

84. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through our first parents?
85. Q. What should we do in consequence of knowing these essential truths regarding our human nature?

Lesson Twenty-two

MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:4-25.

Scripture To Memorize: "And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:15-17).

86. Q. What is the probable connection between the fall of angels and the creation of man?
- A. It is twofold: in the first place, it is obvious that when God created the angels, He had in view also the creation of man, for we are told that the office of the angelic host is to minister to the heirs of salvation; in the second place, it is likewise obvious that the apostasy of certain angels made it even more imperative that God should make a demonstration of His infinite love and justice, in and through our human race, sufficient to prove to all intelligent creatures, for all time and eternity, the falsity of Satan's lying accusations against Him.

(1) It should be remembered that prior to man's creation, God had demonstrated only His "everlasting power and divinity" (Rom. 1:29). This demonstration was made in the world of nature. (2) When the angels sinned, a final and incontrovertible demonstration of His infinite love and compassion became all the more imperative. (3) Naturally the field for such a demonstration was our human race, the creation of which had already been planned in the councils

of heaven. (4) This demonstration was consummated in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son on the Cross, and in the offer of salvation to all mankind on the terms of the gospel covenant (John 3:16, 15:13, 3:3-5; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9-10; Gal. 3:26-27). (5) God's eternal purpose and plan included therefore, the sending of the Word to become flesh and dwell among us and to make atonement for sin, the establishment of the church, the uniting of both Jews and Gentiles in the one body of Christ, and the proclamation of the gospel for a testimony unto all the nations (Matt. 28:19-20, 24:14). (6) This has all been worked out "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10-11).

87. Q. What do we mean by man's original state?

A. By man's original state, we mean his state immediately following his creation and prior to his lapse into sin.

88. Q. What was one circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of special providence.

(1) The Garden of Eden was fitted up, as a special bower of loveliness, for our first parents to occupy during the continuation of their original state of innocence. Everything calculated to contribute to their happiness and enjoyment was provided for them in Eden. (2) "Eden was evidently designed merely as a temporary abode for man in a state of innocence. God does nothing in vain, and foreseeing that man would certainly fall, He fitted and prepared the world at large for fallen man; and the Garden of Eden particularly and specially for our first parents. This was wise, and just, and good" (Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, p. 37). (3) The location of Eden has ever been a debatable question. The most generally accepted views are that it lay either in the highlands of Armenia, or in the valley of the Euphrates. Gen. 2:14—"and the fourth river is the Euphrates." Profane history is in agreement with Genesis

in locating the cradle of the human race somewhere in Southwestern Asia.

89. Q. What was a second circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of unhindered access to God.

(1) During the Edenic period of man's innocence, the Creator and creature lived in intimacy of fellowship, because sin had not come between them to cause separation and alienation. Gen. 2:15—"and Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden," i. e., led him by divine impulse to this habitation specially prepared for him. Gen. 3:8—"and they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," etc. Here we have a quaint but striking revelation of the intimacy which existed between the man and his Creator. (2) This unhindered access to God was symbolized by the presence of the Tree of Life "in the midst of the garden." Where God is, there is always life.

90. Q. What was a third circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of exemption from physical death.

(1) Though created with a body which was from the beginning subject to dissolution, the first man was given access to the Tree of Life which evidently yielded a fruit, the properties of which served to counteract the inherent mortality of his body and to thus preserve his physical youth and vigor. (2) It is quite evident that this Tree of Life had an actual existence and bore real fruit of some kind unknown to us. There is nothing incredible in such a view. If God provides food for us daily which serves to renew our physical strength, surely He could have provided for our first parents a special food intended to renew and preserve their physical youth. (3) Hence, when they sinned, it became necessary to expel them from Eden and to guard "the way of the tree of life," lest they gain access to its fruit and, though in a state of rebellion, continue to perpetuate their physical youth in such an unnatural state. Gen. 3:22-24, "now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever," etc. (4) This Tree of

Life was symbolic of their communion with God; it was a type of Christ Himself; and it was emblematic of the food that will be provided for the redeemed in Paradise restored (Rev. 22:2).

91. Q. What was a fourth circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of liberty within the circumference of the law.

(1) Gen. 2:16—"of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat," etc. Here we have liberty. (2) Gen. 2:17—"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." Here we have the first prohibitory law. (3) Gen. 2:17—"for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Here we have the penalty for the violation of the law. Law would not be law without its penalty. (4) It should be noted that this first prohibition, like all of God's laws, was for man's good. It was benevolent in its nature and design. It follows, therefore, that the law was not the cause of man's disloyalty when the real test came, but rather the proof of it. (5) Moreover the law was so simple and plain that transgression was inexcusable on any ground. (6) All of which teaches us that there is no genuine freedom under any form of government, divine or human, except within the circumference of the law.

92. Q. What was the fifth circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of most intimate companionship with a counterpart of his own flesh and bone.

(1) Gen. 2:18—"and Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should live alone; I will make him a help meet for him" (i. e., a counterpart for him, a helper answering to him). Also vv. 23-24, "And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (2) The creation of the Woman was a particular act of God for the Man's benefit. Gen. 2:21, 22—"and Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead

thereof; and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he (builded he into) a woman . . ." (3) "Not out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled on by him; but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be beloved" (Matthew Henry). (4) Why does not the modern man lack one rib? Because only the individual skeleton of Adam was affected by this miracle. Changes in the human skeleton by modern surgery are not handed down by ordinary process of generation. What may have happened to Adam's anatomy does not necessarily affect his posterity. (5) Gen. 2:22-25, "and brought her unto the man . . . therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (cf. Matt. 19:5, 1 Cor. 6:16, Eph. 5:31). Jehovah thus appears as the Maker of the first marriage. It was He who presented the Woman to the man. "The word implies the solemn bestowment of her in the bonds of the marriage covenant, which is hence called the covenant of God (Prov. 2:17); implying that He is the Author of this sacred institution" (Bush). (6) Thus, in the manner in which He created the Woman—by literally building her out of the rib of the Man—God has impressed upon His creatures two great truths: first, the sacredness of the mystical union between husband and wife in the covenant of marriage; second, the even greater sacredness of the mystical union between Christ and His bride, the church, in the covenant of grace (Eph. 5:22-33).

93. Q. What great lessons do we learn from our study of man's original state?

A. We learn that life, liberty, law and marriage are all of divine origin, and should therefore be highly regarded by man.

The truth that real life and happiness are to be enjoyed only by living in harmony with God's laws and institutions, cannot be too forcefully impressed upon the minds of both children and adults. Living in harmony with God's laws and institutions is righteousness. Sin means discord, disillusionment, suffering, despair and death; but righteousness means self-control, freedom, peace, joy, and the life that is

abundant and eternal. Tit. 2:11-12, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-TWO

86. Q. What is the probable connection between the fall of angels and the creation of man?
87. Q. What do we mean by man's original state?
88. Q. What was one circumstance of man's original state?
89. Q. What was a second circumstance of man's original state?
90. Q. What was a third circumstance of man's original state?
91. Q. What was a fourth circumstance of man's original state?
92. Q. What was the fifth circumstance of man's original state?
93. Q. What great lessons do we learn from our study of man's original state?

Lesson Twenty-three

HOW SIN CAME INTO OUR WORLD: THE TEMPTATION

Scripture Reading: Gen. 3:1-8.

Scriptures To Memorize: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed" (Jas. 1:13-14). "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7).

94. Q. What was man's original state morally?
A. It may be properly described as a state of innocence.