

(Genesis) 6 - Man in His Probation

by S. Lewis Johnson

The probation of Adam in the Garden of Eden was a test of his obedience to God, and the nature of sin is unbelief, which leads to rebellion against God's word and law.

Duration: 47:58

Scripture: Genesis 2:8-17

Topics: "Probation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of a river flowing out of Eden to water the garden, which is described in the Book of Genesis. He suggests that this river becoming four streams may be a reference to the Milky Way, based on an interpretation by an Old Testament interpreter. The preacher speculates that God may have created a vast system of water below the earth's surface, which forced the water up like an artesian well, resulting in the river flowing out of the Garden of Eden. The sermon also emphasizes the importance of man's probation and his responsibility to obey God's command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Transcript

The scripture reading for today is again in Genesis chapter 2, and we're reading verses 8 through 17, which is the account of the probation of Adam. And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east in Eden, and there he placed the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food.

The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is Pishon.

It flows around the whole land of Havilah where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good. The delium and the onyx stone are there.

And the name of the second river is Gihon. It flows around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Tigris.

It flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

And the Lord God commanded the man saying, From any tree of the garden you may freely eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat. For in the day that you eat from it, you shall surely die.

May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Our subject for this morning is man in his probation. In our studies in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, and in the earlier parts of this second chapter, we have learned that man was created in the image of God, implying that he possessed a rational nature so as to know God, a moral nature enabling him to enjoy the righteousness and holiness of the truth, as the apostle Paul puts it in Ephesians chapter 4, and further that he possesses a regal office giving him authority over the creation.

He was told that he was to fill the earth and subdue it and to rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth. These things we know not by human speculation but by divine revelation. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, science is a good piece of furniture for a man to have in an upper chamber provided he has common sense on the ground floor.

Well I think it is really much better than that to have divine revelation in the basement where the foundations are because then we have that which is certain and true. The account of man's probation raises a number of very interesting questions. For example, what is the purpose of the probation? What is the nature of sin as set forth in the probation? What is the reward of the probationary time of Adam? And a further question, which is a rather intriguing one, is how is it possible for a man whose inclinations were to holiness by the creation of God, concerning whom God has pronounced the value judgment very good, how is it possible for such a person to begin a sinful inclination in his own being? How is it possible for a person created holy? For he must have been created holy, not innocent, since he had a will.

And a will that is not directed toward an object is not a will. And so almost all of the orthodox theologians have contended that man was created in holiness. How is it possible for a holy man to begin a sinful and unholy inclination? Now that is a question that it is very difficult for us to answer.

And I will not attempt to give you an answer in this message, but the question is raised here and it carries over into the discussion in the next chapter of The Fall of Man. One last rather interesting question is can we call this probation a covenant of work? Now theologians in the Reformed perspective have spoken of this for centuries as a covenant of work. Is it possible for us to call this a covenant of work? Was life really promised in the probation to which Adam was subjected? And perhaps the most important question, if not the most exciting, was Adam a representative man? Did Adam act for his posterity? The Westminster Confession of Faith has no doubt about that.

In fact, it reads, the first covenant with man was a covenant of work, wherein life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity upon condition of perfect and personal obedience. So the Westminster Confession of Faith calls this a covenant of work. One of the older Reformed theologians, Paramon Vipsius, has said concerning this, The covenant of works is the agreement between God and Adam created in God's image to be the head and prince of the whole human race.

I like that expression, the head and prince of the whole human race, by which God was promising him eternal life and felicity should he obey all his precepts most perfectly, adding the threat of death should he sin even in the least detail, while Adam was accepting this condition. Well these are some of the questions that come before us as we turn now to the probation of Adam. From the eighth verse, and these two verses which begin with verse eight present a picture of the garden and the trees of the garden, we learn

that Adam was created outside of the garden.

We read, And the Lord God planted the garden toward the east in Eden, and there he placed the man whom he had formed. So we would assume from this that Adam had been created and was in existence somewhere to the west of Eden, and the garden that was within Eden. Now how he placed him there of course is not known, but you certainly can begin by noting that the garden into which Adam was placed after his creation was a beautiful home.

One of the commentators has said that the garden of Eden was a model of parental care. The fledgling is sheltered but not smothered. On all sides discoveries and encounters await him to draw out of him powers of discernment and choice, and there is ample nourishment for his aesthetic, physical, and spiritual appetite.

Further, there is a man's work before him for body and mind. I think that the first impression that Adam must have obtained when he was placed in the garden of Eden was that my God is certainly a God of loving care and consideration for me. Now the preparation of the garden itself is described in the might verse, and out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food.

So the trees were lovely. Not only were they lovely, they were nourishing. Now the fact that the trees were lovely would indicate it was not Texas.

We didn't have to know from the Bible that it was in the east. But the trees were lovely and they were nourishing. Now that is a rather interesting thing because evidently the trees contained such properties that they prevented Adam and Eve from aging.

A very active field in modern research is the field of gerontology, or the field of the study of aging. And one of the things that our scientists today have to admit is that with all of the scientific understanding that they have, they do not understand the aging process. But evidently God gave to these trees, or the garden itself in all of its beauty and nourishment, the capacity for giving to man the chemical systems or the chemicals that prevented aging.

Wouldn't it be a striking discovery to be able to discover the things that characterize the chemical systems of the trees of the Garden of Eden? Gerontology would learn a great deal from the book of Genesis if just a few more details were given to us. Now I think from reading the book of Genesis chapter 2 that we are to think of these trees as being actual trees. Now it's a rather striking thing to me that in the book of Revelation, near the end of the book of Revelation, we have a kind of recreation of paradise, a kind of recreation of Eden in the new heavens and the new earth.

And in the second verse of the 22nd chapter of the book of Revelation we read, And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, a kind of fruit of the month's club for eternity, yielding its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. So evidently some of the powers that were contained in the early trees of the Garden of Eden are restored in the new heavens and the new earth so that those who are there are not subject to the aging process. So the fountain of youth was located in the Garden of Eden and we have not discovered its scent.

Now the most interesting thing about the garden of course is the two trees that were in the midst of the garden, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the absence of any specific

information otherwise, I think we are to understand these trees as actual trees. But they evidently are sacramental or symbolical in their significance.

That is, they represent something. They represent the fact that the true means of fellowship is with the Lord. And the tree of life suggests the fact that the knowledge of God is something that, and also man's sufficiency lies outside of himself.

True life is outside of a man, not inside of a man. The expression the tree of life becomes a symbolical expression and through the Old Testament we have it a number of times. It is symbolical of wisdom, it's symbolical of righteousness, it's symbolical of the realization of hope, it's symbolical of temperance and speech.

So that the tree of life then is a kind of sacramental tree. It was the outward means of fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden. And also, as we shall suggest, the means by which man was to attain to eternal life through the partaking of the fruit of that tree.

But now the second tree is, if anything, more interesting. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This also was a symbolical tree.

And incidentally, in the light of the kind of word that is used and translated knowledge, it's probably a reference to experiential kind of knowledge. In other words, it too is a vehicle of grace. Obedience to the command of God would bring knowledge that was analogous to God's knowledge.

We read in chapter 3 and verse 22, After the fall of man, then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. The unfortunate thing about man is that of course he knew the good and was unable to do it. And he knew the evil and couldn't help but do that.

But it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And obedience would bring a knowledge that was analogous to God's. It would be awareness of evil with victory over it.

And evidently the ideal was for man to survive the test of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And then having survived his probation successfully, he would be led by God to the tree of life. He would partake of the tree of life, attain the justification and eternal life, and live forever.

That is suggested for us not only by the placing of the two trees in the center of the garden, but also by the words that are later expressed concerning it. It's rather interesting to read the interpretation that has been placed upon the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Some of the commentators, such as Conrad, have suggested that it is designed to represent omniscience.

And that man is not to covet omniscience. To have the tree of the knowledge of good and evil suggests a complete knowledge to him, and consequently to partake is to covet omniscience. But it does not seem that that is really a true interpretation, because in chapter 3 verse 22 it says that man has now attained to a knowledge analogous to God.

He has come to know good and evil like we know it, in chapter 3 verse 22. So I'm afraid that Professor Conrad's interpretation does not fit the context of the chapter. It has often been suggested as a reference to sexual awakening, and that the partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a reference to the sex act.

It has also been referred to a rival immortality to that of the tree of life. But all of these interpretations are contrary to the context in one form or another. The simplest interpretation is the best, as is often the case.

The trees were symbolical, they were sacramental, they were means by which Adam and Eve were to be taught certain things. Some of the things that they were to be taught have been suggested by one of the old commentators. He has said that it is usually called probative, that is the test that was given to Adam, because God wished thereby to prove man whether he loved God perfectly and more than all creatures, that was one of the reasons for the test, whether he abstained from earthly delights in order to delight in God alone, whether he would subject his own dominion to that of God, whether he would stay good or turn bad, seems rather simple, and it was also given that by sinning Adam might himself recognize the evil into which he hurled himself and the good from which he fell away.

Now having made that simple reference to the trees in the next few verses, Moses describes the garden and the rivers, explaining the fruitfulness of the Garden of Eden. One might ask the question, if there has been no rain, how is it possible for us to have a beautiful and fruitful garden? And so the next verses explain this. Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden.

Very unusual for a large stream to flow out and become four streams. Gunkel, incidentally, an Old Testament interpreter, said this is a reference to the Milky Way. Where he got that interpretation, it's difficult to find.

But this particular thing, this river, becomes four streams, and so I would imagine that the primeval water system was something like this. Deep down in the subterranean parts of the earth, God, in his creative work, perhaps on the third day, had arranged that there should be a vast system of water below, and as a result of the things that had happened in that creation, the water pressure forced the water up, and like a kind of artesian well, the water flowed out of the Garden of Eden and came into four branches, described here in the book of Genesis. Now it was not the kind of pressure that we have today in underground streams, because there was no rainfall, and so it must have been something that was produced by fire.

And as a result of that, this great river flowed out of the Garden of Eden, and the four streams are described. Now we do not know, of course, the names of the two other than the Tigris and Euphrates, and it's very doubtful that we really know the location of these rivers. We know where the Tigris and the Euphrates are today, but we do not really know the location of the Garden of Eden because of the disasters that have taken place and, of course, especially the floods.

So probably the whole area has been rearranged sufficiently so that we do not know the place of the Garden of Eden. Now we come to the important part of our study, and what was summarily stated in verse 8 is now amplified in verses 15 through 17, and you can see from this that everything up to this point is designed to set the stage for the probation or the test of Adam. We read in verse 15, Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

I suggest to you that Eve had not yet been formed at this point, because then Eve was given, with Adam, a fuller commission. She knew about the commission to subdue the earth. She knew also about the condition of verses 16 and 17, but evidently she was formed later.

And so the man was put in the Garden of Eden, and it is said that he was to cultivate it and keep it. So his state was not to be that of indolence, laziness. God's work ethic goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden, and evidently was designed to preserve the ecology of the garden.

In other words, if Adam did not cultivate and keep the garden, it would quickly grow into a disordered garden, and so Adam was told that he was to, literally the Hebrew text says, to serve and to keep watch over the garden. Not because there were some alien forces, but simply to order the garden. So he was to cultivate it, and he was to keep watch over it.

And then the terms of probation are set forth. And we read in verse 16 and 17 of those terms. Now one of these trees, the tree of life, and one of these trees was the tree of life, the other was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

And the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was to train the spirit of man through obedience, and the other was to transform his temporal earthly life into an eternal life. Now the positive aspect of the probation is stated in verse 16. From any tree of the garden you may freely eat.

What a magnificent statement and what a magnificent fact to remember in connection with the temptation of Adam. You could hardly imagine a fairer test than this. The maximum is allowed, the minimum is forbidden.

From any tree of the garden you may freely eat. Only one injunction, not many. He doesn't even say, now Adam, I want to give you a principle, and I want you to follow this principle.

He doesn't say I have a policy or anything else. It is simply a bare word to God Adam. And the answer is a simple yes or a simple no.

Nothing else. He should be motivated by a simple naked kind of filial loyalty to God and respond accordingly. So it was a beautiful test in the simplicity of it.

No confusion whatsoever. It was a test that one could not say was unfair. Simple and complete and it touches, of course, the major point.

And because it was arranged in circumstances that made it easy not to commit, it becomes a beautiful test and probation for man. Now negatively some significant things are added. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.

Now here the future of the whole race hangs on one issue. And that one issue is belief in the word of God. Now I want to stress that because I think this is of the most important significance.

Belief of the word of God. What is the average man's idea of sin? Well the average man's idea of sin is immorality. He thinks of adultery.

He thinks of uncleanness, lasciviousness. He thinks also of other kinds of sin which are manifestations of a nature within contrary to the nature of God. He thinks of all of those specific outbursts of sin.

And of course if he can preserve himself from these things he tends to have the idea that he's not really a sinner at all. But did you notice there is nothing immoral about eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in itself? As a matter of fact it was probably a very beautiful tree. The immorality of it did not exist in the eating of the tree.

It existed in something else. Well someone might say, well it was really Adam's rebellion against the will of God that is the essence of sin. After all he acted autonomously.

And of course that is true. It was contempt of authority for him to partake of that tree. But I ask you now a question.

What was it that made Adam or led Adam to partake of the tree? Rebellion? All right, what was it that led Adam to rebel? It's really very simple. Unbelief. He really didn't believe the word of God.

When God said in the day you eat thereof you shall surely die, Adam followed the advice of the tempter. He said you shall not die. God said you shall die, the tempter said you shall not die, and Adam believed the tempter, or at least the sentiment of the tempter, and disbelieved God.

In other words the essence of human sin is not immorality. The essence of human sin is not rebellion. The essence of human sin is unbelief.

Men commit adultery because they do not believe the word of God. They do not believe the word of God, therefore they rebel against the word of God, and that issues in the immorality. The issue is unbelief.

The nature, the very essence of sin from the standpoint of the man is unbelief. From the standpoint of God and his law it is lawlessness. Breaking up the law of God.

Now the Lord Jesus in the 16th chapter of the Gospel of John, in his words concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit and the work that he would do, has a statement that bears upon this question. He says I tell you the truth, in John chapter 16 and verse 7, it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away the helper shall not come to you, but if I go I will send him to you, and he when he comes will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. Now notice this ninth verse, concerning sin because they do not believe in me.

In other words, the work that the Holy Spirit will do will be to convince the world of sin because the world does not believe in Jesus Christ. That's the essence of sin, unbelief. Now it is very difficult for men to grasp this because they tend to think of sin in these outbreaks of immorality such as we've been talking about.

It's very difficult for us to realize that it is the basic attitude of a person to God that is the most significant aspect of his relationship to God. Now Martin Luther was a man who was full of life and vigor and he also made a lot of statements that he probably would have revised if he had known that his table sayings were going to be published. But some of them that were published occasionally appeared to be bordering on blasphemy.

He said once the curse of a godless man can sound more pleasant in God's ears than the hallelujah of the pious. Now on the surface that remark borders on blasphemy. But if you think about it a little bit I think you will see that Luther has hit upon something that is important.

Take the man who has a form of godliness but who denies the power of God. When that man utters a pass hallelujah it's a raucous screech in the ears of God. Because he has put by his hypocrisy he has put upon his face the attitude of the man of truth and he has uttered something that is totally contrary to the man within.

What did the Lord Jesus say about this kind of thing? He spoke about the preachers and the theologians and he said remember or beware of the scribes which desire to walk in long robes and love greetings in the markets and the highest seats in the synagogues and the chief places at feasts which devour widows'

houses and for a show make long prayers. The same shall receive greater damnation. Now you can see that a hallelujah from the lips of these pious hypocrites was one that was hateful to God.

In the Old Testament and the book of Isaiah he speaks about those who tread his courts the priests and the offering of the sacrifices which the word of God has commanded. But he speaks about how he hates their sacrifices and their solemn feasts. It's not that he does not accept their sacrifices and he does not pay any attention to them he hates them.

He despises the man who puts on a show of spirituality but whose heart is not related to the Lord at all in an attitude of faith. Now Luther was not saying that God loves the godless curse. He was simply saying that he hates that less than he hates this other thing.

The pious hypocritical hallelujahs of the people who sit in the pew. What does this mean? Well it means when you get down upon your knees and you call upon God and there is no real relationship to the Lord in your heart. It's like one of these pious hypocritical hallelujahs and that God hates it.

It means that when we offer prayers to the Lord if they are not in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ with a recognition of what we are before God and what we are by virtue of what he has done. And if they are not uttered out of a faith in him he hates that kind of petition. Men may say what a religious man.

What a godly man. But God hates it. When you sit down at your dinner table and you offer thanks for the food on the table and it is not truly offered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not mean simply using the phrase but I mean it is not offered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ recognizing the truth of the Christian religion. God doesn't hear that prayer. As a matter of fact he hates it.

It means that all of the prayers of the lodges are prayers that God does not answer. Because they are not offered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and out of the truth of the Christian religion. He hates them.

Luther was right. You could have put it a little better than Luther put it no doubt. You could have said the curse of the godless man can be less offensive to the ears of God than the hallelujahs of the religious man.

But he was on to something good and it was that there has to be a relationship of the heart to God and the truth of the word of God before he hears men's prayers at all. You see it comes down ultimately to this question of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith in the revelation of God.

So Adam you can eat of all of the trees of the garden but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat of that and we'll test, we'll test your reliance upon the word of God by that. Well you can see from this that the temptation then or the probation is a probation which has to do with the authority of the word of God. The alternatives in the probation are life and death.

It's clear that death is involved but the fact of the tree of life being in the center by the side of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil suggests very strongly that if Adam had survived the test then he could partake of the tree of life and live forever as is stated in the third chapter. Was the test a covenant of works? Well what are the elements of a covenant? Well a covenant is an arrangement between two parties. Sometimes it's conditional sometimes it's unconditional but nevertheless it is an arrangement between two parties.

Of course was this an arrangement between two parties? It would seem to be. Covenants ordinarily have a condition particularly a conditional covenant such as this. They will have a condition.

There is a condition expressed here. Ordinarily covenants have penalties and they also have promises. They have stipulations of certain rewards and stipulations of certain prohibitions.

Well that's exactly what we have in this arrangement in the Garden of Eden. I gather then that this was a covenant and we may call it the covenant of works. We may want to call it some other name.

The covenant of nature it has been suggested as a possible name or the Edenic covenant. But whatever we call it it is evidently a covenant. The Westminster Confession of Faith is correct.

It is a covenant. It is a covenant which ultimately was to lead through successful response on the part of Adam to an everlasting holiness which is better than a temporary holiness. It was to lead to an immutable perfection which is better than a mutable perfection.

And it was ultimately to lead to a heaven in the presence of God rather than simply life in the paradise of Eden. So we'll call it the covenant of works. It was a conditional covenant.

God instituted it. It came from God. But Adam evidently accepted its provisions and it rested upon the issue of his obedience to the word of God.

So we'll call it a covenant of works and be satisfied with the name. Now there is something else that is even more significant. And I think the most important thing for us to get, you can forget everything else that I've said if you get this.

Was Adam a representative man? Is it true that Adam stood for others? Was he a covenant head of the race? And did the race stand their probation in Adam? When Adam stood the probation, did he stand it for himself and for his seed? In other words, is Adam a representative man? While the things that result from Genesis confirm overwhelmingly that he was a representative man. Now of course in the New Testament we read in Adam, men die. In Christ, all shall be made alive.

And we could learn from that that Adam was a representative man. He was a public figure. That is, he stood not simply as a private individual, but he stood as a public man.

But the evidence of the Bible is overwhelming. Because when Adam failed, his whole race died in him. Not only did Adam die, but all of his offspring died.

And down through the pages of the book of Genesis and down through history, there has rung out that little expression which occurs so often in Genesis, and he died. Only once or twice is any change in that expression countenance. In the case of Enoch, yes.

Elijah, yes. Otherwise, it's appointed unto men once to die, and after this, the judgment. Adam is a representative man, and in Adam, the whole race stood its test, its probation, and failed.

And that little expression, and he died, and he died, and he died, is a reminder of the fact that we have disobeyed the word of God. We have not believed God, and we have believed Satan's lie. You shall not surely die.

Now, in the United States of America, we were taught these things 200 years ago. You notice I say we. Because we do spend together.

We were taught these things in New England in colonial days. When children learned the letters of the alphabet, they learned them theologically. Can you imagine the kind of uproar we would have today if the teacher in one of our schools should say, now today, children, we're going to learn the alphabet.

And here is the help that will enable you to learn the letters of the alphabet. The first letter is A. And this is what you are to remember. In Adam's fall, we sinned all.

Now let's say it, children. In Adam's fall, we sinned all. In Adam's fall, we sinned all.

That's A. And then all the way down the list, X. This is what they learned. Xerxes the Great did die. And so must you and I. That's what they learned.

That's why we produced some great men. They were knowledgeable in the word of God, and they were taught the great principles that pertain to every one of us from the word of God. Well, I know that someone's going to say, well, if that's true, if Adam stood my fall for me and he failed, then that's unfair.

Now let me ask you a question. Suppose Adam had succeeded. Would that have been unfair? No, you wouldn't have thought anything about that, would you? You would have said, why, if Adam had succeeded, there wouldn't be anyone who would go around saying, that's unfair, that's unfair, I ought to stand it for myself.

But the difference of result makes no difference in the nature of the principle. Was it unfair? No, it wasn't unfair. It was the most gracious kind of arrangement that we could have.

Because you see, if Adam does not stand as our representative head, and if we do not stand our test in him as our representative, then what are we going to do if we should fail? If every man stands upon his own ground only, when he fails, there's no hope. There's no hope. No representative savior to die for.

Every one. Take the angels. They sin.

Where's their redeemer? They have no redeemer. Would you like to stand on your own ground? You who object to God's arrangement, his great arrangement, his great and gracious arrangement, would you like to? I wouldn't. I wouldn't want to stand on my own.

I know if Adam failed, it's far more likely that I should fail than that Adam failed. Furthermore, Adam in the garden, no doubt, had an understanding of the fact that everything hinged upon his own actions. He knew that God had created men after their kind, and he knew that he was to have successes.

He was told be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth. He knew that he had contact with the animal creation as well as with the Lord. He was made of the dust of the earth.

He knew that when he would fail, his line after him would suffer the effects of it. And so he stood his test with some understanding of the weight of responsibility that rested upon him, which would not be true of an individual who stands it upon his own. So can you not see that this is a beautiful arrangement on the part of God whereby when man fails, there can be a substitute.

And so just as we stood our probation in Adam and we failed and we have come unto sin and condemnation, and the proof is that we die. All of us shall die. You shall die if our Lord does not come.

There shall one day be a funeral service for you. A preacher shall read the text of Scripture, give a message. Your body shall be placed in the grave.

Your friends shall know that you're gone physically. So we have failed our probation in our representative. But the great message of the word of God is that there is a second man, the last Adam.

If he had failed, there would be no other Adam. The last Adam who comes, who takes upon himself the burden of the guilt of his people. And who as their representative, bears their judgment.

So that we stood our probation in Adam, we fell and come unto guilt and condemnation. Now in our representative, he has taken our case upon himself, he has gone to the cross at Calvary, he has shed his precious blood, and our penalty has been paid in him. And because our penalty has been paid in him, paid, heaven has no further claim that it can possibly lodge against us.

That's why the doctrine of substitution demands. The doctrine of the death of Christ for his people. No further claim.

My representative, my divine arrangement, is the means of my restoration and the enjoyment of the forgiveness of sins and the assurance of life in the presence of God forever and ever. I shall be in the new Jerusalem. I shall partake of the leaves of the tree.

I shall enjoy partaking of the tree of life forever. You know, we are Texans, are we not? We know that when the father strikes oil, the children get rich. We have struck a gusher in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Adam all die, in Christ shall all be made alive. What a magnificent provision the Lord God has made. Only one possessed of infinite wisdom could devise the plan of salvation that he has devised, satisfying all the needs that man should have.

There is one tree of life ultimately. It is the tree of Calvary upon which the Lord Jesus died. If you're here this morning and you have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are in Adam.

Incidentally, in the Bible, all of the cases of representation are generic. A father stands for a child, a king stands for the subject. That's why God put us all in one great family.

It was all with this idea of representation in mind. You are in Adam. You stand under divine condemnation and judgment.

You are headed for a Christless eternity. If you are not taken out of Adam the first and placed in Adam the last by the grace of God, may God help you through the Holy Spirit to recognize your lost and desperate condition. May you not leave this auditorium and get out of this locale onto the danger of the highways and the perils of life here without settling the question of your relation to the Lord Jesus.

The representative man for his people. God the Holy Spirit has spoken to you and convinced you of your sin, your guilt, your condemnation. We urge you to flee to the cross of Christ and receive the full and free forgiveness offered to all men.

May God the Spirit bring you to Christ. Don't leave this auditorium not having made that decision. Let's stand for the benediction.

How grateful we are, Lord, for the gracious provision of a representative, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we do recognize, Lord, that there should be no hope for us had we stood individually. We thank thee for the arrangement that thou hast made.

We worship thee, we praise thee for the grace that was shown us for we needed it. And, O Father, do speak to the hearts of all outside of Christ in this auditorium or who hear these words. Bring them to the knowledge of the Son and to the forgiveness freely offered through him.

May grace and mercy and peace go with us. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12417.mp3>

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