

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God

IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

#01-0724

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November 13, 2007

Adam Did What Love Demands

Elsewhere, I have written about the love that Adam had for Eve that led him to follow her in eating of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. I call it *body love* as revealed through the secret of God given to Paul and written in his Ephesians epistle. Today, it seems that many preachers give Adam a lot of bad press, so to speak. They place all the blame on Adam for the condition that mankind finds itself in, even in our day. Many see Adam as having had a choice in the matter, and he made the wrong choice, so God became very angry with him. But I see it much differently; Adam had little choice in the matter, for he actually followed the great command to love; explained in a moment. God did not overlook Adam's sin. He said Adam would die, and he surely did die after 930 years; all mankind has suffered in this way as well. However, it could have been worse. After all, Elohim was compassionate and loving in clothing them and sending them forth from the garden, barring their way in that day to the tree of life so that they would not live forever in that condition. A greater Adam was on the horizon; and one day, they will be partakers of His love as they too enter immortal life with the rest of their progeny.

I shared this with some men once and they all looked at me like I had three heads. Doesn't matter. After I see Jesus, the love of my life, I want to meet Adam and express my love for him.

It is undeniable that God had to chastise Adam for his one transgression, but it was all in the plan of God that he would fail on this level. I realize that much of the theology of our day stands against such a thought; but then again, much of the theology of our day is nothing more than the collective thought of tradition. According to the record and Adam's own words, Eve was literally of Adam's flesh.

"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23 NASB)

If he had allowed his helper to stand on her own in deception, then Adam would have declared that he hated his own body, according to the very words of Paul that looked back at the record of Adam and his body and brought it forward to Christ and His body. It is all about love!

Thus, the husbands also ought to be loving their own wives as their own bodies. He who is loving his own wife is loving himself. For no one at any time hates his own flesh, but is nurturing and cherishing it, according as Christ also the ecclesia, for we are members of His body. (Ephesians 5:28-30 CLV)

Now, why state that Adam had no to little choice in the matter? I believe that Elohim placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden with full expectation that Adam and Eve would partake of the tree. It was no accident that the tree was placed in full view of mankind's parents and that the serpent of old was waiting for its moment to deceive. After all, if we accept that God is supreme and sovereign, and all things come through Him, then we must conclude that the whole drama played out in the garden was written and directed by God.

Some proclaim that prior to his fall, Adam was in the age of innocence, and he had to be tested to see if he would obey God's one command. If this is true, then it sure sounds like a formula for failure. Adam was the new kid on the block. Satan, the old serpent, had been around awhile and was not ignorant of God's ways. God knows all and sees all, and He knew that in their current state, Adam, and especially Eve, were no match for the old devil. Besides, God put Adam and Eve in the garden with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil staring them in the face, as if to say, *Go ahead and eat!* Adam had no experience with death, so how was he to know what it meant to die? Adam was simply outgunned and destined to fail.

Now, as I have meditated on this matter of love, my understanding has grown, almost as if it is a new revelation for me, not for scripture. Before explaining this, let me assure you that the one transgression of Adam was a colossal sin that has brought untold pain upon the human race. Death, both in the physical and spiritual sense, is ugly. However, I firmly believe that this was all in the will of God; it was according to the purpose of the ages, and it was for life, not death. **Adam, in trying to save the love of his life, did exactly what perfect love demands!** There was no greater love than to lay down his life for his wife.

This is my commandment to you, to love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this—a man laying down his life for his friends. (John 15:12-13 WNT)

Surely, Eve was more than a friend to Adam; she was part of him; she was his love. He was fulfilling the divine law of loving his wife as his own body. This law requires that a man nurture and cherish his own flesh. Adam had perfect love when he was disobedient to God's command. He had no fear at that moment. He knew what he had to do, and he did it without reservation.

Love has in it no element of fear; but **perfect love** drives away fear, because fear involves pain, and if a man gives way to fear, there is something imperfect in his love. (1 John 4:18 WNT [bold added])

Adam loved his wife over any fear of the repercussions of disobedience. Either, he figured he could somehow redeem the situation, that is, save both of them, or, he would die along with his wife. So, he took the only action that he could for one with perfect love. Whether life or death, Adam had no choice; he had to risk it all. Love led to death's door in the hope that God, in His divine love, would redeem them and give them life. Are these thoughts so outlandish that one is to reject them because they do not fit the theology of the day? I do not think so. After all, Adam was a type of Christ, the last Adam.

We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16 NASB)

Our Lord Jesus laid down His life for the love of His life, His body, and, in fact, for all mankind. He laid down His life by dying for the sin of the world, even the very sin of Adam. Love led to death. But the big difference between the first Adam's action and the last Adam's action is that Jesus' death led to life, not only for Himself but for His body, His wife, and not only for her but ultimately for all mankind.

God is love. The first Adam was created in the image of God. Love was the very nature of Adam. He was a prototype of what was to come. Love is the very nature of the last Adam, the *perfect* Man, the Son of God, the visible image of God, who came out of heaven not only to reveal that God is love but to express the depths of the love of God in a way that cannot be denied. One day, Adam's hope of redemptive life will be realized along with his entire race. Praise God for the last Adam! His name is Jesus!