.

'Pray yourself hot.' —'Sunday Times.'

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