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 therein recorded. To be sure the Bible is made up of historical statements of events, precepts and laws to which we owe obedience, predictions of great events to come all bearing upon the One Supreme Actor of all history, and the one great event--His life and death for sin; and therein we have announced the precious promises, and the solemn threatenings, and intreaties, and warnings to operate upon
our hopes, fears, and affections; but when the lives of Scripture are recorded, with all their faults and with all their virtues, with all their weaknesses and with all their strong elements of xter, and then the influence exerted upon them by the declarations 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 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 instructive as that of Biography. The obvious reason for all this is that it enables to study o
own story, 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 represents human nature, the more does it attract, and charm the reader. Anything 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 xten. the histories of the many individuals whose lives are recorded prominently in God's Word, it will be discovered that all their traits of xten are narrated in the simplest and most natural way, and not one among them all is represented as perfect for in them among them concerning whom some gross fault or crime is not stated. This is not without a purpose. Then we learn that all have sinned to come short of the glory of God, and the holiest man that ever lived must repent and believe and be washed from his sins in the blood of the Atonement. It is proposed then to review the lives of the individuals mentioned in the Bible, to trace the influences under which they lived and act, the traits of xten they exhibit, to 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, 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 such a gallery of portraits without making his the first, and 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 ap-
pearing of the dry land and its formation of solid Earth;
distributed had taken place; the irrational creation into tribes of animated
life peoples earth, air, and Sea. Now while, as we learn from
the subline address of God to Job out of the whirlwind, "the morning star
dang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," when
He "laid the foundations of the earth, and the measure thereof,
and stretched the line upon it, and fastened its founda-
tions, and laid its corner stone;" there was no rational
inhabitant to contemplate these works, and trace in them with adoring
wonder, the wisdom the goodness, and the power of Him Who
made. "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 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 regards to
other things God simply said "let them be." But in regard to man He said 
"Let us make man." So his body made of dust was not complete 
it until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and 
"he became a living soul."

The body of Adam was made doubtless, resplendently perfect, as 
may have been accompanied by such a glory as shone to the 
likeness 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 & Elia. 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. (1 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 condition was that of
a mind free from error and prejudice, and filled with all
natural and moral knowledge necessary to his state; that
his soul had no propensity to vice in any form; that his
will was exactly coincident with God's Will; that his
purest affections of love and devotion and gratitude were
constantly rising and burning to God, by day and by night.
His constant fellowship was with God and 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 Eden cannot be certainly
pointed out. Nor is it necessary. We know where the
heavens, paradise is. That we must seek and may find.
Eden was its image, as man was the image of God. Both were
lost + both may be recovered in Jesus xist. 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
whatever 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 and 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 is that while He might have forced
him to obedience in this xist as a Sovereign, He
enters into a covenant of Love, it promises to reeward him
if he would obey. All the elements of a Covenant are here. Two parties
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
to mayest 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 helper meet, 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 we add to it? In the words of a fine devotional writer: "The mind jaded 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. Now 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 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. Messiah had forty days in which to repent; Jesus was forty days undergoing temptation in the wilderness; and so forty days he spent upon the earth between his resurrection and ascension. And so upon no better foundation than this argument from analogy, they adopt the theory that Adam and Eve were forty days on probation. Be this true or untrue, more or less than forty days, other things we are very certain, and that is 1. Adam was placed upon probation. 2. It was not of very long continuance. He failed to stand the test, and fell from his holy happiness.
We may make a general remark just here. From all we can gather from our sources of information, God has placed His creatures upon some sort of probation, or trial of their obedience, before they are conformed. It was so with angels. Jude gives some us to understand that they had a "first estate, and that they had kept it not; that they had a "habitation of their own" which they "left." So did men. So that God meant to produce upon Adam's mind a sense of his dependence upon God, and 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. I 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;

human beings

At that time there were but two present on earth, and if

the moral precepts referred to were those between men then

it was impossible for anyone of them to be used as a test,

for Adam had no father or mother to honor—no one to mur-

der but his wife whom he loved—not could he dishonor

her; he could not steal, 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 not make graven images for worship, because he

saw God's glory in the heavens. His voice every day; he

could not profane God's name; that was reserva-

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 and 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 was all men are. Adam was. Satan (a fallen angel) entered the body of a serpent — then a harmless creature — and through it addressed me as the more pliable of the two. Very subtle it cautious in his approach — “Yea — is it true — that God has said this? Perhaps it is 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.

while

The next thought is that 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, it therefore Adam was persuaded to do what he knew was wrong, and presumptuously embraced both her sin and its punishment.

Confide men at the insignificance of this as a crime.

Let us see what made it a crime.

1. Tempting that forbidden fruit. They defied God’s power.


4. Rejected God as their Sovereign. 5. Yielded up all their happy estate and joined themselves to apostate spirits.

6. The sin was aggravated because they knew better. They ruined themselves and their posterity. As trifling crime.
The next thing is the trial. "In the cool of the day," perhaps their usual hour of prayer and communion with God. God came to them. Men may escape God during the day time of youth or manhood, seven of ripen years—but in the cool of Sixi, day of age or of sickness—when passion cools down—God will come after them. They attempts to hide. You cannot escape Him. The trial is soon over. They do not weep. They do not apparently repent. They do not confess and bewail their sin. They excuse it—they recriminate one but God stops them—Sinner will be punished the other. The whole scene is changed. The body has lost its immortality. Freedom from disease it is now subject to death. Soul estranged from God. Passion has driven out peace, tranquility. God's image lost. All communion with Him gone and cut off. Conscience accuses and points to an eternity of woe.
But now behold, God instead of sentencing them to everlasting destruction from His presence and from the glory of His Power, graciously reveals to them a Savior. For they were driven from Eden, it forbidden evermore to enter; but the Suffering but Triumphant Redeemer was revealed to them, and the hope is that they were saved by His precious blood as they were permitted to behold it forever in the future streaming from Calvary.

My next remark is that, as already hinted, this view 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 and sufferers on account of Adam's sin, is
inconsistent with justice it 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 actions as soon as we can distinguish right from wrong? Do not all men choose the wrong instead of the right? And 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 and 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 farther. He survived the ruin many hundred years, dying at the great age of 930 years. Of all these sons and daughters, how many so ever of them there may have been, only three are mentioned, Cain, Abel, and Seth. What must have been the misery of the parents when they were made to witness as among the first results of their fatal crime, the murder of one son by another, and the exile of the murderers as fugitive vagabonds 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 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 shall we regard
sin, when we trace to it as the fountain
such streams of woe & desolation as
have flooded the world! How shall 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 delight, until we forget God, we pluck & eat, and fall. The only safety is in flight; in driving away the tempter; in closing the eyes & 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-
vailing a glorious plan for regaining the Paradise lost,” through a precious Savior. 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 mental destruction.

Blessed be God! We, degenerate scions of a strange vine, have, in these ends of the earth, offered to us the same Savior, the same salvation, the same Heaven! I offer it in the name of my Master and yours. Obey and be forever blessed. Reject and 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!”