

# *The Second Day*

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We come now to the second day of this Genesis story, which we know to define that aspect of Deity which is best termed Spirit.

One of the most remarkable things on earth is that men have been fooled so long about the spiritual. To mention Spirit or the spiritual conjures up pictures which frighten them into an awed silence and usually a determination to withdraw from the conversation as soon as politeness will allow.

The Master taught spirituality, yet none of his teachings holds a heavy hand over man. What he taught was not an austere, cold, and rebuking relative, sent to hold horror over a younger generation, but the inspiring, at-your-very-age-where-you-are teaching of how to be naturally happy and healthy, how to live in the realm of a constant flow of ideas rightly deduced from their basic Principle or Source, with all the blessings this must admittedly embrace.

## **A Spiritual Impulse Behind All Progress**

A little reflection will cause us to see that the point at which we stand in the progress of civilization and also in our own mental awareness has been arrived at solely through the spiritual impulses ever manifest in man. The decencies, the measures of understanding, the laws, the comforts,—all the things, in fact, which go to make our world worth living in,—are a direct result of man's spiritual instincts through his expression of his Cause, the one Spirit.

As an illustration, take such a down-to-earth matter as human clothing. Why do people clothe themselves? Someone may answer, "For protection from the weather." It is true that because we have become used to clothes, we do feel the need of them for such protection,—just as a horse or other animal accustomed

## The Second Day

to a protective blanket may be affected in health if it is removed,—but this could not have been the original motive, for the animal man like any other animal was properly equipped by what we term nature for his normal survival on earth.

Our human forebears are supposed to have clothed themselves with fig leaves to hide their nakedness, but surely clothing has now outgrown this merely negative purpose and become a medium for the expression of character—and as such is fundamentally a non-material means of expression. Finally, of course, we shall discover that it is impelled by the much truer spiritual instinct which Paul defined when he said, “not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life,”—that is, in all things, even in clothing, we shall endeavour to adopt that which reveals through human means all that is best in the character of man.

Man is spiritual and he knows it, whether he wants to or no, and he responds to the instincts of this spirituality in all his actions,—in *all* of them, not only because everything progressive and beneficial to humanity has been impelled into expression by reason of man’s spiritual awareness and activity, but also because every negative experience can be traced to the unrest and dissatisfaction caused by this *same* impelling spiritual force towards a higher sense of good.

Because he is spiritual and feels it in every fibre of his reasoning, man is determined to cleave a path to the final realizations of this fact. He knows the animal man to be a temporary mockery of the true man, and in all his best activities his purpose is the subjugation of the animal and its replacement by the spiritual. Everything progressive and therefore filled with blessing is on this path leading away from the animal and on and up to the spiritual.

We have taken the simple illustration of clothing, but I invite you to consider in this way every aspect of human life, every law of conduct, every impulse of common goodness to which you respond, every form of expression with which you are surrounded,—be it your home, your business, national unity, or (soon) international unity. Think even of such mundane things as the utensils which you use at table: do they not remove you from

purely animal coarseness to decencies which take into account the feelings of others and thereby refine and happify your own feelings? Whatever you consider, you will be able to trace its actual motive back to the spiritual instinct of spiritual man in response to his Cause as Spirit.

Take a mother making cakes for her children: if we think that she does this merely because she likes cake-making, we lose sight of the real impulse at the back of it,—her joy and satisfaction at being a mother, her recognition of some small portion of the family of man and so of the inter-relationship of us all.

### **Human Progress *versus* the Master's Way**

Man is a progressive being, and history shows that the only progress he has made has been away from animality and towards spirituality. You who are reading this love to push forward into the discovery of something nearer truth, some better expression or performance of anything in which you are interested; and the more you improve the performance, the closer you come to the ideal at the back of the activity. That ideal involves some improvement of the ways of men, and that improvement in some degree removes man from dependence on the material and releases him to a greater opportunity of expressing the actual purposes of manhood.

Is it not true, then, that all human discovery and all the dynamic and admirable purposes of men can be traced to one instinct, and one only? And it causes man to say, "I am not confined to just the physical or material and I am determined to prove this by breaking every barrier that this so-called physical world imposes upon me. Space, time, and all dimensions possible to a sensual world must be battled with, pushed ever farther back, and sometime overcome and annihilated."

So man arrays himself in his responses to a higher and ever higher intelligence and goes forth to battle; and even if he falls, he rises again and once more pushes on.

The great Master had the same spiritual instinct, but he acted on it in a more logical way. His life and methods seem to say to

## *The Second Day*

us, "All right, I agree with all you are doing in pushing back these barriers and disproving all these so-called laws of limitation, but if you *can* disprove them and annihilate and therefore prove unreal these so-called barriers, why not start by admitting the fact which your noble and battle-worn efforts are daily proving,—that is, the utter unreality of these barriers, and the consequent complete reality of spirituality alone? I begin where after all your brave and worthy efforts you will only arrive, and so I use my energies in the positive computations of good for good's sake, of truth for truth's sake; you, on the other hand, may expend all your energies merely in breaking through the mists that you first accept as hiding truth and yet later prove to be insubstantial myths and lies of limitation."

Listen to these words of Jesus: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:" and every intelligent man reflecting on that statement is bound to admit, "You are absolutely right." And then again: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . .For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The Master was saying, in effect, "Come and do it my way, all you fine and noble workers, bearing your unnecessary burdens. Admit with me a full spirituality as the here-and-now and only factor of your being, and from this higher base you will find rest in your work and immediate fruitage to your endeavour."

### THE SECOND DAY (3): DISCERN THE SPIRITUAL FACTOR BEHIND THE HUMAN EXPRESSION

Let us now examine this second day, which describes symbolically that activity which we shall learn to classify under the heading of Spirit.

In all that we have just considered, we can see that the great impulsion of Spirit is towards progress,—the progress of man towards his increasing recognition of the spiritual factor as the one governing factor of his life. Through this progressive impulse man is always receiving advanced ideas, and to be advanced they

must be less material and more spiritual in purpose. Every stage of progress has come about through man being impelled towards his natal and natural spiritual being.

So as we read the first verse (first, that is, to our way of approach) of this second day, we can readily agree that the “evening and morning” of Spirit, or its one main purpose, is to lead man forward along the path of progress.

The verse reads, “*And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.*”

### **The Meaning of the Firmament**

Having admitted that the major purpose of Spirit is to impel men to recognize the spiritual influence in their lives and the blessings it brings, let us see what the firmament which God named Heaven has to do with this. It will be remembered that the firmament was a name for the heavens in those days, and it was thought to be a hollow vault which separated the waters above it from the waters beneath it.

The cultured spiritual thinkers who wrote this Genesis story used the firmament as a symbol. We have seen that they were dealing wholly with thought-processes and used material phenomena simply as symbols for their teaching,—in the same way as Jesus used the mustard seed and the lily of the field to illustrate states of thought.

The firmament clearly represented to them that quality of understanding which enables us to distinguish values and keep them distinct, to discern the actual purpose of anything, to perceive what it is and what it is not.

The meaning of the Greek word used in the Septuagint to correspond with the Latin *firmamentum* of the Vulgate describes what they had in mind: “something solid; a foundation.” These seers knew that an understanding of life based on the ability to discern the spiritual factor is the only type of understanding which will stand the test of time and be “something solid,” “a foundation” for all true progress.

Unless the child, for instance, learns to discern the higher spiritual

motive at the back of the care and kindness which it receives from its mother, it will never make any progress in its own understanding of motherhood.

### **The Firmament Named Heaven**

Heaven means harmony, and any condition which we call heavenly is one which to us embraces a perfect sense of harmony and consequently of happiness. So the words "And God called the firmament Heaven" imply that when anyone has attained to this measure of understanding which gauges all things on the basis of the spiritual factor which impels them, he has found the secret of heavenly or harmonious thought-processes. He is able to go beyond the superficial reading of experience, and who can be satisfied with mere appearances? Who wants to go no further than accepting the surface picture of life? Surely no one normal, for a man in any walk of life recognizes that unless he goes beneath the surface readings, he is liable to be badly misled and cannot properly understand or appreciate even what those surface readings are telling him.

This verse is describing the third motion in this day of Spirit, and therefore it must come under the heading of Spirit operating as Soul. Even that naming—"And God called the firmament Heaven"—conveys a sense of Soul, for as we have seen, the true identifying or naming of anything depends on qualities which we come to classify under the term Soul, in contradistinction to the misleadings or misnamings of the senses. Moreover, when we look for the spiritual reason behind phenomena, we are bound to use processes of thought which we have admitted to be impelled by Soul, as opposed to physical sense. We are bound to rebuke and silence the cries and claims of the senses with a higher, a deeper, understanding.

Paul wrote, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the

spirit of man which is in him? . . . the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

### **The Water Turned into Wine**

Was it not this spiritual discernment, this “firmament named Heaven,” which the Master exercised at the wedding feast (described in the second chapter of John’s Gospel) when he turned the water into wine?

On being told that there was no more wine, Jesus must have looked beyond the immediate picture of a good human marriage which, because it *was* only this, could run short of its inspiration, its real “wine.” He surely looked past this to the spiritual fact of man’s individual completeness which lay behind it; and therefore he discerned in that wedding the happifying picture of two whole units coming together to merge their wholeness in the obvious increase of joy and strength of purpose which this would bring. He did not see two incomplete units coming together to lean on each other in an endeavour to find wholeness, for it would be by that very leaning that they would put certain strains on one another which could deprive them of the full joy of expression,—dry up their “wine” of inspiration.

Because of this clear discernment, the Master was able to bring into complete subjection the human symbol for expressing the happiness and inspiration of the occasion,—the wine. His “firmament” of understanding, his perception of the spiritual factor at the back of the wedding, was indeed “heaven,” not only to him but also to all who were present.

### **From Strength to Strength**

A man who looks at the whole of human life, as Jesus did, with a desire to see through it the signs and teachings of a fundamental Spirit Cause, is one who will go from strength to strength and finally become convinced of the allness and onliness of Spirit. As time and experience go on, he will find himself agreeing

## *The Second Day*

more and more with that statement of the Master's already quoted: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

He will also be the best judge of this world's values, the best confidant, the finest adviser, and the greatest and most appreciative of friends. And why? Because he will always be able to see the fundamental reason, the higher impulse, at the back of all activity and thought-inclination. He will not judge by appearances, but by the forces which he will have learnt to discern beneath the appearances; and those forces without exception are always found to be spiritual. The conviction of this spiritual impulse at the back of all human phenomena will give any man a serenity which will establish him in heaven.

The great rule of life's game implied in this verse is that if you want to find heaven here, you must be prepared to admit that the only actual thing going on is the spiritual expression by spiritual man of the one Spirit. You must then demand of all human activity and phenomena that they reveal to you this vast purpose; and when you have made this demand upon yourself and the great stage before you, you will gradually come to translate surface readings back to higher impulses and instincts, and then from higher impulses and instincts back to the realization of one fundamental Cause expressing itself through all its creation.

Looking thus, as the poet would have it, "through nature up to nature's God," you will come so to admit that fundamental Cause and its expression that you will then turn wholly to that Cause in your reckonings and reason *from* it down to a translation of its effect. Then at last will you possess the true firmament, the immense strength of conviction such as that master thinker Jesus possessed. Just as he did at the wedding feast and on so many other occasions, you will be able to demand of the phenomena before you a harmonious subjection or healthy response to the spiritual impulses which you will know to be at the back of and the reason for these phenomena. Then will you understand even more fully why these clear teachers wrote, "And God called the firmament Heaven." And you will also see how this fits into the overall "evening and morning" purpose of Spirit to bring about real progress.



THE SECOND DAY (2): DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE  
HIGHER SPIRITUAL IMPULSE AND ITS HUMAN  
EXPRESSION

We now come to the verse which must describe Spirit as Spirit, —Spirit as the essence of itself,—for that is the order of the placing of our symbolic names for God.

The verse reads, *“And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.”*

As we have seen, the term “waters” was used to symbolize states of thought as yet elementary in their realizations of fundamental fact. These are never static and fixed—that is why waters symbolize them so aptly—but change with the tides of progress through which our understanding grows.

In this second movement of the second day, or Spirit symbol, we come face to face with a major purpose of Spirit, a veritable “Spirit plus” purpose or Spirit operating as Spirit to establish a basis for logical reasoning in the calculus of ideas. Man is thereby impelled to distinguish between his “waters beneath,” those everyday human activities by which he is defining himself to himself here on earth, and his “waters above,” his growing understanding of the fundamental spiritual activity which impels those lower patternings. Through distinguishing between them, and keeping them distinct and separate in his thought, he recognizes the true value of each.

All constructive reasoning is based on understanding the value of each of these spheres. First, there are the “waters above,”—the actual spiritual impulses of man as dimly discerned and defined by men,—and then there are the “waters beneath,”—the effect of this spiritual animus on all the actions and reactions of men in their responses to it in daily living.

The recognition of these two spheres, and their separation through the use of that clear, strong understanding symbolized by the firmament, will enable men to be active in the calculus of dynamic spiritual reasoning, as the Master was. Did he not set

## *The Second Day*

human forms of expression in proper shape and order through recognizing the spiritual impulses which governed them and then restoring a recognition and use of those spiritual impulses to those who needed it?

### **The Healing of the Man with the Withered Hand**

We read, for instance, in the sixth chapter of Luke's Gospel that when Jesus told a man with a withered hand to stretch it forth, the aroused mentality of the patient caused him to do so and thus to restore the purpose of his human hand. Was not Jesus addressing himself fundamentally to the higher nature of his patient, the "waters above," and rousing some specific spiritual instinct of usefulness and power back into activity? It would appear that the man in becoming an habitu  of the synagogue or temple,—that is, a parasite on the belief in vicariousness,—had allowed this higher active instinct to fall out of use, with the consequent ill effect on his human means for expressing it,—his hand.

We might say that that hand was a "waters beneath" manifestation of his "waters above" instinct, and there had to be the restoration to usefulness of the hand as an expression of this particular spiritual or character power which the Master had awakened into activity. He had drawn forth from the man the sense of conscious worth which was inherent in his true and ever-present selfhood.

It may be asked: Was that hand, then, an expression of Spirit? The answer is emphatically that it was not. The only expression of Spirit is spiritual,—in this case the instinct to function as a man, to be useful, and the ability and power to put it into effect. But having had that instinct instantaneously restored by the Master, the patient could express it only through the temporary symbol which he as a human cognized for this purpose,—namely, his hand. That symbol is, however, unknown to Spirit, even as the rag doll is wholly unknown to the Cause of those maternal instincts which well up to expression in the little girl who endows her doll with the qualities of a child.

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," but he ended

## *A Scientist Opens His Bible*

the sentence with the words, "and all these things shall be added unto you." He awakened those qualities of character which constitute the kingdom of God in man and then allowed those qualities to find their natural expression through the restoration to normality of "all these things," for he knew that humanity at present needs them for such expression.

The Master did not ignore either the "waters above" or the "waters beneath," nor did he ever confuse them to the point of an attempted submergence of one in the other, by giving actual substance to the fleshly symbol or by allowing the governing spiritual animus to be considered of no relevance to the situation.

His understanding was a "firmament" that kept the correct distinction and relationship between the human expression and the spiritual idea which it expressed to men. Without this distinct separation the human expression could be elevated above its levels as a human expression and consequently magnified to a reality it could never possess; and on the other hand, the higher spiritual fact could be brought down to admixtures impossible to its nature.

Keeping them distinct by the "firmament" of constant spiritual understanding, then, and yet seeing the necessity of both as long as earth's scene still hampers man's full, unfettered expression, Jesus became the most practical man who has ever appeared on earth, and we would do well to direct our energies towards learning what he so fully knew.

### **The Ideal and the Practical**

This rule of the dual appearing is essential to our here-and-now existence. It involves first an admission once and for all that the actual character and nature, in fact the whole of man, is spiritual and functions as an expression of the one Spirit; and second, a practical reasoning that that being so, all earth's experience must be the human effort to respond to these higher spiritual impulses in some symbolic degree.

The Christian or the idealist must not make the mistake of trying to keep his head in the clouds at the level of the "waters above," —

## *The Second Day*

his elementary yet noble concept of a world of spirituality alone,—and so ignoring the human experience which stares him in the face. Nor can the man who professes to be practical, and to occupy himself solely with dealing with earth's phenomena as he finds them, expect to be successful unless he looks to see the evidence of the constant presence of that "something" completely outside and above those phenomena and their thought-processes, which yet impels and influences them all.

Thank God this practical and wholly sensible "firmament" of a clear understanding does exist for men to make their own, for there is nothing worse than an idealist with his head fully in the clouds, and nothing more depressing than a man determined to keep his eyes on the ground of no other experience than the material, whilst nothing is more welcome than the man or woman who has learnt how to lift the one to serve the other.

Is not that what the master musician does who makes finite sounds serve the inspiring purpose of defining his intangible-to-sense musical experience? And he does this even whilst he knows that with the passage of but a little time those sounds will vibrate themselves out into the silence of their own nothingness, whereas his musical experience will gain stronger foothold in the path towards the actual substance of it all,—the spiritual joy and certainty of which even his musical experience is only some instinctive awareness.

The entire realm of practical spiritual reason depends on this rule of the "firmament" dividing the "waters above" from those "beneath" for its forwarding of the beneficial and uplifting ideas upon which humanity wholly relies for its progress out of itself into a higher spiritual divinity.

### **The Waters Above Are Only Symbols**

Let us realize that our understanding of the spiritual is quite elementary in character, and will develop and change with progress; and so the term "waters," as a symbol of elementary and transitory thought-processes, applies to our understanding of the

higher spiritual nature of man no less than to our ever-changing expression of that fact here on earth.

For intelligent reasoning we must see that when we recognize genuine human goodness as expressed in some form, it is entirely apart from that higher and wholly spiritual goodness or good instinctiveness which evolved it; and even that recognition of the higher spiritual instinct, that "waters above," is still not final, but only elementary, for the final spiritual recognition will reveal no process towards perfection, but actual perfection here with no process towards it.

Our highest and purest vision of spiritual good is but a rudimentary sense of the ultimate spirituality. Could we see final spirituality in all its beauty, form, and colour, we should have reached its own conscious experience, where physical phenomena and symbols would no longer be either necessary or possible.

We have progressed, then, along a line of clear reasoning by separating "waters beneath" from "waters above," for we have gained some sense of the value of good as we know it, but we have also seen that it is dependent on a higher value, the Cause which in this case would rightly be called Spirit. Yet in all this separating process we have not dealt with anything negative. In all reasoning there is a higher purpose and value related to a lower or more human purpose and value, but both are values and neither is a negative.

### **The Waters Beneath Are a Positive Symbol**

It should be obvious that this firmament separating waters above from waters beneath implies no suggestion that the waters beneath represent an *erroneous* state of thought which by the use of reason must be separated from a true state of thought symbolized by the waters above. We have a complete refutation for such a suggestion when we find that it is from these very waters beneath that the dry land appears and the subsequent ideas of perfection and its activity are developed.

We must realize also that in this first chapter of Genesis, and the first few verses of the second chapter, no negative element at

## *The Second Day*

all is introduced. The purpose of this first part of Genesis is the definition of the symbols of good alone, and not until they have been defined are their apparent opposites revealed in the later chapters and then only for scientific analysis, through the basic understanding of the wholeness of good as defined in this first part. In all forms of teaching the positive processes have to be grasped by the student before he can deal with the negatives which in human experience would oppose them, and it is not otherwise here.

Of course, the first crude and immature impression the small boy may have of mathematics may well be that it exists to deal with his errors; and if he applied this second day symbol to his experience, he would then say that the "waters beneath" were his erroneous expressions of mathematics, whilst the "waters above" were the correct ones, and that the mathematical idea stood as a firmament to separate the one from the other.

So with us in life: through a wholly false teaching based on a misapprehension of the true teaching of Scripture, we may think that the spiritual stands as a separator between us in our materiality and some future idealistic state which we call our spirituality.

Certainly we cannot dismiss that vast activity of earth's preparatory school consisting of the separation of fact from fiction, right from wrong, truth from error, which is our first sense of the "firmament." That is vital to a great extent, for we live in a world where erroneously based conceptions constitute the atmosphere of mortality through which we have to cleave a path to our higher and more native realm.

But to accomplish even this, we must reason with positive values. Unless we know what good is and can define it to ourselves by reckoning the qualities that make up any particular phase of it, we can neither recognize nor reject the specific misconceptions of it which false education may present for acceptance.

The little boy who has been reared in an environment of mental and physical uncleanness cannot be expected to recognize these conditions as unnatural to man. But introduce him into an atmosphere of active mental and consequently physical cleanliness, and gradually he will be equipped first to recognize the unclean,

next to reject or overcome it, and then no longer have it to deal with.

And so although we may begin by thinking of the “firmament” as a separator between good and evil, clean and unclean, pure and impure, we shall come to see that it is not actually concerned at all with myths or mistakes, but rather with the reckoning of distinct ideas of good, for good’s sake alone, in ever-rising ways.

The second aspect, then, of this great second day of Spirit reveals that we must make and maintain through the strong “firmament” of understanding the distinction between “waters above” and “waters beneath,”—between our highest present upreaching sense of good and its human expression here on earth. Both these are ever-changing—hence the appropriateness of the term “waters” to symbolize them—but neither is negative. With the distinction between these held in mind, and yet their interdependence also clearly defined, we may expect the human means of expression to respond immediately to the higher impulses which govern them.

## THE SECOND DAY (1): SPIRITUAL FACTOR AND HUMAN EXPRESSION BOTH ESSENTIAL

The first verse of this second day symbol of Spirit reads, “*And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*” By the order of our symbolic names for God this must be summed up in the phrase Spirit as Mind.

Here we find mention of “waters,” or transitory and progressive thought-processes, and of those waters divided,—that is, classified in purpose,—but there is no mention of waters above waters, or any indication that one is more important than the other. Our wise teachers are now introducing this further rule of the equality in purpose of these thought-processes, for whilst it is necessary to distinguish “waters above” from “waters beneath,” as in the previous verse, it is just as necessary to see that they are equal in overall purpose.

## No Good Is To Be Despised

As we realize this, we are saved from one of the greatest mistakes which mortals may make when they turn their thoughts from earth to heaven,—namely, belittling earth's experience and extolling that which they call heaven's, and even coming to despise the one in their desire for the other.

Men must have a true appreciation of the "waters above" and the "waters beneath,"—first, the ever-advancing spiritual instincts and awareness of men and then their reflection and influence in all human activities and in the progressive steps of civilization; but this verse shows them how to avoid those extremes of thought which swing them to giving importance to one while disparaging or even looking down on the other.

To Spirit in its continual impelling of something new and good for man, all things in this line of progress are important, and not one least thing belittled or decried. Jesus taught this with implicit care in such utterances as "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." To him everything told the one story of infinite good expressed everywhere and in every detail.

He who provided a breakfast for his disciples on the shores of Galilee after his resurrection, when he must have been enjoying the full spiritual inspiration this unparalleled victory had brought him, could not have despised Martha and all that she stood for. He did detect, nonetheless, that she made the mistake of attaching undue importance to the human expression, to the extent of depreciating the spiritual realities which it patterned, whereas both are important and both interwoven in the overall pattern of the unfolding to man of the ever-presence of good.

We should not consider Mary an idealist with her head in the clouds, for the fact that Martha said to the Master, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath *left* me to serve alone?" indicates that Mary usually did do her part in these matters; but Mary so recognized the importance of this other side to the *one* activity of good that on this occasion she was taking full advantage of the



opportunity provided by their entertainment of this guest, who not only taught the spiritual but also illustrated it in every human detail.

Every human activity speaks to men of that which they call the spiritual, and each step to a closer understanding of that spiritual factor only serves to enhance the beauty and value of everything good in human experience. So must not all this activity of good be actually one activity?

### **Good Is Always Unfolding to Man**

When we are honest about our experience in life, we have to admit that good is always unfolding for man. Spirit as the divine Source of good has infinite supplies of good which it is ever impelling towards man through every channel of conscious experience. Sometimes our profoundest realizations of the presence of God, supreme good, come from the simplest things on earth. In fact, the higher we go in our realizations of the actuality of the spiritual,—its presence and power,—the more we come to see it expressed in even the humblest earthly things.

All the time the “waters” of unfolding realization are active in our experience both at the highest, almost ethereal levels of inspired ideas and also through ideas given us from the simplest activities of good right where we are in the daily experience of this human plane. Spirit operating as Mind maintains such a flow of natural goodness to man at every level that the idea of good is irresistibly but gently brought home to him. This flow of good *to* man and *through* man is so impelling and yet so unobtrusively all-inclusive that everyone at some time or another is bound to admit its presence, and thus is the idea of good as natural and real made manifest.

If the criterion of our spirituality is our response in human experience to higher expressions of good, as it certainly is, then surely the “waters above” and “waters beneath” are just thought-processes leading to the unfoldment of that one final conviction,—the onliness and allness of the spiritual as the expression here and now of the one Spirit.

## *The Second Day*

Have we not been so educated to separate the spiritual from even all human goodness that we have forgotten that that human goodness is *our* expression of the spiritual? In their expression of the spiritual men naturally employ symbols equal to their understanding. These symbols are of course as temporary and changing in nature as men's present levels of understanding, but to men where they are they are as important as that understanding.

### **Jesus' Healing of the Man Sick of the Palsy**

The healing of the man afflicted with palsy (the paralytic), as told in the ninth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, provides an illustration of how Jesus levelled the purpose of what our previous verse taught us to regard as "waters above" and "waters beneath," for he showed that both have their part to play in the unfolding of good.

This incident reveals that whilst the two "waters" are still separated, as this present Genesis verse requires, they have an equality of purpose and are not to be kept at different levels of value, as an undue contemplation of "waters above" as distinct from those "beneath" would tend to induce.

Having given the patient that inspiring message, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee,"—a message which surely voices the very "waters above" purpose of true Christianity,—Jesus realized that the Pharisees were questioning amongst themselves this ability to forgive sins and were even saying, "This man blasphemeth." Whereupon the Master replied, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house."

There an apparently downright symbol of earth called the human body, a veritable "waters beneath," was made to conform to a harmonious expression of character,—character which had been relieved from the paralyzing belief that sin is actual and

suffering its normal outcome. Jesus had dealt with his patient at that level of character and had drawn forth in the man's mind a full realization of freedom from any form of condemnation; that relief in turn released the human symbol of the body into a harmonious expression, an expression which from the patient's immediate point of view was as important as the release of character which it showed forth.

In this healing the Master clearly showed that a healthy character-expression is reflected in a healthy physical experience; and if we are to follow him along the paths of his teaching, we must accept this important rule and demand of ourselves that we learn how to obtain the same resultant manifestations of harmony and health through all earth's symbols.

Jesus always dealt with the "waters" of the transitional and oft-times turbulent processes of the human mind with his divine deductions from the divine Mind, but he knew that as human realizations of spiritual fact improve, they will and must be reflected through the means of expression which mortals normally employ.

Therefore although "the waters" must be divided from "the waters," as this verse implies,—that is, although the human expressions (and that includes the vast arena of this earth's experience) must be divided from the impulses and awareness of the divine character which they pattern,—yet to us who are here and could not cognize anything or any purpose without it being defined in human terms, those human terms must be as important as the higher impulses they represent; and even those higher impulses are but the surface movement of the great and to us still indefinable spiritual nature of man as the representative of the one Spirit.

### **The Ascending Scale**

To say this, however, is not to say that the material is or ever could be the companion of the spiritual. At its best, a material phenomenon is but a limited symbolic expression of mortals' finite understanding of some infinite, spiritual, and immortal idea. As that limited understanding grows less limited, the material

## The Second Day

phenomenon is at first brought into greater subjection to this advancing understanding, so that there is an increasing ratio of harmony in its expression.

This finite phenomenon then grows less and less important or substantial with each forward step, until finally it becomes wholly unnecessary to the advancing mortal for his comprehension of the pure spiritual idea; in fact, it fades or dies out of use and he is left with nothing finite or mortal (and no need of it) for his understanding and expression of the purely spiritual. Then, with nothing finite in his consciousness, he himself has become the actual expression of that which is infinite alone. And so he who at one time thought he was a mortal finds himself immortal; and what is more, at that point he has no memory of nor means by which to remember that apparent previous state.

Was not this the natural path which Jesus determinedly followed to the point of his ascension? And in some lesser degree we find that all true scientific education adopts the same method of using finite symbolic media for the expression of ideas which ultimately outdistance and discard them. May not a musician, for instance, eventually find himself working out of the need of ordinary finite symbols for his active realization of musical ideas?

Thus Spirit through its activity as Mind provides the ever-developing ideas which lead men on by gentle, natural stages out of the realm of limited expressions of good on and up to the full acceptance and experience of that same good, but without the necessity or possibility of those finite means of cognizance.

### **“It Is the Spirit that Quickeneth”**

That Jesus placed no *final* value or reality on the expression of divine fact through human symbols is obvious. To him it was a question of “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,” even as with the human symbol of baptism.

At the beginning of his three years’ teaching he turned physical water into physical wine, as we have seen, in order to illustrate the spiritual fact of the true inspiration or “wine” of marriage, as

against the less inspired moral or human sense of it (the "water"). But at the end of this teaching period we find him saying to his students, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom,"—that is, until I drink it new with you in its pure meanings without any human symbol, drink it as inspired spiritual reason through the positive activity of Mind's ideas.

It is clear that the Master actually did this with his disciples at a later hour and after his resurrection, for without any physical wine he drank with two of them on the walk to Emmaus such an inspiring draught of reality that afterwards they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us?"

Again, after he had talked with them just before his ascension and material disappearance to their sight, the effect of this talk and of the whole inspiring experience was such that although they knew they had lost the personal Jesus, the symbol of the greatest friend they could ever have (a loss which under any ordinary circumstances would have occasioned immense grief), we are told that they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Surely this was the result of the real wine drunk with them by their great Master anew,—that is, without the material symbol which only a few years previously he had deliberately employed at that wedding in Cana of Galilee.

Humanity, however, apprehends ideas through limited, temporary symbols; and so in its admissions and expressions of the spiritual it must use those symbols in an ever-increasing response to the perfections of the spiritual. This it must continue to do until such time as it no longer finds these symbols necessary.

### **A Natural Unity of Purpose**

When Jesus, looking down from the cross, said to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son," and to his most faithful disciple, John, "Behold thy mother," he took care of a very human condition of relationship at a time when his whole thought was dedicated to the spiritual in measures of consecration and self-abandonment which we can hardly realize.

## *The Second Day*

But I believe that that going over to a full and utter dependence on Spirit for all the present and future care of his being only served to enhance the Master's awareness of the importance of the care of both his mother and his young disciple. That Jesus should think of human relationships at a time in his life when more than at any other he was devoting his whole thought to his spiritual relationship to his Father, the one Spirit, appeals to me as confirming that he never considered the divine and its human expression as separate in purpose and meaning, but quite naturally as one.

It seems that he could not help but draw a picture of sound human relationship, even at the moment of the greatest exercise of trust in his divine relationship which he had ever been called upon to make. We may tend to think that the care of his mother and this young man at that crucial hour was almost heroic in effort, but I feel that as we come to understand better the whole life-purpose of the Master, we shall see that it was part of the one theme that was being developed on that occasion; it could no more have been left out of the picture than any other portion of that magnificent scene.

Is it not this natural unity in purpose of all things in the development of good through man that we are asked in this Genesis verse to acknowledge and learn to practise?

These great teachers, having taught us the necessity of distinction, through the symbols of the waters above and the waters beneath, have now furthered the lesson to this point where we see that in quality of purpose for man on earth both the human expression and that which it expresses are equal. When properly employed, both these waters of thought ever moving forward to firmer convictions have the same ultimate aim,—the final establishment of the naturalness of Spirit as All. Both are obeying the impulsion of the one theme which alone is going on,—the great symphony of Spirit's onliness. Both are aiding the establishment to humanity of this fundamental idea, and so this verse reveals unmistakably the purpose of Spirit operating as Mind.

## **The Story of Spirit**

Let us remember that the scientific thought-processes of these teachers of long ago, consecrated thinkers as they were, led to such magnificent character-structures as the Ten Commandments, which have lived to permeate all our present-day laws and codes of conduct. They were developed in meaning through the Bible narrative until they culminated in such immortal truths as those embraced in that zenith of spiritual instruction called the Sermon on the Mount. Because of such things, we must admit the immense spiritual culture and intellect of these writers; and having acknowledged that, we can no longer be satisfied with just scanning the opening chapter of the Bible as if it were a child's fairy story of how the world began. No, we are challenged to measure our intellectual capacity with theirs, and if we accept the challenge and employ the same scientific methods as they did, it is only a matter of translating the idiom or symbolic language of their time into that of ours; and thus equipped to decipher their code, as it were, we are soon able to distinguish and appreciate their message.

Here, then, we have considered the second day symbol with its decisive "firmament," and we saw first of all that when understood and practised, it will be found to have a better name and that name "heaven." This "firmament" is the understanding of the basic fact of all conscious experience,—the fundamental spiritual nature of man and all things. With this fact firmly established in mind, we can go beneath the surface picture presented by the senses and discern the spiritual impulses of spiritual man at work; we can then develop our conclusions accordingly in that realm of reason and blessing whose only fit name is heaven.

From this acceptance of the wholly spiritual nature of all real experience we go on to find the second rule of this second day illustration. This is the rule of distinguishing or separating the values of those higher spiritual instincts and yearnings, the "waters above," from their expression at the level of everyday human experience,—the "waters beneath." But in both cases

## *The Second Day*

these seers are careful to classify them as “waters,” for neither possesses the quality of final reality.

This leads us naturally to the acceptance of the third rule developed in this second day theme,—the equality in quality of purpose of the spiritual impulse and its human expression.

Even man’s higher instincts and responses, whilst governing their finite expressions in the physical life experience, are yet but elementary to the type of character reflection he will find at the point where through consistent progress all earth’s finite symbols will be outgrown. But until then to ignore or even by-pass any form of right human expression would break the divine order of “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”

So whilst we are taught in this Genesis story to admit fully that there can be no true substance, intelligence, nor life in a symbol which is obviously finite and devoid of all self-expression, we are shown nevertheless how to give proper value to these temporary and yet so necessary means of expression. Then like the great Master we set ourselves the task of making them conform to the harmonies of those higher thought-processes which govern them.

Thus did Jesus pass from introducing harmony on earth and through even finite means of expression (which he knew to be as completely unreal as the imaginative creations of a dream) on and up to a position where he could no longer employ or be cognizant of those means of expression, and so found that he must ascend to an experience of non-finite symbols. That is a plane where we may anchor our hope, but a realm we can never describe until we win our way to it, even as in a much lesser degree the pupil in music can never describe that higher and possibly soundless musical experience of some great master in that field.

This second day symbol, then, teaches us how to be fully practical here where we are and yet also reveals the pattern of the most inspiring spiritual prospect that awaits man’s full acceptance,—matter’s nothingness and Spirit’s onliness.