

LESSON #3 THE CREATION, TRIAL AND NATURE OF MAN

This lesson introduces us to the power of God working to create the heavens, the earth, animals and man for His purpose. Out of the void and chaos, comes order and the intent of God. It also shows how God's most important creation, man, came under trial and failed. The cause and effect are demonstrated by the entrance of sin and death into the world, but also an introduction to the remedy provided through God's mercy.

Romans 5:12 We begin here because this passage gives us the reason why we live in a world of sin and death. Death comes because of sin. Death affects all mankind. Paul's words are a concise summary of the cause and effect factor mentioned above.

James 1:12-15 Here we see the process by which sin originates with temptation and if left unchecked, develops to end with sin which is fatal in its result. We discover the universal principle in these verses, that trials are necessary to determine our real intentions before we can be accepted by God.

John 2:16-17 These inspired words of John (along with the words of James above) show that temptation comes to us through various channels as illustrated in these verses. IE: The eyes, the flesh, and the appeal to our pride.

Genesis 1 Here is God's record of the beginning. The specific and organized structure of the six days of creation provide insight to God's purpose for doing so. The Hebrew word for "God" is elohim and references the Angels who do the work of God. Of particular emphasis we consider verses 26 and 27, for man is the instrument through which God intends to, realize the object of creation, "as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." (Numbers 14:21) It was all created "Very good". (Gen 1:31)

Genesis 1:26, 27 It is significant that man is created "in the image and likeness of God". Image indicates a physical similarity, while likeness represents a moral capacity. Man, not the animals, was made specifically so that he could be like God. Man alone was given the ability to think and react morally, with awareness and responsibility to the Almighty Creator.

Genesis 2:1-3 The sanctified seventh day of rest is particularly important in relation to God's plan. It sets the pattern for the dispensation of the ages. A brief reference to the time chart from our last lesson will illustrate this principle.

Hebrews 4:3-9 Our reference to this passage in the previous lesson will have already acquainted us with the symbolic seventh day of rest. This verse substantiates the symbolism of the "rest" in Genesis 2:2,3.

Genesis 2:7-9 These verses describe the formation of man from the elements of the earth and the motivating power by which he became a "living being" (R.S.V.). It is helpful here to point out that a living soul is not meant to comprehend any more than a

living creature. See verse 30 of Chapter 1 where the word life, in the margin, is rendered a living soul.

The 9th verse refers to two remarkable trees which had miraculous powers. The unique property of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is seen in the following references.

Genesis 2:16-25 Verses 16 and 17 show the one law under which our first parents were placed, and the penalty for disobedience.

God's statement in the 18th verse is borne out in the 19th and 20th verses. Adam did not find in all God's creation a sympathetic partner adapted to his need.

Verses 21-24 show the process by which the first woman came into existence. It is interesting to note that she was not created directly from the dust of the ground as was Adam, but was taken from Adam's body. The relationship between Adam and Eve was so much more intimate by this creative procedure. In a symbolic sense this figure is later related to Christ and His bride.

Verse 25. Nakedness in this verse is synonymous with innocence. Adam and Eve were physically and mentally mature with a conscience free from the knowledge of evil.

Genesis 3 Read the entire chapter. Verse 1. The serpent's power to reason was superior to any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. It also had the power to speak, which, as far as we know, was not a characteristic possessed by any other creature with the exception of man. The test of the first man and woman was introduced by the insinuations of the serpent. Paul points out in I Timothy 2:14, that the temptation was presented to Eve who was more vulnerable to the serpent's suggestion.

In the 15th verse, the principle of God's love and concern is shown in His provision for the redemption of our first parents. This is a "key verse" and we cannot overemphasize its importance. The "seed of the woman," is Jesus, the Lamb of God slain prophetically from the foundation of the world. It is obvious that this provision by God was not an expediency to take care of an unforeseen event. Jesus was the nucleus of the plan of God before Creation began. The result of Adam and Eve's disobedience is clearly stated in this chapter. Their return to the dust of the ground was now a matter of sentence. As like produces like, so their posterity would also follow the course of their nature. Hope for escape from this dilemma could only come from their Creator. That it would come is revealed in a marvelous manner. The clear indication of God's love is illustrated in the 21st verse. The provision of coats of skins required the shedding of blood on the Bible principle that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22).

An observation in conclusion: It is evident that God intended man to live. Man being created in God's image had a prophetic connotation – an indication that He intended to endow him with His own nature. This was man's potential and the disobedience of

Adam and Eve would not change or frustrate the intent and purpose of the Creator. God's honor and dignity demanded the execution of the sentence, but His love supplied the only remedy and the Redeemer. Here in the very beginning of human history, we see the first demonstration of the divine principle. "God is love."