

ascendency of His goodness, but with an ulterior end transcending all finite thought. For the rest, this subject links Creation with Providence, and will return upon us.

The
Created
Universe.

THE CREATED UNIVERSE.

Sundry comprehensive terms are used in Scripture to embrace and describe the sum of creaturely existence. The most convenient theological distribution of the entire Creation for our present purpose is that which divides it into the Spiritual World, the Material Universe, and Man as uniting both in himself.

The Old Testament begins its announcement of the creation of all things by saying that *God created* THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH, and retains that designation throughout its whole compass to the end. The New Testament adds many other general descriptive definitions: Πάντα and τὰ Πάντα, *all things*, modified as all things *visible and invisible*; ἡ Κτίσις, *the creation of God*; ὁ Κόσμος, *the world* in its vast order; οἱ Αἰῶνες, *the worlds*, in their sæcular succession. These expressions approach very nearly the classical τὸ Πάν of ancient philosophy, the Universum, or the modern term Universe as the system of created things.

Gen. i. 1.
John. i. 3.
Col. i. 16.
Rev. iii. 14.
John xvii. 5.
Heb. i. 2.

Angelo-
logy.

ANGELS AND SPIRITS.

Revelation gives a large place to an order of intelligences higher than man: the history of creation, the records of providence, and the economy of redemption, connect them with mankind in various ways. We now consider them simply as part of the creation of God, and as to their place in the economy of things. They are everywhere designated Spirits and Angels. Being Spirits they are represented as, to a certain extent, independent of matter; highly exalted in their faculties; diversified in their range of existence; under a law of probation; and, as a result of that probation, distributed into two classes

of good and evil. As Angels, they are represented as attendants on the Supreme, employed in the service of His providence; and especially as connected for good or evil with the history of the Divine purpose in redemption, from its origin upon earth throughout all its processes to its close at the final judgment.

SPIRITS.

Spirits.

The name Spirits is given to these creatures of God to denote their specific nature, concerning which we are of necessity shut up entirely to the teaching of Holy Scripture.

1. They occupy a sphere of existence less closely connected with the material universe than that of man in his present estate. Their spirituality, however, must not be misunderstood. It seems to be synonymous with invisibility in the only passage which directly links them with the creaturely universe, or records their creation: by Christ *were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible*. God alone is pure essential Spirit: these created spirits are clothed upon with ethereal vestures, such as Paul describes when he says, *There is a spiritual body*. Thus our Lord tells us that the *children of the resurrection* are *ισάγγελοι, equal unto the angels*. Having a more subtle organisation than man, they are at present higher in their range of faculties: *greater in power and might* and *angels that excel in strength*. But what their faculties are, what organs they use, and what is the bond between their psychology and our own, we know not. They were created at once and in a wide variety of grades. Though the description *thrones, dominions, principalities, powers*, partly refers to their ministerial offices, there are other indications of a boundless range of existence in the super-terrestrial world, answering to the abundance and diversity of life upon earth; but without the law of species, and admitting of no increase by generation or development: they are all and individually, as created at once one by one, *sons of God* by direct filiation. Hence the revelation of Scripture discloses precisely such a continuation upwards of the scale of being as analogy would suggest: as in the lower orders the species is all and the individual nothing, as in man the species

Relation
to Matter.

Col. i. 16.

1 Cor. xv.
44.
Lu. xx. 36.
2 Pet. ii
11.
Ps. ciii.
20.

Col. i. 6

Job i. 6

and the individual are blended, so in the upper world the species is lost, and each is apart and alone before God : all, however, being marshalled and distributed into orders of the laws of which we know nothing save that they do not include species and generation.

Probation
and Fall.
Jude 6.

1 Tim. iii.
6.

Mark v.

9.

Rev. xii.

4.

1 Cor. vi.

3.

2 Pet. ii. 4.

1 Tim. v.

21.

Deut.

xxxiii.

2.

Ch. i.

Ch. vi

2. All spirits were created in the image of God : and their *first estate* was probationary : this law of the moral government of the Most High seems to be universal. In the constitution of their nature lay the possibility of falling from their allegiance. The issue of probation was the fall of a portion of these spirits, with One as their head. These, sharing his rebellion, were condemned with him. We read once of *the condemnation of the devil* : a remarkable expression, which can have but one meaning, as no created being has the authority to condemn. Hence we gather that Satan, before a tribunal of which we have no record, was convicted of pride and cast out of his high place ; doomed to a degradation commensurate with the height of his former dignity. Many fell into his apostasy, and were condemned to the same ruin : how many we need not ask, though it is observable that all the notes of multitude which the Scripture uses are employed to swell the numbers of the good spirits. On the other side we hear one say, *My name is Legion*, and that they constituted *the third part of the stars of heaven* : words on which we cannot lay any stress. But their sentence is for mysterious reasons not yet fully executed : they are reserved for a last judgment and sentence : *know ye not that we shall judge angels* ? The great majority—not of *the angels that sinned*—were confirmed in their state of holiness for ever : they are, therefore, *elect angels* ; elect, as in the case of man, not through pre-ordination, but through approval and separation from the doomed of their own order. Hence, they are also termed Saints : *He came with ten thousands of saints*. The whole economy of the angel world as known to man is divided into two orders, retaining severally their orderly ranks, as a good and an evil hierarchy. The Epistle to the Ephesians, which gives in compensation to those who burned their books of curious arts the most explicit revelation touching the spiritual world, refers in the beginning to the ranks of the better class, and in the end to the ranks of the fallen. But it must be observed that the evil are generally designated spirits, the good are almost invariably angels :

the exceptions on either side are few. The spirits of evil are pre-eminently Satan or the Devil, and dæmons, or *unclean spirits*; Satan the first sinner, the first tempter, the true Antichrist, and, retaining one of his archangel names, the *prince* or *god of this world*; and devils, *δαίμονία*, who in great numbers troubled the bodies and souls of men while their Head assailed the Redeemer. When we reach the doctrine of Sin it will be necessary to introduce these higher intelligences again.

3. While the good and unfallen spirits are generally the Holy Angels, and the evil spirits of Scripture are not generally termed by that name, yet these are also represented as subserving the purposes of the Supreme. Even if they are the servants of their prince, both they and he alike must directly or indirectly, by command or by permission, do the behest of the only Supreme Will. In the mystery of that will they are left in the free restraint or the restrained freedom of the sphere of the redeeming economy. Satan is the *prince of the power of the air*, and his hosts are *spiritual wickedness in high places*; but both the air and the high places are within the Saviour's domain: His authority compasses our world, and no line limits it outward. Still more strange is it that both in ancient and in modern revelation the ministers of evil are exhibited as in the upper spiritual world: a true *wonder in heaven*. But the term is used here symbolically for the spiritual sphere only. It may be noted, finally, that while the Divine Being uses the good spirits to chastise wickedness, almost always the evil spirits are used to discipline the offending righteous.

Mark i 27
Zech. xiii.
2.
John xiv.
30.

Good and
Evil.

Eph ii.
2.
Eph. vi.
12.

Rev. xii.
3.

ANGELS.

Angels.

The denomination Angels, which runs through the Scriptures as pervadingly as the name of God Himself, before Whom they stand, is used with reference to their ministerial service; as the Hebrew *מַלְאָכִים* and the Greek *ἄγγελος* signify. With the exception of some few passages, such as *the Devil and his angels*; *Messenger*, or *angel, of Satan*; *the Dragon fought and his angels*—which do not use the term in an official sense, and are therefore scarcely exceptions,—the angels are the attendants on God and ministers of His will

Matt. xxv.
41.

2 Cor. xii.
7.
Rev. xii 7