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1. 21 - 163
2. 143 - 249
3. 164 - 248

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Life + Character of Adam.

Gen. 5:5

"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died."

Among all the methods used by God to teach us our duty in His Holy Word, none seems to be better adapted to this end than the history of the lives of the men and women that were actors in the ^{scenes} ~~days~~ therein recorded. To be sure the Bible is made up of historical statements of events; precepts + laws to which we owe obedience; predictions of great events to come all bearing upon the one Supreme xter of all History, and the one great event, — His life + death for sin; and therein we have announced the precious promises, and the solemn threatenings, and intreaties, + warnings to operate upon

our hopes, fears, + affections; but when the lives of
Scripture xters. are recorded, with all their faults
and with all their virtues; with all their weaknesses
and with all their strong ^{elements} ~~features~~ of xter, and then
the influence exerted upon them by the declara-
tions of God's word; as they are brought into contact
with the peculiar traits of xter exhibited by
each, and finally as God's truth is illustrated
~~in~~ ^{lives} the deaths of these individuals; we are enabled to
see more clearly the power and influence of the
Word of God in this concrete form, than by all
the abstract principles of truth that are laid
down therein. Indeed there is no department
of human composition so interesting and in-
structive as that of Biography. The obvious
reason for all this is that it enables to study our

own ~~ster~~ history, and destiny by comparison with the life
we read. It is to be observed also that the more faithful,
and candid and truthful the record is, the more
nearly the biography comes to the rule laid down by
good authority that the writer must "nothing extenuate
nor set down aught in malice,"— the more it re-
presents human nature, & the more does it attract, &
charm the reader. Any ~~thing~~^{work} that presents only
perfection in its characters is disgusting, and only
calculated to mislead, because these faultless prodigies
and angelic mortals, are wholly unnatural and no man
can fail to confess that in such delineations of
life he sees no reflection of his own nature,
nothing to encourage him, but everything to dishearten,
nothing to warn him but everything to reduce
him to despair of successful imitation. Now if

we examine the biographies of Scripture xters. - the histories
of the many individuals whose lives are recorded
prominently, in God's word, it will be discovered
that all their traits of xter, ^{good & evil alike} are ~~recorded~~ ^{narrated,} in the simplest
and most natural way, and not one among
them all ~~not~~ is represented as perfect; few are there
among them concerning whom some grievous fault or crime
is not stated. This is not without a purpose. There we
learn that all have sinned & come short of the
glory of God, and the holiest man that ever
lived must repent & believe and be washed
from his sins in the blood of the Atonement.
It is proposed then to review the lives of the indi-
viduals mentioned in the Bible, to trace the influences
under which they lived & acted, ^{& died,} the traits of xter they exhibi-
ted, & extract the lessons embodied in the narratives.

We begin with Adam, because he is the first created man; because his is the first human life recorded; & because his history is absolutely fundamental to the history of all that have ever lived since, of all now living; and of all that ever shall live to the end of time. He occupies therefore a sublime and unique position in the grand historic panorama of our world, and we can hardly begin ^{to study} such a gallery of portraits without making his the first, & pausing to consider it maturely.

Transporting ourselves back to the era of Adam's first appearance, in this world, we find ourselves in presence of a marvelous, and glorious scene. The Heavens & the Earth had been created long ages before, and that formless void which characterized the earth had been reduced to its beauteous shape & regular outline; that darkness that rested upon the face of the deep had been dispersed by the moving

of the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters, and by the word of creative power "let there be light." Sun, Moon & stars at God's command assumed their appointed places in the firmament of Heaven; the gathering of the waters into Seas, and the appearing of the dry land and its formation of solid Earth; had taken place; the irrational creation, ^{distributed} into tribes of animated life peopled earth, air, and sea, Now while, as we learn from the sublime address of God to Job out of the whirlwind, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," when He "laid the foundations of the earth, and the measured thereof, and stretched the line upon it, and fastened its foundations, and laid its corner stone;" there was no rational inhabitant to contemplate these works, and trace in them with admiring wonder, the wisdom the goodness, and the power of Him who made ^{them.} "The firmament" with its myriads of sparkling & glorious orbs even then as now, "declared the glory of God & shewed His handy work"

but these could not perceive them; nor could the animal, vegetable, or mineral Kingdom intelligently recognize their adorable King.

Just then was held the first grand Council that Earth ever witnessed; a solemn Consultation of the Sacred Three was entered into, on occasion of the creation of Man, just as all three of the glorious Persons of the Godhead are recognized as cooperating in ~~his~~ his Redemption. Then said the Great God:—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth." In passing I may remark that this is accepted by all Trinitarians as the first proof-text of the doctrine of the Trinity. It is also claimed as a manifestation of the superior dignity of man that such a consultation was held on the occasion of his creation, but not in connection with any other part of the works of God. In regard to

other things God simply said "let them be!" But in regard to man He said "Let us make man," &c. So his body made of dust was not complete until ^{the Lord} God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and "he became a living soul."

The body of Adam was made doubtless, resplendently perfect, and may have been accompanied by such a glory as shone so brilliantly on the face of Moses as he descended from the mount, or as the body of our Savior when transfigured on the mount with Moses & Elias. Yet it is not the body that was made in the image of God. Paul tells us in two different passages that it was in God's moral image that man was created. (Eph. IV: 24) "the new man... after God is created in righteousness & true holiness;" and then (in Col. III: 10,) he says "the new man... is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." So that from the two passages we gather that man was made in God's image which

consisted in Knowledge, Righteousness, and true Holiness. We
 are authorized then to believe that his ^{moral} condition was that of
 a mind free from error & prejudice; and filled with all
 natural & moral Knowledge necessary to his state; that
 his Soul had no propensity to vice in any form; that his
 will was exactly co-incident with God's Will; that his
 purest affections of love and devotion & gratitude were
 constantly rising and burning to God, by day & by night.
 His Comm. & fellowship was with God & the holy angels. This
 was the shadowing forth of Heaven, and hence Adam was
 not only holy but of course happy.

He was placed in the garden of Eden. What particular
 locality upon our globe was ~~the~~ Eden, cannot be certainly
 pointed out. Nor is it necessary. We know where the
 Heavenly paradise is. That we must seek & may find.
 Eden was its image, as man was the image of God. Both were

lost, & both may be recovered in Jesus X^t. Let it suffice to say that in that garden "planted by the Lord God Eastward" was every thing to be found that was useful or agreeable, every animal or vegetable; herb, fruit, or flower; and whatsoever tended to the delight of the senses, the imagination or the heart. There were two remarkable trees in that garden, which seemed to be designed of God as emblems of Life & of Death; the tree of Life which would have sealed to Adam life & immortal joys in case of obedience; and the tree of Knowledge of good & evil which would have sealed to him death in case of disobedience.

The next event illustrates God's condescending loving kindness to our first Father in that while He might have forced him to obedience in His X^ter as a Sovereign, He enters into a Covenant of Love, & promises to reward him

if he would obey. All the elements of a Covenant are here. 1. Two parties

2. Each engage to do their several parts. 3. A promise of Life on condition of obedience, & a threatening of death in case of disobedience. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest ^{freely} eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Thus Adam was placed in possession of free agency, and before him stood the tree which was to test his obedience, & he was made fully acquainted with the consequences, and there God left him to make his own choice.

Furthermore, to complete the happiness of Adam, God gave him an helpmeet, made not only like him but of him; "Eve, the mother of all the living" was brought to him as the last, best earthly gift which God gave to him.

We behold man situated in circumstances of holy Bliss such as would correspond to the holiest & loftiest aspirations of his soul; with every earthly delight around him, with perfect powers & faculties of mind & body, with an intelligent & congenial companion to share his joys, and with a loving God & Father in constant communion & fellowship with him; what could be imagined that wd add to it? In the words of a fine devotional writer:—"the mind pained with the sins, the follies & the woes which now infest the world, loves to wander back to the holy groves of Paradise, and to linger by the peaceful streams of Eden."

But alas! nothing here is permanent. This peaceful, blissful holy life did not last. How long it continued we are not taught. Forty days is fixed by some Commentators, as the time; and although their views are more curious

than useful, yet it may be well enough to assign their
 reasons. They say that God has made this the period of all the
 great trials through which He has made his servants to
 pass. Moses spent 40 days in the mount with God; ~~Elijah~~
~~for~~ forty days the rain descended upon the earth for the flood;
 Elijah went forty days in the strength of the food that God sent him;
 Nineveh had forty days in which to repent; Jesus was
 forty days undergoing temptation in the wilderness; and
 forty days he spent upon the earth between his resurrection
 & ascension. And so upon no better foundation than this
 argument from analogy, they adopt the theory that
 Adam & Eve were forty days on probation. Be this true
 or untrue, — more or less than forty days, — of some things
 we are very certain, and that is 1. Adam was placed upon
 probation. 2^d It was not of very long continuance
 3^d He failed to stand the test, & fell from his holy & happy state.

We may make a general remark just here. From all we can gather from our sources of information, God has placed ^{all} his creatures upon some sort of probation, or trial of their obedience, before they are confirmed. It was so with angels. ~~But~~ ^{Jude} gives us to understand that they had a "first estate, and that ^{some of} they ~~kept~~ it not; that they had a "habitation of their own" which they "left." So did men. So that God meant to produce & preserve upon Adam's mind a sense of his dependence upon God, & of His authority over him, and hence he appointed a test of this obedience.

Infidels have ridiculed this whole subject of a test applied by God—especially the idea of God making the eating of a little fruit the test, & have asked why God did not make the obedience to some great moral precept the test. But it is easy to answer this cavil.

All moral precepts in form were enacted afterward and

and were only applicable to the world when it was peopled.

At that time there were but two ^{human beings} ~~persons~~ on earth, and if the moral precepts referred to were those between men, then it was impossible for any one of them to be used as a test, for Adam had no father & mother to honor — no one to murder but his wife whom he loved, — nor could he dishonor her; he could not steal, ^{nor covet} for God had given him all things; he could not bear false witness against his wife as there was no motive to induce him to do it; he could not love his enemies — for he had none. Nor could he have any other Gods before His Maker — for such a thing as false Gods were not then known; he ^{did} ~~could~~ not ^{need to} make graven images; for worship, because he saw God's glory & heard His voice every day; he could not profane God's name; — that was reserved for a later stage of the world's history; nor could he

violate the sabbath, as he found his greatest delight in the exercises of God's worship & communion. Indeed as man was holy, this sort of test could not apply to him. because he could have no inclination to violate it. So that only some simple test, was appropriate - such as involved in itself no guilt, save only as it might be a test. The simpler the test, - the more easily it might be kept, the greater God's kindness, and the more aggravated man's guilt in violating it.

My next thought is that God allowed man then just as He does now to be subjected to temptation. Jesus x^c was. All men are. Adam was. Satan (a fallen angel) entered the body of a serpent - then a harmless creature, - and through it addressed Eve, as the more pliable of the two. Very subtle & cautious in his approaches - "Yea" - is it true - that God has said this? Perhaps it's a mistake - it seems harmless beautiful - pleasant to taste - it will make you wise - as God

In short it is not true that you will die if you eat
of this tree; & God knows it.

The next thought is that ^{while} man was created holy he
was created free to fall. So Eve listened, wavered, ate,
fell; Paul says that Adam was not "deceived," that Eve
was, & therefore Adam was persuaded to do what he
knew was wrong, & presumptuously embraced both her
sin & its punishment.

Infidels sneer at the insignificance of this as a crime.

Let us see what made it a crime.

1. In eating the forbidden fruit. — they defied God's power.
2. Made God a liar. 3. Believed Satan rather than God.
4. Rejected God as their sovereign. 5. Yielded up all their
happy estate & joined themselves to apostate spirits.
6. The sin was aggravated because they knew better. } They
ruined themselves & their posterity. No trifling crime.

The next thing is the trial. "In the cool of the day" - perhaps their
 usual hour of prayer & communion with God - God came
 to them. Men may escape God during the day time of
 youth & manhood - even of riper years - but in
 the cool of life's day of age or of sickness - when
 passion cools down - God will come after
 them. They attempted to hide. You cannot escape
 Him. The trial is soon over. They do not weep. They
 do not apparently repent. They do not confess & bewail
 their sin. They excuse it - they recriminate one
 the other. ^{But God stops them - Sinners will be speechless -} The whole scene is changed. The body
 has lost its immortality & freedom from disease & it is
 now subject to death. Soul estranged from God. Pass-
 ion has driven out peace & tranquillity. God's image
 lost. All communion with Him gone & cut off.
 Conscience accuses & points to an Eternity of woe.

But now behold, God instead of sentencing them to everlasting destruction from His presence & from the glory of His Power, graciously reveals to them a Savior. Some they were driven from Eden, & forbidden evermore to enter - but the Suffering but Triumphant Redeemer was revealed to them, & the hope is that they were saved by ^{faith in} His precious blood as they were permitted to behold it 4000 year in the future streaming from Calvary.

My next remark is that, as already hinted, this sin was not confined to themselves; it also extended to their posterity. Just here we come in contact with a doctrinal point, and that is the principle of imputation. It has been objected by many that the idea of the whole race being made sinners & sufferers on account of Adam's sin, is

inconsistent with justice & cannot be true. But it is so stated in God's word and this is in accordance with every day's experience and the testimony of all History. "By one man sin entered into the world and so death has passed upon all men for that all have sinned." And is it not a fact not otherwise to be explained that we enter the world with sinful natures and sinful tempers which develop into sinful xters as soon as we can distinguish right from wrong? Do not all men choose the wrong instead of the right? And if so, why? Because "the Cov^t being made with Adam not for himself alone, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him & fell with him in his first transgression." It is accounted for

then by two principles - 1. Adam was our Representative
in the Covenant with God. 2. He was our natural
Father.

We may follow our first Father very little further. He
survived the ruin many hundred years, dying at the
great age of 930 years. Of all ~~his~~ sons & daughters,
how many soever of them there may have been,
Only three are mentioned, Cain, Abel, & Seth. What
must have been the misery of the parents when
they were made to witness as among the first re-
sults of their fatal crime, the murder of one
son by another, and the exile of the murderer
a fugitive & vagabond upon the earth with
the ineffaceable brand of God's displeasure
upon his brow! Nothing further is related of
Adam of any importance. We are at liberty to

suppose however that his remaining days were
 spent in sad reflections upon the terrible change
 wrought in the physical & moral aspect of the
 earth in consequence of ^{his} one rash act of
 disobedience; how that earth which he had
 seen in its glory now lay in ruins;— that na-
 ture which he had beheld in the image
 of God, he now beholds in moral degradation.

There are some lessons to be extracted from this
 sad his history.

1. With what horror & hatred sh^d we regard
 sin, when we trace to it as the fountain
 such streams of woe & desolation as
 have flooded the world! How sh^d we turn
 from it and flee from it as from our most
 terrible enemy!

2. We learn also that the first approaches to sin should be carefully avoided. We may imagine how much more safely our mother Eve would have fared had she rejected Satan's first advances, & planted herself firmly upon the words of God. But we are reproducing Eve every day; we dally with temptation; we tamper with the forbidden object; we gaze upon the fruit; we permit ourselves to dwell upon sensual delights, until we forget God, we pluck & eat, and fall. The only safety is in flight; in driving away the tempter; in closing the eye & stopping the ear to all his blandishments, "Charm he never so wisely."

3. We learn from this history the infinite and boundless love of God to our race in pro-

viding a glorious plan for regaining the "Paradise lost," through a precious Saviour. No sooner was the ruin wrought, and the guilty pair stood trembling in expectation of their sentence of eternal condemnation, than the promise of a great Redeemer was made to restore the ruins of the Fall, and save a lost world from merited destruction.

Blessed be God! We, degenerate scions of a strange vine, have, in these ends of the earth, offered to us the same Saviour, the same salvation, the same Heaven! I offer it in the name of my Master & yours. Obey & be forever blessed. Reject & be forever lost. "Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him!"