

Adam in Eden

Part 1

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Duration	00:23:57
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/fb006/adam-in-eden

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[00:00:00] The Book of Genesis, and Chapter 2, the Book of Genesis, Chapter 2, verse 8.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Verse 15. And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden [00:01:03] to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. 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.

There is another verse, my eye can't just drop on the verse, but it's a verse very well known and in the same connection. It's in connection with the tree of life. In the pursuance of our exercises this morning, and no doubt that is in keeping with each of our desires, [00:02:04] it's laid on our hearts, according to prayer and according to the way we're being led, that we should have God-given thoughts to occupy us in our time together during this day. And one of our difficulties in holiday meetings is to abstract ourselves from the holiday conditions and the fact of being brought together in this way and find ourselves a little out of adjustment. And so we need the help of God. For even the very best minister, dear brethren, the very, very best available, and God has the best, of that we are sure, the very best ministry available, does not affect us unless we ourselves are in that state [00:03:12] of appreciation so that we can receive it and to assimilate it. No doubt we have those very exercises and it behoves us to be before God in reality and in earnest, but in the very consciousness that God has the resource and has the very best, yes, the best in these days, we ourselves need to be before him in that self-judgment so that we can be divested of the, of other things which in themselves can hinder us from the appreciation of the great things of God. A brother well known to us used a little illustration in regard to these things, a very apt illustration, that in regard to the most magnificent view, and here we're in the [00:04:06] the very region where we have the excellence of the of the views and the the country, but with the smallest of our coins put to the eye, the old threatening bit, the silver threatening bit, it cannot skewer the most imposing, the most commanding view. Now that, dear brethren, is what I really mean, that the things of this world and the things concerning ourselves, according to their relative importance, they are often in the way to our seeing with appreciation the great things which God has introduced and brought us into them.

[00:05:07] And it's just as important for us in our preparation for what God has as it is for the importance of the word that is spoken. Without a doubt that we start at the very top in our reading this afternoon in regard to that which is nearest and dearest to the heart of God. For that to be realized and for it to be made a matter of revelation, there was the giving of God's Son. That was no white matter. And in coming, what he did so well known to us is death on the cross. That at the very

outcome of that death, according to John chapter 16, would help us to understand those words uttered by the Lord just before he went into death. [00:06:02] And that was, he spoke of another day.

Of another day, and that is the day consequent upon his own work being accomplished and the spirit given when the saints would be introduced into all the deep thoughts of God. And that day was when, having given himself voluntarily in devotedness to the will of God, an offering and a sweet sacrifice to God, that he took his place on high a man in resurrection, ascended, glorified.

That was the new day in view. That is, his death would give birth to new creation. Dear brethren, that's a wonderful day, and we are brought into that day. [00:07:02] And so the mystery is really the outcome of that. It's so great. You remember where we read in Job 28, for the benefit of those who are not with us this morning, our thoughts were provoked by such scriptures that are in the 28th of Job and in the 8th of Proverbs and the 2nd chapter of Colossians. Where man is seen as a result of the fall, and that's why I turned to the early chapter of Genesis, to show that all the difficulties that accrue and increase, they have their beginnings there.

And one of the things we have to prepare ourselves for is the limits of human resource. I think every one of us must confess, as we face these things, and the problems of life, why it's that which brings us down before the face of God, [00:08:03] in that the problems are beyond our solving.

So these questions arose in the early chapter of Genesis, and it all revolves around the two trees that the Lord planted there. And so we have read where, having planted the garden and put man whom he had created there in the garden with the simple commandment forbidding him to eat of the tree of the Lord, the knowledge of good and evil. There was also the tree of life. He was not forbidden to eat of the tree of life, but he was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But when he had transgressed in eating of the tree of the good and evil, he was forbidden to eat of the tree of life. And from that, dear brethren, accrues all the problems confronting this world and man in this world. And they are not solved by human [00:09:08] resource. Job tells us that man is left in God's creation, a lawless creature, and many things at his disposal and his self-will leads him to explore and to acquire the things that are available. And when he is successful in acquiring gold and amassing gold, or the things that are precious like the rubies, the impotence of man is to be seen in that he cannot solve his problems by all that he has acquired. A man cannot solve his problems by education and by culture. If the problems could have been solved by culture, then the Jew put under the law would have solved his problems by the culture into which God introduced him. The disciples in the company of the Lord Jesus, if ever men had the opportunity of culture, it was a man like Jesus, represented in the flesh, [00:10:06] which showed itself to be not subject to the law of God, neither indeed could it be. It shows itself to be, like the scripture in Jeremiah, to be desperately wicked.

And brethren, this is the solemn thing that confronts us, that it's not within the scope of man, even with all the senses of fast, and supposedly he meets one problem and another problem, only to find that the great problem of life, it's not for man to solve. We have then that conclusion, exposing man in his limits. But we have, on the other hand, the opportunity for God to display himself. And we have God, who alone can take up the great [00:11:07] problems of life, not only relating to man, but relating to the man whom God has created, and involved in the ruin, and expose himself to that which brings dishonor to God. It provides the occasion for God to assert himself. And it brings in the display of divine resource, and that resource being reserved for him is in Christ. We have the problem of the solving of good and evil, which is reserved for God and God alone. The answer to that, of course, is Christ. God's resource is Christ. To take up every problem in connection with good and evil, and the

cross is the very evidence of God's ability to meet that problem and bring in, [00:12:04] change everything which was dishonorable to himself, to reverse the whole situation with a view to bring glory to himself. We have the sequel to this, of course, in the New Testament. We have in the mystery the outcome and the fruit of divine love.

And we are brought into it, we are brought to the very center of it, the third chapter of Ephesians, a scripture which we might have read, it brings us to God's center. The outstanding things relating to man's relations with God is that he is a lawless creature, and the object of God in his resource is to be seen in that he brings man out of lawlessness into righteousness. And he brings him out of a scene characterized by hatred and death, [00:13:03] and you get that very early on in Genesis, in that we have Cain who slew his brother Abel. The scriptures tell us why he slew him. He hated him, and he slew. The slaying, the murder, is the consummation of the hatred that is in the heart of man. Well, we have God in his resource able to meet a situation like that. He brings man out of lawlessness, and he brings him into righteousness. And in bringing him into righteousness, righteousness, it's in relation to his appointed center, which is Christ. Dear brethren, that is really what God has brought with you and me. He has brought us into right relations with himself. He's made the first move, he's made it in power. And the power of God, along with the wisdom of God, is Christ. We haven't any difficulty in [00:14:02] showing you where the power of God was exercised in the first Ephesians to meet the whole situation where man was brought down to the bottom, where God was in dishonor. God has wrought in Christ, and the man who was in death, he's raised him and put him at his own right hand. And in saying that, that we might know the exceeding greatness, the surpassing greatness of his power. There is power in creation, but the surpassing greatness of God's power is in that which has been done by God in raising Christ from amongst the dead. And not only for him to be risen and to be with the disciples for forty days, but the scripture shows that the power of God is this. He raised him from amongst the dead and set him at his own right hand, far above all power, all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, [00:15:02] not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And has given him, and so it goes on, quite proceeds, and has given him to be head over all things. That's a wonderful consideration of headship in Christ. He's given him to be head over all things, and he's head to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. We have that which typified the church in Adam and Eve, and the marriage, as the Lord says that there shall be marriage and giving in marriage as there was before the flood. And so that's the regular thing, that which is instituted of God. But to keep before us, dear brethren, the fact that God has something else in view, and the reality of all that is [00:16:02] the antitype to the thought of God in regard to marriage, is Christ and the church. That's the simple thought, and yet the profound thought of God is, it's not Christ alone now, but it's Christ and the church. And that's how the mystery of God is to be understood. There's a wonderful union, and in regard to that union, it could only be considered in this light, in the light of reconciliation. There's something that precedes union, and that is reconciliation. The thought of new creation is to be understood by reconciliation. And so to help us to understand this, dear brethren, the Lord Jesus gave us that wonderful parable in the 15th of Luke. It's a blessed thing, it's a blessed consideration. That's the gospel in its fullness that really constitutes worshipers. [00:17:02] There was one amongst us who used to say that the reason why we are not functioning as priests, according to our privilege before the Father, could be accounted for for this reason, that we are not in the good of the gospel. I refer to the gospel in the light of the 15th of Luke, and this is a divine thought. It's the Lord Jesus who introduced this precious thought. And why? It's so that in the blessedness of all that God is to bring us into, and the way he brings us into it, and his delight in doing so, it is that we should be before him, before the Father, at home with himself, without any sense of being at a disadvantage. How often we find ourselves, not up to our privileges, in that which intrudes to suggest that we are at a disadvantage, [00:18:08] when

we have to be occupied with ourselves. Instead, the thought of God is that we should be before him with the eye of complacency, resting upon us, no longer in the far country, and no longer in the filthy rags, in any sense of being at a disadvantage in our approach to God. But his thought is that we should be before him in the best robe, which is God's thought of new creation, wrought about by Christ's death on the cross, and his resurrection, denoted in a new place entirely, a new place on the resurrection side, out of death, not to come into judgment, but is passed out of death into life. What a blessed thing it is to be led of the Spirit of God, [00:19:06] to be in the thoughts of God, to be brought into the appreciation of the heart of God. His thought is that we should know the warmth of the welcome into which we are brought. And that helps us to understand the thought of how we can be reconciled. Well, I can quite understand that when the prodigal, as he was dealt with, in the way he was received by the Father, and the servants who are in the light and in the knowledge of his will, they know where the best robe is. The ministry which is applicable to the saints at the present time, the unfolding of the epistles of the Romans, which is the part of the servant's duty as putting the best robe on the returning prodigals, is in the gospel in its fullness, that the sinner, the one once in the far country and in the rags, [00:20:05] should be in the atonement with the Father, with the shoes on the feet, the shoes of access, and the clothing of this providing, which is this thought of new creation in Christ Jesus, where God's eye of complacency now rests upon us. Dear brethren, that helps us to understand how we are brought back to God in reconciliation. And it's what is of God, according to the fifth and second Corinthians, that which is of God which is reconciled, that which is of his own work in new creation, we can readily understand that that can be reconciled. And every one of us, according to the thought of God, are in that reconciliation, and accordingly we are of that material which Peter speaks of in another figure as living stones, [00:21:01] living stones animated with life, no longer in lawlessness but in righteousness, and there in relation to the center, and we are to know ourselves of that material as living stones that can be joined to the one who is the living stone. That helps us to understand, according to Peter's writings, what it is to be that which is united to Christ, according to the thought of God. And then we have at the end of the third of Ephesians, the very last word. Psalm 19 tells us that the things in creation, they declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. And without a doubt, it gives us the creatorial power of God in that respect. The solution to that which is a problem to the incredulous people who delve into things that are beyond their [00:22:08] knowledge. These things can only be known by divine revelation, and not by speculation, and not by imagination, but only by revelation. Well, we have those things which are apparent to the eye, which declare the glory of God. But there is that in regard to the church, the mystery, in which are to be found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, every thought of God, dear to the heart of God, is deposited there in connection with the mystery. And what is said in regard to that at the end of the third chapter of the Ephesians, that is to be to the glory of God. And for how long? For all eternity. That would help us to understand the importance the mystery is to God, and how God would lead us into the apprehension [00:23:10] of it, and the appreciation of it, that already brought there, according to that very same chapter, for Christ is to dwell in our heart by faith, is absent. And that's the normal state of the faith, that we should know ourselves to be at the very center of all God's thoughts, in that the one who himself is the center dwells in our affections. Well, may the Lord lead us further into these, into these which are the great thoughts of God, the deep thoughts of God, the things which God asked.