

sin was made to measure them. This study is so deep and high that we should keep closely to Divine Scripture, and while each may form his best idea of its meaning, yet let us all meekly own our ignorance, and not vainly claim to be wise above what is written. In one sense, at least, God still creates (Ps. 104: 80); and we all need this (Ps. 51: 10, and 2 Cor. 5: 17).

10. "God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures." God is the supreme cause and source of all good gifts and graces. Man is but an image or copy, which at best only receives and reflects God's gifts: the male reflecting more of His Wisdom and Power; and the female more of His Love and Gentleness. But each sex requires to be daily nourished from His infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and thus to receive out of this fulness of Knowledge, Righteousness and Holiness, in order to become truly Intelligent, Moral and Social, to any perfection. Then only shall we have dominion over our *animal desires and passions*, as well as over the other *animal* creatures. This is worthy of closest study and care.

11. "By His most holy, wise and powerful Providence God preserves and governs all His creatures, and all their actions." He equally PRESERVES all His creatures with all their power and liberty of action as second causes, and also GOVERNS them, by proper limitation of their power and freedom. That is, He protects them and their energies, within due bounds, yet also limits their power and liberty, saying as it were, "Hitherto thou mayest go, but no further." This is necessary to preserve the universe from recklessness and ruin. This is the true view of Providence; which is "most holy, wise and powerful." This is otherwise expressed as "Infinite in Love, Wisdom and Power." Our fathers put "Holiness" instead of "Love," lest some might pervert love to license. No doubt some will do so: but they will bear the consequences. God's Love is indeed Holy Love; but still it is Infinite Love none the less; and if a sinner will abuse His love and not reform, it will send him to "his own place," among his like, where the wicked shall "cease from troubling" those that are good and true. This is better for all parties.

12. "When God created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, under penalty of death." This is just a parabolic way of saying (1) that when God creates

one in His own image, he creates a ~~FREE~~ MORAL AGENT. (2) Such a one can enjoy heavenly life only in the obedience of God's laws, as they are the only possible channels from God, the one only fountain of all life and good: (3) just so far as any one infringes on God's laws, he of course rejects this heavenly life: (4) thus death will come if he despise God's Infinite Wisdom and prefer the fancies of his own finite knowledge, which is so inevitably imperfect as yet. Compare Isa. 42: 10 with Prov. 3: 13-18.

13. "Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from their holy state of life, by sinning against God." That is to say, Adam and Eve neglected and despised God's perfect laws, and not only trusted their own fancied knowledge in preference to God's Wisdom, but utterly broke His laws: thus becoming "carnally minded, which is death;" namely, alienation from the life of Divine Wisdom and Love. Rom. 8: 6.

14. "Sin is any want of conformity to God's Law, or any transgression of it." The first clause describes "Sin of Omission;" the latter clause describes "Sin of Commission." Too often these are both combined, when we omit the duty we should do, and also commit the sin we should not do: thus erring alike on the right hand and on the left.

15. "The sin by which our first parents fell from their holy state of heavenly life, was the eating of the forbidden tree." This was an awful sin indeed; for in it they preferred the sensual to the spiritual nature, and appetite to conscience: (2) they preferred self to God, and the finite to the infinite: they preferred the knowledge of evil to the love of God, and thus cut themselves off from the Divine fountain of heavenly wisdom, love and life!

We are well aware that "the Fall of Man" is not a scripture phrase, nor yet "the forbidden fruit." Of course the notion that it was an apple is a mere popular fancy. God spoke of a "tree of knowledge." Satan spoke of a "fruit." Heed him not, but lay hold on God's Wisdom, which is a tree of life (Prov. 3: 18); and trust not to man's wisdom or folly, which is our own tree of knowledge (Isa. 47: 10).

Although many unscriptural fancies have been added to the Bible symbols of the loss of Eden, yet the truest philosophy agrees with daily experience in confirming the scripture idea, that, however man was first formed and instructed, he was early led in a state of child-like innocence and heavenly delight; some remnants of which are seen and felt during