NOTES AND STUDIES

GENESIS I—III AND ST JOHN'S GOSPEL.

In his introduction to the 'Johannine Vocabulary' Dr Edwin Abbott points out the real difficulty of Johannine exegesis: 'A mere glance at the R.V. marginal notes on the Gospels will shew the reader that, in the synoptists, the notes mostly suggest alternative readings, but in the Fourth Gospel they suggest alternative renderings. The former imply corruption in editors or scribes, the latter imply obscurity in the author...'. The Fourth Gospel contains many words and phrases which bear two or even three meanings, and each different meaning carries with it further allusion and suggestion. Those commentators who are concerned with the problem of historicity often fail to note the suggestive character of the Gospel; whilst others, who feel the ambiguity of meaning, take refuge in a bald and crude symbolism, which confines the author's meaning within too narrow limits, and ultimately destroys his ambiguity. The notes which follow endeavour to fix the origin of a series of suggestions in the Gospel; but it is not intended to limit the meaning of the passages discussed, or to exaggerate such suggestions so as to turn allusion into symbolism.

The quotations from the Fathers in the Corderius catena on John xix. 31 ff, and the passage in Ephraem's commentary on the Diatessaron (Moesinger 260) shew that, in the interpretation of the Johannine account of the Crucifixion, traditional exegesis apparently naturally compared and contrasted Adam and Christ. This raises certain considerations. Are the Fathers imposing such an interpretation upon the text, or are they drawing out a meaning suggested in the text itself? And further, are there other passages in the Gospel which presuppose a similar parallel? The problem may be approached by a study of John xix. 26, 27.

The Beloved Disciple and Mary the mother of Jesus are standing by the cross, παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ; and Jesus, seeing them there, unites them as mother and son. Mary is called ἡ Μητὴρ absolutely and Γένει. ἦσον οὖν, ἵδον τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὁ ἤγαπα, λέγει τῇ μητρί, Γένει, ἵδοι, ὁ νῦν σοῦ. That they do not immediately go away is shewn clearly in v. 35, in which the mysterious eyewitness, who is the authority for the Gospel, and who is variously described as ὁ ἄλλος μαθητής, and ὁ μαθητής ὁ ἤγαπα ὁ ἦσον, sees the Blood and the Water coming from the pierced side, and presumably falling on those who
stand below, that is upon the Mother and the Son. This is the scene
St John is describing. For our purpose verses 30 and 34 are important.
Καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, with its parallels, ἀφῆκε τὸ
πνεῦμα (Mt.), ἔξεπνευσε (Mk.), πάτερ, εἰς χεῖράς σου παρατίθεμαι τὸ πνεῦμα
μου (Lk.). St Mark suggests that there is a mystery connected with
ἔξεπνευσεν, by noting that the centurion was compelled to faith when he
saw that He thus ‘breathed out’. St Matthew also describes suggestively
that ‘He let go the spirit’, not ‘His spirit’. St Luke reports
a saying which explains the death as the handing over of His spirit—to
the Father. St John says that having inclined His head, He handed
over the Spirit; and from the chapters which precede, it is suggested that
the Spirit is handed over to the Mother and the Son, whilst the second
meaning of κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν, of reclining in sleep, suggests the peace
of the return to the Father, which is also foretold in the preceding chap-
ters. In the description of the death St John therefore suggests that while
Jesus returns to the peace of the Father, the Spirit is left with the be-
lievers, which is what we have been led to expect from chapters xiii–xvii.
The Spirit of Life is thus handed over to the Mother and the Son, and
they are re-created or reborn with a new life, which is eternal, ζωὴ αἰώνιας;
and the Spirit, freed by the sacrifice of the only-begotten Son, is the
means of re-creation, as in Gen. i 2 the Spirit of God is the means of
the original creation. Mary, the Mother, is, however, not re-created
merely as an individual; the title ‘mother’ implies children, and it is
through her that the life is passed on. Her new son already stands by
her side.

The title, Γυνῆ, is thus significant, standing as it does immediately
following ἡ μήτηρ. Its meaning in Jn. xvi 21 is clear, where St John
describes the pain and joy of the woman who bears a man. The change of παιδίων to ἄνθρωπος and ἡ ὥρα suggests that it is to the birth
of believers the passage refers in point of fact. ἡ γυνὴ ὅταν τίκτη λύτην
ἐχει, ὅτι ἠλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς ὅταν δὲ γεννήσῃ τὸ παιδίων, οὐκέτι μυθολογεῖ τῆς
θλίψεως, διὰ τὴν χαρὰν ὅτι ἐγεννήθη ἄνθρωπος εἰς τὸν κόσμον. In any
case, whatever suggestions there may be, ἡ γυνὴ is the woman as mother,
and this use of γυνὴ can be exactly paralleled in Gen. ii 23. αὐτὴ
κληθῆσεται Γυνῆ (Theod. Ζωογόνος) and in Gen. iii 20 καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Ἀδὰμ
tὸ ὄνομα τῆς γυναικὸς Ζωῆ, ὅτι αὐτὴ μήτηρ πάντων τῶν ἔως. If this be
the true significance of γυνὴ as applied to Mary, its use in Jn. ii 4 τὸ
ἐμὸι καὶ σοί, γύναι; οὔπω ἢκεὶ ἡ ὥρα μου becomes clear. Because Mary
is the mother of Jesus, she will become the mother of those who believe
in Him. This second motherhood of Mary is anticipated, whose hour
will come when the sacrifice on the cross has been offered. ‘Woman’
is a far better translation than ‘Lady’. When, therefore, the Fathers
say that Mary is the new Eve, they have caught the meaning of the
passage far better than modern commentators; for, while Eve was the mother of a sinful people who ceased to have real contact with God, Mary is the mother of believers, who, redeemed from sin, are reborn and abide (μένειν) with God. In this Christian motherhood of Mary the other great women of St John’s Gospel to some extent share. The woman of Samaria brings the Samaritans to Jesus, that is to Life; Mary Magdalene first sees the living Lord in the garden and tells the disciples. This idea of motherhood explains the group of women, who in St John’s account of the Crucifixion stand παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ, and not as in Mk. xv 40 ἀπὸ μακρῶθεν. The ‘sister of his mother’ is further defined as the [mother] of Cleopas, a disciple, Lk. xxiv 18, or if it be translated the ‘wife of Cleopas’ (Alphaeus), she would be the mother of James, Mt. x 3. They are all mothers; Mary Magdalene finding her true motherhood springing from the sacrifice of the Lamb. They are the mothers of the new Israel, among whom Mary, the mother of Jesus, is supreme.

The same allusion is found in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, where the Γυνή—Μητήρ is also referred to. There the woman is first the mother of the child, who is caught up to God and to His throne, xii 5, and then also the mother of the Christians, who are called ‘the remnant of her seed, who keep the commands of God and have the testimony of Jesus’ (a phrase which incidentally is Johannine). Both the mother and her seed fly to the desert, where they are persecuted by the great dragon, the old serpent, called in v. 15 simply ‘the serpent’. The Mother of the Messiah is also the mother of the believers, and is persecuted by the serpent, but in contrast to Eve protects her seed from the serpent’s power. The suggestion is that the mother of the Lord and of those who believe in Him is the new Eve, still persecuted by the serpent; but, where Eve failed by handing her seed over to death, the new Eve is victorious by bearing children who possess eternal life.

Justin Martyr in the Dialogue 100, commenting on Lk. i 35, draws the same parallel between Eve and Mary, ... καὶ διὰ τῆς παρθένου ἄνθρωπον γενονέναι, ἵνα δὲ ἔστω ῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅφειν παρακοφὴ τὴν ἄρχην ἔλαβε, διὰ ταύτης τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ κατάλυσιν λαβῇ. Παρθένος γὰρ οὖσα Εὔα καὶ ἄρθρος, τὸν λόγον τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅφειν συλλαβοῦσα παρακοφὴ καὶ βάναυσον ἔτεκε· πιάτῳ δὲ καὶ χαρὰν λαβοῦσα Μαρία ἡ παρθένος, εὐαγγελισμένον αὐτῇ Γαβριὴλ ἀγγέλῳ ὧν πνεῦμα Κυρίον ἐπὶ αὕτην ἐπελεύστηκαι καὶ δύναμις ὕψιστον ἐπισκάσας αὐτὴν ... There is no reason to suppose that such a comparison was first drawn in the second half of the second century, and we may even suggest further that the mother of Jesus was historically of far more importance within the community of original believers than modern critics have allowed.

Returning to the Gospel, xix 31 ff, the mother and the son remain
with the other women by the cross whilst the soldier pierces the side, from which is poured out Water and Blood. The earlier chapters of the Gospel prepare us for the interpretation of the death on the cross as the sacrifice of the true Lamb of God, by which those who believe receive both purification and life. Modern commentators have pointed out that St John describes the Crucifixion so as to draw attention to the truth that Jesus is the real Paschal Lamb; but they have not seen that the Lamb presupposes a people to receive the benefit of the sacrifice, and that the group at the foot of the cross are in fact the new and true Israel. Thus the original believers stand beneath the cross to receive the new birth very literally ‘from above’ through the Spirit breathed upon them, and through the Water and the Blood poured out upon them. Very striking passages in the Gospel anticipate and interpret this incident, eis tis diψη, ἔρχατον πρὸς µὲ καὶ πινέτω. ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἑµέ, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, πισταµοῖ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ πρεύσουσιν ὦδατος ζῶντος, vii 37, 38. The ambiguity of ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἑµὲ— it may be subject to ἔρχασθω and πινέτω, or explanatory of αὐτοῦ—is caused by the double nature of Christian experience; the new life comes from Jesus, but is passed on to the world through the faithful. 'Ἀµην ἀµην λέγω σοί, εἰν µὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, iii 3. In iii 5 ἄνωθεν is explained as εἰς ὦδατος καὶ πνεύµατος, and the whole passage both illustrates and is illustrated by the account of the Crucifixion, where Jesus is lifted up in death and those below receive both Spirit and Water. The connexion between the Blood of Jesus and eternal life is definitely stated, ὁ τρώµων µου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων µου τὸ ἀµα ἔχει ἑων αἰώνων, vi 54, whilst the famous passage in the first Epistle i Jn. v 8 provides the basis for the true interpretation of the incident in the Crucifixion with which we are dealing. In the Epistle St John brings together the Spirit and the Water and the Blood which bear witness to the conquest of the world by Jesus, and to the new birth of the Christians as nothing less than birth from God.

The idea of re-creation and new birth therefore underlies St John’s account of the death on the cross, and Mary herself, as the mother of the faithful, shares in this rebirth. If this be accepted we can hardly dismiss as fantastic the allusion implied in the account of the reclining of the head of Jesus in sleep, followed immediately by the rebirth of Mary from his side. The account suggests Gen. ii 21–22 καὶ ἐπέβαλεν ὁ θεὸς ἑκοστασιν ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀδὰµ, καὶ ὑπνώσας· καὶ ἐλαβεν µίαν τῶν πλευρῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεπλήρωσεν σάρκα ἀντ’ αὐτῆς. καὶ ὑποδόµησεν Κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὴν πλευράν, ἦν ἐλαβεν απὸ τοῦ Ἀδὰµ, εἰς γυναίκα, and Tertullian’s comment De anima 43 represents real insight, ‘For as Adam was a figure of Christ, Adam’s sleep shadowed out the death of Christ, who was to sleep a mortal slumber, that from the wound inflicted on His
might, in like manner (as Eve was formed), be typified the church the true mother of the living.'

The study of Jn. xix 31 ff has shewn the idea of re-creation to be fundamental to St John, and has further presented some evidence that in his narrative he alludes to the opening chapters of the book of Genesis. If other passages in the Gospel can be interpreted in the same way, the argument will be strengthened.

Some modern commentators have noticed that in the account of the Crucifixion St John alone uses the words κηπος, κηπουρος. In the parable of the mustard seed St Luke uses the word once, Lk. xiii 19, but otherwise the word is not used in the N.T. The Johannine passages are: ταῦτα εἶπον ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξηλθε συν τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τῶν Κέδρων, ὅπου ἦν κήπος, εἰς δὲ εἰσῆλθεν αὐτός καὶ οἱ μαθηταί αὐτοῦ. xviii 1, cf. xviii 26; ἵνα δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐστεαυρώθη κῆπος, καὶ ἐν τῷ κηπῳ μνημείων καυνόν, ἐν δὲ οὐδεὶς οὐδεὶς ἐτέθη, xix 41; λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς; ἐκεῖνη, δοκοῦσα ὅτι ὁ κηπουρός ἐστι, λέγει αὐτῷ, Κύριε . . . , xx 15. For St John, therefore, the Betrayal and the Resurrection take place in a garden, and the site of the Crucifixion is closely connected with a garden. In the O.T. the word κῆπος is used as a synonym for παράδεισος, ἐποίησα μοι κῆπος καὶ παράδεισος, Eccles. ii 5; in Ecclus. xxiv 23-34 Wisdom waters her garden, and creates the true garden of Eden, which the first man did not perfectly know, ὡς ἑδραγωγὸς ἔξηλθον εἰς παράδεισον εἰσα Ποτῶ μοι τὸν κῆπον. In the LXX the 'Garden of the Lord', ἡ γῆ τῆς, is translated by παράδεισος in Gen. ii and iii, but the version of Aquila has κῆπος in Gen. ii 8, iii 2, and in Isa. xli 3, 'For the Lord hath comforted Zion; he hath comforted all her waste places, he hath made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert places like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.' Cf. also Ezek. xxxi 8, 9 where the Garden of the Lord is Eden. The version of Theodotion also has κῆπος in Gen. iii 2, Isa. li 3, Ezek. xxviii 13, xxxi 8. We may therefore conclude that the Garden of the Lord, the true Eden, could be in Greek either ὁ παράδεισος τοῦ κυρίου or ὁ κῆπος τοῦ κυρίου, but that in the translation made in the first half of the second century A. D. ὁ κῆπος τοῦ κυρίου is preferred.

Κηπουρός is used neither in the O.T. nor in the N.T. except in Jn. xx 15. Mary thinks that Jesus is the gardener. The real question is, is she right or wrong? There are passages in St John's Gospel where a statement is made which at first sight is obviously mistaken, but which proves on further consideration to be as a matter of fact true, because the speaker makes use of words which have a double meaning. The woman of Samaria says, πόθεν σὺν ἔχεις τὸ ὕδωρ τῷ ζῶν; μὴ σὺ μεῖζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν ἵκαβα . . . ; iv 12. Jesus will not give her 'running
water’ as opposed to well-water, which she wishes; but he will give her ‘living water’, which she really requires; and as a matter of fact he is greater than Jacob. The true interpretation depends on an understanding of the double meaning of τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν. Caiaphas says συμφέρει ὑμῖν, ἵνα εἰς ἀνθρωπὸς ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ μὴ ὄλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται καὶ 50; as he means it, what he says is totally false; and yet what he says is true, if the words ἀποθάνῃ, ἔθνος, ἀπόληται be rightly understood. St Peter says ὑπάγω ἄλλες ἔως. He was wrong if he meant that he was going back to Galilee to return to his old occupation; but, as the miracle which follows shews, he is as a matter of fact to go away into the world to catch men. In its true meaning ὑπάγω picks up αὐτὸς, ἢπάγητε καὶ καρπὸν φέρητε... and ἄλλες ἔως has the same double meaning as is implied in Lk. v 1-11. When therefore Mary thinks that the risen Lord is the gardener, we cannot be content merely to say that she was mistaken. The key to the interpretation of the incident is to be found in the further meaning suggested by κῆπος, κηπουρός. By emphasizing that the great deeds by which Christian redemption was effected took place in a garden, St John suggests that the events which caused the original fall are here reversed, and once again the Garden of Eden is open to men. Mary’s words are then true, the risen Lord is ὁ Κηπουρός, for He is the Lord of the Garden, and once more He walks in His garden in the cool of the day, the early morning, xx 1, and converses not with the fallen but with the redeemed. The importance of the Betrayal in a garden is also now clear; Satan, the prince of this world, in Judas (xiii 2-27) again attempts to betray the Man; but, where the serpent succeeded, Judas failed, since the death which Judas-Satan caused was not a punishment for sin, but the means of new creation by which Eden was reopened. ‘The Prince of this world cometh, but he hath nothing in me’: cf. xviii 3. Incidentally this series of suggestions explains the ἐξω in xii 31. The Prince of this world is cast ‘out’ not ‘down’ (syr sin, it, chrys, read κατω in recollection of Lk. x 18).

The use of ἐμφυσάν in xx 22 is important for our purpose; καὶ τοῦτο εἰς ἑν τε καὶ λέγει αὐτῶν, Λάβετε πνεύμα ἄγιον. The word ἐμφυσάν occurs in the N.T. only in this passage, but it is used in the LXX twelve times, where it describes the method by which creation or re-creation or healing or destruction is effected. ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν πνεῦμα ζωῆς, Gen. ii 7, Wisd. xv 11; ἐμφύσησεν εἰς τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους, Ez. xxxvii 9, cf. Tob. xi 11; ἐνεφύσησεν τῷ παιδάρῳ τρίες, 1 Kings xvii 21; ἐν πυρὶ ὄργῃ μοι ἐμφυσησόμενο εἰπε σέ, Ez. xxi 31, cf. xxii 20-21, Job iv 21, Na. ii 1, Ecclus. xiii 4. It would appear that Jn. xx 22 re-echoes Gen. ii 7, as do all the other O.T. passages. When, therefore, the Lord breathes upon His disciples, they are through this action
reborn to the new life, and given new powers, and, because they are
reborn from God Himself, they share both in His creative and in His
destructive power; they too have power to re-create men by loosing
them from sin, and to destroy them by retaining their sins. This
explains naturally the words which follow immediately, ἐν τινῶν ἀφῆτε
τὰς ἀμαρτίας, ἀφίωντας αὐτοῖς· ἐν τινῶν κρατῆτε, κεκράτηται ἡ ἡμέρα. The
verbal parallel with Gen. ii 7 ceases to be fanciful and unnatural, if once
we are clear that St John is describing Christianity as the new creation
by God Himself, and the Christians as the new race. The phrase
γεγεννημένοι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ—ἐκ τοῦ πνείματος is either stated or implied
throughout the Gospel, as it is in the first Epistle, iii 3–8, xvi 21, i Jn.
ii 29, iii 9, iv 7, v 1, 4, 18. This underlying idea explains the importance
which St John attaches to the fact that the blind man in the ninth
chapter was blind 'from his birth'. Jesus does not merely heal him,
He re-creates him. And the meaning of the miracle was truly seen by
those who ordered this chapter to be read on the third Sunday in Lent,
when the catechumens were being finally prepared for baptism (Ambr.
de sacr. iii 2). Since Jesus is Himself born from God as the Eternal
Word, those who share in His life are also born from God, and whether
in i 13 we read ὅς . . . ἐγεννήθη or ὅς . . . ἐγεννήθησαν, both senses are
Johannine, and the problem can be understood better by the theologian
than by the textual critic. If St John wrote ὅς he implied ὅς, and vice
versa.

If re-creation by God is St John's primary explanation of Christian
experience, the Prologue ceases to present real difficulty. Dr Rendel
Harris in his 'Origin of the Prologue to St John's Gospel' has brought
back the study of i 1–14 from Hellenistic Philosophy to the Old Testa-
ment Wisdom Literature, and for this we cannot be too grateful. But he
has not explained the use of the word Λόγος. If his argument were
finally adequate, the Gospel should have opened with the words Ἐν
ἀρχῇ ἦν ἡ Σοφία. If, however, we take the opening chapters of Genesis
rather than the Wisdom Literature as the starting-point, and then use
the Wisdom Literature where it also is alluding to the Book of Genesis,
the theological as well as the linguistic difficulties of the Prologue can
be explained. Ἐν ἀρχῇ, ὅ θεός, ἐγένετο, σκοτία, κόσμος, φῶς, ἡμέρα, all
suggest the first chapter of Genesis. In his Johannine Grammar 2134
Dr E. Abbott explains the use of the Hebraic narrative καὶ: 'In the
opening of the Gospel John follows the style of the opening of Genesis,
not in affectation, but with a symbolism natural to him, sympathetically
describing what was “in the beginning” of Spiritual Being, as Genesis
describes what was in the beginning of material creation. But after the
Resurrection, when the apostles are receiving their morning meal before
going forth to convert the whole world, Greeks as well as Jews, “all
things are become new”, and the old-world Hebraic style is thrown aside.’ St John’s natural and instinctive sympathy with the first chapter of Genesis, to which Dr Abbott has drawn attention, supports an interpretation of the Gospel which insists on the importance to St John of Christianity as the new creation, and the return to the presence of God, which had been lost by the sin of Adam and Eve.

The relation of the Prologue to the opening of Genesis is, however, not primarily one of grammar or of vocabulary. The parallel lies rather in the underlying conception of creation as effected by the Word of God: speech being thought of as effective and creative rather than as descriptive. ‘And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.’ This attitude to the Word of God is preserved by the prophets. When God has spoken creation or destruction follows inevitably. The dramatic situation, for instance, of the Book of Amos, is not due primarily to any historical causes, but to the fact that God has spoken and destruction is imminent. The prophet is able to announce the coming destruction and to warn the people, because he has heard the Word of God uttered. This is the line of thought which lies behind the Prologue. Since Christianity is the new creation, such a creative act can only be explained by the claim that Jesus was the incarnate Word of God. For the same reason throughout the Gospel the words of Jesus are effective both in creation and in destruction, and thus both ως and κρίσις follow inevitably. This may be illustrated most clearly in the account of the raising of Lazarus: καὶ ταῦτα εἰπών, φωνὴ μεγάλη ἐκραύγασε, Λάζαρος δὲ ὤρω ἕως xii 43. These words actually caused the recreation of the decayed body of Lazarus. St John draws attention to this by noting that Jesus cried ‘with a loud voice’, and by his description of the miracle in xii 17 ἐμαντύρει σὺν ὁ ὃχλος ὁ ὃν μετ’ αὐτοῦ ὅτε τὸν Λάζαρον ἐφώνησεν ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου καὶ ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν. All who hear the word of Jesus have eternal life vii 68, are clean xv 3, have joy xvii 13, because the words of Jesus are creative words.

The conception of κρίσις in the Gospel belongs to the same line of thought. He who does not hear or believe the creative word comes under κρίσις. ὁ ἄθετων ἐμὲ καὶ μὴ λαμβάνω τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐχει τόν κρίνοντα αὐτῶν: ὁ λόγος ὃν ἑλάλησα, ἐκεῖνος κρινεῖ αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ xii 48. But destructive judgement takes a secondary place in the Gospel, because St John is concerned primarily with Christianity as creative rather than destructive. ‘For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.’

To sum up. What originally appeared a somewhat fantastic interpretation of a single incident in the account of the Crucifixion has led to an interpretation of other passages, and has thrown considerable
light on the great underlying claims of the Gospel. The theory, with which we started, has been found to explain much which has often appeared inexplicable, and since this is the only means by which a theory can be tested, the fact that it does explain what commentators do not explain inspires confidence that the theory at least contains truth. St John is dealing with the experience of Christianity, and he asserts that it is nothing less than a new creation. He explains this experience by saying that the author of the original creation and the author of Christianity are the same—namely God Himself. But since Christian tradition claimed Jesus of Nazareth as the founder of the religion, St John harmonizes Christian experience and Christian tradition by interpreting the life of Jesus as the life of the incarnate Word of God, by whom the universe was originally created. Thus the Life of Jesus is rewritten in St John's Gospel from this point of view, and the passages, which we have examined, shew that the account of the Creation and of the Fall in Genesis has influenced his account of the life and death of Jesus.

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