

Deeper walk 3. 14/1/23

GOD's ETERNAL PLAN – Elizabeth Jordaen.

(This is only a very simplistic discussion of the glorious work of God. Please don't see it as a major theological doctrine.)

God has an eternal Plan that He purposed in His heart before He created the world (physical universe, earth, sun, moon and stars). To achieve the Plan all Three Persons of the Godhead (Father, Son and Spirit) strategized together. Before creation a specific creature from all of creation (both heaven and earth) was selected (predestined, chosen, foreknown), that would play a major role in the execution of His Plan. This chosen creature would bear the image and likeness of God Himself (both in body, soul and spirit). He would create a body, then a soul, and in a mysterious way unite this creature's spirit with Himself. This Plan was to bring the greatest display of God's glory in both heaven and on earth for all eternity.

- *The Plan was a mystery that would only be revealed at the right time (Rom.16:25)*
- *The mystery was hidden for ages in God who created all things (Eph.3:9)*

THE EXECUTION OF THE PLAN

First, God the Father set apart His Son, as the One's whose IMAGE would be skilfully crafted into this specially selected, predestined, chosen creature.

- *He (the Son, Jesus Christ) is THE IMAGE of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (Col.1:15)*
- *Father, You loved Me before the foundation of the world. (Joh.17:24)*
- *He was foreknown before the foundation of the world. (1Pet.1:20)*
- *God's mystery, which is Christ. (Col.2:2)*

SELECTING THE IMAGE BEARER

Then God set about selecting the creature that would bear His image and that would be united with His Son.

- *He (God the Father) chose us in Him (the Son) before the foundation of the world. (Eph.1:4)*
- *For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. (Rom.8:29)*
- *In Him (the Son) we have been predestined according to the purpose of Him (God the Father). (Eph.1:11)*

CREATING THE IMAGE BEARER

- *Then God said, "Let us make MAN in our image, after our likeness." (Gen.1:26)*
- *So God created MAN in his own image, in the image of God He created him; MALE and FEMALE he created them. (Gen.1:27)*
- *Then the LORD God formed the MAN of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (Gen.2:7)*

TWO MYSTERIOUS TREES

God formed the Garden of Eden as a home for mankind. The Garden had many kinds of fruit trees for humans to eat from. Included among them was the Tree of Life. The fruit of this Tree had a secret.

- *Anyone who ate of it would receive ETERNAL LIFE (Joh.17:3).*
- *Eternal Life was UNION WITH GOD HIMSELF, completing the IMAGE OF GOD, revealing the MYSTERY OF GODLINESS. (1Tim.3:16)*

There was another Tree in the Garden that also contained a secret. It was called the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The fruit of this Tree was forbidden and would cause death.

Bearing the image of God, implied that mankind could exercise free will. He could choose what Tree to eat from, although God made it clear to him what he should not eat. We all know that Satan, the Serpent, entered the Garden, deceived Eve, and caused them to eat from the forbidden Tree. Death entered the world. God expelled the man and his wife from the Garden, put an angelic guard with a sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life, so that man could not eat from the Tree of Life and live forever in a fallen condition.

- *Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—"He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen.3:22,24)*

FALLEN MAN

Humans lived and died for at least 4000 years (historic time of Old Testament since the birth of Set, Adam's third son) with a MARRED IMAGE of God. Another image was growing in their hearts. The image of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Very soon every intention of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil (Gen.6:5)

THE MYSTERY OF GOD VEILED

God's Plan was on hold. He had to wait until the right time to reveal it again and accomplish what He planned before the creation of the world. He waited until He knew that the FULLNESS OF TIME had come. God's Plan was not revealed to any human in all of human history during the thousands of years recorded in the Old Testament. It was not even revealed to any angelic being in heaven. IT WAS THOROUGHLY HIDDEN.

- *[The mystery] was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. (Eph.3:5)*

Although God did not reveal the mystery of His eternal Plan in the Old Testament, He did REVEAL HIMSELF to humans. He revealed Himself to Enoch, Noah, Job, Abraham, Hagar, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and other prophets. But they did not know the hidden secret. They longed for deliverance but all they got were just clues, whispers from heaven about a Son, a Messiah that will deliver them, a kingdom that awaits them. They tried to obey God's commandments but were unable to do it. The image of God was marred. Their hearts could not

change. They suffered under Satan and Death. They needed LIGHT in their darkness. They needed someone to show them the WAY TO LIFE, a SHEPHERD and a HELPER.

Then one day, God decided that the FULLNESS OF TIME had come. An angel suddenly appeared in the temple at Jerusalem, next to the incense altar, right in front of the curtain that shielded human eyes from the glory resting on the Ark of the Covenant. He had a message for an elderly priest, Zechariah...

Prayer: Father God, my heart rejoices at the thought that You also chose me to bear Your image. Please reveal to me Your secret plan and how I can bring glory to Your Name.