

Hymns: 11 How Great Thou Art 65 This Is My Father's World
Psalm 19

Good Morning. Do any of you recall something like this from your school days?

In the sixth grade you're given an assignment to read about *prehistoric* times. Your textbook contains pictures of ape-like men clothed in animal skins, walking around in bare feet, and carrying clubs. It talks about Peking Man, Piltdown Man, Nebraska Man, Cro-Magnon Man, and Neanderthal Man and **even shows you pictures** of them.

How strange and even nonsensical it all seemed to me – even at my tender age. These men existed **before** recorded history, yet I was being charged

- not only to read about this conjecture or fantasy,
- but also to memorize the information and be tested on it as if it were fact.

As time and technology progressed, the evidence has shown these so-called “primitive men” to be either:

- outright **hoaxes**,
- **animals** like apes and even pigs,
- or **humans** like us.

As we shall see in our study today, what we have in the history of the world, despite **appearances** to the contrary from accumulated knowledge and advancing technology, is **not evolution** to **higher** intelligence and ability of mankind, but **devolution** into **lower intelligence** and **diminished** physical ability.

Review

You may recall from last time that we're starting a study aimed at understanding the Bible by looking at dispensations. We learned that the word *dispensation* in Greek sounds like *economy* and has the basic meaning of a *steward* that is, someone who administers a household.

We also learned a definition for the theological meaning of the term. It involves:

a **new** method of **administration**
of man
by God

regarding:

1. sin
2. man's **responsibility**.

Components we can recognize are:

1. a new **test** for man
2. man's **failure** of that test
3. God's **judgment** of man.

Dispensation of Innocence

The first dispensation called *innocence* spans the time from the creation of Adam through his fall and God's curse. We'll start first with **what** God made on the first five days of creation:

1. Light and darkness, day and night
2. Atmosphere separated from the earth
3. Dry land and water were separated and plant life created.
4. Moon, sun, and stars
5. Birds and water creatures

We'll pick it up there:

Genesis 1

[24] And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

[25] ...: and God saw that it was good.

That's the setting for the creation of man. The description of that event starts here:

*[26] And God said, Let **us** make **man in our image**,*

Notice the use of the words *us* and *our* in that verse. It's referring to God, who has three persons, yet is still one.

The Context / New Administration

The next verse starts the first dispensation.

*[27] So God **created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him;***

There was something very special about man compared to the rest of creation.

*male **and female** created he them.*

*[28] And God **blessed them**, and God said unto them,*

1. *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,*
2. *and subdue it:*
3. *and **have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over **every living thing** that moveth upon the earth.*

Then God specified that both animals and man would eat plant life for their food.

*[31] And God saw every thing that he had made, and, **behold**, it was **very good**. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

Genesis chapter 1 gives the overview of creation.

Genesis chapter 2, in a very familiar biblical fashion, elaborates on an aspect of the overview. In this

case, the chapter gives more details regarding the creation of man, much like a hyperlink does in electronic publishing today.

Genesis 2

*[7] And the **LORD** God*

Did you notice the switch? Chapter 1 spoke of *God*. Now that **man** is on the scene He is called *the **LORD** God*.

*formed man of the dust of the ground,
and **breathed into his nostrils** the breath of life;
and man became a living soul.*

*[8] And the **LORD** God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

The Assignment

First, God gave man **his assignment**.

*[15] And the **LORD** God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden*

1. to [tend] it
2. and to [watch over] it.

The Moral Test

Then, God gave man **a test**. God had to give man, a free moral agent, something to prove that his love for Him and obedience to Him were genuine.

*[16] And the **LORD** God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*

*[17] 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.*

Next, we learn of God's reason for creating woman.

*[18] And the **LORD** God said, It is not good that the man should be **alone**;
I will make [a helper suitable] for him.*

Rather than just create her though, God first demonstrated to the man why he **needed** a wife. He brought **all** of the animals before the man for him to **name** them.

*[19] And out of the ground the **LORD** God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto*

Adam

Note here God first **names** the man **Adam**. **Then**, God gives the man the task of **naming** all of the animals.

to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

*[20] And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field;
but for Adam there was not found [a helper suitable] for him.*

Then the LORD God performed a number of medical firsts:

1. first general anesthesia – put Adam into a deep sleep,
2. first operation – removed his rib and repaired his flesh,
3. first modified cloning – created this helper in a different gender from the rib, and then he also performed the first wedding as the Father presented his daughter to the man

Adam then named his bride *Woman* because she was created from man.

Genesis 3

[1] Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman,

Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Who is this serpent? Where did he come from? And how is it that he is able to speak? Could all of the animals speak? Let's see what the Bible says:

Revelation 12

*[7] And there was war **in heaven**:*

*[9] And the great dragon was cast out, **that old serpent**, called the Devil, and Satan, which **deceiveth** the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, ...*

Ezekiel 28

*[13] Thou **hast been in Eden the garden of God**; ...*

[14] Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; ...

*[15] Thou **wast perfect** in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, **till iniquity was found in thee**.*

*[17] **Thine heart was lifted up** because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, ...*

So this serpent was Satan. Whether or not other animals could talk in Eden, we do not know. The words of the **serpent** though were from the deceiver – Satan.

Let's return to our passage in Genesis 3.

[2] And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

[3] But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat

of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

[4] And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

*[5] For **God** doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

The Fall

[6] And when the woman saw that the tree was

- **good** for food, and that it was
- **pleasant** to the eyes, and a tree to be
- **desired** to make one wise,

she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat,

and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

[7] 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.

Mankind had **fallen** and failed God's **test**.

[8] And they

- *heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife*
- *hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

[9] And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

[10] And he said,

- *I **heard** thy voice in the garden,*
- *and I **was afraid**, because I was naked;*
- *and I **hid** myself.*

[11] And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked?

Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

Finger pointing man → **woman** → **Satan**

[12] And the man said,

***The woman** whom **thou gavest to be** with me, **she** gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

[13] And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?

And the woman said,

***The serpent** beguiled me, and I did eat.*

The Judgment

[14] And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this,

1. **thou art cursed** above all cattle, and above every beast of the field;
2. upon thy belly shalt thou go, and
3. dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
4. [15] And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

It's interesting that God pronounced a curse upon the **animal** used by Satan.

[16] Unto the woman he said,

1. I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;
2. in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;
3. and thy desire shall be to thy husband,
4. and he shall rule over thee.

[17] And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast
hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,

and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt **not** eat of it:

1. **cursed** is the ground for thy sake;
2. in **sorrow** shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;
[18] **Thorns also and thistles** shall it bring forth to thee;
3. and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
[19] In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
4. till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust **thou art**, and unto dust shalt thou return.

[20] And Adam called his wife's name **Eve**; because she was the mother of all living.

First Adam named the animals. Then he named his wife. *Eve* means *life* or *living*.

[21] Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

[22] And the LORD God said, **Behold**, the man is become as one of **us**,

There's that us again.

to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

[23] Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

This concludes the tragic story of the first dispensation.

Application

We learned today how the woman, Eve, was deceived by Satan. He tricked her into believing his lies. Her name appears only **four** times in scripture, but that's enough for us to understand what happened.

II Corinthians 11

[3] But I fear, lest by any means, as **the serpent beguiled Eve** through his subtilty, so your

minds should be corrupted

On the other hand, Adam understood fully what he was doing.

I Timothy 2

[13] For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

[14] And **Adam was not deceived**, but the **woman being deceived** was in the transgression.

Indeed, Adam did not fall until **after** Eve came on the scene. Satan used the **strongest possible means** of prying Adam from his loving Heavenly Father. Eve presented Adam with a dilemma.

He could have:

1. chosen to not eat the fruit and let Eve die alone,
2. or he could have eaten the fruit and gone with her through God's judgment.

Adam's choice was **not** to:

1. To eat something forbidden
2. To become wise like God

Instead it was simply between:

1. living with God
2. dying with Eve

By virtue of her action, Eve had already fallen and was condemned to death. She was lost, hopeless, and alone in her sin. Adam was fully aware of this. Adam **in his compassion** chose to go with her into the darkness of sin and death. While Adam was the first man to die for his wife his choice was not unusual. History is filled with stories of men who died for their wives and families.

By the way, despite Adam and Eve being created innocent, they were by no means stupid or ignorant. In fact, it's my belief that Adam was the smartest man who ever lived.

He was created perfect. He had a perfect mind.

God called His creation "very good."

We know that Adam named all of the animals. Adam lived nearly a thousand years **after** the curse.

The Bible presents man **declining** in capability ever since the fall.

God chose **the** man with the **best mental capability in history** to make this choice.

Last Adam

This brings us to another Man who died for His bride.

Even in the story of man's fall, we see the **beauty** of God's plan to redeem fallen man. God used the **same metaphor** that brought about man's fall to bring to man redemption. The sinless Adam chose death out of love for his bride. Even so, Jesus Christ chose death to demonstrate His love for His bride and redeem her into an abiding relationship with Him.

I Corinthians 15

*[21] For since by man came death,
by man came also the resurrection of the dead.*

*[22] For as in Adam all die,
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

[45] *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [Jesus Christ] was made a [life-giving] spirit.*

[49] *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also **bear the image of the heavenly.***

What a blessed promise that someday we will be like Jesus. Why?

Because:

- Just as the fruit **hung** on a tree and brought death, Jesus **hung** on a tree and brought life.
- Just as a **serpent** infected man with the terminal disease of sin, Jesus **became sin** lifted up (John 3:14; Numbers 21:8-9) that all who look to Him will receive new life.
- Just as God **spilled the blood** of animals to **clothe** Adam and Eve, the **blood** of Jesus provides the means for God to **clothe** men and women who believe, with Christ's righteousness.
- Just as man was condemned to death in a **garden**, man received new life as a crucified Savior conquered death in a **garden** as His **garden** tomb could not contain Him.

Benediction

*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling,
and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,
To the only wise God our Saviour,
be glory and majesty,
dominion and power,
both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)*

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