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Studies in Genesis

(Leaflet 5)

CHAPTER II (CONTINUED)

ADAM AND EVE — A TYPE OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

As we considered in our last lesson, the details of the creation of man, recorded in the second chapter of Genesis, we did not attempt to outline the deeply spiritual lessons found in what is written and implied here about Adam and Eve—a type of Christ and the church. This is a full lesson in itself, one which we shall study today.

Unless we find in another part of the Bible, God's teaching concerning the relationship of our first parents, we shall miss the fulness of the blessing He has for us. May He open the eyes of our understanding to "behold wondrous things out of" His "law!"

THE FIRST ADAM AND "THE LAST ADAM"

Adam was the first man; Christ, "The last Adam." And in the sight of God these two represent the human race. The first Adam was the federal head of all mankind; "the last Adam" is the Head of all who are cleansed from sin by His precious blood. The first Adam represents the fallen race; "the last Adam" represents the redeemed of God.

"So also it is written, *The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam (became) a life-giving spirit*" (I Cor. 15:45, Revised Version).

(Note that the word "because," enclosed in the parenthesis here, is in italics in the English translation of our Bible, which means that it was added by the translators to make the meaning clear, and therefore was not in the original Greek. Our Lord was *always* "a life-giving Spirit.")

Again, we read:

"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. 15:47).

And again:

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:21, 22).

The first Adam was the head of God's finished creation; the second Adam is the Head of "a new creation," wrought in the hearts of all who put their faith in Calvary's Cross and the empty tomb.

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Moreover, the first Adam was a "figure of him (Christ) that was to come . . . If through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God . . . which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (Rom. 5:12-15).

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous . . . Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:19, 21).

We must ever remember that Christ is the central theme of all the Word of God; and in order to find the purpose for which the Bible was given, we must read each portion in its relationship to Christ and His redemptive work. Accordingly, it is one thing to know about Adam; it is a more important thing to know about the man whom Adam pre-figured—"the last Adam." It is a blessed thing to know all about the first man; but there is a second Man; and all we can learn about the first man will be nothing to us unless

we find from the story of the first man just what God has done through the second Man, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THE CHURCH — THE BODY AND THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

As the Lord "formed Eve from the body of Adam," to quote the Presbyterian "Catechism for Young Children;" and as the Lord "brought her unto the man" (Gen 2:22) to be his bride; even so the church is called the body and the bride of Christ. John the Baptist; Paul; and John, the apostle—all refer to our Lord as the Bridegroom; and to the church as His bride; whereas Paul also uses the figure of the body, of which Christ is the Head, to set forth the union of Christ and His church.

Now the creation story tells us that Eve was both Adam's body and Adam's bride. Let us read Gen. 2:21-23, to see how God, the Holy Spirit, states it:

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Thus the very word "woman" means "because she was taken out of man." And she became Adam's bride.

To find the New Testament explanation of this beautiful type of Christ and the church, let us turn to several passages:

1. "*Now ye are the body of Christ*" (I Cor. 12:27). Space forbids quoting in these pages all the Scripture which describes the church as the body of Christ. Here are a few:

God "hath put all things under his (Christ's) feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to *the church, which is his body*, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23).

"*He is the head of the body, the church*" (Col. 1:18).

"For as *the body is one*, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is *Christ*" (I Cor. 12:12).

We should expect Paul to say here, ". . . so also is the church;" but not so. He said, rather, ". . . so also is Christ," thus identifying our Lord with His church. How exalted is our position in Him—all to His own praise and glory!

"For as we have *many members in one body*, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are *one body in Christ*, and every one members one of another" (Rom. 12:4, 5).

"There is *one body*, and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers . . . for the edifying of the *body of Christ*: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ . . . which is the head . . . from whom the whole body" is "*fitly joined together*" (Eph. 4:4-16; compare also Eph. 2:15, 16; I Cor. 12:12-28; Col. 3:10, 11; and other such passages.)

The lessons God would teach us in this figure are unmistakable. As the physical body is lifeless apart from the head, so there is no true church except by union with Christ on the basis of His finished work on Calvary. Again, as the physical head controls all the human body, so Christ wants to control every thought and every action of His blood-bought church. He wants to be on the throne of our hearts. And as the different members of the physical body work together for the good of the whole, even so individual Christians, walking in the will of the Lord, ever seek one another's good and Christ's glory.

But there is a deeper, even a more beautiful meaning to the Genesis record than these familiar lessons afford us. It is suggested by:

2. *The Deep Sleep and the Riven Side.*

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs . . . And the rib . . . made he a woman."

Thus Eve was created from the body of Adam, which was opened while the deep sleep was upon him. The "deep sleep" foreshadowed the deeper sleep of death, into which the Lord Jesus was to be placed. And the church was created by Christ's being put to death. "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). And out of the riven side of the Son of God, when He died on the cross, the church has been created.

Surely our hearts can but echo the words of the poet who sang:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure."

3. "*He That Hath the Bride is the Bridegroom*" (John 3:29). So spake John the Baptist when he refused to be worshipped as the Christ, declaring that he was only "the friend of the bridegroom," who rejoiced "greatly because of the bridegroom's voice." This is a striking illustration of the inspiration of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit; for John the Baptist, like the Old Testament prophets, evidently was not given the teaching concerning Christ and the church. That was given later, by special revelation, to Paul. John was the herald of the King—Israel's Messiah. Yet, guided by the Holy Spirit, He spoke these remarkable words.

Later Paul uttered the same truth when he wrote to the Corinthian Christians, saying:

"I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I

have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).

The most complete exposition by Paul of the teaching concerning the church as the bride of Christ is found in Eph. 5:22-33, which we shall study in a few minutes. But just here let us turn to our Bibles and read this longer passage.

Having given definite instruction regarding "the married life of Spirit-filled believers as illustrating Christ and the church," Paul concluded this remarkable passage by saying, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (verse 32).

Not only John the Baptist and Paul used the figure of the Bridegroom and the bride to illustrate the union of Christ and His church, but John, "the beloved disciple," in the book of Revelation, wrote of that yet future day when "the marriage supper of the Lamb" shall take place in heaven (Rev. 19:7-9). This last book of the Bible closes with the prayer of "the Spirit and the bride," expressed in the one word, "Come." And today we add our testimony to that of John when we, too, pray, saying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The bride longs to see her Bridegroom, and to be with Him forevermore!

Now let us turn again to Eph. 5:22-33' to study in some detail Paul's clearest passage, setting forth Christ as the Bridegroom and the church as His bride. Adam and Eve and all other Spirit-filled brides and bridegrooms illustrate this blessed truth of the union of Christ and His church. And this brings us to a definite command of God:

4. "*The Husband is the Head of the Wife, Even as Christ is the Head of the Church*" (Eph. 5:23). And this statement follows yet other significant words, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (verse 22).

Some people do not like this teaching, but it is in the Word of God. Eve was formed from the body of Adam to be "an help meet for him." And when Adam and Eve fell, the Lord said unto the woman, "Thy desire shall be to thy

husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16). The place of authority was given the man, "even as Christ is the head of the church."

This is not to say that the man is to be a domineering over-lord. On the contrary, God expressly states, "Husbands, love your wives" (Eph. 5:25, 28-31). But in the public assembly of Christians, and in the Christ-directed order of Christian living, the place of authority is given to the man, even as yet other Scriptures plainly teach:

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. 5:24; compare Col. 3:18; I Peter 3:1-6).

"The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (I Cor. 11:3).

"Let your women keep silence in the churches" (I Cor. 14:34; compare I Tim. 2:11-14).

We believe that this means that in the public assembly men, not women, should be pastors and evangelists and teachers. Surely there is still a wonderful ministry for Christian women, not only in the home and in every walk of life, but also, as Sunday School and Bible teachers, soul-winners, pointing the lost to the Saviour.

Paul, in Titus 2:4, 5, spoke again very plainly, admonishing "the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Whether we like it or not, this is God's order. Eve was to be subject to Adam, "even as Christ is the head of the church."

A greater responsibility rests on the husband because God says of him that he must be willing to die for the woman; and any man who is not willing to lay down his life for her is not a real husband, according to the Word of God. He must suffer anything. Why? Because Jesus did. He is the

Great Antitype. We are only types. That is all. We are to be built after the Great Antitype. He is the Bridegroom. Will He do everything for the bride that is His? What has He already done? He died for His bride. He gave Himself. Therefore, He says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

5. *The Church is to be Presented to Christ.* And why did Christ lay down His life for the church, His bride? "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:26, 27).

When God made Eve, He "brought her unto the man" (Gen 2:22), and she was presented unto Adam. Likewise, the church, the bride of Christ, is to be presented unto Him "at his appearing."

The man "is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. *Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man*" (I Cor. 11:7-9).

The message is very plain: The church is to be presented to Christ, not the other way about — not Christ to the church. The day of presentation is coming. God created Eve and presented her to Adam. Christ is at the right hand of God in the glory, and God is creating the church now out of the riven side of Christ. One day the church is to be presented to Him, "holy and without blemish."

Thank God! In that day there will be no more sinning and stumbling and falling. We shall be "without spot or wrinkle," forever like Him, by His power and grace. We shall be "to the praise of His glory."

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 1:12; 3:21),

And now let us note one other wonderful truth in this type of Christ and His bride, as set forth in Eph. 5:28-32:

6. *The Church is Eternally Secure in Christ.* Verse 31 of this passage takes us back to Gen. 2:24:

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

Will you mark it? It is the man who gives up for the woman; not the other way. It is the husband that does the cleaving. It is the husband that clings to the wife. Thus God has put the responsibility for the safety of the woman on the husband, not the other way. Therefore, what? The safety of the church, the body, is upon the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus.

Some people cannot understand when we talk about eternal security. Here is another reason why every believer is eternally secure in Christ. That believer is a member of the church, the body of Christ, the bride of the Lamb. Upon whom is the responsibility for the bride? The responsibility is on the Bridegroom. It is He that must cling. And He has promised in His infallible Word that the members of His bride “shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of” His “hand” (See John 10:27-30).

Will He ever let her go? My friend, the one you love is just as safe as you can make her, if yours is real love. Now Christ loves the church. How do we know? Because He has already given Himself for her. He loves the church infinitely. Will He allow anything then to come between Himself and His bride? Could there be any possibility that the bride will be harmed and that He will finally lose her? Certainly not. Why? Because He is the eternal Bridegroom, and His Word is sure!

Then “who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom. 8:35). It is not our love, my friends, that makes us safe. Not that. Our love is a very poor thing. If our love for Christ were our security, the devil could very soon overcome it; but if our love is the love of Christ, what can Satan

do about it? Satan is already a defeated foe. "Who can separate us from the love of Christ?" My friend, if you get a complete and full conception of Christ's love for you, you need never think about your love for Him. It will take care of itself.

A young girl went to her pastor and said, "I am afraid something is wrong, for I do not love Christ as I ought. I have tried and tried and tried, and it just seems that I do not love Him the way I should." Then the pastor very wisely answered: "Perhaps you go about it in the wrong way. Say a thousand times daily, 'Jesus loves me.'" That did the work. It was not long before she was rejoicing in the love of Christ, for love begets love. "We love Him." Why? "Because He first loved us." The consciousness of His love for us begets love; and our love will take care of itself in the consciousness of His love for us. Don't you see, my friend, the sufficiency of that love to keep us?

I want to use an illustration that I have used before. You will bear my repetition of it because I do not know any other way, or any better way, to make this clear: A little child is in the arms of its mother, when suddenly danger appears. Immediately that mother is transformed, and all the tigress in her nature asserts itself. Every ounce of strength, every ounce of ingenuity that the woman can muster is at once brought into play to save that little thing she loves. The child is not held in the mother's arms; he is held in the mother's love, which is stronger than any mother's arms. That woman has the strength of ten women. Why? Because danger has appeared to the one that she loves.

My friend, we are in God's hand. Let danger appear, and immediately all the infinite power of the mighty God who built the universe is for us. Then what can harm us? "Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord?"

At the very beginning of the Book of books, God said, "A man . . . shall cleave unto his wife." So also Christ clings to every soul who goes to Him for pardon, to be a member of His body and His bride.

LOVING "HIS APPEARING"

The aged Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, saying that the time of his departure was "at hand"; and that he was to receive "a crown of righteousness . . . at that day" when Jesus comes, even as would "all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:6-8).

The coming of the Bridegroom for His bride is "the blessed hope" of the church, which is His body. And again, we echo the words of John, in the closing prayer of the Bible, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Meanwhile, are we keeping our garments "unspotted from the world"? (See James 1:27.) In searching words God asks us:

"What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

You have often heard me refer to a very dear Hebrew Christian friend. We were fellow-students in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, and later we were co-pastors in a little church in Texas that became very dear to our hearts. That Jewish Christian never loses an opportunity to tell the passing stranger of his Messiah and the long-expected Bridegroom of the church, of which he is a zealous member.

On one occasion he made a trip to Dallas, Texas, with a young woman who was the organist in his church; for together they were to select a new piano to replace the organ that had been burned.

The young woman, taking advantage of the opportunity, went to a department store to select her wedding dress—for she was soon to be married. With a fatherly kind of interest, my Hebrew Christian friend went with her, to watch her in her choice of materials.

There was the purchase of white satin and lilies of the valley, sold by a young woman whose face showed that she

was a Jewess. And to that Hebrew girl, who did not know the Lord, my Hebrew Christian friend began to talk. He told her that the bride-to-be was looking for the soon coming of her bridegroom-to-be; that he was in a distant city; and that meanwhile, his friend who had purchased the satin and the lilies of the valley, was getting her wedding garments ready to meet her bridegroom-to-be.

The Jewess, of course, appeared interested. And then, faithful to his Lord, that soul-winner told the Jewish girl of another Bridegroom, even Jesus, and of His bride, the church. He told her that the Bridegroom, having "loved the church," and having given Himself for it on the cruel cross, had gone back to "a far country," even heaven itself, there to pray for His blood-bought bride until He should return for her. That Hebrew Christian told the Hebrew girl that, while the Bridegroom was away, His bride was arraying herself in garments "clean and white," washed in the blood of Calvary's Lamb, getting ready for "His appearing" and "the marriage supper of the Lamb." Then he pled with her to accept the Bridegroom as her personal Saviour and Messiah and Lord, that she, too, might be a member of His body, which is His bride.

My unsaved friend, will you also listen to His voice, "Come unto me . . . Ye must be born again"? Will you "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"? Then you, too, will join that vast company of the redeemed, looking and longing for the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Then, with these, you, too, will sing from an eager heart:

"The bride sees not her garment,
But her dear bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace;
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand:
The Lamb is all the glory
Of our Emmanuel's land."