

Lessons from the Garden

1. Adam a type of Christ – see Romans 5

The story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden is one of the most ridiculed and disbelieved by the men and women of this world. Yet the name of Adam is found in the writings of Job, Luke, Paul and Jude. The Lord Jesus quotes from Genesis chapter 2 when dealing with the subject of marriage. So too does Paul when dealing with the same subject in Ephesians chapter 5.

One of Paul's references to Adam is in Romans chapter 5:14:

Who is the figure of Him that was to come

We are familiar with many men in the bible whom we use as types or pictures of the Lord Jesus. We can find characteristics in their lives which are similar in some respects to the Lord when He came into the world. Only one man however is said to be a type of Christ and that is Adam. Paul so describes Adam in the above passage in Romans. This present study does not only look at Adam personally but will also consider Eve as a type of the Church, the bride of Christ. We are looking generally at lessons from the garden of Eden.

2. Genesis 1:26 Adam in the image and likeness of God

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness

No doubt many have tried throughout the ages to form a picture of what God is like. The above verse tells us that man was made in the image and likeness of God. As to appearance, we are like God and He is like us. The Bible tells us that Moses saw His back as God passed by when he was in the cleft of the rock. In Matthew 18, the Lord told His disciples that the angels do always behold the face of the Father. In Revelation 5, John writes about the book in the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne.

God therefore made Adam in order that the man might be His representative here in this world. Adam soon forfeited that place as a result of the fall

Today, in the assembly, the male member of the company is said to be the image and glory of God. He is God's representative on earth. If men wanted to know what God is like, they should be able to see His features in the brethren. I Corinthians 11 is often used to challenge the sisters in the company, but the biggest challenge is laid at the feet of the brethren. How true is it of me, that I represent Christ in this world? In II Peter 1:4, Peter tells us that we are partakers of the divine nature. God is love therefore I should show love in my life. God is forgiving, therefore I should forgive those who trespass against me. God is rich in mercy, therefore I should show mercy to others. God is a gracious God therefore I should be gracious also.

When Christ came into the world, the second man, God at last found a man who was the image of the invisible God. Christ is the image of God but He is never said to have come in the likeness of God. He is no likeness – He is God!!

3. Genesis 1:28

Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth

Adam's place in the world.

Adam was not just another part of God's creation. He was given a place of dominion over all of creation. This is seen in the fact that Adam gave names to every creature which was brought to him. Psalm 8 also tells us of his dominion:

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands

Again, Adam lost this place of dominance because of his fall. We see not yet all things put under him, that is a man, but we see Jesus.... (Hebrews 2). When Christ was here on earth, He was the master of creation. He spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness with the wild beasts, yet was unharmed. He gathered the fish of the sea to the right side of Peter's boat. He calmed the winds and the waves and the great storm became a great calm. He rode into Jerusalem upon the untamed foal of an ass. And we know, of course, that one day in His millennial reign, the whole of creation shall be pacified.

4. Gen 1:31 – divine pleasure in man

And behold, it was very good

At the end of each day of creation, God reviewed His handiwork and saw that it was "Good". However, at the end of the sixth day, after Adam was formed, God saw that it was "very good". There was pleasure for God in the creation of Adam that God did not find in His previous work.

"Good pleasure in men" was not seen again until the birth of the Lord Jesus. The Father expressed His pleasure twice over during the Lord's public ministry. At the river Jordan, the Father announced from an opened heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". The same words were repeated at the top of the holy mount. The Lord was speaking with Moses and Elijah, but God said about His Son, "Hear ye Him".

5. Gen 2:7

God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and Adam became a living soul

The first man Adam was made a living soul – the second Adam a life giving spirit. Adam was formed from the dust of the earth – his body lay lifeless on the ground until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. We learn from John chapter 1 that the source of all life is Christ Himself.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The Lord gives physical life to all men, but He also gives spiritual life, eternal life, to as many as the Father has given to Him. In this respect, we see a contrast between the Lord and Adam. Adam received life – Christ gives life.

6. Gen 3:8 – fellowship with man

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day

When God made the first man, there was something about him that separated him from the rest of creation. No matter how beautiful other creatures might be, there was only one creature with whom God could converse. He could share His thoughts and His feelings with only one being and that was Adam. We can gather from Genesis 3 that it was God's custom to come down into the garden that He might commune with Adam. This closeness was again lost through the fall.

In the perfect man, God found perfect communion. Here was a man who would commune with Him in prayer as each day dawned. The Lord could say in John 17 in His prayer, "I have given unto them the words Thou gavest Me". The Lord enjoyed complete fellowship with the Father. He could say, "He that sent Me is with Me. The Father hath not left Me alone".

When the Lord Jesus chose His disciples in Mark chapter 3, He had two definite reasons for doing so. "He ordained twelve that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach". He didn't send them out very often, so the primary reason for choosing them was that they might be with Him. They were to be witnesses later of all that He said and of all that He did. John writes many years later in his first epistle:

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us". Peter also writes about the Transfiguration, "We were eye witnesses of His majesty when we were with Him on the holy mount".

Great though the Lord was, He sought out the company of these twelve men. At times they were weak and failing, on more than one occasion arguing amongst themselves as to who should be the greatest. Yet He appreciated their company. Towards the end of His life, He said to them, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in my temptations".

The Lord seeks the same company with us. That is why we read in I John 2:1

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. If our fellowship is broken because of sin, He will act on our behalf to restore it. The preposition "with" in our AV is in fact the Greek word PROS which means "Towards". If we move away because of sin in our lives, He works to bring us back towards the Father.

Had we been standing beside Peter on that morning beside the fire, we would have heard a man denying Jesus with oaths and curses. We would have written Peter off as a hopeless case. Had he ever been saved at all? Yet the Lord takes seven steps to bring about Peter's recovery.

8. Gen 2:16 The free gifts of God

Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat

God gave complete freedom to Adam to eat of every tree in the garden. There would be only one exception as we shall see – the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil. What we see in Eden is a beneficent giving God.

In His prayer about us in John 17, the Lord speaks of several things which He has given to His own.

Eternal life

Thy word

Thy words

Thy name

My glory

In Ephesians chapter 1, Paul speaks of the spiritual blessing which God has given to us. There are 8 blessings mentioned in the verses that follow, amongst which are :

Chosen

Accepted

Redeemed

Forgiven

An inheritance

Sealed by the Spirit

The blessings are unconditional – they are not dependent upon our faithfulness – unlike the earthly conditional blessings of God to Israel.

9. Adam put to the test

Gen 2:17

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die

In His free hand mentioned in verse 16 above, there was only one exception made by God - the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Why did God make this one exception? It was surely to put Adam to the test. God would give Him only one commandment in the garden – was he able to keep it?

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness, He gave them many commandments. Why did He do this? They were given to prove them – to see whether they would keep His commandments or not. They failed miserably, just like Adam and Eve in the garden.

Where there was failure before, only one man managed to resist the trials put before Him, and that was the perfect man, the Lord Jesus.

The three temptations brought before the Lord in the wilderness were reminiscent of the three things written about Eve and the forbidden fruit. When offered it by the serpent, she saw that it was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise". The first temptation put before the Lord was to make stones into bread (good for food). The second one was to be shown the kingdoms of this world and all their glory (pleasant to the eyes). The third was to prove who He was by putting God to the test. "Cast

yourself down from hence, for it is written, "He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, lest Thou dash Thy foot against a stone" (a tree to be desired to make one wise).

The same three temptations are mentioned by John in his first epistle:

The lust of the eyes

The lust of the flesh

The pride of life

Where Adam failed, Israel failed, and we often fail. Only the Lord succeeded .

10. Eve – a bride given to Adam

Gen 2:18

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone' I will make him a help meet for him

Despite the nearness of the creatures of the garden, Adam was alone. He had no-one to share his thoughts and his feelings. God therefore gave to Adam a wife. Eve came into being as a help for Adam. She was not his "help-meet" as we often hear it said. God said, "I will make him a help meet for him". The word "him" occurs twice in this verse and on each occasion it has the sense of "for him". The word "meet" is an adjective meaning "suitable" or "fitting". What God was saying was, "I will make for him a help, suitable for him." In what way was Eve unique?

1. Her unique origin

The way she came into being was unique. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and Adam himself were all made from the dust of earth. There was only one exception to this rule. God builded the woman from a rib taken from Adam's side. She was called "woman" because she was taken out of the man.

God has also given His Son a bride, the Church of Christ. Like Eve, she does not belong to this earth. Her true place is in heaven. There we have our citizenship according to Phil 3:20. John in Revelation sees visions of the bride descending from God out of heaven.

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2. She establishes the principle of marriage

God said of these two people, "What God hath joined, let not man put asunder." When speaking upon the subject of marriage and divorce, the Lord takes us back to this union between Adam and Eve. Here is enshrined the divine principle of marriage – it is dissoluble only in death.

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3. She is part of Adam

God says about this couple- they shall be one flesh. In Genesis chapter 5, we read, "God called their name Adam". He saw them not as two people but as one.

In Ephesians, Paul writes about the mystery of "the Christ" ie Christ and His

Church. How close this union is can be illustrated by reference to Revelation chapter 21: 11

Having the glory of God

We now have the very thing that we could not attain to because of our sin. Romans 3:23 tells us, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God". But by the sacrifice of Christ, our sins have been forgiven.

But there is one more difficulty. In Isaiah 42:8, God says, "My glory will I not give to another". If this is the case, how come the Church in Revelation 21 has this very glory, the glory of God? It is because she is not "another". She and Christ are one flesh, like Adam and his bride. In Ephesians chapter 1, the church which is body is said to be "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The Christ is complete only when Christ is united to His bride.

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4. She shares in the dominion of Adam.

In Genesis 1:26, even before Eve comes into being, God said, "Let them have dominion".

Eve was to share with Adam in his dominion over the whole earth.

In Ephesians chapter 1, we read of the inheritance that Christ shall receive. He is worthy of it. But then we amazed to learn that we, His Church, shall share the inheritance with Him.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance.

11. Eve and her fall in the garden

1. The reasons for her fall

It would be easy for us to excuse Eve for what she did – after all she was deceived and beguiled by the serpent who was more subtle than any of the beasts of the field. So what should she have done when approached by the serpent? She should have referred the serpent to Adam. It was to Adam that God spoke about the forbidden tree. Her defence should have been. "Go and talk to him". She received the words of God second hand, hence she misquoted the words of God in a number of ways. Gen 2:17 tells us what God said to Adam:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die

In Genesis 3:1 and 2, we read of Eve's version of God's command.

We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden.

But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

There is one word used by God which is omitted by Eve and that is the word "freely". God was acting in a liberal generous manner.

Secondly, Eve adds to the word of God. God said nothing about not touching the fruit, but Eve did. To add to the word of God generally speaking is to dilute

it.

Thirdly, Eve is vague about two of her statements. God was very specific about the forbidden tree. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, said God. Eve said, the tree which is in the midst of the garden.

Eve watered down also the consequence of taking the forbidden fruit. God said, thou shalt surely die. Eve said, "Lest ye die".

All of this could have been avoided by sending the serpent to Adam.

Her misquotes left her open to the wiles of the wicked one. First of all he questions the word of God. "Hath God said? He finally denies the word of God. "Ye shall not surely die".

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2. The consequences of Eve's fall

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1. Enmity between her seed and that of the serpent

From this day onwards, there would be enmity between the two seeds. Was not this the reason why Cain slew Abel? Was this not what brought the flood upon mankind? Was this why Atthalia slew all the royal seed bar one? Was this why Herod sought to kill the young child in Bethlehem?

2. Woman's place in the assembly.

Paul wrote, "I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man." There are to be no women teachers or elders in the church of God.

Women are to wear a head covering at assembly gatherings. Most of the reasons given take us back to Eve. She is to show her place of subjection because:

Adam was first formed then Eve

The Woman is of the man as to her origin

The woman is for the man

After the fall the woman was made subject to Adam. "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband and he shall rule over thee".

12. Adam and his fall

1. The reason for his fall.

Paul says about Adam, "Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the transgression". I believe that when confronted by Eve with fruit in her hand, Adam knew exactly the consequences of what she had done. He was then faced with a choice. Obey God and lose Eve, or join Eve in her sin and disobey God. Ephesians 5 tells us that "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it". Adam loved his wife, and gave himself for her.

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2. The consequences of Adam's fall

The bible does not say, "As in Eve all die" even though she sinned first. The responsible head of all humanity was Adam, so he is blamed for the ruin of humanity.

As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive