

FEED MY SHEEP

by Harold Camping

A Scriptural view
Of the Christian's responsibility
To the world around him.

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INTRODUCTION

Any true believer worth his salt must be deeply concerned about his responsibility in relationship to the world in which he is living. He must realize that his salvation resulted from an act of completely undeserved love by his Savior. Because he has become a citizen of Christ's Kingdom, he should want to make certain that he is living in obedience to this King. He should know that Jesus saved him for Christ's glory. But he should also know that to live as a saved believer to the glory of Christ involves obligations to the world in which he presently exists.

As mankind becomes more bewildered, and as sin multiplies, the believer is even more pressed to make certain he is faithfully discharging his duty to God, in relationship to Him, all other truth, phenomena, and reality will pass away.

But can he know precisely what his mandates with reference to the world actually are? Can these be articulated in such plain fashion that he will have precise guidance in such common place areas of his life as choosing his vocation, and spending his money?

In general, we could probably say that two answers are offered to the question of the believer's task in the world. The first is that he is first of all a witness of the Gospel of Christ, and this is to be the motivating philosophy undergirding every decision. As a first responsibility, he is not to be at all concerned about the other spheres of life such as governmental, scientific, business, etc. As long as he is witnessing, he is within the will of God.

The second is that which is held by many, and which indicates that while we are witnesses, we do have dominion over this earth. We are to bring it into subjection in the name of Christ. Thus, we are to become scientists, statesmen, philosophers, and building contractors that we might assist in building a better world in which to offer the Gospel. We are to rule over every aspect of this creation as God's vice-gerund.

Which answer is the more Biblical? Or is there another answer? We must go to the Bible to find our solution. Only it is trustworthy and authoritative.

This is an important question. Upon its answer hangs the whole philosophy of the education of our Christian youth. Upon its answer depends the nature of each Christian's livelihood. Indeed, to its answer the whole cause of Christ in the world today relates.

In this paper we shall attempt to find the Biblical answer. In order to find this we must begin at the beginning--in the Garden of Eden. For it is there that man is first shown to us. We shall examine him in his world of long ago, and in so doing shall discover our responsibility to today's world.

As we search for these answers we shall also get a fresh look at the entrance of sin into the world. We shall not only determine the timetable of Lucifer's fall into sin but also the certainty of his destruction.

CHAPTER 1

Death Comes to the World

Any attempt to discover the task of the believer in the world today must begin with Genesis I. For it was in this first chapter of the Bible that God gave the initial decisive information regarding the role of man in the world.

But when we look at the language of Genesis I, we are confronted by a contradiction in statements that seems to frustrate us at the very outset in our attempt to develop a clear understanding regarding the question we are examining. In Genesis 1:28 God said after He had created our first parents, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

To be fruitful, to multiply, to fill the earth, and to have dominion over its creatures is language that poses no apparent difficulties. The Bible appears to teach that the earth together with its creatures was created good and beautiful. There was no sin, and no curse of sin. Man was placed here as the crown of God's creation to serve as God's vice-gerent, as the Lord of His creation. Logically, he would exercise dominion or rule over the lesser creatures.

But there is included in these verses the phrase "subdue it." A contemplation of this phrase produces a whole host of questions. If this world was created good and perfect, what was there to subdue? One subdues something that is an antagonist or that is in rebellion. Maybe the world, before the fall of Adam into sin, wasn't as perfect as we always thought. And isn't it a fact that God placed Adam and Eve in a garden? Doesn't this suggest that the world outside the garden was wild and in need of subduing? Moreover, didn't the angel Lucifer, and his fellow angels rebel against God at some earlier date? Couldn't they already have contaminated the earth in some fashion so as to necessitate the command to Adam to subdue the earth?

These are not idle questions. For some reason, as we shall see in later chapters of this study, the command to subdue the earth and have dominion over its creatures was never repeated again in the Bible. It is imperative, therefore, that we

ascertain whether these commands related only to man before his fall into sin, or whether they relate to all mankind throughout history.

An understanding of the Biblical statement "subdue it" is, therefore, exceedingly crucial if we are to understand the believer's task today. If there was indeed rebellion in creation before the fall of man into sin, then God's command to Adam to subdue the earth would apply in a similar fashion to man today. But if the earth was good, without any rebellious elements which we commonly associate with the curse of sin, then there must be an altogether different explanation for "subdue it" than that which appears at first glance; and man today would, therefore, have a somewhat different responsibility toward the world and its creatures than Adam did before he fell into sin.

We should therefore, examine the world that existed before man's disobedience in the Garden of Eden to discover if there was anything there that looks like that which would result from sin's curse on the earth.

A most obvious place to begin in our search is to examine the question of death in the world before the fall of man. God decreed to Adam that in the day that he disobeyed God, he would surely die (Gen. 2:17). Death, then--at least death for mankind--was an immediate and terrible result of sin. And since we read in Genesis 1:30 that the animals apparently were herbivorous--"I have given every green plant for food"--whereas today and during known history many animals are carnivorous, we suspect that the curse of sin (death) could have applied to animals as well as man.

A study of the question of the timing of death's coming into the world, therefore, should be made. If death did occur in the animal world before man's sin, we could readily believe there were other rebellious elements in the world at that time. We would then see the reasonableness of the command to Adam to subdue the earth. On the other hand, if we could know that there was no death in the animal world before the fall of man, we would suspect that an altogether different solution must be found to the command "subdue it." This solution would also have much to say about man's task today.

May There Have Been Animal Death In Eden?

Let us first ask if the Scriptures in any way suggest that there may have been animal death before the fall? In a number of places the Bible speaks of animals and birds using other animals as food. But none of these statements relates in any sense to the pre-fall era. The only verse that could possibly be of significance is that of Psalm 104:21, "The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God."

Some believe that this verse, which is speaking of carnivorous animals, is set in the context of a Psalm dealing with the creation of the world. If this is so, we have already found an answer to the question of animal death before the fall of Adam.

But is this so? Let us look at this Psalm more carefully to determine if this verse is pre-fall or post-fall in its application.

It is true that verses within this Psalm speak of the initial creation. Verse two--"who has stretched out the heavens as a tent," verse five, "thou didst set the earth on its foundations," verse nineteen--"thou hast made the moon to mark the seasons," all surely are speaking of creation. But these themes do not assure us that the entire Psalm speaks of creation. They are often used in other places in the Holy Canon to speak of creation but within a non-creation context. (cf. Isa. 48:13.) Moreover, several verses of Psalm 104 definitely do not have reference to the creation. Verses 6 to 9 speak of the waters standing above the mountains, followed by the raising of the mountains and the sinking of the valleys. The promise is then enunciated that the waters "might not again cover the earth." The word 'again' indicates that something different than the separation of the dry land from the seas as detailed in the creation account is being considered. For Genesis 6 to 9 tells us of the covering of all the earth with water, and that event occurred long after creation. These verses in Psalm 104:6-9 are, therefore, none other than a description of the flood of Noah's day. The mountains were covered at that time (Gen 7:19) and God faithfully promised He would never again destroy all flesh with a flood (Gen. 9:8-17).

Other verses of this Psalm also describe things unrelated to the creation program. Verse 26 speaks of ships, a much later phenomenon than Genesis 1:3. And verses 27 to 30 indicated that death comes to all who look to God for food. But "these all" who look to the Lord must include the fish, the animals and man himself who are the subject of the preceding verses. Since man's death was without question a result of Adam's sin, we know that these verses must be referring to conditions after the fall of Adam. Finally, Genesis 1:30 clearly states that plants were given to man and animals for food. Psalm 104:21 does not conform to this condition and, therefore, must relate to conditions after sin entered the world.

We see, therefore, that Psalm 104:21 must be speaking of a situation prevailing during the lifetime of the Psalmist. Since this appears to be the only Biblical passage which might possibly relate to animal death before the fall, we conclude that the Bible offers no information that would suggest there was death amongst animals before the fall.

Does The Bible Prohibit The Idea of Pre-Fall Animal Death?

Let us now approach the Bible from another viewpoint. Does it suggest in any way that there could not have been death among the animals before the fall? This question must be answered affirmatively as we shall see.

When we look at death we are surprised to see the close link between animals and man. We know, of course, that man is altogether different from animals in that man is created in the image of God with a soul that lives beyond the grave. He dies

when the soul leaves the body. But we can also properly say that he dies when the breath of life, which is also called spirit, leaves his body. In this the animal is like man. By the same token, in this context, we can not speak of plants dying, inasmuch as they do not have the breath of life. In fact, the Bible very particularly indicates that the created function of plants was to serve as food (Gen. 1:29,30).

In Psalm 104:27-29 we have an example of this relationship between man and animals. There we read "these all...are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath they die." The phrase "these all" includes man and animals as the context of this Psalm shows. Death is the lot of all men and all creatures who have the breath of life. This same truth is given in Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 where we read, "For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of the beasts is the same; as one dies so dies the other. They all have the same breath...who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down to the earth." Interestingly the word "spirit" or "breath" is the Hebrew word 'ruach' whether used of man or of animals.

Since this identification of man with animals, by virtue of the fact that each has the breath of life, extends throughout the Bible, we can expect it to be true at the time of Adam's sin. It begins to appear that when death came to man it also came to animals. The spiritual aspects of this death (eternal death) apply only to man. The physical aspects (removal of breath) would apply to man and animals.

Man and Animals Destroyed

When we look at the major judgments of God we discover in even more striking fashion the parallel relationship that exists between man and animals in the area of death. These judgments show that the weal or woe of animals is directly parallel to that of men. The first judgment after Adam was that that of the flood of Noah's day. Of this judgment we read, "And all flesh died...birds, cattle, beasts and all swarming creatures,... and every man; everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died," (Gen.7:21-22). A second judgment is that upon Sodom and Gomorrah; "the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone...and he overthrew those cities...and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground," (Gen. 19:24,25). A third judgment is that upon the Egyptians; "the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle," (Ex. 12:29).

Another judgment is that upon the inhabitants of Canaan, with the destruction of Jericho serving as a prototype; "Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and asses, with the edge of the sword," (Joshua 6:21). This was in strict accord with the commandment of God as recorded in the fifth book of the Pentateuch; "But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you

shall utterly destroy them" (Deut. 20:16).

Amazingly in all of these accounts, animals are destroyed with man, even though it is man who was the cause of the judgment, rather than the animals. This would explain the statement found in the last verse of Jonah where we read, "should I not pity Nineveh...in which there are...much cattle." The weal or woe of the cattle would be in direct relationship to that of the Ninevites.

The First Judgment

But one other judgment must be considered. That is the initial judgment, a judgment so severe that its shock waves continue through all of time and on into eternity. Adam and Eve sinned. God's judgment was immediate and quite fatal. They were condemned to death. In Genesis 3, where we read of this sad event, the animals are not specifically mentioned as sharing in this judgment. But we have seen that all of the other judgments upon man were shared by the animals. Therefore, since God is consistent and orderly in His dealings with His creation, we would expect that animals would also suffer death in parallel fashion to man.

The Bible nowhere intimates this is not the case. In fact, Romans 8:20 indicates the creation was "subjected to futility not of its own will." Animals were a part of creation so they, too, must be included with that which was brought into the bondage of decay. Genesis 3:17 states that the ground was cursed and Romans 8 surely indicates that this is to be understood as the whole creation including animals. Hosea 4:3 further shows us this bondage as including animals; "Therefore, the land mourns and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the air." We must conclude, then, that animals were subjected to death in like fashion with man, because of man's sin.

Herbivorous Animals In Eden

This concept is further strengthened when we note that in the Garden of Eden the animals were herbivorous: "I have given you every plant...for food, and to every beast of the earth..., I have given every green plant for food" (Gen. 1:29,30). Note the close relationship between animals and man. We do not know when animals became carnivorous, but undoubtedly the results of the curse upon creation brought about this condition. We do know that God must have killed animals when He brought skins to cover Adam and Eve (Gen.3:21). We know Abel killed a lamb and his offering was very acceptable to God. But these events were after the fall. To clarify this post-fall relationship, God told Noah in Genesis 9:3, "every moving thing shall be food for you." Following the fall, the plan of God was that animals were to be killed. Before the fall, the herbivorous nature of animals accorded perfectly with the concept of the absence of death amongst animals.

Herbivorous Animals in Eternity

If we look for a moment now at the weal of man, we shall find additional evidence that shows how animals are related to man in

God's plan. In Genesis 9:8-17 we read that God covenanted with man and with every living creature with the breath of life that He would never again destroy the world with a flood. And in Exodus 11:7 we read that the animals of the Israelites were to be spared God's judgment of the tenth plague. No wonder Christ spoke of the Father's concern of a sparrow.

This concern of God for animals and all creatures with the breath of life is pictured for us all the way into eternity. When judgment day comes, all animals will be destroyed with the unsaved, even as they were destroyed in Sodom and Jericho. But even as animals were saved with Noah out of the flood judgment, and with the Israelites out of the tenth plague judgment, so, too, out of the final judgment God gives us word pictures of weal or blessings for animals along with man. In Hosea 2:18,19 we read, "I will make for you a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field...and I will make you lie down in safety." The picture is one of peace and security with no fear of death. An even stronger statement is that of Isaiah 11:6-9, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb...and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den." That these conditions prevail in the new heaven and earth is assured us by the testimony of Isaiah 65:17-25. There we read, "the wolf and lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like an ox" (Isa. 65:25). The question at hand is not whether there literally will be animals in the new heaven and earth. Rather the truth imparted in these passages is the revelation of the completion of the predetermined program of God. The creation that was "subjected to futility, not of its own will...will be set free from its bondage of decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:20,21).

For mankind this glorious liberty means that death has been destroyed and all decay has ceased. Since the rest of creation is to obtain glorious liberty like man, death and decay must likewise be removed from all of creation including animals. This is the new earth. The covenant made with all living creatures in Hosea 2 will be fulfilled. Death will have been destroyed (I Cor. 15:26). The evidence of the fulfillment of that promise includes the word picture of Isaiah 65 that shows that the animals are again herbivorous. God, therefore, relates the picture of herbivorous animals to the concept of the absence of death. The herbivorous animals in Eden should then give the same concept, i.e., the absence of death.

Moreover, since the promise of the removal of death from man as well as animals must be understood as being included within the language of the 'glorious liberty' into which the creation will be restored, death amongst animals must be a result of the curse into which the creation was subjected by Adam's sin. The pre-fall animals, therefore, did not die since there was no curse upon creation at this time.

The language of Genesis 1:31 supports this whole idea of Eden being without death amongst animals. There we read that God saw all that He had made and it was "very good." This had reference to man without the ravages of decay and death. But it also had reference to animals since they are a part of creation. Since man

with the breath of life was without death and was "very good," the animals which likewise have the breath of life must also have been without death in order to receive God's commendation "very good."

We, thus, see that the Bible gives much evidence that points to the absence of death amongst animals before the fall. This, incidentally, means that the fossil record is that of animals which have died after Adam's sin and expulsion from the garden. Thus, the General Theory of Evolution or the idea of a so-called "theistic evolution" must be rejected as idle speculation. For these evolutionary theories require long periods of time during which lower creatures lived and died while gradually evolving to the highest being, man.

CHAPTER 2

ADAM FAILS AS KING

We have thus far determined that the Bible teaches that there was no death before the fall of Adam amongst the creatures (man and animals) with the breath of life. Thus, we sense that no aspects of the curse of sin (storms, thorns, thistles, earthquakes, decay, etc.) were present before the fall. We, at this point, are very comfortable with all of the teachings of the Bible relating to creation and our first parents. Everything was good. The animals and man were herbivorous (Gen. 1:29,30). Thorns and thistles came after sin (Gen.3:18). The six days of creation must have been twenty-four hour periods as the Bible seems to indicate, for long periods of time would have required death. Even Romans 8 fits beautifully into this understanding as we read there that creation itself was subjected to futility (Rom.8:20).

The command to subdue the earth must, therefore, have been strictly for our first parents and must have no relationship to the believer today.

But wait a moment. We still haven't faced the question of the timing of Lucifer's fall into sin. If he sinned before Adam was created, couldn't it still be possible that some part of the earth was still cursed? Then to subdue it could still have meaning for the believer today.

In this chapter we shall study more intently the meaning of "subdue it" and in so doing also discover the timing of Lucifer's fall into sin. We shall then be better prepared to begin to study more specifically the task of the believer today.

Fill The Earth

In seeking light on the phrase "subdue it," let us look briefly at other statements in Genesis 1 relating to our first parent's responsibility toward the world. Perhaps, by studying these we may get some insight into the meaning of the phrase "subdue it."

The first phrase we should look at is the phrase 'be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth'(1) (Gen. 1:28). We see this phrase does not relate in any sense to a mandate to conquer, or to subdue. This language is employed to indicate God's blessing upon man who would fill the earth with progeny. Not only is it a blessing to man to see his seed, but a mandate is surely implied here that this should be one of his goals in the world.

Identical language is employed in Genesis 1:22 after God created the fish. There we read:

And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.

The fish, of course, do not conquer or subdue the sea. They simply, under the blessing of God, multiply and fill the sea which is the environment in which they exist. This phrase, then, does not help us to understand the command to subdue the earth.

Till And Keep The Garden

A second phrase that relates to Adam and his work before his fall into sin is the command given to Adam in Genesis 2:15:

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

In this command Adam is told to till the garden and keep it. Let us examine these tasks. The word "keep" is the Hebrew word shamar which means to keep, observe, take heed (Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible). Shamar is translated as "keep" at least 284 times in the Old Testament. Keep my commandments, keep all the words of this law, are typical Old Testament sentences employing shamar. The implication is that of maintaining the present state of affairs. There is no suggestion in this word of bringing into subjection or bringing into control that which is out of control. Adam was to maintain a creation that was good and perfect. This command is, therefore, also unrelated to the word "subdue."

The command to dress or till the garden is the other part of Genesis 2:15. The word "to dress" or "till" is the Hebrew word abad.(2) It really is the opposite of a word like "subdue" or "dominion." It is translated some 214 times in the Bible as "serve." It tells us that Adam was to work in the garden, tilling it and doing what was necessary to maintain production. It also carries no implication of Lordship over the earth, or of having the earth in a state of subjection to man. Rather, it implies that man was to maintain that which was already good and perfect.

Dominion Over The Creatures

Thus far then, we have discovered no statement in the Biblical record of man before the fall that relates to this intriguing command to subdue the earth. There is one word, however, that

appears to be quite related to it. That is the word "dominion."
In Gen. 1:26 we read:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

And immediately following the command to subdue the earth we read (Gen. 1:28):

...and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

The word "dominion" which is the Hebrew word *radah* means to rule or reign. It is, thus, at least somewhat related to the idea of subduing or bringing in subjection. The word *radah* can be found twenty-four times in the Bible. It is normally translated "dominion" or "rule." But significantly, while in Genesis 1 it is used twice to indicate man is to have dominion or rule of all other creatures, exclusive of man, it is never used in this manner again. It is used to indicate rule over a slave (Lev. 25:43, 25:46, and 25:53) rule over those who built Solomon's temple (I Kings 5:16, I Kings 9:23, II Chron. 8:10); rule of the enemies of God over God's people (Neh. 9:18, Lev. 26:17); rule of God's people over the enemy (Judges 5:13, Numbers 24:19, Ps. 49:14, Isa. 14:2, Ps. 58:27); rule of the enemies of God over the nations (Isa. 14:6, Ezek. 29:15); rule of Christ over the nations (Isa 41-2, Ps. 110:2, Ps. 72:8); rule of false priests over God's people (Jer. 5:31, Ezek. 34:4); rule of Solomon over the land and kings between the Euphrates River and the Mediterranean Sea (I Kings 4:24).

What can possibly be the intention of God in using "radah" twice in Genesis I to indicate man's relationship to the lesser creatures of the world and then never repeating this? Instead God uses the same word to emphasize man's relationship to man and to the nations.

Especially interesting, too, is the statement made to Noah after the flood. Genesis 9:1 is almost identical to Genesis 1:28--, except that where Adam is told to subdue the earth and dominion over its creatures, Noah is given no such mandate. Rather he is told that God had put fear and dread of man within the other creatures and into man's hand they were delivered. Why this complete change in language? Something drastic must have happened between the events of Genesis 1:29 and those of Genesis 9:1,2.

The word "dominion" (*radah*) thus appears to introduce more questions into our search for the meaning of the command to Adam to subdue the earth. Since we sense that there is an intimate relationship between "subdue" and "dominion" it is time to look forth rightly at the phrase "subdue it." In so doing we will

discover the answers to the questions raised by the word radah, and we shall also discover the correlation between the words "subdue" and "dominion." Moreover, we shall also find answers to the questions concerned with the timing of Satan's fall, and the possibility of death and decay being present in the world prior to Adam's fall.

Adam Is To Subdue The Earth

We must logically look for our answers from the pages of Holy Writ. The Bible is its own interpreter. It does offer a valid and beautiful solution to the proper understanding of this key phrase "subdue it."

The word "subdue" which is the Hebrew word "kabash" is used twelve times in the Old Testament in addition to this use in Genesis 1:28. It is variously translated subdue, subjection, assault, etc. An examination of these twelve usages will help greatly to understand the meaning of its use in Genesis. Four times it is used to indicate mastery as in the relationship of a master to a slave. These passages are:

Now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children are as their children; yet we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have already been enslaved; but it is not in our power to help it, for other men have our fields and our vineyards (Neh. 5:5).

But afterward they turned and took back the male and female slaves they had set free, and brought them into subjection as slaves (Jer. 34:11).

And now you intend to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, as your slaves. Have you not sins of your own against the Lord your God? (II Chron. 28:10).

But then you turned around and profaned my name when each of you took back his male and female slaves, whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them into subjection to be your slaves (Jer. 34:11).

Once it is used in the book of Esther when Haman threw himself on the bed of Esther to plead for his life. The king, who entered the room, suspected Haman was trying to seduce the Queen. We read in Esther 7:8:

And the king returned from the palace garden to the place where they were drinking wine, as Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was and the king said, "Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?" As the words left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman's face.

The word kabash translated "assault", therefore, in this instance also means mastery over, or bringing into subjection even as in the case of the master-slave relationship.

Five times the word kabash is used in relationship to the

Israelites and the land of Canaan.

And every armed man of you will pass over the Jordan before the Lord, until he has driven out his enemies from before him and the land is subdued before the Lord; then after that you shall return and be free of obligation to the Lord and to Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord (Num. 32:21-22).

And Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, every man who is armed to battle before the Lord, will pass with you over the Jordan and the land shall be subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession (Num. 32:29).

Then the whole congregation of the people of Israel assembled at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there; the land lay subdued before them (Josh. 18:1).

Is not the Lord your God with you? And has he not given you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before the Lord and his people (I Chron. 22:18).

These also King David dedicated to the Lord, together with the silver and gold which he dedicated from all the nations he subdued (II San. 8:11).

In these verses, too, the word subdued (kabash) is emphasizing mastery. But over whom or what had they obtained mastery? Was it over the physical land of Canaan as suggested by the phrase "land is subdued" or "land shall be subdued." Had they gone into the land, reclaiming the wilderness, planting vineyards and building cities? Having done all this, was the land subdued or in subjection before them?

The fact is that this is precisely what they did not do. They were to possess the land and these provisions of plants and buildings were completely prepared for them with no effort of any kind on their part. In Joshua 24:13 we read:

I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you dwell therein; you eat the fruit of vineyards and oliveyards which you did not plant.

To subdue the land of Canaan, therefore, must have reference to something entirely different to that of subjugation of the physical land. If we look again at these passages where kabash is used, we note that in each case it deals with the subjugation of enemies. The land was subdued only when the enemies within the land, who also claimed possession to the land, had been destroyed from the land. Even as kabash is used to relate to mastery over a slave, so, in these passages it used to indicate mastery over an enemy. In neither case does it relate at all to material substances such as a physical land.

It was an enemy who must be removed from this land flowing

with milk and honey. Until he was removed, the Israelites could not claim their mastery over it. The land was not their possession in actuality although it had been given to them as their right. When they stood at the boundary of the land of Canaan they were to go in and subdue it. They were to claim their rightful ownership, their Lordship, over this good and wonderful land by destroying or enslaving the enemy who also claimed ownership of the land.

When we look now at Genesis 1:28 we see that man is to "subdue it." The word "it" without question refers to the earth. Thus the language employed here is exactly parallel to that of "subdue the land" when Canaan was in view. Adam was to "subdue the earth." We, therefore, must conclude that even as in the case of subduing the land of Canaan, Adam was not to subdue a physical land but an enemy of some kind. Adam was to enslave someone or destroy someone. He was to become master over some other personality. This person or persons could be an enemy who also wanted to

possess the land which had been given to him, even as the Amorites who claimed possession to the land of Canaan were the enemy who were to be destroyed by the Israelites as they subdued or subjugated (kabash) the land.

Note now the parallel that exists between the Israelites at the borders of Canaan and Adam as the first man on this earth. The creation lay before Adam. It was completed without his effort. Similarly, the land of Canaan lay before the Israelites. It was a good land. The cities and vineyards had been completed without any effort on their part.

Adam was promised by God that this creation was to be under his dominion. He was to fill it with his progeny. The Israelites were told that the land of Canaan had been given to them as an everlasting possession. They simply were to go in and possess it.

Adam was told to subdue the land. An enemy threatened. He was to claim his right to the land by bringing this enemy into subjection. Likewise, the Israelites were to subdue the land of Canaan. The enemy who required subjugation were the Canaanites who also wanted ownership of the land. Israel would subdue the land--conquer this enemy--by being obedient to God. Adam could also subdue the land--conquer the enemy who threatened--by being obedient to God. The parallelism being the two situations of Adam and Israel is certainly striking.

But who was this enemy in Eden? It surely was not someone who already occupied the land, for the creation was good. The enemy was someone who had become jealous of God. He, too, wanted to be a King. This enemy was one of the highest of the angels, Lucifer. His envy would lead him to a terrible act. The New Testament points to this envy and pride of Lucifer who became the devil, Satan. In I Timothy 3:6 we read:

He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into condemnation of the devil.

And in James 3:14, 15 the Scriptures declare:

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.

Apparently, the sin of pride was driving Lucifer to this overt act of rebellion against God. And the creation of the world provided the golden opportunity. If he could enslave man, he would automatically become King of this beautiful creation. Since Adam had been given dominion over it, the master of Adam would also be master of all which was subordinate to Adam.

But how could Adam subdue this potential enemy? How did the Israelites subdue the land of Canaan? By obedience to God. In the measure they obeyed God, they came into possession of the land of Canaan. God would lead in the destruction of the enemy.

One man of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the Lord your God who fights for you, as he promised you (Josh. 23:10).

In the measure they disobeyed, they became slaves to the enemy in the land. The several hundred years of history, recorded in the book of Judges, give vivid testimony to their enslavement, which followed when they did not obey God by destroying the enemy who also claimed ownership to the land.

Adam, of course, failed the test. Lucifer came into the garden and the battle was joined. He apparently took on the form of a serpent for it was the wisest of all the animals (Gen. 3:1). The Hebrew word for "subtle" or "crafty" in the verse is translated most often in the Bible as "prudent." Of all creation this wisest of all animals would most easily be obeyed by Eve. He, of course, did not join the battle head on with Adam. He carefully planned his strategy by capturing a lower echelon ruler first. Then her obedience to Satan would insure victory over the king, Adam, himself. Satan follows the same technique today as he seeks to overthrow the work of Christ by working through the bride of Christ, the Church.

I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one husband. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ (II Cor. 11:23).

Adam was to subdue the earth by destroying Satan. He could assure the destruction of Satan by his perfect obedience to God. This understanding of the word "subdue" (kabash) matches the usage of this word elsewhere in the Scriptures.

The implementation of this command was assured by the words of Genesis 2:16,17:

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 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 die.

Here we see how God set up the testing arena. A tree was included in the garden from which he was not to eat. This is where man and Satan met to determine who was to be Lord of creation. As we continue our study, we shall see how this battle affected both heaven and earth. But at this point in our discussion we see clearly that the phrase "subdue it" of Genesis 1:28 gives no aid or comfort to those who might believe there was death in creation before Adam's fall. And the understanding of this key phrase opens up a door to much other significant truth that relates to a historical Adam.

But before we develop this thought further, let us address ourselves to another question which also suggests the possibility of death in the creation before the fall of Adam. If the angel, Lucifer, fell into sin and had access to this earth, could not his sin also have brought death or decay in some measure to the universe? Let us return to Eden to answer this question. Let us attempt to determine the timetable of Lucifer's fall into sin.

When Did Satan Fall?

In I John 3:8 we read, 'the devil has sinned from the beginning.' Was this the beginning of Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created?" Did it occur before the six days of creation? Then Satan must have been created a sinful being, or his rebellion must have been so close in time to the time specified in Genesis 1:1 that to all intents and purposes it must have been almost simultaneous with the 'beginning' of Genesis 1:1. But other Biblical evidence points to a time when Satan or the angel Lucifer did walk in perfection. This is suggested by the name given to him in Isaiah 14:12, as well as the statement concerning him in this same passage.

How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low.

This thought, of sin in the world of angels coming some time after their creation, is also suggested by such Biblical statements as that found in II Peter 2:4:

For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgment.

Perhaps a clue to the timing of the angel Lucifer's sin can be found in Mark 10:6. There we read:

But from the beginning of creation,
God made them male and female.

Note that this verse also speaks of beginning even as I John 3:8 spoke of the beginning when Satan fell. But "beginning" in Mark 10:6 is identified with Adam and Eve. This would suggest

that possibly Satan did not sin at least until Adam and Eve were created.

This concept of Satan's rebellion occurring at about the time of Eve's sin is further strengthened when we witness God's curse upon him in Genesis 3:14,15:

The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 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.

In the case of man and creation it was at this moment in history that the ground was cursed (Gen. 3:17-19), and man was condemned to return to the dust. The parallel curse comes upon Satan. One could expect then that Satan's fall was also simultaneous with that of man's.

Incidentally, we sometimes think of the curse of Genesis 3:14 as being applicable to the animal which was the ancestor of the snake. The snake may well be the descendant of a serpent which was cursed as a result of its involuntary involvement with the sin of Satan. But the curse in its primary emphasis is on the serpent, the devil. Verse 15 has reference only to Satan, and there is no change in the object of God's statement between verse 14 and verse 15. Moreover, the Bible expressly calls Satan a serpent in a number of places, a most notable place of which is Revelation 12. Furthermore, in Isaiah 65:25, God speaks of the new heaven and new earth, and in this context he speaks of dust being the serpent's food. This can only be a fulfillment of the curse of Genesis 3:14.(3)

So the earth is cursed, man is cursed by death and travail in childbirth and Satan is cursed. Satan and mankind stand equally guilty before God. Upon both are pronounced the condemnation of God. Only man is given hope as God intimates victory for mankind over Satan, as he promises a Redeemer in Genesis 3:15. Significantly, it appears that the final judgment upon Satan is also simultaneous in time and parallel in character to that upon mankind. Both will be thrown in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10 and 15). Both are destroyed from this earth when Christ returns in judgment (Rev. 19:11-21). This parallel termination of man and Satan emphasizes the possibility of a simultaneous falling into sin.

We have seen thus far that for a number of reasons Satan's sin probably occurred simultaneously with that of man's. None of these reasons is in itself conclusive. But all are within the intent of Scripture. There is, however, one other rather impressive reason that points to Satan's initial sin occurring simultaneously with man's.

When we examine God's statement to Adam in Genesis 1:28, we see that he is to subdue the earth. We have determined that this must be understood as a mandate to Adam to conquer and destroy the

enemy, Satan, who would attempt to subjugate Adam. He was to expose and destroy Satan by his perfect obedience to God. But nothing is said to Adam by God relative to the question of redeeming a universe or heaven from the ravages of Satan's sin. We know as a fact that Satan's sin produced real distress in heaven for many of the angels rebelled with him. Moreover, as we have seen, his rebellion also produced a cursed earth and death in man and the lesser creatures. If Satan had rebelled much earlier than the time of the episode in the Garden of Eden, so that there already were results--death and decay--in the universe as well as rebellion in heaven, one surely could expect some provision for redemption of the earth and heaven. None, however, is suggested or intimated before the fall, in regards to Adam's mandate. His only job was to conquer Satan by his perfect and loyal obedience. Could this have been because Satan's fall was simultaneous?

When we look at the last Adam, Jesus Christ, however, we see immediately that He had a two-fold task. He must destroy Satan by His perfect obedience as part of His mandate. In this He paralleled the first Adam.

But the God-man Jesus must also destroy the work of Satan. He must redeem a cosmos that had become ruined and deranged because of the dominion of Satan. The havoc of Satan's rebellion not only resulted in a wrecked earth but also in a heaven that required renewing. This renewing was Christ's task as we see in Ephesians 1:9.

For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

This corresponds to the statement of II Peter 3:12,13--that the heavens as well as the earth are to be renovated, and new heavens and a new earth to be provided:

Waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire. But according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Adam was given no mandate relative to the work of Satan and, therefore, we must conclude heaven as well as earth were without the ravages of sin until this moment in history when the temptation took place. Therefore, Satan's fall must have been simultaneous with man's.

Creation Cursed

Now the whole picture of misery lies unfolded before us. Satan is cursed so that whereas in his pride he wanted to be King, he now is told that he is to be less than the least of the animals. He, who aspired to rule over man who was created in the image of God, is cursed to be less than the least of the creatures with the breath of life. The creation, too, was cursed. Because

Adam, who had been given dominion over the creation, was cursed, all that over which he was to reign was also cursed.

This is the significance of the words of Romans 8:19-23:

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption of sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The creation which had been given to Adam as a loyal, obedient, wonderful, living creation now had become rebellious,

and deranged with death as the evidence of this futility. The ground was cursed so that it brought forth thorns and thistles. It would no longer be obedient to King Adam who was to till it and keep it (Gen.2:15). Instead man must draw his living from this rebellious cursed earth by the sweat of his brow (Gen. 3:18,19).

Man was cursed. In the day he disobeyed he died. He died spiritually in that he was separated from God by his sin. He died physically as indicated by the decay that began in his body. The evidence of this death was the eventual return of his body to the dust. Even as his body decayed, the entire creation would be subject to decay and death. The instructions given to Adam in Genesis 1:28 were given before the entrance of sin into the creation with all of its horrible consequences. Adam and Eve as the first people in their beautiful world were given the guide lines for their kingship over it. But they disobeyed and, instead, were made subject to Satan.

It is very enlightening to read in the Bible God's mandate to Noah when he left the ark. Then the world, which had become too sinful to continue, had been destroyed; and God began again with Mr. and Mrs. Noah and their three sons and their wives. Now all the curses of Genesis 3 have been declared. The world is under the dominion of Satan as prince of the earth. God, however, again gives an outline of man's responsibilities in this sin stained world. He uses very parallel language to that given in the garden to Adam.

In Genesis 9:1,2 we read the mandate given to Noah:

'And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered.'

Note the similarities of Genesis 1:28,29:

And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.

Both Adam and Noah are blessed, both are commanded to be fruitful, to multiply and to fill the earth. But at this point the similarity comes to a crashing halt. Adam is told to subdue the earth and have dominion over all of its creatures. God is silent with reference to Noah's subduing the earth, or having dominion over its creatures. Instead, the beasts are to live in fear and dread of him. How clearly the Bible describes the change in creation in these verses. Noah cannot be told to subdue the earth because he is a slave of Satan. By Adam's sin, man has lost his claim to Lordship over this earth. Satan is rightly called the "prince of this earth," and the "prince of the air." He has enslaved man and robbed him of his kingship and authority over the creatures. Even though Satan has been cursed, he has become the ruler of man and creation. The beasts are not loyal, willing subjects to man as they were before the fall. Instead, they obey man only because of fear. They are slaves of slaves.

Creation Redeemed

This dark, dismal picture sets the stage for the coming of Jesus Christ. Already in Genesis 3:15 God promises that a Redeemer will come who will destroy Satan. This Redeemer, who is the seed of the woman, that is, he, too, is a man, will crush the head of the serpent. He will utterly enslave him and destroy him by his perfect obedience to God. He will do what Adam failed to do. By his perfect obedience to God he will claim this creation as his own possession. He will have mastery over it and reign over it as king. This is why Paul in Romans 5:14 calls Adam a type of Christ. This is why Jesus announced in Luke 4 at the beginning of his public ministry that he had come to set the prisoners free. They were to be set free from bondage and enslavement to Satan.

Satan fully realized Christ's threat to his kingdom. He attempted to kill the baby Jesus using Herod as his tool. He came to Jesus in the wilderness to tempt him. The language of Matthew 4:1 is very pertinent:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Christ must establish his claim to this earth by subduing the enemy Satan. He is following the footsteps of Adam. God had set the stage for Adam's test by the command that they were not to eat of the tree. If Jesus, too, succumbed to the temptations of Satan, the present ruler of the earth, he, also, would become his slave and the creation would be Satan's forever, or God would have to introduce an altogether different plan for its redemption.

Christ is the seed of Abraham. The seed of Abraham is also spiritual Israel, the body of Christ. Even as Israel was tested by God for 40 days while Moses was on Mt. Sinai, 40 years while they were in the wilderness, and 400 years during the period of the judges, so Christ was tested for 40 days. Adam had failed. Israel had failed again and again. Now Christ had come to do what Adam had failed to do. Now Christ had come to do what Israel under the law had failed to do. So he was driven into the wilderness to prove His obedience, His rightful claim on this creation which He created.

Did he fail? No. By his perfect obedience He won a resounding victory over the enemy. And try as he might throughout the years of Jesus' ministry, Satan was unable to break through this obedience. Satan's doom was sure. But would Christ be obedient even unto death? Jesus had said to Nicodemus, "For God so loved the world He gave his only begotten son." Christ's mandate was far more serious and complex than Adam's. Adam was to claim possession of a perfect world by his perfect obedience to God. Christ must not only claim possession of the world, but also must do what was necessary to make that world perfect again. The world of Adam needed no improvement. It was good. It was the ideal kingdom. All of it was loyal, obedient and loving in relationship to King Adam. The world that Christ had come to redeem was wrecked. It was cursed. It had been under the dominion of Satan for 11000 years.(4) Time after time God had had to visit it with judgment. At one time God had even destroyed the earth by the great Noahic Flood, because of the degradation into which it had fallen. The work cut out for Christ was indeed formidable. And because Christ was God He knew with awful certainty the awfulness of God's wrath that was to be poured out on this world as penalty for its rebellion and sin. Satan thought that crucifying Jesus was a tremendous solution to his problem. With Jesus dead, Satan's kingship was secure. He hadn't succeeded in causing Jesus to disobey God during the 40 days of temptation in the wilderness. And even though Satan and his demons recognized that judgment day was coming and that Jesus was involved in this ("Have you come to torment us before the time?" Matt. 8:29). Satan, who had introduced death into the world, believed death was the only answer to his problem with Jesus. Already in Genesis 3:15 it had been prophesied that Satan would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. Christ was the seed of the woman. Something dreadful was to happen to Jesus, in fulfillment of the prophesy that his heel would be bruised. Could this dreadful thing be the death of Jesus?

So Jesus is betrayed by Judas under the power of Satan. Will He go through this awful sacrifice in obedience to the will of the Father? "I do as the Father has commanded me" (John 14:31), was the desire of Jesus. And because of the sheer horror of the path He must walk, Jesus asks, is there another way? Could the cup be removed from Him? And then in perfect obedience He declares "not my will but thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

Jesus hangs on the cross. He has become sin for all who believe in Him. He is satisfying God's justice on behalf of all

who had or will place their trust in him. He endured the pain, the equivalent punishment of an eternity in Hell for all of these, and had not been destroyed by the very magnitude of the wrath of God.

When the penalty was paid, He had to prove that death also had been vanquished. Moreover, He must complete his identification with this world He had come to redeem. After declaring "It is finished" and commending His Spirit into the hands of His Father, He allowed His body to be buried. But His body did not decay (Acts 2:31). Death had been vanquished. Decay which came with death into the world as a product of sin and death had been complete and final on the cross.

Further proof of his victory over death was given in magnificent fashion by the empty tomb on that first Easter morning.

Christ had come to destroy the devil. Through his death he accomplished this.

Since, therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14).

He came to destroy the works of the devil.

He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8).

By Christ's perfect obedience Christ had subdued the earth. He had established his rightful claim as Lord of creation. No wonder we read in Hebrews 1:8:

But on the Son he says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of thy kingdom.

By his death, with its resurrection proof, He established that death no longer had any hold on men, if they believed on him. There was to be a resurrection for them, even as He arose from the dead. Thus, he destroyed the work of Satan, the most terrible evidence of which was decay and death.

At the beginning of this discussion it was indicated that, in addition to Genesis 1:28 where Adam is told to subdue the earth, there were twelve places where the Hebrew word for "subdue" is used. The Hebrew word is kabash. Ten of the verses were listed. Let us now look at the remaining two. They are:

He will again have compassion upon us, he will tread our iniquities under foot. Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19).

The Lord of hosts will protect them, and they will devour and tread down the slingers, and they will drink their blood like wine, and be full like a bowl, drenched like the corners of

the altar (Zech. 9:15).

Notice here that these prophetic verses used the word "kabash" as indicating on the one hand that the enemies, the slingers, were to be trod down, and on the other that our iniquities would be trod under foot. This was prophetic language describing the coming victory of Christ over sin and Satan.

Parallel language is easily found in the New Testament:

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church (Eph. 1:22).

But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet" (Heb. 1:13).

...putting everything in subjection under his feet (Heb. 2:8).

The subduing of the earth had truly been accomplished by Christ.

Christ Shall Have Dominion

Early in this chapter we saw how Adam before the fall was given dominion (radah) over the lesser creatures. We noted with amazement that this command or mandate to have dominion over these creatures was never repeated after the fall. Rather when we examine the use of radah in the Scriptures we see especially four usages in addition to that of Genesis I. In Leviticus radah relates to dominion of a master over a slave. In this it is parallel to the use of the word "subdue" (kabash) to indicate mastery as that of a master holding a slave in subjugation.

The second usage is that of the enemies of God ruling over the nations of the world or over the people of God (Neh. 9:28, Lev. 26:17, Isa. 14:6, Ezek. 29:15, Jer. 5:31, Ezek. 34:4). In this we are given symbolical or figurative language showing Satan's dominion over this world. Radah is the word that God uses in these passages because this world, which was to have continued under the dominion of man as King of this world, and as outlined in Genesis I, has instead come under the dominion of the enemies of God headed up by the prince of this world, Satan. This parallels the situation of Israel when they failed to destroy or "subdue" the enemy. They instead were brought into subjection by the enemy.

The third use of the radah is in those passages which speak either directly or figuratively to the dominion of Christ over this world (Isa. 41:2, Psalm 110:2, Ps. 72:8, I Kings 4:24). This is a result of Christ's victory over Satan and his rightful place as Lord by virtue of his redemptive work. The new Testament addresses itself to this dominion by Christ in such passages as I Peter 5:11; (5)

To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The fourth usage is that of God's people having dominion over the enemies of Christ (I Kings 5:16, I Kings 9:23, II Chron. 8:10,

Judges 5:13, Numbers 24:19, Ps. 49:14, Isa. 14:2, Ps. 68:27). This is surely prophetic language of the Christian believers ruling over Satan in Christ. This begins in this life when we are saved, and will find its ultimate fulfillment in the new heaven and new earth.

We thus see that the dominion of Genesis I as employed throughout the Bible is in perfect accord with the use of the word "subdue" (kabash) in the Holy Canon.

In summary we have seen that from every viewpoint the Bible emphasizes the truth that there was no death before the sin of Adam and Eve. We have seen that the mandate they received to subdue the earth was a command to perfect obedience in the face of the enemy Satan. Thus man would establish his legitimate right to Lordship over this creation. The angel, Lucifer, Satan, saw in this creation the possibility of satisfying his own desires.

But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death (Jas. 1:14,15).

So Lucifer, who became Satan, subdued man and simultaneously he, the earth, and man were cursed. All were judged by God and were made subject to His wrath. By conquest Satan had become prince of this earth.

Adam's task was relatively limited. The world in which he lived was good and sinless. Death and decay were non-existent anywhere in the entire world.

Christ, the last Adam, came to do what the first Adam did not do. But Christ's task was infinitely greater than Adam's. He must not only vanquish Satan, but must also redeem the cosmos from the curse of God, and from the results of Satan's dominion. Truly, the Bible teaches that there was no curse in any sense upon the world before Adam's fall.

Many questions have been raised by this chapter. If Satan was cursed in the garden, why was he permitted in the presence of God as we read in Job? And if Christ destroyed Satan and his works by his atonement, why is Satan still operating in the world? And how does all of this help us in our quest for an answer to the question of the believers task today?

We shall continue in our study to look at these questions.

(Notes to numbered passages in Chapter 2)

(1) In the KJV the word "fill" of this phrase is translated 'replenish.' To replenish something signified that it once was full or had plenty; it became empty, and now must be filled again. The Hebrew word is male. It is translated seven times in the KJV as replenish or to be replenished. But is it translated at least 175 times as fill, or full or fulfill. There is no basis in the text or the context of the entire Bible that insists that the

translation of male must be "replenish" in Gen. 1:28. In fact, the later translations, (RSV, ASV, etc.) have changed this usage in this text to "fill." This agrees with the teaching of the entire Bible.

(2) See Chapter 4 of this book for a more complete analysis of this phrase.

(3) An interesting parallel exists between man and Satan in this regard. Man returns to the dust as a result of the curse upon him. Satan ultimately is to have dust for food which is to suggest he is in the dust or is of the same level with the dust.

(4) For an analysis of the history of man established by biblical reckoning see "The Biblical Calendar of History" by Harold Camping in Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation, Sept. 1970, p. 102.

(5) See also I Peter 4:11, Jude 25, Rev. 1:6.

CHAPTER 3

MAN'S TASK

We shall now continue in our study to answer some of the questions raised and left unanswered in the previous chapter. As we discover solutions to these questions we shall also get closer to the end of our search for the Biblical answer to the question of man's task in the world today.

God's Victory Timetable

The first question we shall try to answer is: If Christ had destroyed Satan and his works by His perfect obedience, why does Satan still continue to bind the hearts of men throughout the New Testament period? Why is death and decay still as prevalent as ever? Where is the evidence of the victory on the cross?

The fact is, of course, that while Christ's work as Redeemer, as the last Adam, has been completed, the time for the full impact of the victory upon this sinful world and upon Satan has not as yet arrived. That God has a timetable in dealing with Satan is suggested in the Old Testament. In Genesis 3:14 we read:

The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals! Upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life."

But while the physical snake moves around on its belly, Satan, the real object of this curse, took over this world as its prince. He actually appeared to lose almost none of the prerogatives he had had before the fall. The book of Job gives startling evidence of his continued freedom to be in heaven. Thus, while the curse was certain and sure, the final effects of it were not to appear until some future date.

Similarly, while Christ was completely victorious over Satan, the final evidence of this victory is for the future. This is intimated in I Corinthians 15:24-27:

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. "For God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when he says, "All things are put in subjection under him," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things under him.

It is even more clearly stated in Hebrews 10:12,13:

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet.

And in Hebrews 2:5-9 we see that the subjection is not to be complete in this world:

For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou carest for him? Thou didst make him for a little while lower than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet."

Now in putting everything in subjection to man, he left nothing outside his control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

These verses are quoted from Psalm 8:4-8. While the Hebrew word *radah* is never used outside of Genesis 1 to describe man's rule over the creatures, in Psalm 8:4-8 the Bible does use the Hebrew word *mashal* to describe such a rule. There God declares, "Thou madest him to have dominion (*mashal*) over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen," etc.

While this appears to be a statement relating to the condition of man today, a commentary found in the Bible on these verses indicates otherwise. That commentary is Hebrews 2:5-9, where these verses are quoted to show that it is in the world to come that this condition will apply. The whole world is brought into subjection to Christ (Ephesians 1:22) because of Christ's work on the cross. But "we see not yet all things under Him" (Hebrews 2:8). This will be in the world to come.

Moreover, the man that is in view in Psalm 8 is not mankind. It is not the believers either. Hebrews 2 clearly shows that the man God is speaking of in Psalm 8 is Jesus Himself, who was made a little lower than the angels. By this magnificent victory on the cross He brought everything into subjection. This subjection includes Christ's victory over Satan.

It is in the world to come, the new heaven and new earth, that the full destruction of Satan will be realized. At judgment day Satan and all who are his followers, both demons and men, will be cast into the lake of fire. Then, too, death itself together with the place of the dead, Hades, will also be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14). In other words, at judgment day the full consequence of Christ's victory on the cross will be realized. At that time the full impact of the curse of Genesis 3:14 will be seen.

Note the language of Isaiah 65 which indicates the conditions that will exist in the new heaven and new earth (Isaiah 65:17). In verse 25 we read:

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

Note that the statement speaks of conditions similar to those that existed in the garden of Eden. There is peace. The animals are again herbivorous. Note the serpent. The curse of Genesis 3:14 has been brought to full fruition. His humiliation is complete. In Hell he is the lowest of the creatures. One is reminded of the language of Isaiah 14 which speaks of the end of the king of Babylon. I believe there is adequate Biblical evidence to show that the king of Babylon is presented here as a type of Satan. Note:

But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit. Those who see you will stare at you, and ponder over you; is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home? All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb, but you are cast out, away from your sepulchre, like a loathed untimely birth, clothed with the slain, those pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the Pit, like a dead body trodden under foot. You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have slain your people. May the descendants of evildoers nevermore be named. (Isaiah 14:15-20)

The passages quoted in Isaiah 65 and Isaiah 14 are obviously word pictures of conditions that will exist beyond judgment day. How much we can understand them literally is not the burden of this discussion. The picture of the final punishment of Satan is easily seen.

Why Does God Delay?

Why, we might ask, did God delay carrying out his curse on Satan? Why has He delayed for almost 2000 years throwing Satan into the lake of fire? Some light is shed on this question in Ephesians 3:8-11:

To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this

grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The delay of God, in bringing into effect the final destruction of Satan and his works, is necessary to permit the development of the church. God has in view a vast throng of people who were chosen from eternity to be his sons. Until all of them have been born of Christ, the church will not have come to full fruition.

It is through this church that Christ's wisdom is being made known to angels and demons, to all of the inhabitants of heavenly places.

The Cross and Satan

However, while Satan's destruction is destined for judgment day, the impact of Christ's victory on the cross was experienced by Satan at the time of the cross.

Because Christ was entirely victorious over Satan by his death and resurrection He was enabled to do with Satan as He willed. His mastery over Satan is emphasized by the statement that He has the keys of Death and Hades. In other words, Christ is the complete master of Satan as evidenced by His mastery over the works (Death and Hades) of Satan.

I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades (Rev. 1:18).

He has become the supreme master of the earth, even though Satan is permitted to continue for the time being as prince of the earth.

And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth (Rev. 1:5).

Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (John 12:31,32).

He has removed the authority and power of Satan over this creation, which Satan had obtained by virtue of his victory over Adam. During the Old Testament this authority and power of Satan was not total. It was limited by God because God has never relinquished His care, love and concern for this universe he created. God continued to reign as Creator. Moreover, it was limited because the Lordship as Jesus Christ as Redeemer King was anticipated. Thus, while Satan is called by God the prince of this world, and the ravages of Satan's ruling are seen on every hand, we read in Psalm 24:1:

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.

And,

For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine (Ps. 50:10,11).

This same theme is emphasized in the New Testament where we read in I Corinthians 10:26:

For the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.

At the cross, however, the limitations placed upon Satan became more pronounced. We read in Colossians 2:14,15:

Having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him.

The victory over Satan which was anticipated in the Old Testament became a reality at the cross. Because of this reality Satan began to experience increasing difficulty in maintaining his dominion over man.

He was cast out of heaven so that he can no longer accuse believers before God as he had done with Job.

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the

whole world--he was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power of the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony for they loved not their lives even unto death (Rev. 12:7-11).

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Christ bound Satan so that he can no longer deceive the nations. By this binding the Holy Spirit is enabled to plunder the house of Satan. In other words, men from every nation who are under bondage to Satan now can be made free from the shackles of Satan. Matthew 12:18,29 speaks of this binding:

But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a

strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Much New Testament language is employed to indicate the freedom that has come to men because of Christ's victory over Satan. A few verses will serve to illustrate this:

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to beings that by nature are no gods (Gal. 4:8).

And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:1,2).

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18).

The startling evidence that something happened to Satan at the cross can be seen at Pentecost. For more than three years Jesus, the master teacher, had been teaching and showing the power of God. For example, His home environment of Nazareth and Capernaum is cited for its unbelief. The converts were few and far between. While crowds followed him, the conversions that are recorded are in the main those of isolated individuals.

But then came the cross. And 50 days later Pentecost. Peter preaches one sermon and a whole multitude are saved from every nation. Just think of it, 3000 were saved that one afternoon. Surely something had happened to Satan's power over man.

And as we look at this dramatic proof of the fact that Satan's house is being plundered following the victory on the cross, we might ask the question, "what then is the mandate, the responsibility of the Christian in this present world?" Isn't he to subdue this world for the glory of Christ? Isn't he to probe the scientific mysteries of the world to His glory? Isn't he to master the animals and all living creatures so that they are again loyal subjects to him as they were before the fall? Isn't he to build cities and rule people's to God's praise?

In attempting to answer this question we might review what happened to man in Eden.

Sinless Man

When we first look at man in the Bible we see that he as well as the world is completely pleasing to God. After the six days of creation "God saw everything he had made, and behold, it was very good." It was without the ravages of sin and the decay and death that followed when sin entered the world. In every aspect of creation there was loyalty, obedience and felicity to God.

Man who was created in the image of God was given dominion

over this perfect and wonderful creation as God's vice-gerund. He was to rule over it, to care for it and maintain it in its pristine state of goodness. He was to multiply and fill this earth with his progeny. He was to be the head of a great people that would serve and glorify their creator in perfect obedience to Him. They were to live in a perfectly harmonious relationship to God the Lord of creation. They would walk as a holy race in personal fellowship to God. The lesser creatures, the animals, the fish, the birds together with the ground itself were to exist in a harmonious relationship to their lord and master, man. And as man ruled over them they too, would glorify God in their loyalty and service to man. All creation, both animate and inanimate, praised God as Lord and Creator.

Sinless Man Falls

But one slight condition was imposed upon our first parents Adam and Eve. They, as the head of mankind, must claim it by their perfect obedience to God. To give them opportunity to claim their right to be king of this creation God set up the testing program. He put a tree in the garden called the tree of good and evil and told Adam and Eve they were not to eat of it. This tree, together with this command, provided the arena where Adam would claim his lordship as comprehended in the command to subdue the earth.

The angel Lucifer, Satan, was the enemy who also wanted to assert his lordship over the earth. We saw that Adam failed the test. Satan became prince of the earth and man became his slave. The creation was cursed as was Satan.

What was man's new relationship to the world? What was his new relationship to God after the fall? By virtue of his obedience to Satan he had repudiated his own lordship over creation. He, in fact, became a slave of Satan. Creation itself was subjected to the bondage of decay in parallel relationship to man's enslavement.

Man, The Slave Of Satan

Because man had become a slave of Satan he no longer wanted to please God. Instead he transferred his affection, his loyalty, his allegiance to Satan. The evidence of this transfer was in his lack of desire to please God and his all consuming desire to please himself. He, himself, was now the only King who must be served.

He was under God's condemnation because God's perfect justice required punishment as a penalty for such a rebellion. He lost his fellowship and his communication with God. His sin-darkened mind and being provided the avenue through which Satan could assert his mastery over man.

Because he had repudiated his lordship over creation, that lordship was actually taken from him. Never again was he told to

have dominion over the creatures as Adam was given dominion before the fall (Gen. 1:26 and 28). Rather the earth and the creatures rebelled against man as man had rebelled against God. The earth instead of obediently serving man would bring forth thorns and thistles. Earthquakes, tornadoes, the raging seas, forest fires, drought, famine, floods, epidemics, insect infestations, wild animals, and poisonous reptiles are surely all manifestations of a rebellious creation over which man no longer had dominion.

The cosmos would continue to praise God as creator (Ps. 19). Even the wrath of man would praise God (Ps. 76:10). God was still Lord of His creation. But man's position as His vice-gerent had been removed because man had surrendered to Satan. The perfect order established at creation had been destroyed. Instead of being King, man had become a slave.

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