

# **WHY GENESIS?**

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The book of Genesis gives the history, the means, and the process of creation. But that book was not written at creation. I call your attention now to that fact, and want you to think for a while upon the meaning of that fact. I will state it again:

The first chapter of Genesis gives the history, the means, and the process of creation; but it was not written at creation.

Then is it not plain that, since the account of creation was not written at creation, but a long time afterward, there was a purpose in the writing of it beyond its being only a record of creation?

If the first chapter of Genesis had been written the next day after creation, it might be said that the primary purpose of the writing of it, was to give men an account of creation, but since it was not written until nearly two thousand years afterward, it must be plain that, since the people all this time had gotten along without any written record of creation, the primary purpose of the written record was beyond--the same thing, and more--than to tell how creation was wrought. For if I could get along all right for forty years without a certain record, and then God should cause that record to be written for me, would it not be plain that I need that record for something more than simply the record?

When was Genesis written? Genesis was written by Moses during the forty years he was keep ing the sheep of his father-in-law; but that was after the message had come to bring the people out of

Egypt.

The Lord had called Moses to deliver the people, but Moses had not yet learned just how. He made a mistake at the very start, and had to take forty years of instruction before this deliverance could be wrought; and in this forty years he wrote the book of Genesis.

The book of Genesis was, therefore, written at the time of coming out of Egypt, when God was to deliver his people from Egypt and set them a light in the world for all the world forever.

Look now in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus--the Song of Moses and the children of Israel after the crossing of the Red Sea; for that gives to us the statement of what it was to which God was bringing his people when he brought them out of Egypt.

“You in your mercy have led forth the people which you have redeemed, you have guided them in your strength unto your holy habitation. Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of your arm they shall be as still as a stone; till your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which you have purchased. You shall bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which you have made for yourself to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.” (Exodus 15:13,16-17)

This is emphasized in Revelation 15, in the record of that

company which stands on the sea of glass, “having the harps of God,” and who “had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name,” singing “the song of Moses the servant of God.”

First, “you shalt bring them into your holy habitation”-- to the place where God himself dwells; secondly, into “the mountain of your inheritance”-- the land of God's inheritance, “in the place, O Lord, which you have made for yourself to dwell in.”

Revelation 21 describes this same thing. The time comes when it is said,

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” (Revelation 21:3)

“In the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.” This is the heavenly sanctuary, for

“...of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” (Hebrews 8:1-2)

In Acts 7, it is said,

“But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt.” (Acts 7:17)

Then the deliverance came. God had sworn to Abraham, and had promised to give his seed the land which he saw, the world to come.

(Exodus 6:2-8)

“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord.” (Exodus 6:2-8)

When God gave that promise to Abraham and gave his oath, it was to Abraham and his seed: not to the seed without Abraham, or to Abraham without his seed. So when God was to bring them into the land which he swore unto Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to give it to them, they were all to be together.

God was to bring all of his people into the inheritance. Whether it would happen immediately or in process of time, is not material. The great object which God had in bringing the people of Israel out of Egypt was to bring them into the land which he had sworn to give to Abraham, and that land he says, is his holy habitation, the place which he made for himself to dwell in, the mountain of his own inheritance, and in the sanctuary which his own hands had established.

Since that was God's object in bring the people out of Egypt, and that promise to Abraham is the new earth which God will create, do you not see the object in the giving of Genesis then?

It was so that they should become acquainted with creation, with creative power, so that God by his creative power might recreate them and bring them into the new world, which he was to create and give to Abraham, according to that which he had promised him.

The object of God's giving Genesis just then was that the people might be prepared for the work which he had to do by them for all the world: the work by which he would prepare them for the

work which he was to do by them. For God's work is always creative.

### **What God does is always by creation**

The great thing of all to which God was to bring his people, was the newly created world. But it was impossible that they should come to that without being newly created themselves. Therefore, in order that they might have instruction in creation, he wrote out an account of creation as an object lesson, a school of instruction for every soul, that all might become acquainted with God's processes, with God's means, with God's creative power, so that God's work by them might be accomplished through its first being wrought in him.

And so they were a “church in the wilderness.” Jesus Christ took his place as the Head of that church. And here again we see his own processes of organization. He continued it, and kept it up until he came into the land of Canaan, and we have heard as to what God's object was in the land.

But the people missed God's object, and failing to see God's purpose in the instruction which he had given them, began to organize themselves. And the organization which they established when they did it themselves was a kingdom. They must have a king. Don't forget that; remember it as you walk along the street, wherever you may be--never forget that the ultimate end of every organization that man ever established is kingship, monarchy. And kingship among men, in the place of God, is despotism--and that is ruin.

This downward spiral began to be worked out in Israel, when they chose a king instead of the Lord, in the days of Samuel. Instead of keeping God's organization, and holding fast to the Head, they turned aside and made a head of their own, that they might be like all the nations around them. And indeed, they became like all the nations, and came to an end, as did all the nations around them.

First came the destruction to the ten tribes in the days of Babylon, and then the destruction of all the tribes at the destruction of Jerusalem, when they chose Caesar instead of God. For when Pilate had put before them the challenge, "Shall I crucify your King?" they replied, "We have no king but Caesar."

Then God started again on his course with his church, with Christ as the Head and the organizer. And the mystery of God was manifested and made known unto the sons of men as it was not known in all the ages before. The mystery which had been kept secret in times eternal, was made known to his saints, which is:

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

Christ was the head of every man, and the head of all by being the head of each.

But the mystery of iniquity arose, and put itself in the place of God, passing itself off for God. And so the mystery of God was hid again for ages and generations.



But thank the Lord, the day has come, when

“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that lives for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he has declared to his servants the prophets.” (Revelation 10:5-7)

The mystery of God shall once more stand forth in its sincerity, in its purity, in its power; and that power is the power of God.

The “seventh angel” referred to in Revelation 10 is the seventh trumpet angel, described in these verses:

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which are, and was, and are to come; because you have taken to yourself your great power, and have reigned. And the nations were angry, and your wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that you should give reward unto your servants the prophets, and to the

saints, and them that fear your name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.” (Revelation 11:15-19)

The “time of the dead, that they should be judged,” commenced with the ending of the 2300 day/year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which reached from 457 B.C., when the final decree was made to rebuild the temple and city of Jerusalem (Ezra 7:11-26); all the way down to 1844 A.D., when Christ entered upon his final work of judgment and cleansing in the temple of heaven.

There is to be no more delay, thank the Lord; there has been too much.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.” (Isaiah 11:11)

And he is to bring us into the land which he promised, which he swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

But that is to be by creation only, for he that sits upon the throne, when that day comes, says,

“Behold, I make all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)

So then, we are to enter into the promises and inheritance of Abraham only by the creative power of God.

The first chapter of Genesis is written for us, because those for whom it was written in times past did not learn the lesson. It has been delayed, frustrated, thrown aside here, thrown aside there, set aside in other places, but now the Lord has promised that there shall be no more delay.

“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” (Hebrews 10:37)

This is the time. God's purpose in the writing of Genesis has been frustrated so far, and now the time has come when he says it shall be done. Then the book of Genesis, and of all things the first chapter of Genesis, is present truth to us.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

And how did he do it?

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” (Psalm 33:6,9)

Now remember that is not written primarily as a history of creation, but primarily to bring to us God's means, God's process of creation, and to make us acquainted with that process. This is so that he can bring us to the great creation which has been prepared and promised ever since the days of Abraham.

What does that mean to us?

In that first word in Genesis there is a lesson for every one of us. God created the heavens and the earth, by his word. What about us?

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and flower falls away: But the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” (1 Peter 1:23- 25)

That word by which God created the heaven and the earth in the beginning is the word of the gospel, which is now preached unto you. Then the first words of Genesis contain the gospel. The first words of Genesis are the preaching of the gospel. And with that thought is connected the following:

“For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto

good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. Then the first step in Christianity, the first step in the course which God would have men take, can be taken only by creation, can be taken only by our being created. And becoming a Christian is just as much creation as was the making of the world in the beginning. No man can ever become a Christian except by being created, just as the world was created in the beginning.

And the great beauty of that truth is that it is so easy for it all to be done. For when we have it settled that it can be done only by creation, self is utterly left out of the picture. The human knows that there is no source of creation in himself; he simply has to quit trying. And when he knows that it can be done only by creation, and is brought face to face with the Creator, then it is easy. God can create simply by speaking the word.

“He spake, and it was.”

Let us read on:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” (Genesis 1:1-2)

Now we were all darkness; but God creates us new; and our

lives, until God does create us new, are less than nothing, worse than nothing. Yet when God creates us new as for any life of righteousness, any life of godliness, what is the situation? Isn't it formless and void?

When God takes a man from the world, from the darkness that may be felt, and creates him new, all that is before him is new. So I say as to that new life which the man is to find, and which is to be found in the man, what is his condition as relates to it except formless and void? But behold the next thing:

“...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” (Genesis 1:2-3)

Now the word “moved” means “brooded.” It is the same thought exactly as Jesus spoke to the people of Jerusalem:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets, and stone them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!” (Matthew 23:37)

The meaning is: “I would have gathered you; I would have brooded over you: I would have sheltered you and brought from this brooding that newborn thing, to the glory of God.”

The thought that Jesus expressed in these words about

Jerusalem is precisely the thought that he spoke in the second verse of Genesis. The Spirit of God brooded upon that created thing, which, until the Spirit of God came upon it, was without form and void. But when the Spirit of God came and brooded over it, organization began. Then began God's way of organizing.

Organization comes to the individual first of all, and from him is carried forward to others. God's organization must come from the Head, which is Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, and it then reaches to the individual.

Each individual is brought face to face with God, to stand there alone only with God. And God organizes him. This makes him self-governing. But no man in this world can be a self-governing individual except as God in Jesus Christ is his Head, and the man is governed by the power of God. The only self-government, true selfgovernment, in the world is a man standing in the liberty wherewith Jesus Christ has made him free, master of his worst self, and living in the divine self, which is Jesus Christ.

Then he has met the enmity, the evil, and has it underfoot; and there he stands in the heaven-born liberty with which God has made him free--a free, self-governing individual, as God made him to be in the beginning, and as he makes him to be when he creates him again.

Each one, then, must have set up in himself, and must be in himself, a local self-government, to the glory of God. But no man

can ever do that, except by the power of God in him: and no man can do that and remain a local self-governing man, except he stands alone with God, apart from every body else, and everything else, in the wide universe.

Now that does not separate him from all other people. Our truest unity, with other people is our sole loneliness with God. Our truest fellowship, our sincerest love, our tenderest sympathy, reaching out to all people, is found only in standing absolutely alone, separate from all other things, with God.

We must be brought face to face with God, each for himself alone, and alone with God. And for what shall we be brought face to face with God? To find our bearings, which we have been exhorted to find. And having found our bearings, then let God in Christ be the Head, and the grand organizer.

But this is accomplished only by the Spirit of God, who broods upon all. Jesus was here once, and was the Head of the Church when he was here. But he said,

“...It is expedient for you that I go away:” (John 16:7)

It is not good for you that I stay; I must go.

“...For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” (John 16:7)



There are more reasons than one; but the reason which concerns us just now, why Jesus should go away that the Comforter should come, is that Jesus in the flesh could not be in all places at once. He could not be in Australia, and be as well here in this place now in the flesh. But when he went away, he sent us the Holy Spirit, which broods over all God's creation; and by that Spirit, Jesus Christ can become the Head of every vestige of his creation.

Then when any soul, any individual on the earth, has found this creation, has become a part of the creation of God, the Holy Spirit broods over him; and so Christ becomes the Head of the individual, and that man has a Counselor who is more capable of giving counsel than is any man ever seated in a head office.

One of the chief advantages in that, is that Jesus Christ, the Head of that individual by his Holy Spirit, can give counsel and send help immediately, just when the help is needed.

That is an immense advantage over any other form of communication. May the Lord join us to himself; may we find that creative power in God, by which each soul shall find Jesus Christ, his Head and his Counselor, day and night forever. This is the process of creation.

Again to the first of Genesis:

“And the Spirit of God moved [brooded] upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

(Genesis 1:2-3)

And the light was the life. But creation was not finished. The creation was not completed; it was not perfected even now while the Spirit of God was brooding upon it. Other steps were taken. I need not follow each one in detail. The next thing was the firmament; then, the next day, the waters gathered together into one place, and the dry land appeared; then the next day the earth brought forth fruit; and so on through the six days.

Now note this next thought closely, and carefully, for it is a subtle thing, and requires a subtle mind to catch it; but when it is caught, it is forever. Those successive steps in the creation of the world, through the whole process of the creation, were not taken by growth from the original creation. The successive steps of the first chapter of Genesis were not taken by growth from the original act of creation. How were those steps taken? By successive creations.

We become Christians only by creation; we remain Christians only by creative power; we grow in Christian grace only by successive creations of God. There is no development in Christian life except by the direct creative power of God from heaven, through his word, by the Holy Spirit.

Now do you begin to see the philosophy of giving the record of creation to Israel as they come out of Egypt? God wanted each individual of Israel to know the creative power of God abiding in his life day and night, so that the creative power of God should be his

life. But that has been delayed, delayed, delayed, and it has now come to you and me; and we are the people now to whom God has written the first chapter of Genesis.

In our time the first chapter of Genesis is being set aside, and everything is explained to be made by evolution instead of creation. But it is precisely in this time that God is revealing to us the true philosophy of the first chapter of Genesis. In his people, God wants to hold up before the world his light and the power of his creation against the insidious deceptions of Satan, that are leading away the world into the everlasting abyss.

That is what is in this; and God wants every one of us to become thus connected with that creative power, to find that creative power living in us, as the only means of our progress, of our Christian growth, in order that we can stand in the light of God, and upon that firm foundation of the word of God, and certify to the world in such a way that the world cannot doubt it.

They may reject it by not choosing to surrender to it; but they cannot doubt it; the power will be in it. He wants us to certify that the evolutionary explanation for the first chapter of Genesis is a false philosophy, and merely so-called science. He wants the true science of Genesis to stand out. He wants the true philosophy of Genesis to be a light to the world. The true science and philosophy of Genesis is creation. And no man can teach it, no man can set it forth, unless he knows it in his own life.

Now, these successive steps in creation were not by growth from the original. Each step was taken by a direct creation by God speaking the word.

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters... ..and it was so. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night... ..and it was so.” (Genesis 1:6-7,9,11,14-15)

But when we have to grow by trying to do better, and swearing off this, that, and the other, it is a wearisome, tiresome, and fruitless process.

Oh when we know that the true progress, the true growth of Christian life, the true development of the Christian heart, is by the successive creations of God through his spoken word in the Spirit, then all that is needed is to find the word; and it is done. Here is the true remedy.

Have you found yourself barren? Have you found things in your life, while trying to establish righteousness, that utterly failed? What is the remedy? When I find a lack in my life--that which is not of God, that which is not a reflection of the word of God--I must search the Scriptures till I find the word of God speaking to me on

that question, and then that word creates me new in that thing, and the old is passed away, and all has become new.

That is the philosophy of searching the Scriptures. To search the Scriptures for doctrine, to search the Scriptures for sermons, to search the Scriptures for arguments, is all vanity, vexation of spirit, and idolatry.

But to search the Scriptures to find the creative word of God, to choose creation, the righteousness of God in the place of my sin--that will put the power of God, the strength of God, in the place of my weakness; that will make God appear in the place of myself. That is the searching of the Scriptures, that is the salvation of the soul. And is there not room enough? Is there not sufficient ground for us to begin that kind of searching of the Scriptures?

It is a blessed prospect, a message of good cheer, to every soul who finds himself destitute, who finds himself cast down, who finds himself the victim of the power of the enemy--it is a blessed message that God sends, that "He spoke, and it was done." Only find the spoken word of God, and your infirmity is gone before his creative power, spoken through the Spirit.

"He spoke, and it was." This word of God is just as much the spoken word of God as was that word which he spoke in the beginning; the word that created the heaven and earth.

Again to Genesis: this process of successive creations went on

until God's ideal appeared: the perfect man. There he stood, the perfect man, created by the power of God; and he stood as the son of God:

“...which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”  
(Luke 3:38)

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.” (Genesis 2:1)

And then God rested. The Sabbath was the seal --the delightful, refreshing rest which God took, beholding the finished creation from the beginning unto perfection.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...”  
(Ephesians 2:10)

The Spirit of God broods upon this new creation, causing the spoken creative word to bring to perfection this new creation:

“...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13)

Then the seal of God will be affixed. Then the Lord will rest again, and will joy over us with singing. He will rest.

“...he will rest in his love.” (Zephaniah 3:17)

God is to rest again. When Jesus came here, he said,

“My Father works hitherto, and I work.” (John 5:17)

But the time is coming when he will rest again.

In the original creation, the Father worked and Jesus worked through the Holy Spirit that accompanied the work and perfected the creation, in which God rejoiced, and from which he rested and was refreshed.

But that creation was ruined, and God began again to create, and he has kept it up till now, and soon it is to be finished, and then when it is finished-- let us read it in the word of God:

“The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity...” (Zephaniah 3:13)

Here is the same remnant mentioned in Revelation 12:17 that “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

“The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the

LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.”  
(Zephaniah 3:13-15)

Bless the Lord!

“In that day...” (Zephaniah 3:16)

Here is what is just before us. “That day” is now! Hear the word:

“In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear not: and to Zion, Let not your hands be slack. The Lord your God in the midst of you is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over you with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over you with singing.” (Zephaniah 3:16-17)

God is going to rest again and be refreshed, when this creation which he has brought to us is finished under the blessed brooding of the Spirit of God. That is so. You know it is written that in the last times God's people are to be covered with the covering of his Spirit (Isaiah 30:1, Joel 2); and now is the time.

The thing for us to do is to recognize that fact, recognize this creative power of God, find it for ourselves, creating us new, and ever walk, ever dwell, in the presence of that brooding Spirit.

Then what was spoken to Mary will also apply to us:



“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke 1:35)

For that brooding Spirit is a fructifying Spirit. Then we shall exclaim, and sing with joy:

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” (1 John 3:1)

Then it will be true also that

“...the world knows us not, because it knew him not.” (1 John 3:1)

The world has known us too well. It has had cause to know us. We have been so much like the world, that the world recognized us: but the Lord will deliver us from all that, and the world shall know us no more, because it shall not be able to recognize us as of the world. It will know that we are not of the world; that our interest are not centered in earthly things; and that brooding Spirit will put upon us such a character and will cause us to speak such words, and will give to us such an appearance in the world, that nothing but heaven can recognize us; and that recognition is enough.

This is the beginning of Genesis. It is not all the book. Remember, all the book was written while Moses was there keeping the sheep, and all the book belongs to us now. But none of the rest

of the book will count for us, unless we find the science and the philosophy of the first chapter of the book: for that is the beginning of God's creation and God's processes and of everything, and nothing is found as it truly is until we find that. In the light of that first chapter, all the rest will be plain, and all the rest is ours, thank the Lord.

Let us search the Scriptures. Let us read the first chapter of Genesis. A good plan to follow is to read over and over, over and over, the first chapter of Genesis, until we shall see in it, with our eyes shut, Christian experience in every verse, and in our own lives day by day.

Then the Spirit of God will brood upon that creation which God is carrying on to bring us unto perfection in Christ Jesus, so that the work of God shall be done, the triumph of the saints shall come, and we shall rejoice before the Lord now and forevermore.

Then the church shall indeed grow into an holy temple in the Lord:

“That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:27)