

The Promise Of Christ's Coming

The opening chapter of the first book of the Bible tells us how our Lord Jesus Christ created the world in six days. The creation account was believed by all the apostles who testified in the book of Acts, 'Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is'. On the sixth day God created man and on the seventh day He rested 'from all his work which God created and made'.

The breath of God

In chapter two of Genesis various things concerning aspects of creation are enlarged upon and explained. Details are included that did not find a place in the initial account of chapter one, such as to how the earth was watered before ever it rained, the method employed to make man from the dust of the earth by the breath of God, and how woman was formed from the rib of the man. There is an account of the land into which Adam and Eve were placed, their role to tend the garden of Eden, and their authority over the animals.

A tree and a test

Also in chapter two we learn of a tree singled out from amongst all the trees in the garden concerning which Adam is told by God, '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'. This tree we later learn seemed good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. By it man's obedience to God was tested, tried and found wanting.

A snake that speaks

In chapter three Eve is enticed and deceived by a serpent possessed it appears by Satan as a means to gain Eve's attention. This was a real snake yet it could speak, reason, cajole and deceive Eve and did so by tempting her to eat of the fruit of the tree God had warned against. Satan set his trap with promises of life, wisdom, knowledge of good and evil, even divinity itself. All of which tempted Eve and Adam and brought them into disobedience.

Shame guilt and nakedness

The immediate result of eating the fruit was shame, guilt and an awareness they were naked. Adam and Eve tried to cover their shame with leaves plucked from the trees around them but it was a vain effort. The Lord made coats of skins, and clothed them. This act signified how disobedience brings death and the shedding of blood.

Paradise lost

Because of their sin Adam and Eve were expelled from the presence of God, driven from the beauty and bounty of Eden, and made subject to physical and spiritual death. Life for man would hereafter be full of sorrow, labour, loss and blame. Adam and Eve had rebelled against God, fallen into condemnation and brought all their children and descendants under the same curse.

A word of hope

However, amid the reckoning for their sin Adam and Eve were privy to a statement from God to be noted and remembered. It was a statement of hope. As Satan's curse was being pronounced the Lord declared the words we shall take for tomorrow's verse. There in the presence of the guilty sinners God told the serpent, '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'.

An enduring enmity

This little passage speaks of enmity, or hostility and hatred, between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. From that time forth there has always been a mutual abhorrence between mankind and snakes, but mystically this enmity was fixed between the powers of evil, wicked angels and rebellious men, and the church and people of God. The former hating and persecuting the latter.

A gospel promise

Yet there is an even higher significance to the Lord's words. They contain a promise. This promise is about one particular seed, a man whose heel would be bruised by the serpent but who in turn would bruise the serpent's head to

destroy him. Here in the Garden of Eden, on the very day sin entered the world, in the immediate aftermath of the Fall of Man and Adam's loss of fellowship with God, Christ the Eternal Word supplied a gospel promise of hope and recovery.

The price of redemption

In the coming weeks as the world prepares for Christmas we shall do well to remember the longstanding promises of God concerning Christ's coming. Christ's incarnation was the fulfilment of God's purpose to secure reconciliation for His people. In the midst of judgment Adam and Eve obtained a promise of deliverance, though not without price. It pleased the Lord that our Redeemer be bruised, yet our Saviour in turn has by His suffering bruised that old serpent's head and destroyed the works of the devil.

Amen

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