

Facts and Fancy about the Bible - 12

Voltaire continued his criticism of the Scriptures by next finding fault with Genesis 1:3 where on the first day God gave light on the earth, while in 1:16 the sun and moon appear on the fourth day - "the author of Genesis ...states the creation of the sun and moon not to have taken place until four days after the existence of light. It was impossible that there could be a morning and evening before the existence of a sun."

In his rush to ridicule the word of God that writer ignores the opening statement, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The heaven refers to that region of space beyond the clouds or the visible sky, the expanse in which the sun, moon, and stars had been created per verse 1. The next verse begins with the earth covered with water and in darkness, and the heavenly bodies could not be seen. This early statement in the word of God is doubtless a true enunciation of the physical state of the earth at that time -

But the aim which the Author had in presenting His word was not to give lessons in the physical sciences. It was rather given in the same spirit as a father gives guidance to his child, with the objective of that child developing into "a wise son who makes his father glad" - Proverbs 10:1.

"The Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; 7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly...21 For the upright will dwell in the land (inherit the earth), and the blameless will remain in it; 22 but the wicked will be cut off from the earth, and the unfaithful will be uprooted from it" - Proverbs 2:6 .

There are those among mankind with the humility to submit to the instructions of God in His word. These are the "meek" who will "inherit the earth" - Matthew 5:5. Of them it can be affirmed that "you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" - 2 Timothy 3:15.

Their attitude toward the Scriptures is that "YOUR WORD is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path" and "Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live" - Psalm 119:105,116. In them will God see His purpose fulfilled, to develop a race of beings who have been imprinted with His moral character by the influence of His word and will be made the immortal inheritors of the earth -

"Truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" - Numbers 14:21.

This was the ultimate aim which the Author had in presenting His word, so there is more to this account than a report of what occurred during these seven literal days. The report is presented in a manner which presents an allegory of how God was going to take the earth from being a dark uninhabited planet to being populated with enlightened and immortal people.

Peter declared that "You who believe...are...His own special people" It was "Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" - 1 Peter 2:7-9. For this reason, the very first act of God was to dispel the natural darkness of the earth - "Then God said, 'LET THERE BE LIGHT'; and there was light" - Genesis 1:3 .

But Voltaire was mistaken to deny that there could be mornings and evenings before the fourth day, when "God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also" - Genesis 1:16. Details next time, God willing.