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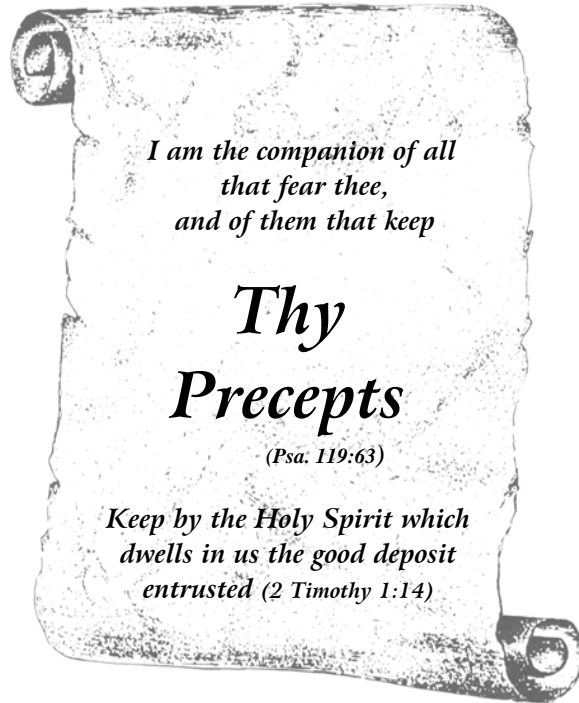
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*I am the companion of all
that fear thee,
and of them that keep*

Thy Precepts

(Psa. 119:63)

*Keep by the Holy Spirit which
dwells in us the good deposit
entrusted (2 Timothy 1:14)*

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*The Mystery of Christ and the Church
and The Covenants*

Chapter 4.2

The Fall of Adam

They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them (Ex. 32:8).

Introduction

THE ENEMY OF GOD AND MAN WAS IN EDEN

The Word of God alone accounts for how sin entered the world as a result of disobedience to a holy God. Other ancient documents speaking of a once-happy state in contrast with the conditions in the world when such documents were written do not deal with the moral issues we will consider in Gen. 3.

Gen. 3 is not mythical -- with some alleged moral; nor is it symbolic of something important that happened to man. What is moral does indeed characterize the passage, and certainly something of most serious consequence happened -- and it happened as the text states it did and for the reasons that the text states. The apostle Paul commented on what took place regarding the serpent and treated it as literal (2 Cor. 11:3). The description, "the ancient serpent" (Rev. 12:9), reaches back to Eden. Moreover, the curse on the serpent will remain in the millennium (Isa. 65:25). If the serpent is the personification of evil, what does the going on the belly and the eating dust signify for the personification of evil? Rather than a literal, talking serpent being allegedly like medieval superstition, it was a reality and used as an instrument of the great Enemy of God and man; a malevolent being who can (as far as God permits (Job 1, 2)) use the elements (Job. 1:12-19), cause a malady in a child of God (Job 1:7; 2 Cor. 12:7), work power in the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9), give breath to the image of the beast (Rev. 13:15), test the Christ of God (Luke 4), personally possess a man (John 13:27), and transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

We might note that:

1. In general, the animal kingdom suffered consequences from sin.

2. God smote the firstborn of beasts in Egypt (Ex. 12:12).
3. If a beast touch Sinai while God was there, it was to be killed (Ex. 19:13).
4. The firstborn of unclean animals had to be redeemed by the death of a clean animal (Ex. 34:30).
5. Animals involved in bestiality were to be killed (Lev. 20:15, 16).
6. The Lord Jesus sent the demons living in the demoniac of Gadara into a herd of swine, which then rushed into water, drowning themselves.

We note this on account of professed Christian's who assert that no literal serpent was present because animals are not moral creatures. It is beside the point. The serpent does not represent the "personification of evil." In effect, such an idea undermines the truth of how sin arose in Eden. When the Lord Jesus was tested by "Satan," Satan does not mean the personification of evil. If so, that would make Christ a sinner because all would have been going on inside Himself. To deny that Christ was tested by an objectively existent Satan outside Himself actually constitutes Him a sinner and is fundamentally evil doctrine.

There *is* an objective Satan; he tested man in the garden and he tested Christ in the wilderness. It ought to be clear to the Lord's people that the testing of man in the garden and the testing of the second Man are meant to be compared and the results contrasted -- and, that there was an objective Enemy present in both cases.

Satan is a fallen cherub, an angelic being (Ezek. 28:11-19), ¹ perhaps the highest being in the angelic order. No doubt it was on account of his former position that Michael, though an archangel, did not dare to bring a railing accusation against the devil, for Michael is not numbered among those who despise lordships and speak railingly against dignities (Jude 8, 9). The cherubim are not personifications of something but creatures of God -- though there are

1. Isa. 14:12-15 is not Satan. Isa. 14:4 refers to the king of Babylon, who is the Lucifer in this chapter, the last one who holds the power of empire first committed to the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar. That is the beast of Rev. 13:1-12, i.e., the coming Roman prince of Dan. 9:26. The reader should keep in mind the image of Dan. 2 depicting the epoch of Gentile power of empire down to the appearing of the smiting stone (i.e., the appearing of Christ in glory to smite the nations) while Israel is Lo-ammi (not-my-people), forming one whole; and the starting point gives character to this whole, so much so that the last one holding the power first given to the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar, is styled king of Babylon in Isa. 14. That this man reflects characteristics of Satan, as Lucifer does, should not surprise students of prophecy. We should keep in mind that the Beast in his final phase -- i.e., during the last half-week of Daniel's 70 weeks -- receives governmental power directly from the dragon (Rev. 13:2-4). That Lucifer should reflect Satan is not surprising. This, of course, is governmental apostasy, paralleling the Jewish apostasy and the apostasy of Christendom.

This use of Babylon also bears on the use of "Babylon" in the Revelation.

symbolic representations of them to convey some truth. They execute God's judgments.

Note, then, that Gen. 3 begins with a fallen cherub ruining the work of God which He had pronounced "very good," and the chapter ends with (unfallen) Cherubim guarding the way to the tree of life. Such is the result of disobedience to God.

Note also the falsity of pictorial representations of the pair in Eden with the serpent present. No one knows what the serpent looked like in Eden since it was drastically changed by the curse on it. It went on its belly consequent upon the curse on it, and ate in a different manner than before the curse.

TWO CHARACTERS OF THE ENEMY OF GOD AND MAN

The two great ways in which the Enemy of God and man -- an implacable, malignant foe -- acts are corruption and violence. Usually corruption is tried first. In Eden we meet with his subtle corruption of what God declared to be "very good." J. C. Bayley wrote:

We are told in Rev. 12:9 and 20:2 very definitely that the serpent represents our great adversary the devil. The figure is apt in these points, deceit and death. The two most characteristic features of all sin I believe to be craft and cruelty . . . All the attributes of the father of sin are comprehended in these two terms,

A liar and a murderer. ²

In the serpent this is graphically expressed: it is

more subtle than any beast of the field {Gen. 3:1};

and under the hooded glory of the cobra lurks the malignant virus of death. If we could forget this, we should see that it is not without semblance of outward innocence and beauty, which, however, only makes it the more to be dreaded . . .

It is for this reason that the worship of the serpent -- ophiolatry, which has extended, in one form or another, all over the world ³ -- is peculiarly heinous: it is the supplanting of God, not merely by a stock or stone, but by the symbol of Satan. For this reason also the character of its worship was distinct from general idolatry, in that it was the avowed worship of a dreaded and hated object, being somewhat similar in this respect to the worship of Ahriman, the evil deity by the Persians, in contrast with the more intelligible worship of Ormuzd, the beneficent one. But it was reserved for professing Christians to develop this abysmal wickedness to

2. John 8:44.

3. Deane traces its origin from Babylon, whence it overspread the ancient world. {See also *The Bible Treasury* 7:2}.

its utmost depth. The oriental sect of Gnostics, called the Ophites, ⁴ even went so far as to connect their adoration of the serpent with the observance of the Eucharist; and that in a repulsive manner which I forbear describing

. . .

There is another figure used of Satan in the lion ⁵ seeking whom he may devour. Here the prominent feature is violent destructiveness, as in the foregoing figure it is the crafty destructiveness. These two features always alternate and, so far as I can see, the violent hostility comes first, and, when this fails, the crafty one generally succeeds. Thus, in the beginning, he seems to have assailed the power of the Omnipotent, but was defeated . . . Then the tactics are changed and the specious deception of Eden succeeds -- for a time at least. In like manner (not to mention other dispensations) he assailed the church, first, as Peter describes, imprisoning, burning, crucifying; but when three hundred years of that left the church still triumphant, the methods are again altered. *Now it is as*

Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses {2 Tim. 3:8};

that is to say, by imitation and deception. The important thing to see is that it is the same opponent and hostility though under different forms. ⁶

Genesis 3:1-7

The Fall of Adam

(1) And the serpent was more crafty than any animal of the field which Jehovah Elohim had made. And it said to the woman, Is it even so, that God has said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (2) And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; (3) but of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, God has said, Ye shall not eat of it, and ye shall not touch it, lest ye die. (4) And the serpent said to the woman, Ye will not certainly die; (5) but God knows that in the day ye eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and ye will be as God, knowing good and evil. (6) And the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a pleasure for the eyes, and the tree was to be desired to give intelligence; and she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. (7) And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that

4. The Ophites, however, seem not to have dreaded but to have adored the serpent. A subdivision of them, -- for they had their divisions too! -- called the Cainites, had a peculiarly reversed way of reading the Bible; Cain and Judas were good men; Moses and Paul bad men &c. Yet these people flourished till the sixth century.

5. 1 Pet. 5:8.

6. *The Bible Treasury* 19:93-95.

they were naked. And they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

The Enemy of God and Man

“IS IT EVEN SO, THAT GOD HAS SAID . . . ?”

Questioning If God Really Said That. The apostle Paul commented on what happened here (2 Cor. 11:3) as actually taking place. Considering that there is no indication of surprise on Eve’s part that the serpent talked, here is something that can trigger speculative minds into action. Did God give us this as fodder for speculation? There is no indication, either, that Balaam gave an indication of surprise when he was rebuked by the ass he was riding on.⁷ The apostle Peter had no difficulty with believing this happened (2 Pet. 2:6). FAITH, which comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), knows nothing by speculation of the human imagination.

We know by the Word of God that it was the Enemy of God and man that was speaking; the serpent was his instrument.⁸ That the serpent itself was in a different condition before the fall is clear from the sentence on it, that “on thy belly shalt thou go” (Gen. 3:14). That *descent* does seem to reflect the *fall* -- which was down, while evolution says that man rose up; up from the slime, indeed from the “big bang.” And many call Gen. 1-3 myth! Why the “big bang” notion cannot even be called a myth with a moral lesson.

The approach to Eve was, then, not in over-powering angelic form, but through a creature over which Adam had dominion (Gen. 1:26). As his consort, and as *of* the man (1 Cor. 11:8 with Gen. 2:21-23), Eve was above all other earthly creatures also, except Adam her head.⁹

7. That the serpent was more crafty than any other animal is not grounds to suppose it was “a talking animal,” i.e., having an inherent power of speech. There is no reason to suppose that Balaam’s ass had an inherent power of speech. The serpent was the instrument of the Enemy of God and man.

8. See also Job 2:7; 1 Chron. 21:1; Zech. 3:1; Luke 10:18; 22:3, 31; John 8:44; 12:31; 13:27; 14:30; 16:11; Acts 5:3; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 4:4; 11:14; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; 1 John 3:5, 12; 5:19; Rev. 12:9; 20:2, 7, 10.

9. W. Kelly remarked:

Undoubtedly the man was first in being, the woman first in sin; yet another being mysteriously intrudes, not yet alluded to, but availing himself of a creature best adapted to his fell purpose . . .

Truly we may say, *An enemy, the enemy hath done this.* There is no allegory whatever, any more than in a dumb ass which, speaking with man’s voice, forbade the folly of the prophet. Here it was the great adversary of God and man, who employed the crafty serpent as the vehicle of his temptation. The great apostle of the Gentiles in 2 Cor.

(continued...)

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The use of the names of God in Scripture are of great significance, and in Gen. 1-3 we find the use of Elohim and of Jehovah Elohim. In ch. 1 Elohim is used regarding God’s activity in ordering the condition of the waste and empty earth for the habitation of man and the unfolding of His purpose in Christ to glorify Himself in the earthly and in the heavenly sphere. In chapter 2:4ff, Jehovah Elohim is used where man is taken up as in *relationship* to Him. In Gen. 3:1-7 the name Jehovah Elohim is not used. The Serpent only used Elohim:

and ensnares Eve into fatal forgetfulness of it, v. 3, in a section which everywhere else carefully maintains it: phraseology consistent with moral purpose, not at all so with an Elohist scribe, a Jehovist, a junior Elohist, a redactor, or any of the other fancied actors in the rationalistic farce. Scripture tells things simply as they were with the calm and simplicity of divine truth.¹⁰

The various use of the names of God is no proof of various documents being redacted or conflated, rather than being divinely inspired. Scripture is filled full of accuracies and the use of the divine names is in accordance with spiritual meaning.¹¹

Yes, the woman followed suit. How well it is for us to ever keep the names of *relationship* before us at all times and not slip away from them. The Enemy, however he was aware of what God had commanded Adam and Eve, questioned the Word of God. While it is true that in one sense God had said they were not to eat of every tree of the garden, that is not the form in which God had given the commandment.

9. (...continued)

11:3 has ruled in the Spirit that Gen. 3 presents the actual, no fable or myth, but a positive fact . . .

How then did he approach Adam? Through Eve, the weaker {1 Pet. 3:7} vessel (*The Bible Treasury* 19:129, 130).

10. *The Bible Treasury* 19:129, 130.

11. Concerning the fact that Ex. 6:3 does not mean that the name Jehovah was unknown before Moses time, see *The Bible Treasury* 7:79, 80 and also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 6:114, 190 -- answers to critics of Scripture.

JEHOVAH ELOHIM	SERPENT	EVE
Of every tree of the garden thou shalt 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 of it thou shalt certainly die (Gen. 2:16, 17).	Is it even so, that God has said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (Gen. 3:1).	We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, God has said, Ye shall not eat of it, and ye shall not touch it, lest ye die (Gen. 3:2, 3)

Satan, the Father of Eisegesis. As W Kelly said of Satan's question:

It was but a question, as if surprised, at most an insinuation . . . If He made and pronounced all very good, why keep back any? Is this love? Did Elohim really say this? Are you not mistaken? Distrust of God and His goodness was his first effort. ¹²

Exegesis is supposed to be drawing out of the text. Eisegesis would be placing things into the text that are not really there.

“Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
Things that are put there by you and by me.”

What W. Kelly remarked seems to me to be at the bottom of numbers of new views on Scripture that claim to be the result of exegesis -- things that set aside God's instituted order for the sexes, for marriage, and for the womb. Even some so-called Evangelical exegetes and expositors have joined in Western society's present behavior noted in Psa. 2:3.

CONCEALING THE INFLUENCE OVER THE MIND

In the very first temptation, when Satan beguiled Eve through his subtlety, we get the main traits which mark every one of his great assaults on man. Here Satan came in the form of “the subtlest beast of the field which the Lord God had made” -- in the form of a serpent. Now the verb, to use “enchantments,” is a cognate of the word for serpent, both being spelled alike, without points, (שׂוֹפֵר) to which I may allude presently. I only adduce it now to show that Satan assumed the serpent form with the same intent that he would use enchantments -- in order to deceive -- and hence the Apostle comments on this deed, as “the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety,” and Eve says herself, “the Serpent beguiled me.” We need no more than this, to establish that the first great aim of Satan is, to conceal from man the power which is exerting its influence over his mind and conscience. And this is a most important discovery for me to make. Evil likes to accomplish its

12. *The Bible Treasury* 19:129, 130.

malicious designs without its origin being discovered; whereas good, like every thing divine, is always more confirmed by being traced to its origin. We may conclude, then, that Satan will always deceive man when he seeks to make his prey of him; and, therefore, if I cannot see distinctly the origin of the influence brought to bear on me, i.e., from whom it proceeds, I have need to beware and tread cautiously, lest I fall into the snare of the devil. Let us note this well. Satan's first appearance in an assault is with deception and subtlety; the next (and from this, if I have spiritual sense I may discover my danger) is, that he always proposes to me something which will magnify myself; it matters not whether it be so morally or naturally, he seeks, in either case, to make self my object, and will use God's name to lend a weight to his lie. In the case of Eve, he sought to make her disobey God by first asserting a lie, and then presenting the gain that would arise to her from acceding to his counsel; which is backed up by reference to God. Even though it be an evil insinuation, yet the appeal to God, in its very hardihood, often reaches the simple and inexperienced with the force of truth. Who, it might be said, would assert so openly, in the face of heaven, if he had not truth on his side? But this dogmatic effrontery is, in reality, diabolical profanity. Now, if I am spiritual, I immediately suspect any specious counsel addressed to me exclusively or primarily with reference to my own progress or advantage. The gospel, I may be told, presents to me pre-eminently my own advantage. True, but does it not connect me with God? And is it not in the setting forth therein of His grace and His glory that I find a place of everlasting *nearness* to Him? “Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord” -- a message from the glory of God! Satan would occupy me about my own advantage, and my own ability too, to secure it. Having first deceived me as to the real source of the influence which addresses me, and having obtained a hearing, he presents to me how I may advance myself, and that in a line known to God; all scruple as to Divine restrictions being overborne in the God-known assurances of positive gain, and man's own ability to attain and acquire it. When man yields thus to Satan, the same thoughts in principle pass through his mind as through Eve's; there is a scrutiny and a conclusion, that great personal and self-elevating advantages will arise from the Tempter's propositions. And then the fatal course is entered on. Adam and Eve are naked! They see too much! So much for the advancement they had derived from listening to Satan! They now see what they cannot remedy. God's grace is always to keep before the soul of His people the remedy equal to the need. Adam, in having recourse to fig-leaves, makes a miserable effort, considering his extensive natural information to remedy his need; and in skulking behind the trees of the garden presents a still more melancholy exhibition of resourcelessness and inadequacy to meet his case when he had to with God. ¹³

13. *The Present Testimony* 14:22-23.

The Woman's Parley with the Enemy and The Enemy's Contradiction of Jehovah Elohim

EVE'S ADJUSTMENT OF THE WORD OF GOD

Her words, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden" (v. 2), omitted the word "freely." Jehovah Elohim had stressed His liberality. But the goodness of God was not now strongly before her soul. Moreover, she spoke of "the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden," whereas Jehovah Elohim had spoken of the tree of life in the midst of the garden.¹⁴ Something erroneous was getting a place in the midst of her mind, so to speak. Her attentiveness to the Word of God was lapsing. Next, she added to the Word, by saying, "ye shall not touch it" (see Prov. 30:6). There is a progression here in a downward course. In Luke 18:18 we read, "Take heed how ye hear." This refers to the moral state of soul in which we listen to the Word of God. And, finally, she mitigated the sentence for disobedience, saying, "lest ye die." Jehovah Elohim did not say "lest," but "thou shalt certainly die."

Persons undermine God's Word in the same way. They state things in a way that God did not say them. They add to His Word. Then they mitigate the force of God's Word. Finally, they contradict it.

The Enemy accused God of withholding a blessing that man ought to have and did so on the ground that God would be envious. This was craftily implied in the way that he worded the question.

The Enemy quickly discerned the opening that Eve's handling of the Word of God gave him. Now he would openly contradict God and impugn Jehovah Elohim's authority and goodness:

How evident, from the mode of the enemy's attack, that faith is the root and spring of all obedience in the creature, even in innocence, as well as that which receives the Savior and His great salvation when man has fallen! No wonder that such stress is laid on it as the fundamental principle of the Christian's life, walk, endurance, and victory. Perfect confidence in God's goodness would have assured our first parents, though they knew nothing of the reason for the prohibition, that it must be, and was, for their good and happiness. They would then have repelled the base insinuation against God's goodness, implied rather than expressed in the artful question, "Yea, hath God said?" &c. How much more was contained in such an inquiry than appears on the surface!

His own pretended anxiety for their enjoyment; the insinuation that such a thing was too bad for God to have said; but if He had, what a foe to their

14. The reader may have noticed in the NT the place that the Lord Jesus has, in various situations, *in the midst*.

happiness He must be, to grudge them so small a gratification? What could have met so poisoned a dart from Satan's quiver, but the perfect confidence which would have replied in the very words of the LORD God: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat" -- "such is our Creator's goodness; and, having made the one only exception to this, we can trust His goodness in this also -- that it is for our good." Faith would have noticed the "every" and the "freely" in Gen. 2:16; and such observation of the very words of the "Lord God" would again have strengthened faith, and led to the instant repelling of such thoughts as the enemy sought to suggest.

But Eve's first reply has two sad features: first, that God's very words did not constitute it; and, secondly, that the two {words} she omitted were such as show that the tempter's insinuation had already begun to take effect. Her answer betrays that already her thoughts of God's bounty are less vast and magnificent than the words had expressed. The thin edge of the wedge was already inserted. All the rest, alas! was easy. The threatening was all that now stood between her and the enjoyment she had alas! begun to covet. And even as to the threatening, the solemn words, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," have got diluted in Eve's lips to, "lest ye die." The heart set on a prohibited indulgence, the threatened punishment the only barrier, and even this viewed through a diminishing medium, how easily can Satan silence all remaining fears by the bold contradiction of God's word: "Ye shall not surely die!" To this, moreover, he now adds, what he had but insinuated before, that God has motives of His own for the prohibition. According to the enemy, it was to perpetuate their inferiority to Himself that God had forbidden them the fruit.¹⁵

J. N. Darby remarked:

Thus there were three things in which the devil desired that man should dishonor God; first, as to His grace; secondly, His truth; thirdly, the majesty of His Godhead.¹⁶

THE SERPENT'S THREE-FOLD RESPONSE

The crafty one's ploy was to speak about what the pair would gain (by disobedience) while hiding the awful result (of disobedience). He gave a three-fold response to what the Woman said.

Ye¹⁷ Will Not Certainly Die. The Enemy of God and man directly contradicted God. It was a certainty. "Thou shalt certainly die" (Gen. 2:17). Concerning the

15. *The Bible Treasury* 12:194; see also 19:145-146.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 309, note.

17. "Ye" refers to both the woman and her husband. However, that is no basis on which to assert that Adam was standing by listening to the conversation.

day in which Adam would die, it may mean that in the day He sinned the penalty would fall on him. It was many years later that Adam actually died, but his death was certain. And so, it is appointed unto man once to die (Heb. 9:27). See the refrain, “and he died,” in Gen. 5. This was the result of God’s government in this world. The issue of eternal matters is not raised here.

But God Knows That in the Day Ye Eat of It, Your Eyes Will Be Opened.

He then said, rather than certainly dying, “Your eyes will be opened.” That is, of course, a figure of speech regarding the knowledge that will be acquired. “I see” is often used as a figure of speech for understanding something. In a quotation above, the writer said, “What did they see?” They saw that they were in an estranged position from Jehovah Elohim.

The thrust is that God is withholding something good. And so distrust of God’s goodness is in all mankind.

And Ye Will Be as God, Knowing Good and Evil. Moreover, you will be as Elohim in the knowledge to be gained. Yes, they obtained the knowledge of good and evil, but the evil seized on them, and characterized them, and exercised dominion over them. They did not hold the knowledge of good and evil in the same way as the Holy One does. God hates the evil (for “God is light”) and does only good. Fallen man loves (moral) darkness rather than light because his deeds are evil (John 3:19).

It is true that Elohim is plural, but it was not meant that they would be as gods (plural). They had no knowledge concerning gods. The snare was to be like the Creator.

How different this is from what we read of One in the form of God:

. . . Christ Jesus; who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God; but emptied Himself . . . becoming obedient even unto death, and [that the] death of [the] cross (Phil. 2:8).

Is it not clear that this stands in direct contrast to Adam who took the position of his wife? Is it not a diametrically opposed thing to what the second man, the Lord out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:47) did compared to the first man? Do you not think that it is meant by God that we contrast the first man and the second man?

Resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

Satan’s Masterpiece Is Yet to Come. Just before Christ comes to smite the nations and take His power of the coming kingdom, the Man of Sin will appear, who will “sit down in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4). The apostates of Christendom and of Judaism will be sent a judicial working of error, from God, to believe what is false (2 Thess. 2:11).

A man-god was Satan’s bait and man’s ruin. The God-man dying in obedience and for redemption is the triumph of truth and grace.¹⁸

***The Woman Taken in the Three-fold Snare;
and The Man Follows the Woman***

DISTRUSTING GOD

Eve began to lust for the fruit that would make her as God, knowing good and evil. Oh, to have what God withheld! Oh, to be God-like! She knew better what was good for her than her Creator Himself did. Thus, obedience and trust in the goodness of God were set aside. Such is the deceitfulness of sin. Distrust of God’s goodness is now in the soul of all, even the Christian, for it is implanted there by the acquisition of “sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3) which entered the soul in the fall.

Verse 6. What a contradiction here to the One who judged not “after the sight of his eyes,” or “the hearing of his ears,” and what an answer to the infidelity which prefers “sight,” or what men call “demonstration,” to faith in God’s word. She saw through the medium Satan had interposed, and what she saw was neither more nor less than three enormous lies. God had said, by prohibiting the tree, that it was not good for food: she saw that it was. Had God retained His place in her heart, she could not have found pleasure to her eyes in that which He had forbidden, but she saw “that it was pleasant to the eyes.” Believing Satan rather than God, she saw, moreover, that “it was a tree to be desired to make one wise.” “The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life {1 John}, having thus entered, the act of disobedience was all that remained, and soon, alas! she took, ate, gave to her husband, and he also ate.

We have divine authority for believing that “Adam was not deceived, but the woman” (1 Tim. 2:14). Hence learn:

1. The wisdom of God in making the man the head of the woman.
2. Satan’s craft in addressing himself to the weaker vessel.
3. The evil and misery which flow from practical disregard of God’s arrangement. It was evidently Eve’s place to have referred the serpent to Adam, or to have herself referred to him the representations falsely made to her by the serpent; and how evident, as Adam was not deceived, that the tempter would in this way have been foiled.
4. God’s claim ought to have been, with Adam, superior to that of conjugal affection, whether the latter led him to choose, with his

18. W. Kelly, *In the Beginning and the Adamic Earth*, p. 105.

eyes open, to sin, and perish with his wife, or whether it was in some other way that it operated.

5. How solemnly does the whole illustrate and enforce the subjection due from the church to Christ (Eph. 5), as well as the chosen symbol of this in the actual and willing subjection of the wife to her husband!

It has often been said, and still oftener thought, that the act of our first parents in thus eating of the forbidden fruit was a trivial act, when compared with the consequences it involved. Nothing can be more absurd than such a thought. The occasion afforded them of obeying or disobeying was certainly in itself, viewed apart from God's command, a trivial one. But not only did it cease to be a trifle, when it had become the subject of a divine command, and a test of man's obedience, but the more trivial in itself the prohibited act, the more fearful and manifest the guilt of disobedience. The man who would be a traitor for a toy would be justly held more culpable than one whose inducement to revolt was the anticipated possession of a kingdom. If it were a small matter to eat the fruit of any particular tree, it was surely a small matter to abstain therefrom. But, for the sake of so confessedly small a matter, to disobey God's command, was not a trifle, but an act of gravest significance and deepest guilt. Consider the elements which are combined in such an act -- which were combined in this. Distrust of their Creator's goodness; the denial of His veracity; ingratitude for all the bounties He had bestowed upon them, and all the favors He had shown them; contempt of all the blessedness involved in His continued favors, along with the hardihood which dared Him to fulfil the threatening He had denounced. These, as well as the trampling under foot authority, the aspiring to equality with Him, and the preferring Satan as their friend and counselor to the God who had given them existence, with all that made that existence a blessing, were some of the chief moral elements involved in the act which has been deemed so trivial by their fallen and corrupted offspring.¹⁹

There are three stages to take note of: we have just considered *distrust* of God; the next step that we will consider is *lust*; and after that the overt act of *disobedience*.

HER VIEW OF THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT

In 1 John 2:16 we read:

. . . all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

These are the three features of sin that motivate the sinner, perhaps one of them

19. *The Bible Treasury* 12:195, 196.

more prominently. It was through Adam that sin entered the world (Rom. 5:12) and we see all three of these things at work in Gen. 3:6 and in the very order of 1 John 2:16:

1. "and the woman saw that the tree was good for food";
-- the body -- the flesh -- comfort --
2. "and that it was a pleasure for the eyes";
-- the soul -- the world -- acceptance --
3. "and the tree was to be desired to give intelligence."
-- the spirit --²⁰ the devil -- pride --

Lust was now at work in her soul and it broke out into open disobedience. See James 1:13-15, keeping in mind that lust is itself sin in its principle, i.e., in its root within us -- "sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3) working within -- that breaks out into open sin in an act, and produces death.

Examination of the testing of the Lord Jesus in the wilderness (a far different situation than the garden in Eden) will show that the three temptations are of this character. He overcame by the Word of God. The three excuses made in Luke 14:18-20 to not accept God's invitation also have this character. These three excuses show how everyday, normal things are used to set aside the will of God. Why, the first two persons were even polite: "I pray thee hold me for excused"; while the third did not say so -- and he could have brought his wife along. God instituted marriage and he used marriage to peremptorily refuse God's invitation! Let us beware of the working of such things in our souls, for we do indeed have within us "sin in the flesh." The apostle John has warned us:

And the world is passing, and its lust, but he that does the will of God abides for eternity (1 John 2:17).

20. Man is tripartite, spite of what dichotomists say:

Now the God of peace sanctify you wholly: and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:23).

Notice the reverse order (spirit, soul, body) from the account in Gen. 3. See also Heb. 4:12.

ADAM EATS OF THE FRUIT

Adam Was Not Deceived. W. Kelly observed:

She “gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.” Mankind was now fallen. Cleverly had Satan planned his temptation. He addressed himself to the weaker vessel, and deceived her as we have seen. He left it to the woman to draw the man into her error; and we are told by authority beyond appeal, by the apostle Paul, that “Adam was not deceived.” This is characteristic. The woman was deceived, not the man. So says the Holy Spirit in the Epistle {1 Tim. 2:14}. We perhaps might have failed so to infer from the ancient record, but feel none the less assured that the difference is true and important, as appears from the application of it to Timothy. The man without being deceived was entangled by his affection, and shared her transgression to universal ruin. Affection is an excellent bond and a great support when it works in God’s order. But here all was out of course. The woman acted first in weak but known opposition to the divine word, and also, as compared with her husband, was not subject to him as became her. He followed, instead of directing her, in too bold disobedience, and so must share the punishment she had incurred. God was not in his thoughts. Satan triumphed for the while, always doomed to defeat in the end.²¹

Indeed, the woman was deceived and Adam went into it without being deceived. But he was enticed by his wife, his woman. She enticed him. She was doing the serpent’s will. How many women since then have practiced enticement on their husbands to lead them into disobedience of God? I was once told that it is true that man is the head, but woman is the neck and turns the man. Is that the relationship of the man and the woman as God instituted the relationship? -- and as it points to Christ and the assembly (Eph. 5:22-33)? Try to work that “neck” notion into Eph. 5:22-33. The “neck” notion is rather found in the sinful enticement of Adam.

The Free Moral Agent Became the Bound Moral Agent. Before the fall Adam had free will. That is not to say that God offered him a choice, as if God offers anyone the right to disobey. Here in the most favorable circumstances, with only one prohibition, free will in man was put to the test. Man chose to disobey and in doing so acquired what Rom. 8:3 calls “sin in the flesh.” This is what we call the old nature. This brought man into a state of dominion of sin (Rom. 6). The old nature within controls the will, and so powerful is this control that we read in Rom. 8:7, 8:

Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God; for neither indeed can it be; and they that are in the

21. *The Bible Treasury* 19:161, 162.

flesh cannot please God.

“Neither indeed can” are words stating *inability*, but inability is disbelieved by many professed Christians. The 4000 years of the trial of the first man to show that he was not recoverable does not convince them.

He that’s persuaded against his will,
Is of the same opinion still.

Thus books are filled with arguments attempting to prove that man in his fallen state still has free will and can choose by free will to obey God. But God must implant a new nature into the soul, a nature that acts on the will to please Him:

According to his own will begat he us by the word of truth . . . (James 1:18; see Phil. 2:13).²²

BEING FAITHFUL IN THAT WHICH IS LEAST

He that is faithful in the least is faithful also in much; and he that is unrighteous in the least is unrighteous also in much (Luke 16:10).

Here is a moral test for our souls. The “little” things are an indicator of what is going on in the soul. Luke 16:10 is contrary to the natural thought.

Gen. 1:26 had “the whole earth” in view, but God set Adam in a garden within Eden. It was ‘little’ compared with the whole earth, and it was just there that Adam fell. Is there nothing to be learned from this and our Lord’s words in Luke 16:10?

The ‘little’ thing of being forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the assertion of God’s rights to be obeyed. God is to be obeyed in the ‘little’ things! They are not so little as we imagine. The first man was, then, unfaithful in the little thing (though obedience to God is not a little thing) and when Christ came, which was a very large matter, the first man cast Him out. Unfaithful in a little thing, he was unfaithful in such a large thing.

* * * * *

It was not the environment that caused sinful behavior, nor was it society, nor anything else than disobedience to God.

The Change in Adam’s and Eve’s State

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons

22. See my, *The Sovereignty of God in the Salvation of Lost Men*, where these things are considered in detail. A companion volume is *The Work of Christ on the Cross*. These two books address the Calvinistic-Arminian controversy and present a dispensational understanding as J. N. Darby taught dispensational truth.

(Gen. 3:7).

THEIR EYES WERE OPENED

The fruit eaten had no intrinsic power over the moral faculties. It was *the act of disobedience* that was the spring of their new-found knowledge of good and evil. The acquisition of this knowledge opened their eyes. What did they see? Surely they saw more than merely physical nakedness, though they saw that also. How different in result was this from the case of the two discouraged saints on their way to Emmaus. The stranger that had walked with them was constrained to sup with them:

And it came to pass as he was at table with them, having taken the bread, he blessed, and having broken it, gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him (Luke 24:30, 31).²³

Who but our beloved Lord Jesus was so gracious? When He opens eyes it is really for seeing Him, not our own wretchedness as in Adam's and Eve's case, though the more we learn of Him the more we see how wretched man's lost condition is.

THEY KNEW THEY WERE NAKED

Concerning the change that took place in Adam consequent upon his act of disobedience, God said:

Man is become as one of us, to know good and evil (Gen. 3:22).²⁴

Clearly, Adam was not created with the knowledge of the distinction of good and evil.²⁵ The acquisition of this knowledge also resulted in him acquiring what Rom 8:3 calls "sin in the flesh" which all the children of Adam have. When we speak of the old nature in man we are speaking of "sin in the flesh," a disposition to sinning, a disposition in his soul that characterizes fallen man, that controls his will in opposition to God. In the point of view concerning man's condition before God given in Eph. 2, man is spiritually dead before God and in need of the divinely initiated action of quickening. See also John 5. With sinning, Adam had died in that sense, though such things were brought to light in the gospel. However, God communicated to Adam a new, spiritual life, concerning the soul

23. It has been suggested that as He reached the broken bread to them with His nail-pierced hands, they saw the nail-prints! Pause; does not this say more to us?

24. Concerning the knowledge of good and evil, and conscience, see *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 22:365-367.

25. I suggest that it is erroneous to think that Adam had the knowledge of good as created and acquired the knowledge of evil in the fall. Good and evil are correlative terms. It is the knowledge of the distinction of good and evil that Adam acquired in himself. As created, he was innocent, and by this we mean that he did not have the knowledge of good and evil. I suspect that the idea that he knew good as created is coupled with the erroneous notion that Adam was holy and/or righteous as created.

-- but there was another consequence, for Adam's body must eventually die and he must be expelled from Eden. He brought death into the world of man by sinning.²⁶

. . . by one man²⁷ sin entered into the world and death by sin (Rom. 5:12).^{28 29}

It is evident from the pair's behavior when they heard the voice of God that they had acquired a conscience,³⁰ a bad conscience, for they had *no conscience in innocency*. Fig leaves in Scripture typically signify profession;³¹ they had realized that they were naked and sought their own device to hide it; but hearing His voice they realized God saw through them (cp. Heb. 4:12, 13). They stood before him in spiritual nakedness, with a bad conscience. Such will be the condition of all who stand before the great white throne as Christ looks at them in judgment.³²

26. Since Cain killed Abel, we see that physical death did not first occur in the world when Adam physically died.

27. The apostle Paul did not regard Gen. 3 as "myth." See also Rom. 5:14, 15.

28. This text is speaking about the world of which Adam was the appointed head, not about any life that may have preceded the Adamic earth before Gen. 1:2, with which he had nothing to do.

Concerning mankind, Scripture speaks of Adam as the first man, and does so in contrast to Christ, the second Man (1 Cor. 15:45, 46). There were no pre-Adamite men.

29. "And he died" is a characteristic phrase in the chronology in Gen. 5.

30. Dave Hunt, who appears to be a four-point-Arminian Scofieldian, as if a Covenantist, wrote that any person

has a conscience in which God has written His moral law (Rom. 2:14-16) . . .

(*The Berean Call*, Jan. 2005, p. 3).

Rom. 2:14-16 says no such thing. The "work of the law" is conviction of sin, and it is possible to have a conviction of sin apart from law, though that is the work of the law. "The work of the law written in their hearts" is the conviction of sin, and the conscience bears witness -- to what? that they are guilty or not. The passage clearly states of the Gentiles "which have no law" and "having no law." To say, 'Oh, but they have it written by God in their conscience' means that they *do* have the law in some form. But if the moral law was written in sinners' consciences, when did that first happen, and how did it happen?

31. The fig tree that the Lord cursed (the only thing He cursed) was a picture of fruitless Israel. The tree had leaves, which means figs should have been present. That is representative of profession without fruit.

32. Concerning physical nakedness, it is only in the innocent state that the Word of God speaks of it without attaching shame to it. "The shame of thy nakedness" (Rev. 3:18) uses nakedness figuratively; and what is figurative has a literalness underlying it. Cp. Nah. 3:5. One has but to look in a concordance under "naked" and "nakedness" to see how these words are used in Scripture and what God thinks of it. Professed Christian women in the West, with the consent of their husbands, follow the world in its skimpy dress. A 'principle' has been generated to even cast a holy aura on it: 'Christian women should not dress so as to look different.' Dressing for the purpose of being different is an entirely different thing from dressing this way:

. . . whose adorning let it not be that outward one of tressing of hair, and wearing gold, or putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible [ornament] of a

(continued...)

It is clear from the character of God's providing a covering for the pair that something deeper than mere physical nakedness is meant. The fig-leaf aprons could have taken care of mere physical covering. Speaking of the resurrection of the just, Scripture says:

. . . if indeed being also clothed, we shall not be found naked (2 Cor. 5:3).

A believer already has the garment of salvation (Isa. 61:10). For such, 2 Cor. 5:3 means that his mortal will be swallowed up in life (2 Cor. 3:4) at the resurrection of the just (or by rapture of the living), i.e., at the resurrection of life. The unbeliever will be raised in the resurrection of the unjust, and though he will then have a never-dying body, he yet remains naked. He has no eternal garment of salvation, nor does the resurrection of judgment clothe him in the sense of 2 Cor. 5:3.

RECOURSE TO THE FIG TREE

Their new-found knowledge is accompanied by inventiveness. There was no change in the bodies of Adam and Eve apparent to the eye (though, of course, death was now at work within them). They looked as before and there were only animals there. But having acquired a *new awareness* and a *bad conscience*, desired *concealment*. Thus we hide from one another and from God. The fig-leaf aprons were a sign of hypocrisy -- two-facedness. We do not want others to know the secret chamber of our souls and the soul is locked in its own hiddenness and loneliness. It will be the unbeliever's awful, eternal portion.

Adam and Eve's fig-leaf religion (the first invention in Scripture), the result of *the work of their hands*, comes out in Cain in the form of an offering to Jehovah from the cursed ground, *the work of his hands*. All of man's religions are works-religions, attempting at what is really a useless palliative for a bad

32. (...continued)

meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. For thus the holy women who have hoped in God heretofore adorned themselves, being subject to their own husbands . . . (1 Pet. 3:4:6).

In like manner also that the women in decent deportment and dress adorn themselves with modesty and discretion . . . (1 Tim. 2:9).

The answer to the kind of dress, or rather undress, appropriate to certain places indicates that the Christian does not belong there. In case you do not understand the thrust of this, allow me to ask if you seriously think that you ought to go swimming at a nudist beach? You say *no*? But you think a bikini swimsuit (which is no suit) is alright? You retort, But where do you draw the line? Such a question betrays a state of soul that appears not to be seeking to please Him Who never pleased Himself.

Rom. 1:21-32 describes the condition when the gospel came, as well as the true condition of the moralist (Rom. 2:1-16), and of the Jew (Rom. 2:17-29).

conscience.³³

We just noted that the fig leaves were a sign of hypocrisy in Adam and Eve. In John 8:2-12, the hypocritical scribes and the Pharisees, wearing the fig leaves, so to speak, came to the Lord in an attempt to either manipulate Him to contradict the law of Moses or show Him as no different from themselves. His addressing their bad consciences revealed their spiritual nakedness, manifested in leaving that place where He was.

We would do well to consider the question, "where are you," as addressing their consciences regarding their newly-acquired fallen state. They were afraid now of their Creator. And he asks, "what have you done?" for all must be manifested in His presence. With sin having entered the world, blame-passing begins.

Before examining Adam's excuses, and the discipline under which he was brought by God, let us consider some thoughts on morality, will, freedom of choice, and man's sinful condition, as connected with Adam's fall. J. N. Darby wrote:

I am not questioning the door being freely open and the blood on the mercy-seat, but this is the final proof that man will not come, when he can as regards God, and God has proved that NO motives suffice to induce him: he must be born again wholly afresh. The history of scripture is of God's using all means and motives, the result being, the rejection of His Son and judgment. The case of Adam {as created} was somewhat different, because lust and self-will were not yet there: man was not captive to a law of sin in his members; sin was not there, nor was deliverance required; he was with God in innocence. Clearly God put no restraint on him to leave Him and disobey: his obedience was tested; it was not a question of coming to God when already evil: the prohibition was a pure test of obedience, and the act innocent if it had not been forbidden. There was as yet no conscience in the sense of knowing the difference of good and evil for oneself; he had only to stay where he was and not disobey. There was nothing in him, nor, I need not say, in God, to hinder him; in this he was free: his fall proved that not the creature was bad, but if left to himself could not stand firm. But in this state, so far from choice, and freedom of choice being what he had to do to go right, the moment there was choice and will there was sin. Obedience simply was my place; if a question arose whether he should obey, sin was there. Choice is not obedience. The moment he felt free to choose, he had left the place of simple obedience. Think of a child who takes the ground of being free to choose whether he shall obey, even if he chooses right. I deny that morality depends on

33. Concerning conscience, see "*Conscience*" in *Subject Index to J. N. Darby's Writings*, available from Present Truth Publishers.

freedom of choice. Man was created in a given relationship with God; morality consisted in walking in that relationship. But that relationship was obedience. There he could have continued simple and happy, and not set himself free from God. This is what Christ did. He came to do God's will, took the form of a servant. Satan in the temptation in the wilderness sought to get Him to leave this to be free and do His will; only in eating when He was hungry. What harm was there in that? It was freedom and His own will: and its answer is, that man shall live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. There was no movement in His heart or will but from or by the will of God; and that is perfection. Not a rule checking self-will, which we, alas, often need, but God's will the motive of our action -- of the action of our will. That is what is called in scripture the obedience of Christ to which we are sanctified. Man has in one sense made himself free, but it is free from God, and thus is in moral apostasy and the slave of sin. From this Christ wholly delivers, and sanctifies us to obedience, having borne the penalty of the fruits of our free will. How came I to have to choose? If I have, I have no good yet, and what is to make me choose it?

They confound too, conscience as to good and evil, with will. Man acquired this by the fall, and it is thus exercised in a state of alienation from God in the unconverted; and will is a distinct thing. In the flesh it is enmity against God, {it is} lust and lawlessness, and, if the law comes, transgression. If even I have the Spirit of God, it lusts against it. It is expressed by the heathen in saying, I see better things and approve them, I follow the worse. There is conscience and lust governing will. If all this be so, man was perfectly at liberty as to what he might do as put to the test, but the exercise of will or choosing was just sin, obedience being his place with God. He was created in good, and had it not to choose; now he loves sin and his own will, and has to be delivered from it.³⁴

Let us continue with this deeply instructive line a little longer and consider the workings of the result of the fall, namely, "sin in the flesh," i.e., the old nature, in ourselves:

The principle which is called the "flesh," or "old man," is produced at once, and at once begins to work. Confidence in one another is immediately lost. Innocence had needed nothing; but guilt is necessarily shame, and must get some kind of covering. Every man to this hour carries in him what he cannot comfortably and confidently let out; even to his fellow-creature. Restraint has taken the place of freedom, and artifices come to the relief of guilt and shame. So is it now; and so was it in that hour when the flesh was generated.

More deeply still does it retire from God. Men can bear each other's

34. *Letters* 2:166-168.

presence under the dressing of form and ceremony, and the common understanding of the common guilty nature; but they cannot bear God's presence. Though he had the apron of fig-leaves, when His voice is heard, Adam retreats under the trees of the garden. This is the flesh, or the old guilty nature, to this day. God is intolerable. The thought of being alone, or immediately with Him, is more than the conscience can possibly stand. All its contrivances are vain. God is too much for the flesh. It secretly whispers and lays all the mischief on God Himself, but it cannot come forth and tell Him so. Out of its own mouth it is judged.

These are its simplest, earliest, energies: we are hateful and hating, and we are at enmity against God.

But the working of this same principle (thus produced in Adam through the lie of the Serpent) is manifested in other ways afterwards in Cain. "Cain was of that wicked one." He becomes a tiller of the ground. But he tills, not as subject to the penalty, but as one that would get something desirable out of the ground, though the Lord had cursed it; something for himself, independent of God.

This is a great difference. Nothing is more godly, more according to the divine mind, concerning us, than to eat our bread by the sweat of our face, to get food and raiment by hard and honest toil. It is a beautiful accepting of the punishment of our sin, and a bowing to the righteous thoughts of God. But to get out of the materials of the cursed ground what is to minister to our delight, our honor, and our wealth, in forgetfulness of sin and of the judgment of God, is but perpetuating our apostasy and rebellion.

Such was Cain's tillage. And accordingly it ended in his building a city, and furnishing it with all that promised him pleasure, or advanced him in the world. This he seeks after -- and seeks after with greediness, though he must find it all in the land of Nod, in the regions of one who had left the presence of God.

He had his religion withal. He brings of the fruit of the earth that he was tilling, to God. That is, he would fain have his enjoyment of the world sanctioned of God. If he could command it, he would keep God on terms with him, though he was making the very ground which he had cursed the occasion of his enjoyments. This is very natural, and practiced by our hearts to this hour. Cain desired to link the Lord with himself in his worldliness and love of present things, that he may keep conscience quiet. But the Lord refuses, as he does to this day; though as we have said the heart to this day would fain make the same efforts, and get its worldliness and love of present things sanctioned and shared by Jesus, that conscience may not interfere with the pursuits of lust.

What ways of the flesh or of "the old man" are here? All this is the very thing that is abroad in the world to this hour. It is the working of that apostate principle which was generated by the lie of the Serpent in the soul of Adam. And being of the wicked one Cain "slew his brother." He had religion, as we have seen; but he hated and persecuted the truth; just as to

this day. Look at the same thing in Saul of Tarsus, as he gives you the account of it himself in Acts 26. Look at it in the person of the Pharisees set against the Lord. Look at it in the history of Christendom all down its generations to the present hour.

This is the enmity of the seed of the Serpent to the Seed of the woman. "Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." This was the cause. It was the enmity of sin to godliness, the enmity of the carnal mind against God, the lusting of the old man, the lusting of flesh against Spirit; it was the hatred of the world to Christ, because he testified of it, that "the works thereof were evil." It does not always wear such garments stained with blood; but it is always in the heart, "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

Such is the flesh, the old nature, in the history of its production, and in the course and character of its workings. It is exactly now what it was then. It rules "the course of this world" under Satan, but it is found also in each of us, if provision be made for it. But we are to know it -- to know it whence it came, and how it works, and to mortify it in its principle and in its acts, in all its proper native energies which so continually beset the soul.³⁵

As fallen, Adam was still Adam, having human nature as before, but in addition to human nature he had that working of evil in the soul which we refer to as the old nature. To be born anew (John 3) the Lord describes as a birth (John 3). The new birth does not mean an amelioration of, or modification of, or a lessening of, the character or force of, the old nature, i.e., of "sin in the flesh." It does not mean that there is an infusion of some holiness into "sin in the flesh," i.e., into the old nature. The new birth is not a change in the old nature. The old and new natures remain fixed in their respective characters. So we speak of the two natures, referring to "sin in the flesh" and to the new nature implanted³⁶ within us by the Spirit's action using the Word of God; but we need to keep in mind that human nature remains, and is acted on by the old and new nature.

Fallen man's moral condition is that he is in conflict with God. Eph. 2:2, 3 describe the condition from the point of view that man is spiritually dead toward God. In Romans, man is viewed as alive in sins and under the dominion of "sin in the flesh," running from God as fast as he can.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

35. *The Bible Treasury* 15:145, 146.

36. James 1:18, and other texts, attribute the implantation of the new nature to the sovereign act of God. For more about this, see my *The Sovereignty of God in the Salvation of Lost Man*.

*The Christian's Heavenly Place and
Calling Eviscerated by Messianic Judaism*

Chapter 9

Positional Circumcision

Positional Circumcision in Colossians

In Col. 2:16-19 we read:

(16) Let none therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in matter of feast, or new moon, or sabbaths, (17) which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [is] of Christ. (18) Let no one fraudulently deprive you of your prize, doing his own will in humility and worship of angels, entering into things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by the mind of his flesh, (19) and not holding fast the head, from whom all the body, ministered to and united together by the joints and bands, increases with the increase of God.

The Messianic Jews' notion is that "Let none judge you" means go right ahead and do those things of v. 16 and do not let anyone judge you for it. First of all, that argument admits that Jewish things are referred to in v. 16. Next, that is the same as saying you may do the things named in v. 18 also. The Apostle rejects the whole of vv. 16-18. It is clear that one who is complete *in Christ*, and spiritually circumcised *in Christ*, should not be found engaged in these practices, for such practices are contrary to the Christian's position in Christ. They involve not "holding the head"; i.e., something has come between a member of the body and the Head. Moreover, such practice is disruptive of the practical expression of the body united together by the joints and bands. It is divisive. Furthermore, "the body" (i.e., the reality) has displaced the "shadow of things to come." There is no allowance of Jewish and gnostic distinctives. What is wrong is the refusal to be heavenly, for that is what this amounts to. It is a denial, in practice, that we are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10).

The Colossians giving ear to Jewish things, philosophy, gnosticism, etc.,

that the background of Paul's writing to them concerning that they were complete in Christ and they were circumcised *in Christ*.

We Christians answer to the meaning of circumcision without the circumcision made by hands on the body. And what is our circumcision?

(10) . . . and ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and authority, (11) in whom also ye have been circumcised with circumcision not done by hand, in the putting off the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of the Christ;

(buried with him in baptism) ¹

in which {or, in whom} ye have also been raised with [him] through faith of the working of God who raised him from among the dead . . . (Col. 2:10-12). ²

The putting off 'the sins of' the flesh is quite erroneous here, as some translations include. Not sins, not what I have done, but *what I am* as standing in the flesh, standing in (fallen) Adamic responsibility, has been cut off. Not sins, not what I have done, but I as identified with Adam fallen, am cut off -- not the physical body, but the flesh; morally speaking, the whole of it. "The putting off the body of the flesh" means the whole of our position as fallen; i.e., our identification with the fallen position, is gone from before God, but gone as having died with Him, and we are now identified with Christ. The flesh is likened to a body, for a body has members, and in Col. 3:5 (practice/experience) where we are exhorted to be practically in the good of Col. 2:11 (position), we read of members to be mortified, i.e., put to death, killed.

1. The parenthesis was suggested by F. G. Patterson; and, along with "in whom" rather than "in which," thus disconnecting the raising from baptism, and leaves baptism simply pointing to death and burial; while the raising is *in Christ*. See the interesting note in *Synopsis 5:22*.

There is no thought of raising in circumcision, nor is there in baptism.

2. In Col. 2 we have vv. 10-12 because the Colossians were in danger of adding something to Christ. And in Colossians we have Judaism set aside. We are complete in Christ and Judaism (also philosophy, etc.) can add nothing to the Christian because the Christian is complete in Christ. Not only so, but all that is incompatible with that position is removed by the spiritual circumcision.

There was a good state at Philippi and Paul could notice such a thing as Euodia and Syntyche. He also speaks to them of things to think upon (Phil. 4:8). Paul did not say such things to the Corinthians. There were other things for them to think about and he told them quite pointedly. Philippi was like a white sheet of paper with a spot on it, and he desired to see the spot removed. Corinth was a dirty place needing a powerful purging. Yes, every Scripture is perfect in its place. And Phil. 4:8 was not for Corinth. Sorry to say, I have often observed a Christian try to rebuff the judgment of evil by citing Phil. 4:8, just like those who use "judge not that ye be not judged" out of context for the purpose of hindering holiness to the Lord, while using such texts as if that self-serving use was a holy use. Such is the flesh; and what is needed is the mortification of the members spoken of in Col. 3, so as to answer to our circumcision in Christ. In Philippi, where there was a state substantially answering to our circumcision in Christ, the Apostle says "we are the circumcision." Every Scripture is perfect in its place.

What shall we do with "the body of the flesh" that is put off in the circumcision of Christ? Bury it (figuratively, in baptism)! For the Jew, circumcision was the mark of death on him. For Christians, we are spiritually circumcised. Does the Christian have an external mark of death? Yes, it is in v. 12: baptism. Baptism signifies the judgment of God on the first man. That is the outward thing regarding a Christian whether Jew or Gentile. In Rom. 6:3 we see that we are baptized unto Christ's death -- identified with His death as the removal of the first man from before God. Thus, in an outward way, the baptized are identified with His death. And in Col. 2:12 we see that the baptized are "buried with him in baptism": yes, both dead and out of sight -- entirely gone. Thus speaks the outward mark now. For a believing Jew now to circumcise his children, even if claiming to be under the Abrahamic covenant in order to do it, is having two marks, one suitable for an earthly people of God when owned of Him in the millennium, and one for a heavenly people now. As circumcised in the body, one is not viewed as buried with Christ. Circumcision in the flesh is suitable for this world, not for the heavenly ones (1 Cor. 15:48). We are not of this world and are crucified and buried; and then another truth, we are raised with Christ; and, in Ephesians, seen seated together in the heavenlies in Him. This is true of believing Jews and Gentiles, now one body. Circumcision for religious reasons is now is a denial of the heavenly position of a Jewish Christian, regardless of any claim to have both the heavenly and the earthly.

The office of circumcision *in the OT* is complete. It looked *forward* to the work of Christ. *Now*, circumcision is spiritual -- *in Christ*, as having died with Him. All sealed saints now are in a heavenly standing where circumcision in the body does not apply. *In Christ* we answer to the meaning of circumcision and are in the moral power of its meaning, being over Jordan, in the heavenlies. In the millennium Israel will be in an earthly standing and circumcised as looking *back* to the completed work of Christ. Israel will be in the spiritual meaning of circumcision in the body, but not as being dead with Christ and *in Christ*. They will not be in the dead and risen way in which we are now, but connected with being seated in the earthlies -- alive towards God, here on earth. ³

By saying that he is under the Abrahamic Covenant, Dr. Fructenbaum makes himself one with the *earthly*, Jewish expectation of the Abrahamic Covenant. Circumcision in the Abrahamic Covenant pointed forward to the work of Christ. Practicing rites and days that in the OT pointed forward to Christ, now when the work of Christ has been completed, is a seriously erroneous mixture. Circumcision in the flesh for religious reasons in effect

3. See *Notes and Jottings of J. N. Darby*, p. 438.

means that we are not complete in Christ. You cannot add to what is complete; the attempt implicitly denies the completeness.

Moreover, while professing to be under the earthly, Abrahamic Covenant, thus attempting to circumvent engaging in Jewish observances as if under the Mosaic order, Dr. Fructenbaum nonetheless observes feast days prescribed under the Mosaic Covenant.

Our Completeness in Christ

(The following extract is from F. G. Patterson.)

Why are we said to be “risen” with Christ *before* we are said to have been co-quickened with Him? (Col. 2:12, 13). Let me draw your attention to it for a little. I must leave full details aside in doing so, interesting though they are. One first thought in his mind is to establish their souls (as all others whom he had never seen in the flesh, Col. 2:1) in conscious union with Christ in glory, and this without naming the bond -- the Holy Ghost. He saw the danger in the want of this; and how the soul was open to every device of the enemy; and he would unfold the glories of Christ as he never had before, and give them the consciousness of “completeness in him.” To have even named the bond of union -- the Spirit of God, to such a state would have been to occupy them with the Holy Ghost rather than Christ Himself, and damage their souls. Instead of this he would lead them most blessedly, as in Col. 1:9-14, into the true experience of the Spirit in the soul which is at peace -- i.e., the thoughts begin with God, and flow downwards from the light of His glory into the conscience of him who is their recipient. The Spirit of God reasons ever from God to us; and when the soul is at peace and the heart free, the reasonings and experience of the soul flow in the same direction. How strange, and yet how lovely, then, to find the apostle in the one passage praying to God, writing Scripture, teaching the saints, and giving the true experience of the soul who stands in grace, by the same words! In Col. 2:12-14, he begins in the light of the Father’s presence with praise, and by seven steps he reasons downwards from His heart, to the conscience of the worshiper, giving them the true direction of thought, when the soul is right with God.

1. “Giving thanks unto the Father.”
2. “Which hath made us meet.”
3. “To be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”
4. “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,”
5. “And hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son,”

6. “In whom we have redemption,”
7. “And the forgiveness of our sins.”

We learn this in the inverse way, from us to Him: from the depths of the need of conscience, to the light of the Father’s presence. We see this in the order of the offerings, and in their application. How in the unfolding of the doctrine of them He begins with God, and in their application to the sinner he begins with him, and so on constantly.

I allude to the first chapter of Colossians, because it helps us in the second. It gives us *our* apprehension, experimentally known, what we have through grace. Col. 2 gives us God’s side rather. He looks at Christ Jesus, the Lord; He beholds Him in whom dwelleth all the completeness (πληρωμα) of the Godhead bodily, as man. In Him “we are complete.” From Him he reasons in the same way as in the first chapter -- from God downwards to our depths of need. Here Christ and His identification with His people, that they may be thus “complete in Him,” is his theme. Again we find seven steps in the train of thought:

1. “In Him dwelleth all the completeness of the Godhead bodily. And *ye are complete in Him.*” “God is complete in Christ for us; we are complete in Him for God,” as one has said.
2. “In whom also *ye are circumcised* with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” He has left the scene, given up His life here below, and all that connected Him to this scene and Israel His people. He is gone on high, the beginning of the creation of God.
3. “*In whom also ye are co-risen* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.” [Remark here that in v.12 I have omitted the first clause -- “Buried with Him in baptism.” I would read that clause as a parenthesis]. Just as Rom. 6 was the link *forward* with Colossians (see also Ex. 15:16), so this parenthesis is the link *backwards* with Rom. 6. (See also Josh. 4:23.) This, too, relieves us from any controversy as to whether ἐν ᾧ should be translated “in whom” or “in which”; either translation being possible from the original words; the spiritual sense alone determines the true translation. Read verses 11 and 12 for a moment, omitting the parenthesis, and the meaning is plain. “In putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ . . . in whom also ye are co-raised through the faith of the operation of God,” &c. This leaves baptism its own true meaning, that of the person baptized being buried to death. It does not, in my mind, go farther than that, and just ends there; the person is buried to death, as we read in Rom. 6, “Therefore we

are buried with Him by baptism unto death.” Read the first clause of Col. 2:12 as a parenthetical link connecting us with Rom. 6, and read what follows as in connection with “Christ . . . in whom ye also are co-risen,” &c., and all is plain. Faith in God’s operation comes in there and clears baptism of the thought of resurrection, though it follows where there is faith in God’s operation.

4. “And you being dead in your offences, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath *He co-quickened us together with Him.*”
5. “*Having forgiven us all the offences.*”
6. “*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances* that was against us . . . nailing it to His cross.”
7. “And having *spoiled principalities and powers*, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

Thus we see the reason why the co-raising us up with Christ should come before the co-quickening; because the Spirit of God reasons in the true divine order -- from God in Christ to us, and down to all our ruin in which we lay, by the seven steps of His truth.

- (1) Complete in Him;
- (2) circumcised in Him;
- (3) co-risen with Him;
- (4) co-quickened together with Him;
- (5) forgiven through Him;
- (6) the law ⁴ nailed to His cross; and
- (7) the whole power of Satan destroyed.

Now let me notice another thing which is very fine. The seven steps of Col. 1 give us *our* subjective consciousness, what *we* possess and know in our own soul’s experience, what we have from God. Those in Col. 2 give us rather the objective unfolding by revelation -- what is *in Christ* for us, apart from our experience, though known to faith, of course. Both lines of thought reasoning

4. {The reader’s attention is drawn to the fact that no Scripture says that the law itself was nailed to the cross. *The handwriting in ordinances* was nailed to the cross, meaning *the sentence* of judgment of the law against us. Christ’s death left the law just where it was. Cp. 1 Tim. 1:8. The law has not died; the Christian is viewed as dead, and is dead to the law (Rom. 7:4). If you say the law is dead, you are saying that we are dead to what is dead. We are dead to the law because it still remains, though the Mosaic system, the Mosaic Covenant, was ended by the cross, yet the age has not changed -- the Mosaic age continues on, “the end of the age” (i.e., the end of the Mosaic age) will come, and then the millennium.}

from God to us, whether in a revelation objectively presented in Christ, or what our own souls consciously possess in Him. ⁵ ❖

Positional Circumcision at Gilgal

It is noteworthy that Israel was not circumcised in the wilderness. It is at Gilgal Israel was circumcised. Gilgal is the entry point for Israel into the land of promise. The conflicts of Israel in the land typifies our conflicts in the heavenlies. ⁶ Circumcision is connected with entry into the land, pointing to our entry into the heavenlies, *in Christ*. We all, believing Jew and believing Gentile, must be in the heavenlies as circumcised ones, not as earthly ones under the Abrahamic Covenant.

The command to “Circumcise again the children of Israel the second time” (Josh. 5:2) is in reference to the circumcision that took place preparatory to the passover of Ex. 12, as Ex. 12:43-50 suggests. Previous to that, there had not been the faithful following of the practice of circumcision as is illustrated in the case of Moses’ children (Ex. 4:24-26). He was to be the leader in Israel’s deliverance and had not obeyed the charge of circumcision. Israel was as Jehovah’s firstborn, and Pharaoh would not acknowledge the call of Israel. Therefore the firstborn of Egypt came under judgment. Moses was to bring these things before Pharaoh without having had his sons circumcised?

So, preparatory to the passover and crossing of the Red Sea they were circumcised at that time and then again at Gilgal, the entry point for Israel into the land. In the interim between these two circumcisions, the nation had rebelled at the report of the spies (Num. 14) and thereafter stayed in the wilderness ⁷ until those 20 years and older at the Exodus had died in the wilderness, except Joshua and Caleb, who, of the 12, gave a good report. The refusal to go into the land violated the meaning of circumcision; they did not circumcise in the

5. “The Red Sea and Jordan” in *Collected Writings of F. G. Patterson*, p. 39, available from Present Truth Publishers. In this paper, emphasizing what J. N. Darby taught regarding the fact that the *purpose* of God was to bring Israel out of Egypt and into the land, the wilderness comes in as part of His *ways*, FGP directed attention to Psa. 114 where we see clearly implicit the coalescence of the Red Sea and the Jordan -- and God’s purpose is seen in Ex. 3:8; 6:6, 8; 15:13, 17; Deut. 6:23.

6. Jordan does not signify, or typify, physical death and then our going to heaven. That is a practice-enslaving view. Typically, the conflict in the land of promise, and the conflict we Christians have in the heavenlies in Eph. 6, answer to one another

7. Subsequently Israel was in the wilderness some 38 years, the time that the man of John 5:5 suffered under his infirmity until the Lord Jesus delivered Him from it by the word of His power.

wilderness.⁸

The wilderness is not part of God's *purpose*. His purpose was to bring Israel into the land (Ex. 3, 6, 15). The wilderness is part of *His ways* with His own to teach them what He is in spite of what we are. Physically, of course, Israel had to go through the wilderness first before entering the land; but we Christians are both in the wilderness and in the heavenlies at the same time. The Red Sea (Christ's death and resurrection *for* us) led to the wilderness. The Jordan (our death and resurrection *with* Christ) led into Canaan for Israel, the heavenlies for us. When God brings us into the good of Christ's death and resurrection *for* us, He simultaneously brings us into the good of our death and resurrection *with* Christ. We are both in the wilderness and Canaan at the same time. The Red Sea and Jordan coalesce, i.e., become one, so that we may be viewed as having gone *through* the Red Sea, right on *through* Jordan, up the bank of Jordan, right to Gilgal, the entry point of the land (and into the land (Eph. 2:6)). If you will look in Ex. 14-15 you will see that it is not expressly stated that Israel came out of the sea as compared with Israel coming out of the Jordan (see Josh. 4:17).⁹ Of course Israel came out of the Red Sea physically, but it is not noted. Romans does not give us the typical teaching of Jordan (it does, of the Red Sea) but Rom. 6:8 brings us as far as into the Jordan and stops there.¹⁰ But over Jordan,

8. God has used the failures and disobediences of man in forming the types in Scripture. Another example is that Moses failed in smiting the rock when he should have spoken to it. Indeed, that was the marring of a type, and he was not permitted to go into the land. In Josh. 1:2 we read, "Moses my servant is dead." He is replaced by Joshua, a type of Christ leading His people in the heavenlies. Moses was connected with the law. However, it is not that the law is dead but we Christians are dead to the law (Rom. 7:4), dead with Christ (Col. 2:20), and risen with Christ (Col. 3:1). Thus, concerning what Canaan typifies, Joshua, not Moses, is the leader. And we must not mix Moses and Joshua. Thus, the law is not written in the heart of the Christian; *Christ* is written in our hearts, the old corn of the land. The law will be written in the hearts of the Israelites under the new covenant. The law is not our rule; the new creation is our rule (Gal. 6:15, 16).

Covenantists place the Christian under the law for practical sanctification. It is mixing Moses with Joshua and much at Joshua's expense. It necessarily lowers the higher to the level of the lower. Mixing Moses and Joshua, so to speak, and knowing the Lord's day is the Christian day, and that there are 10 commandments, they must have a Sabbath day, so by spiritual alchemy they transmute the seventh day Sabbath into a first day of the week sabbath in order to have 10 commandments, for nine will not do. It is Judaizing.

9. Israel marched to the Red Sea "arrayed" (Ex. 13:18), meaning five in a rank. No doubt that is how they went through the Red Sea (hardly only a single column, of course). They were commanded to go over Jordan in this same "array" (Josh. 1:14; 4:14), 2000 cubits (perhaps both to the left and to the right) from the Ark standing in the middle of Jordan.

10. Romans does not bring before us the doctrine that we are risen with Christ; Colossians does that, and Eph. 2 speaks of it. In keeping with the presentation of truth in Romans we are told that Christ was raised again *for* our justification. That is the Red Sea: Christ's death and resurrection *for* us. Colossians is Jordan: our death and resurrection *with* Christ.

(continued...)

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up the bank, and to Gilgal is where Colossians takes us -- Colossians, where we read of how we were circumcised (as Israel was circumcised at Gilgal) and where we read about mortifying our members, i.e., answering to our circumcision in practice.

Looking at the Red Sea and the Jordan as coalescing, we see that at Gilgal, the reproach of Egypt was rolled away. Those born in the wilderness did not have the mark of death to the first man on them. It was a mark of separation from the world. In Scripture typology, Egypt signifies the world. Those born in the wilderness did not have the mark on them of separateness from Egypt, separateness from the world. This is a reproach to Israel, i.e., their bondage, their connection with Egypt -- the reproach of Egypt. As we saw above, when considering Col. 2:10-12, we are circumcised *in Christ*. That is *positional*. There is no other basis to truly enter the land, the heavenlies. God has separated us from Egypt, typically speaking: i.e., from our identification with the world. Just think of what I am in the fallen, Adamic position as if that could enter the heavenlies. Positionally, He has fitted us to be there.

Our understanding the matter of rolling away the reproach of Egypt might be helped by keeping in mind when considering what redemption means, that the Red Sea and the Jordan coalesce; so we see, as it were, Israel come out of Egypt and go right on through the Jordan to Gilgal, where the reproach of Egypt is rolled away for the first time, as our *positional circumcision*. The Red Sea delivered them from the power of the taskmaster, "sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Speaking typically, Canaan changed their place, their citizenship, or better, associations of life. Accordingly, in Phil. 3:3 Paul emphatically declares:

For *we* are the circumcision,

true of all believers, including himself, and emphatically tells the Philippians (who were walking in the moral power of their positional circumcision in Christ) that:

our commonwealth {associations of life} has its existence in [the] heavens, from which also we await the Lord Jesus Christ [as] Savior (Phil. 3:20).

In our practical walk there is *practical circumcision* -- which we will also

10. (...continued)

W. T. Turpin has some excellent observations concerning the Red Sea and Jordan regarding that

it is a very important thing to see where they are separated and where they are connected, because they are connected for redemption, but they are separated for experience. Where it is a question of our experience of the thing, that is Jordan alone. Where it is a question of redemption being accomplished, Jordan and the Red Sea go together {i.e., really, they coalesce} (*Collected Writings of W. T. Turpin*, p. 91, available from Present truth Publishers).

consider below regarding Col. 3.

Suppose you see one who is a Christian running after the world, and the fashions and follies of the town: Well, you say, you may be dead and risen with Christ, but you had better go to Gilgal and have that reproach to His name rolled away by practical putting to death your members.¹¹

Gilgal, then, is over Jordan, Jordan typifying our death and resurrection with Christ, and what we were in our fallen Adamic condition is removed from before God by the circumcision of Christ (our death with Him) and we are risen with Christ. We are circumcised in Him and we are raised in Him (Col. 2:10-12, 20; 3:1).

If *in Christ* and we *do not want* to answer in our walk to our positional circumcision, then we *do not want* to be heavenly. On the other hand, if we do not know what our spiritual circumcision means, how can we be heavenly? And why would we not want to know what it means? Col. 2:20-23, for example, gives an exhortation based on our spiritual circumcision in Christ.

Israel went back to Gilgal after victories. What does that typify? As Gilgal was the starting point for their taking possession of the land, so it was to be the starting point for all their conquests, giving character those victories from the character of the starting point -- hence their return to Gilgal after victory.¹² For victory we must be in the good of what Gilgal points to: judgment on the flesh. Recall that Ehud and some others visited the king of Moab, returned to Israel when their mission was completed, but as they came to Gilgal, Ehud turned around and went back to the king of Moab and killed him. This victory took its character from Gilgal (i.e., from what it signifies). Observe also that in Judg. 2, after Israel failed so much in Judg. 1, they were at Bochim (means, weepers) and the Angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal (where they should have been) and left them with a word for their consciences. They were not in the moral power of Gilgal, pointing first to positional circumcision in Christ (Col. 2:11), and then in returning there to the mortification of the flesh (see Col. 3:5). Observe that none of this points to Canaan as signifying our being in heaven someday. Jordan does not point to physical death and going to be with the Lord. It points to practical lessons for us to be in the good of self-judgment in our walk as those who are heavenly. Do you want to be heavenly? Christ is.

Gilgal is the entry point of the land for Israel, and in Colossians which views us as over the Jordan and just at this entry point, we look into the land. Thus, in Col. 3:1, 2 we are to seek the things which are above, in effect,

11. *Words of Truth* 7:20, F. G. Patterson.

12. See *The Bible Treasury* 7:356.

looking up to where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Ephesians views us as sitting there (Eph. 2:6).¹³ In Ephesians, we are in the land and there are spiritual forces opposed to practical possession (Eph. 6:10-20) of what we have title to. But title is not the same as possession.

There is a song which says that "Each victory will help you some other to win." This is unscriptural, substituting a victory for a return to Gilgal, leaving out the place of Gilgal. The truth is that each return to Gilgal will help us some other victory to win.

After the victory Israel returned to the camp of Gilgal. But the return thither of the conquerors of the Canaanitish kings contains the instructive lesson that, whatever our victories and our conquests may be, we must always return to the place that becomes us before God in the annihilation of self; to the application of the knowledge we have of God (the resurrection of Christ having set us in the heavenly places), to the judging and the mortifying of the flesh, to spiritual circumcision, which is the death of the flesh by the power of resurrection. There is a time to act and a time to be still, waiting upon God that we may be fit for action. Activity, the power that attends us, success, everything, tends to draw us away from God, or at least to divide the attention of our fickle hearts.¹⁴

Notice that in Josh. 5:1 we read that the heart of the inhabitants of the land melted when they heard that Israel had passed over Jordan. In the case of Rahab, we learn that 40 years after the Exodus, the knowledge of what had transpired at the Red Sea was known by these inhabitants. Now this people was camped at Gilgal in the plains of Jericho and fear gripped the inhabitants -- their hearts melted. Was that a good reason to immediately begin the conquest of the land? No. ***There were prerequisites to victory.*** The rest of Josh. 5 gives those prerequisites. There was to be the circumcision the second time, the passover to be observed -- on resurrection-ground, typically speaking -- and the old corn of the land, typifying Christ in resurrection, fed on, and the Captain of the Lord's host come forward for them. These things, not the enemies' weakness, are the basis of victory. The later failure of the people is given in Judg. 2.

13. In Col. 3:1, 2, we are told, in effect, to look up; in Ephesians, we are not told to look down.

14. *The Bible Treasury* 12:304. See also 13:18, 19.

ADDRESS AT THE FUNERAL OF AUGUSTUS JAMES CLARKE, 13 YEARS OLD

(May 22, 1831 - May 2, 1845)

by J. N. Darby

Our brother Mr J. N. D. -- then read 1 Thess. 2, and spoke with an unction and a power which lifted our hearts above the circumstances of sorrow which surrounded us, and carried us onward to the day when "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." The point on which he specially dwelt was,

* * * * *

"That while sin and death had entered into this world, and must sever every natural tie, however blessed originally, however true and proper in its place, *grace* had formed new ties, new affections, new relationships, which death could not touch; because they had their source in that new life which God has given to us in Christ, and flowed from Him who is beyond death.

"Paul had come to Thessalonica a perfect stranger to those whom he now addresses; he had not 'known them after the flesh.' He preached the gospel to them; they received his testimony, and were born of God. New affections at once existed between them, -- new ties which death could not sever. How beautifully we see the exercise of them developed here! Before their conversion, 'he was willing to have imparted unto them not only the gospel, but also his own soul, because they were dear to him' (v. 8). When they were in the weakness of newborn babes, he was 'gentle among them, as a *nurse* cherisheth her children' (v. 7); after that he had 'exhorted them, and charged every one of them, as a *father* doth his children (for he had begotten them in the gospel), to walk worthy of God, who had called them to His kingdom and glory' (vv. 11, 12).

"Circumstances, such as bodily separation, the power of Satan, death itself, may hinder the full enjoyment of these divine affections, but they cannot destroy them. Such was the case here; Paul was taken from them in presence, but not in *heart*; 'he had endeavored to see them once and again, but Satan hindered him'; but these very circumstances only caused him to look beyond this scene to that day when these new affections will have all their full blessedness. 'What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming? For ye are our glory and our joy' (vv. 19, 20).

"It was thus with our beloved young brother. All that was merely natural in relationship between him and us was gone; death was the end of all that. But death could not touch one spiritual tie or affection. So far from that, it only removed the hindrances to the fullest enjoyment of them; for it destroyed the

energy of the flesh and natural will, which is wholly opposed to the life of God. Another step was gained; a painful and an humbling one, it was true, but a needful one. Death had removed the flesh with all its workings. There was nothing on his part to hinder now.

"More even than that. The very body lying here was one step nearer to glory. That very body would become, by and by, the more efficient servant of those new affections, which it had hitherto been able so feebly to express. These new, divine feelings and affections were now ripening in their native clime above; and this body was preparing to give them, in their maturity, an unhindered development, 'in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming.'

"The coming of that day is the spring and power of our hope; for it will be the consummation of everything which even these renewed affections can desire, whether it be, as in this case, the Father in Christ's affection for His children, or the brotherly affection which unites all the members of the family of God.

"In the mean time, there is 'the *patience* of hope.' It is an unworthy object for which we cannot bear to wait. What is that love worth which cannot bear a trial? The present ability to bear separation, 'taken from you in presence, not in heart,' proves its reality and power. How blessed, then, amidst all these circumstances of sin and sorrow, to have these new joys and affections, which death itself cannot touch; the full maturity of which will be known, 'in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming!'"

* * * * *

We then sang the following hymn, which had been a great favourite of dear Augustus's, and we rejoiced that it was only "a little while," and Jesus would return, and we should be with him for ever.

"'A little while,' our Lord shall come,
And we shall wander here no more . . .

Mr D -- gave thanks to the Lord for His grace to our young departed brother, and we moved to the grave.

After we had stood round it for some minutes in solemn silence, a brother in the Lord read 1 Cor. 15:35, to the end; and our beloved friend O'B -- bore testimony to the value of the blood of Jesus, and declared the joy he had felt when he last saw Augustus, in witnessing the heavenly smile which the mention of that precious blood produced. He then, with the deepest fervor, prayed for his beloved parents, the children, and ourselves; and gave thanksgiving and praise for him who had fallen asleep in Jesus.

The body was then lowered into its quiet resting place, to wait for the morning of the resurrection. I read the following hymn, and we sang the last two verses :—

“Great Captain of Salvation,

We bless Thy glorious name . . .

A slight shower fell while we were singing, but the clouds soon dispersed, and the sun again burst forth, and shone brightly upon us. It reminded us of the day when “the Sun of Righteousness” shall come; when “He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass, springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain” (2 Sam. 23:3, 4), when those “that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Mr R -- concluded the service with thanksgiving and prayer. We gathered close round the grave, to take a last, lingering look of him we loved, and then returned home. Several brethren accompanied us; we dined together, and then dispersed. The love of Christ had brought us for a little season together, round the grave of one whom Jesus loved; and then we separated “in presence, not in heart,” desiring to occupy “the little while,” till He come again in works of faith and labors of love . . .

And now, dear Reader, what are the lessons we learn at this early grave? Does it not cry “all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass?”

Are you a Parent -- a believing Parent? For what are you bringing up your children? For this world, or for eternity? Oh, remember that all which is naturally lovely and intelligent in our children must soon wither in the grasp of the hand of death.

Have you brought your children to Jesus? Have they faith in His precious blood? Are they safe in the ark from the coming wrath?

If not, let me beseech you to read them the dying experience of this youth, cut off as a flower of the field before he was fourteen years old! Tell them what he thought of this poor delusive world on his dying-bed; and what he found Jesus to be to his soul. “Jesus was all his peace.” Tell them of all his desire for all around him, that “they might come to Jesus, and follow Him.”

Would not the Israelite, whose child was bitten by a fiery serpent, have been its murderer, if he had not hastened with it to the brazen serpent, lifted up upon the pole, and bid it look and live?

And are not your children *sinner*s? They may appear outwardly fair and lovely in your eyes; but the deadly poison of sin infects their bodies and their souls: and will you not be the soul-murderer of your children, and guilty of their blood, if you do not warn them of the wrath to come, and set before them *Jesus*

crucified? Oh, then, tell them of the Cross; of the love of God in giving His Son to die for sinners; and tell them of the Savior’s love -- His willingness and power to save. What but His blood can deliver them from hell, or fit them for the joy, the glory, and the holiness of heaven?

Above all, cry to Jesus for your children. Cry, as she cried for her daughter, to whom He said, “O woman, great is thy faith!” (Matt. 15). Such a cry is louder in the ears of Jesus than all the songs of heaven. He will say to thee, “Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt.”

What rich encouragement has Jesus given us to bring our little ones to Him! We hear Him say, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not”; and we see Him take them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and bless them. Mark, their coming was not of themselves; they were *brought to Jesus*. “He is the same yesterday, *today*, and for ever.” He did not cast out those little ones; He will not cast out ours, if we bring them to Him. The birth of each dear child would indeed be agony to a parent’s heart, who was alive to its state by nature, and the evils and temptations of this sinful world, if he could not see Jesus thus presented to us, with His arms wide opened to receive them, His hands stretched out to bless them, and hear His voice of tender, gracious love, saying, “Suffer them to come unto Me.” And oh, what a hiding-place, what a refuge, what an ark of safety for our children, in His arms, near His heart, and under His blessing! There let us take our little ones; and if our faith be weak, still let us come as the father of the poor child that was possessed with the devil, “Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

But if, by the grace of God, you believe that your children are saved, let me, though conscious of my own personal failure, ask you, what are you seeking for them? Is it that they may really follow Jesus? Are you outside the camp yourself? and are you bringing up your children there? Are not converted children often early taken away because even converted parents so little seek for themselves and for their offspring, “First, the kingdom of God and His righteousness?” It was not, I judge, because Lot himself loved Sodom (for his righteous soul was daily vexed there), that he gave up his stranger, pilgrim walk of faith, to dwell in its polluted walls. Did he not go there from misjudged, carnal, natural affection for his children? There they were brought up, there they married, and, though he himself was saved, there they perished. Oh, if that word, “Remember Lot’s wife,” is a warning to professors: Remember Lot’s children, should be a warning to parents! May the Lord give us grace to tread in the steps of Abraham, of whom God could testify, “I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord” (Gen. 18:19).

Surely it is no light responsibility to have the training of a child bought with

the blood of Jesus. Well may believing parents ask of the Lord, as Manoah did, "How shall we order the child, and what shall we do for him?" (Judg. 13:12).

Should any unconverted person, young or old, read this memoir, let me affectionately beseech him to remember, "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." And how can you meet death or judgment, if you are in your sins, out of Christ, and a neglecter of this great salvation? Oh, believe the gospel of the grace of God! The God you have sinned against has given His Son to die for sinners, and He beseeches you to be reconciled to Himself. Your sins, which made you fit for hell, make you also fit for Jesus crucified; believe in His precious blood, and that blood will make you fit for the presence and glory of God in heaven.

Luke 15: The Two Sons

As regards the application of Luke 15 to a Christian turned aside, I have often heard it, but I reject it altogether. The fact of God's graciously receiving back a wandered Christian is of course true, but such is not the purpose of the parable. The first verses show, as distinctly as possible, that that is not its purport. The question is between the Pharisees and Jesus eating with and receiving sinners. He thereon gives the picture of God's love in seeking and in receiving sinners. The two first describe the seeking (as I believe by Christ and the Spirit), the third the reception. The reception back of a Christian fallen had not its application here. Further, the introduction of the eldest son carries us back evidently to the Jew, or any legally self-righteous person, but literally to the Jew in "all that I have is thine." The principle is shown in the two first, joy in heaven over a sinner that repents, and the third the way of original departure and return. Hence all that is seen of the elder is not an original estate, but the Jews' jealousy of the admission of sinners of the Gentiles. The notion that "son" carries with it the reality of being born of God is all a delusion; because then the eldest ought to be one; whereas on the footing of grace (which makes sons) he would not come in. Adam was the Son of God; "Israel my firstborn." The remark you refer to is all a mistake, because the first parables show the seeking, the active love of God; this, the reception by the Father of one who returned. I have myself no kind of doubt of the true application . . .

Letters of J. N. Darby 1:307.

The "Church" and the World

. . . There are two classes of religious movement at this time. The first takes the word, sees man, the child of Adam, dead through sin, and will have nothing but Christ, His death, His resurrection, a heavenly state. The second class holds with the world, maintains worldly connections as an accepted system and does not consider the world as a system to be passed through by motives outside of that system. People wish to have part in the movement: there is zeal, but they wish to remain self, not to become Christ {practically}.

Letters of J. N. Darby 1:266.

The Age We Are in Is The Same Age In Which Christ Was

Prophecy gives the career of *earthly* events, the wickedness of man, or the dealings of God. But the church is not earthly; its life is hid with Christ in God; it has its place with Christ while He is hidden; when He appears it will appear {Col. 3:4}; we await the manifestation of the sons of God. Hence it was hid in God from the foundation of the world (Eph. 3), and the prophets do not speak of it. Only it is true that it maintains (or ought to have maintained) the testimony to the kingdom, during the interval of the rejection of the Jewish witness. As inheriting the promises as being in Christ the seed of Abraham, it comes in and maintains by divine wisdom their constancy and unfaithfulness. But the age is the same age as that in which Christ was upon earth¹ -- "the harvest is the end of the age."² Hence the church cannot be the subject of prophecy. It was not -- as being a kind of wisdom hid in God and now made known to principalities and powers, and now it is not -- the subject, but the depository of prophecy, {and it is} not earthly but heavenly, though on earth in testimony of what is heavenly, and of a hidden Christ with whom it is as one. Hence what relates to it is, as I have said, only seen when it comes down out of heaven having the glory of God. Hence it has no place in prophecy.

Letters of J. N. Darby 1:131.

1. {That is, we are in the Mosaic Age. The Church is not an age; it is above and outside ages.}

2. {"The harvest is the end of the age." What age? -- the end of the Mosaic age which is now running on. See *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1 for more about this.}

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