

## SESSION 4: ADAM – PERFECT BUT NOT COMPLETE

Man was created to represent God on earth. Man was God's likeness and image. He was to extend God's temple—the sacredness of his presence and creation beauty from Eden throughout the entire earth.

But this never happened.

Why not? And what went wrong?

Why, instead, do we read, with horror, of MAN's relationship with God being severed, of the earth being cursed, of MAN being sentenced to death, and his life on 'death row' being one of hard labor, toil and sweat? Why do we read of family relationships becoming heart-breaking, of conflict and violence among people and nations, of famine and disease prowling the earth, and all because, it seems, Adam and Eve transgressed by eating a piece of fruit that God told them not to eat?

It does seem that God was a little too sensitive, does it not? In fact, a casual read of Genesis 1 to 3 by any novice Bible student, might possibly cause them to question the wisdom of God placing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden in the first place. After all, if it wasn't for that tree with its tantalizing fruit, all this terrible 'fall out' wouldn't have occurred, right?

We have learned, thus far, that Adam (or Man) was created in God's likeness and image, to be adopted into the royal family of God as an heir of God and of his kingdom. He was to rule together with God in bringing God's creation project to fullness, completion, and glory.

So why don't we see God and Man working together as God had purposed from 'before the world began?'

Well, here's where it gets really interesting. Rulership with God in God's Kingdom and as part of the royal family of God, demanded that Man possess and display qualities that the godhead of Father, Son and Holy Spirit possessed and displayed (Jn 17:21). Adam and Eve had to demonstrate these very same qualities in order to qualify for such sacred co-rulership with God.

This is where the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and its delectable fruit comes in. There was nothing wrong with that tree, nor its fruit. God created it and placed it there, not the devil. God does not create evil, nor does he make mistakes. In fact, this tree along with every other tree and its fruit, was created for blessing. It could be argued that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the tree with

the greatest potential for blessing, more than any other. Why? Because it was placed there to provide Man with the opportunity to qualify for rulership with God in his kingdom and for all eternity. All that Adam and Eve had to do was follow the specific instructions from God regarding this particular tree and its fruit.

So, what was this tree, and God's instruction about this tree, all about?

Well, Adam was created as a free moral agent, with the ability to make free moral choices. This tree and its fruit was all about Adam making moral choices in favor of God, thus taking on the divine nature and demonstrating suitability for divine rulership in God's kingdom, and participation in God's royal family.

Adam was created perfect but not complete. At creation, Adam was not yet the done deal. He was not yet the finished product! God could have created Adam with robotic obedience, similar to the powerful instincts that birds and animals possess, but robotic obedience was so far removed from God's nature and the way that the godhead and royal family functioned. Remember, Adam was made in the likeness and image of God, not the image and likeness of birds and animals. God could create Adam as perfect, and he did, but not complete.

Completion was always going to be a journey, particularly a journey of Adam and Eve making choices in favor of God. And this is what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, provided. This was God providing Adam and Eve with the opportunity to qualify for royal duties, so to speak. What a blessing! What a blessing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was!

Now, how long this journey was to take, we don't know. We don't know how long it would take for this divine nature to be formed, but what we *do* know, is that sadly, Adam and Eve never got past 'first base.'

Adam and Eve, the representatives of all of humanity, chose disobedience towards God over obedience and allegiance, thus forfeiting Man's adoption to sonship and inheritance as heirs in God's kingdom.

Interestingly, Professor N.T Wright commented on this, saying that actually, idolatry was at the very heart of Adam and Eve's fall, and was the essence of the devil's temptation. Disobedience—the eating of the fruit—was the result of idolatry. In Philippians 2 Paul, in speaking about Jesus, said that Jesus, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped (Ph 2:6) and this is exactly what Adam and Eve did. Instead of humble submission to God they elevated themselves to be as God, or in place of God.

Paul also brings this out in Romans 1, which talks about the 'fall' and disintegration of Mankind, where Man went from knowing God (Ro 2:19) to not honoring him as God (Ro 2:21), which is idolatry, and then descending into spiritual and moral disintegration (Ro 2:24 until the end of the chapter.)

So, what does humble submission and obedience to God look like?

Well, it can very easily be summed up in the greatest of all commandments: loving God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. (Mk 12:30)

The good news is—the gospel is—that God did not give up on his creation project, as catastrophic as this now appears to be. There was another project which was at the very heart of God's 'creation project,' and this was God's 'human project' or his 'adoption project!' This is his project of qualifying Man to be adopted into the royal family of God, to be heirs in Kingdom endeavors and to join with God in the outworking of, and the glorification of, his 'creation project' for all eternity.

This is the greater 'mission of God.' God's mission is his 'creation project,' at the heart of which is his 'human project'—Man becoming a partaker of his divine nature. (2 Pe 1:4)

Furthermore, Paul in Romans 8 (which is the new creation chapter of the Book of Romans) has God's, wider, creation project being fulfilled immediately upon the fulfillment of his human project. So the two are inseparable, as one will not be fulfilled without the other, but the most important is God's 'human project.'

Knowing that we are intended to be co-heirs with God for eternity, how does this change the way we now view our walk with God? Does the life we live and the choices we make on a day-to-day basis take on new significance?