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S5. Spiritual Foundation Series

E10. Q.5 - The Adam Covenant

Covenants are most serious agreements to enter into. They represent binding agreements between God and man. The Bible emphasizes the importance of keeping covenants but also cautions against making such agreements lightly or not aligned with the will of God. It reminds us of the seriousness of broken promises and the consequences of violating covenants, both with God and man. The covenant between man and woman of marriage is also such a covenant to be taken with all soberness and commitment. Failure of Adam to keep his covenant with God had consequences that echoed down through ages unto this day.

Question 5 Continued. Regarding the Garden of Eden: Was there actually a covenant between God and Adam given and broken in the Garden? What is, in all spiritual reality, *the Tree of Life*? Is it a magical tree or, perhaps, a divine being? What is the spiritual interpretation of the two trees in the Garden of Eden? What is the “hope” of Salvation?

Was there actually a covenant between God and Adam given and broken in the Garden?

The Adam Covenant. With the critical yet necessary comparison of religion and life having been made in the previous Episode, let us now examine more closely the Covenant God made with Adam. The Biblical word for covenant is derived from the root word meaning “to cut.” This means that for covenants to be binding they were often cut or sealed in blood. The Old Covenant (Old Testament) was sealed in the sacrificial blood offering of animals, the New Covenant (New Testament) was sealed in the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. However, a physical blood sacrifice was not an immediate part of the Adam Covenant as this was yet a time of innocence, and blood had yet to be shed upon the face of the earth.

However, something of great spiritual significance did precede it. It is written, Rev. 13.8 “*All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” The meaning here is that the intention to offer Jesus for a sacrifice was formed in the collective mind of God then, and that it was so certain that it might as well be spoken of as actually having occurred. The Covenant of Adam was cut in this yet-to-be blood.

Like the Law of the Old Covenant, the Adam Covenant was a “conditional covenant” requiring promises by both man and God and strict obedience to its requirements. It is written, Gn. 2.16-17 “*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*” Adam’s obedience to the covenant would mean continual life and spiritual fellowship with God in paradise, but disobedience meant death, the loss of life in the garden and of communion with God_ obedience brings rewards, disobedience brings judgment, curse, and the loss of sustainable rewards.

Covenants are most serious agreements to enter into. They represent binding agreements between God and man. The Bible emphasizes the importance of keeping covenants but also cautions against making such agreements lightly or not aligned with the will of God. It reminds us of the seriousness of broken promises and the consequences of violating covenants, both with God and man. The covenant between man and woman of marriage is also such a covenant to be taken with all soberness and commitment.

From the beginning of time, the greatest consequence for failure of man to adhere to a covenant with God came as a result of Adam’s disobedience to God’s single commandment, Gn. 2.17 “*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*” For in this Divine curse, every soul coming into this world, born of the seed of Adam, was, and is now, defiled by that single act of disobedience, and therefore must die. Man is conceived in sin, born in sin, and is a sinner by nature. Because of the knowledge gained in eating of the forbidden tree, he now rationalizes and cleverly thinks that somehow he can save himself by doing good deeds and offering sacrifices. But how can an

impure, unholy, sinner do anything in his own power to bring righteousness and holiness to himself? He cannot; he will die in his false self-serving religion.

The apostle Paul realized that within him was resident this defiling power of sin, and he was hopelessly lost and bound by its power. He confessed in Rm. 7.17.18, *“But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.”* He then cried out in the following verse Rm. 24.25, *“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* May we all realize, with Paul, that it is not a matter of religiously training our old nature to do good, to conform ourselves to certain commandments, doctrines, sacrifices, rituals, holidays, and so on, but it is altogether a matter of a new life conceived in Christ and being born of His Spirit.

1 Jn. 5.11-13 “And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

Thus, salvation is more a matter of replacement of the old with a new life than it is trying to conform the old nature to new Godly standards_ which is impossible to do.

What is, in all spiritual reality, *the Tree of Life*? Is it a magical tree or, perhaps, a divine being?

The Bible is filled with types and shadows, symbols and copies of natural things in the Old Testament that represent eternal spiritual things in the New Testament. For example: Adam may be seen as a type of Christ, and Eve as a type of the Church; Israel being delivered from slavery in Egypt and brought to the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey is also a type of the Church being delivered out from the world and transferred into the Kingdom of God; and every item in or relating to the tabernacle of Moses or Solomon’s temple is representative of Christ: for instance, the candlestick, *“I am the light of the world...,”* the table of showbread, *“I am the bread of life,”* the altar of burnt offering as the cross, and even the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle speaks of that place of man’s spiritual union with God in Christ. This is the Christian story: from shadows to reality.

And so, the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* is not a literal fruit tree, nor is the *Tree of Life* a kind of mystical tree whose fruit enables one to live eternally. If Jesus is seen at the creation of the world as the “lamb of God,” (Rev. 13.8) He is also seen at creation as the *Tree of Life*; for although man may have received his soul life at creation, eternal spiritual life has only one origin, God the Father, and one source, Jesus Christ. How demeaning it is to think that “life,” everlasting Divine life, is resident in something created. But to eat of this *Tree of Life*, Jesus said in Jn. 6.53-56,

"So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is real food, and My blood is real drink. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him."

Religion is outward and easy to understand. Spiritual things are always difficult to grasp; they require meditation, prayer for revelation, and faith, and above all a renewing of the mind in the way we think. When Jesus spoke these words to His disciples, it is written, *"Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"* Jn. 6:60 And that, *"From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more."* Jn. 6:66 Jesus never demanded obedience but prayed for understanding and obedience to His word; for He knew that in His words were the overcoming powers of grace and life over sin and death. It should be noted that in the John 6 discourse about eating His body and drinking His blood, the verb tenses in the Greek indicate a continual action and not a one-time occurrence. A more literal translation of John 6:54 reads, *"The one eating My flesh and drinking My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day."* Jesus must be thought of as that continual source of the flow of life much like the flow of the essence of life from the vine into the branch (Jn. 15:1-5)

In my mind's eye I can see Jesus looking away from the multitude and look directly to His disciples nearest to Him and saying, Jn. 6:67-69,

"Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also want to go away?' But Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

Thus, eating of the Tree of Life is the continual feeding upon the Spirit of Christ. If we are to survive in the natural, we must continue to eat and drink, otherwise we weaken to the point where the soul life leaves the body in death. We must be fully convinced that the life of Christ is not ours, but life flowing into us, as we continually feed upon Him.

What is the spiritual interpretation of the two trees in the Garden of Eden?

If the *Tree of Life* is personified in Jesus Christ, the Lord and giver of life, then what personifies the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*? Like the *Tree of Life* it is not an actual tree with poisonous fruit but embodies something else, something more ominous. Could it not actually personify Satan? After all Satan epitomizes all that the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* represents— is it not the exaltation of self above the will of God; the quest for power and control; to be independent of God and to do one's own desires; to decide for one's self what is good and what is bad; to seek recognition and ultimate control of one's life. As we think of Christ as a person, but also as one who can come spiritually into our hearts and become a vital part of our being, so too it is written of Satan in Jn. 13:27, *"Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him (Judas). Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."* Though it is frightening and disturbing to think of this happening, the fact is that it does happen and the evil spirit of the devil can enter hearts prone to eat of the forbidden fruit.

It is also written that the devil entered Judas earlier, Lk. 22:3, when he went to the chief priests and temple officer to begin plans to betray Jesus. But now the entrance of the devil into Judas was to further possess him; it signifies Judas's giving up of his free will and himself

to Satan's suggestions and conduct. In similar manner, under the New Covenant in Christ, believers, who have eaten of the *Tree of Life*, are said to again later be filled with the Holy Spirit of God: for example in Acts 2.4 they were filled on the day of Pentecost; Acts 4.31 they were filled and spoke the word of God openly; Acts 13.9 Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke directly to the sorcerer; and Acts 19.2 Paul asked some Ephesian believers if they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed; they had not but then Paul laid his hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit and began to prophecy and speak in tongues.

Even though these believers previously received the Spirit in regeneration, the Holy Spirit came upon them again in power to do the will of God with fuller and stronger impulses and conduct. And, even though Satan had formerly been moving in Judas to betray Jesus, after he has taken of the bread at the Last Supper the devil came upon him with stronger impulses and suggestions and now became master of his conscience with false reasonings and justifications, hardening his heart, preparing him for the vile task at hand. These are not children's stories but factual cautions of the swaying power of the evil one.

Do you see how the devil worked the same work in the Garden of Eden, visiting and revisiting Adam and Eve to the point where they believed his lies, as he appealed to their egos to exalt their wills over the will of God in order to achieve greatness. Read the deceiving conversation between the devil and Eve: Gn. 3.1-7,

" 1Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'? 2And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' 4Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. 5For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' 6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."

And so you see something far more sinister took place in the Garden; with deception the sinful spirit of Satan entered the souls of Adam and Eve defiling them, turning their eyes from the *Tree of Life*, which means living their lives in union with Christ, but rather now to eat freely of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*; which ominously means living their lives more directly under the influence of the devil. Satan is seen as the "god of this age" and the "ruler of the air," influencing the present world's systems of sinful opposition to God. His influence, to this day, extends to political, cultural, and social and even into religious spheres. Satan had taken over planet earth. Thus, to this day, all mankind has been tainted with the quest for independence, being self-willed, self-important, self-fulfilled and the desire to fulfill the longings of the heart—they have become egocentric (ego = self). Man had fallen from the light of paradise into the kingdom of darkness. As it is written, 1 Jn. 5.19.

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one."

The world likes to think of all things as being black or white with many, many, shades of gray between them. Not so, all things are good or evil, there is death or life, truth or false. All mankind is divided into two dominions; the sheep that belong to God, and the goats that belong to the wicked one. (See Mt. 25.31-45) True believers belong to Christ; they are of God and representative of Him, while the remainder, by far the greatest number, are under the power of the wicked one; they are representative of him; they do his work and support his causes.

What is the “hope” of Salvation?

All mankind was lost in the futility of their thinking, darkened in their understanding, and alienated from the life of God. A faint hope came as a vague shadow, not the light itself but a shadow of that light, in the giving of the Old Covenant (Testament) to the person of Moses. In this covenant was, and is, embedded a shadow of the coming kingdom of light, life and truth...in the person of Christ Jesus. When Christ came into the earth, He was the sole, the singular source of light, life and truth of the Kingdom of God. Upon His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit into the lives of His disciples, to all who believe in Him; thus the Kingdom of God now is in the Church, expressed in the earth as the Body of Christ. (See Eph. 1.18-23) Herein is the fulfillment of His covenant promise,

“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,” Col. 1.13

Thus, the Kingdom of God is in the earth today solely in the Church. But surrounding the Church remains those, according to 2 Cor. 4.4, *“whose minds the god of this age (Satan) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”*

And so today all mankind across the whole of the earth is divided into just two dominions: that which belongs to God in Christ, and that which belongs to the wicked one, in Satan. There is no middle ground; there are no gray areas. True believers not only belong to God, but He has become their Father in a true spiritual birth. Believers are ‘**of**’ God in birth (Jn. 1.12-13), ‘**from**’ Him as translated into His Kingdom (Col. 1.13), ‘**to**’ Him in thanksgiving and worship, and ‘**for**’ Him in His purposes in this age and the age to come. While the rest of mankind, by far the greater number, is under the sway and power of the wicked one; they do his works, support his causes, proclaim his lies, and act as his unknowing puppets. Many are with good intentions towards their fellow man, good intentions that they determine as good.

This number includes all unbelievers of the Gospel of Christ, whatever their profession, title, or placement in this life—religious or otherwise. They think they are doing good, righting the wrongs of society but unknowing are under the sway of the devil. The bias of their minds is toward self-willed goodness, abnormal love, self-promotion, extremes of liberalism of thought, with many addicted to immoral or addictive behavior and all kinds of wickedness. They are by nature immersed in it, subject to the power and influence of Satan...for this is his kingdom of darkness upon the earth. This includes those who the world considers to be the most “godly” men, ranked as such by men and not by God. These are obviously witnessed by those who walk in the light of the Gospel; these have a true sense of not belonging to this

generation, of being grieved and offended and troubled by it, who look only to the building up of the Body of Christ as the true light in the world and have hope in the age to come.

The Promise

This is the ominous result of what really happened in the Garden of Eden. It is not a child's story of innocence, apple trees, and deception. It was a blatant attack by Satan to exalt himself above the throne of God, to usurp His authority, and to enlarge his kingdom. When confronted with Christ, the devil offered to give Him authority over all the kingdoms of the earth, saying if Jesus would "*fall down and worship him*," to which Jesus replied, Mt. 4.8-10 "*Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.*" Obviously Jesus thought that obedience to God, even to the death on the cross, was abundantly beyond all Satan has to offer. And that through His obedience all things in heaven and earth will be gained to the Kingdom of God, and the souls of all who would believe will be made perfect, acceptable, and exalted in Him. The final exhortation to the Church and believers therein is given in Rm. 16.20

"And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Amen."

This is a promise of God. It is the culmination of the very first promise of redemption in the Garden: Gn. 3.15 "*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*" Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent and by virtue of Him bruising the head of Satan, the serpent is brought under our feet, for we, the Church, are the Body of Christ in the earth today. On our behalf, Satan is a defeated enemy. That does not mean he is powerless or without influence, for as it is written in 1 Pet. 5.8,

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

But now we, the seed of Christ, shall triumph in victory over Satan, for the scripture clearly reads, it is "*he will be bruised under your feet.*" The blessings contained in this promise is victory over Satan. This includes all plans and devices of Satan against us: body, spirit, and soul, and in due time triumphing over sin and death, over trials and adverse circumstances. It is triumphing over the "enemy who sows tares who attempts to cause division in the church and bring in false teachers that cause confusion and dissension, making every attempt to defile us, wanting to disturb, even to destroy us; all his attempts to keep us from the *Tree of Life* here and fullness of life in the age to come.

Salvation cannot be made any clearer, or more available than in the promise of the New Covenant in Christ, 1 Jn. 5.11-13,

11And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."

S5.E10. Q.5. Questions for Discussion

1. Explain how the covenants with Adam and with Israel are both “conditional covenants.” What is the significance of this?
2. How is the New Covenant not a “conditional covenant.” Explain 1 Jn. 5.11-13.
3. Explain the spiritual significances of the *Tree of Life* and the *Three of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. What is meant by the “personification of these two trees? Explain the roles of Christ and the devil as seen in the two trees.
4. What is the Kingdom of God? Can it be found anywhere in the earth today? What is the domain of Satan in the earth?
5. Explain the “promise of salvation.” How does the “seed of Christ” enter into this promise? Especially, explain how salvation is more than gaining a “ticket to heaven.”