

Sabbath School Lesson #2 – The Fall – 2-8 April 2022

Christ, the deliverer, was promised as soon as our first parents sinned. The loving Father did not leave His children entirely in the hands of their merciless adversary. Immediately after our first parents had committed the sin, brought death into the world, and all our woe, with loss of Eden, God spoke the words which saved the guilty ones from utter despair, saying to the one who had caused the fall, “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” (Genesis 3:15). Adam and his family understood the promise of the Messiah who was to be “bruised.” We find evidence in Abel’s offering (Genesis 4:4) he made by faith (Hebrews 11:4). Abel had faith in the Lamb of God, who, by His death, should take away sin. By this sacrifice Abel showed that he knew how and why the Messiah was to be “bruised.”

Sunday: The Serpent – How was Eve deceived? ‘But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ’ (2 Corinthians 11:3). Who was the serpent? “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:2). How did he begin his work? “Now the serpent was more subtle 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?” (Genesis 3:1). When Eve repeated the prohibition, what did the serpent reply? “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die” (verse 4). What did he say that eating from the tree would do for them? “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” (verse 5). In so saying, what imputation did he cast upon God? Satan would first induce Eve to believe that God was unjust in His requirements. This is what was involved in his question “hath God said...” (verse 1), in other words: ‘Can it be possible that God would do so unjust a thing as to forbid you to eat of all the trees of the garden? I have heard so, but it is so monstrous, so tyrannical a requirement, that I can scarcely believe it.’ Thus with feigned words, under the cover of pretended interest in the good name of God, he sowed the seeds of distrust. The object of this speech can be seen at once. It was threefold, namely, to cause her to doubt the goodness of God; to raise himself in her estimation to the same extent that he lowered God; and to make her feel that she was being deprived of her “rights.” Pride and discontent were aroused, which prepared the way for open rebellion. “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; 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.” Here was a square issue between Satan and God, and Eve had been worked into such a condition of doubt and discontent that she readily sided with Satan. This was the first sermon on the natural immortality of the soul of man. Notice that it was this teaching that caused the fall; consequently the teaching that man is by nature immortal, is responsible for all the evil that has ever come to mankind. “For God doth know,” etc. Here again Satan charged God with deliberately withholding a good thing from Adam and Eve, so that He might keep them in a position inferior to that which their natural talents entitled them to. What was that position? “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be like God.” This is just what Satan said, and a literal translation of the Hebrews. Said Satan, ‘You might as well be like God; He knows this, and has placed this prohibition upon you, so that He may keep you down. Now will you consent to be thus imposed upon? Do not do it; assert your rights and be free.’ Who on earth is unfamiliar with this kind of talk?

Monday: The Forbidden Fruit – What prohibition had God laid upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden? “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” (Genesis 2:17). Who of the pair first partook of this forbidden fruit? “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” (Genesis 3:6). Was Adam deceived as to the consequences of the act? “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:14). In telling our first parents that by eating the forbidden fruit they should be like God, what was

Satan instilling into their minds? – *Pride*. What caused Satan’s fall? Pride (Isaiah 14:12-14). What follows pride? “When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom” “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 11:2; 16:18).

Tuesday: Hiding Before God – Besides physical hiding, why did Adam and Eve try to hide what they had done, why not answer God’s straight questions straight? “Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” (Genesis 3:11). Adam could have said, ‘Yes, I have; and I am inclined to think that it was not exactly right; and I am sorry,’ but he did not. Had he not eaten of it? – Certainly, he had. Why did he not say, yes? It is all the answer there was any room for. But he said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” It came in at last, admitting that he was involved in it. But whereabouts did he come in? – The last possible place. The woman, and the Lord Himself, must come in for the blame, before he could allow himself to come into it at all. In all this he was simply saying, in substance, ‘I would not have done it if it had not been for the woman; because she gave it to me; and if the woman had not been here, she would not have done it; and if *you* had not put the woman here, she would not have given it to me: so, of course, as a matter of fact, I did eat; but the responsibility is back yonder.’ What was it in him, and about that, that would lead him to involve everybody else in the universe before himself, and before admitting that he had any part in it at all? – Nothing but *love of self*, *self-defence*, *self-protection*. “And the Lord said unto the woman” – another clear question – “What is this that thou hast done?” Eve could have said, ‘Oh, I took of the tree, and I ate of it, and I gave it to my husband, and he ate, and it is too bad,’ but she did not. “And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” She answered the question the same way that Adam did. The same thing caused her to dodge the question, and involve somebody else, that caused Adam to do that. Everybody else must come in but themselves. Why did they not answer the straight question straight? *They could not do it*. It was because the mind with which they were actuated, which had taken possession of them, which held them in bondage, and enslaved them under its power, was the mind of Satan.

Wednesday: The Fate of the Serpent – What did God do to remove the mind of Satan from Adam and Eve? As soon as our first parents had sinned, God said to the one who had caused the fall, “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” (Genesis 3:15). God put the Spirit of Christ, which is enmity to the spirit of Satan, in their hearts. God does the same with you, He puts “the Spirit of His Son into your hearts” (Galatians 4:6) which causes you to fulfil His Law – “for without Me,” Christ declared, “ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). The Spirit of Christ in Adam and Eve expelled the spirit of Satan. This was the Covenant of grace. As soon as they sinned, the Covenant – the one-sided promise of God – was made. “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” (Genesis 3:15). “The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ” – Ellen White {PP 370.2}.

Thursday: Human Destiny – What did sin bring to mankind? Weariness. Adam in Eden had work to do, yet he had perfect rest all the time he was in Eden, till he sinned. If he had never sinned, weariness would never have been known. Work is no part of the curse, but fatigue is. “Cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ... In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Genesis 3:17-19). In what way can we still see the grace of God in our sweating to produce our bread? God still says to us, as to Adam, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” This is not the pronouncing of a curse, but the relief from it. Sweating is necessary, to carry off the impurities from the system. The stream of life must be kept constantly moving. One ought to exercise sufficiently every day, in some way or other, to induce free perspiration; only so can health, be maintained. Tilling the land, man was to sweat to produce bread. But man has invented lazy ways to produce bread without sweating, and man has become unhealthy. Occupations requiring sedentary habits are the most dangerous, for they take people away from the open air and sunshine, and train one set of faculties, while other body organs are becoming weak from inaction.