

## Creation of the Earth

Immediately after the prayer of the faithful choirs and that movement in the Godhead, I saw below me, not far from and to the right of the world of shadows, another dark globe arise. I fixed my eyes steadily upon it. I beheld it as if in movement, growing larger and larger, as it were, bright spots breaking out upon it and encircling it like luminous bands. Here and there, they stretched out into brighter, broader plains, and at that moment I saw the form of the land setting boundaries to the water. In the bright places I saw a movement as of life, and on the land I beheld

vegetation springing forth and myriads of living things arising. Child that I was, I fancied the plants were moving about.

Up to this moment, there was only a gray light like the sunrise, like early morn breaking over the earth, like nature awakening from sleep.

And now all other parts of the picture faded. The sky became blue, the sun burst forth, but I saw only one part of the earth lighted up and shining. That spot was charming, glorious, and I thought: There's Paradise!

While these changes were going on upon the dark globe, I saw, as it were, a streaming forth of light out of that highest of all the spheres, the God-sphere, that sphere in which God dwelt.

It was as if the sun rose higher in the heavens, as if bright morning were awakening. It was the first morning. No created being had any knowledge of it, and it seemed as if all those created things had been there forever in their unsullied innocence. As the sun rose higher, I saw the plants and trees growing larger and larger. The waters became clearer and holier, colors grew purer and brighter—all was unspeakably charming. Creation was not then as it is now. Plants and flowers and trees had other forms. They are wild and misshapen now compared with what they were, for all things are now thoroughly degenerate.

When looking at the plants and fruits of our gardens, apricots, for instance, which in southern climes are, as I have seen, so different from ours, so large, magnificent, and delicious, I often think: As miserable as are our fruits



compared with those of the South, are the latter when compared with the fruits of Paradise. I saw there roses, white and red, and I thought them symbols of Christ's Passion and our Redemption. I saw also palm trees and others, high and spreading which cast their branches afar, as if forming roofs. Before the sun appeared, earthly things were puny; but in his beams they gradually increased in size, until they attained full growth.

The trees did not stand close together. Of all plants, at least of the largest, I saw only one of each kind, and they stood apart like seedlings set out in a garden bed. Vegetation was luxuriant, perfectly green, of a species pure, sound, and exempt from decay. Nothing appeared to receive or to need the attention of an earthly gardener. I thought: How is it that all is so beautiful, since as yet there are no human beings! Ah! Sin has not yet entered. There has been no destruction, no rending asunder. All is sound, all is holy. As yet there has been no healing, no repairing. All is pure, nothing has needed purification.

The plain that I beheld was gently undulating and covered with vegetation. In its center rose a fountain, from all sides of which flowed streams, crossing one another and mingling their waters. I saw in them first a slight movement as of life, and then I saw living things. After that I saw, here and there among the shrubs and bushes, animals peeping forth, as if just roused from sleep. They were very different from those of a later day, not at all timorous.

Compared with those of our own time, they were almost as far their superior as men are superior to beasts. They were pure and noble, nimble, and joyous. Words cannot describe them. I was not familiar with many of them, for I saw very few like those we have now. I saw the elephant, the stag, the camel, and even the unicorn. This last I saw also in the ark. It is remarkably gentle and affectionate, not so tall as a horse, its head more rounded in shape. I saw no asses, no insects, no wretched, loathsome creatures. These last I have always looked upon as a punishment of sin. But I saw myriads of birds and heard the sweetest notes as in the early morning. There were no birds of prey that I could see, nor did I hear any animals bellowing.

Paradise is still in existence, but it is utterly impossible for man to reach it. I have seen that it still exists in all its splendor. It is high above the earth and in an oblique direction from it, like the dark globe of the angels fallen from Heaven.