

The character of God

One way to find out about the character of God is to read through the bible. A shorter method would be to simply do a short study of Genesis chapter 3, this gives quite a good insight to the character of God. Adam and Eve had been told by God that they should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, yet they both ate the fruit of this tree.

The first thing we see after that is God walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, seeking fellowship with Adam and Eve (v9). This shows that God, far from being remote from people, is clearly seeking out mankind in order to have fellowship with them. Adam and Eve ran away and hid when God came along (v10). Sadly, so many people now a days do the very same thing - that is they run away from fellowship with God. God however pursues them so that fellowship can be re-established (v11).

Having learned of Adam and Eve's disobedience and sin, God would have been with His rights to destroy Adam and Eve, wipe out sinful man from His creation and make another pair of human beings in their place. But such is the love of God, and such is His desire for fellowship with us that instead of destroying them, He activates a plan of salvation that can bring back Adam and Eve and everyone else who would ever live, back into fellowship with Himself.

Up to this point God had given three opportunities for them to confess and repent of their sin, but then, just as today, instead of turning away from it, they put the blame on someone else. The man blamed the woman (v12), the woman blamed the serpent (v13) and the serpent? He didn't have a leg to stand on. I wonder to this day what would have happened if they had confessed asked God for forgiveness there and then.

Faced with this situation, being a God of righteousness, who could not allow sin in His presence that had not been atoned for, He had to pronounce Judgement on Adam and Eve. It is therefore at verse 14 that God's judgement on Adam and Eve is shown to begin. If God were not a God of righteousness and justice, He would not have to pronounce judgement, yet in this judgement can be seen the characteristics of compassion and mercy. Even at this stage, mankind had to learn that if they sin they will bring upon themselves the judgement of God and the consequences that must surely follow.

There is much evidence today that God is very patient with mankind but will eventually bring upon them His judgement. Even today mankind must be careful not to bring upon themselves the judgement of God, just as a nation can bring judgement on itself. St Paul wrote "He (that is God) reproveth and disciplines all those He loves and acknowledges as His children".

In Genesis chapter 4 we see Cain bringing upon himself the judgement of God (v10 - 14). Always with God there is the possibility of repentance and forgiveness (see particularly the story in the book of Jonah where the people are spared the consequences of their sin because they repented). If there is no repentance the full penalty for sin must be exacted. In this judgement and with the judgement on Adam and Eve, a way back to true fellowship with God is spelled out. Knowing that the serpent is the devil in disguise, God first pronounces judgement on him, the judgement being a crushing defeat by one born of a woman. No mention is made as to who the father will be, sin nature is passed down through the father, it could not be an earthly father who would conceive the one who was to crush the devil

beneath his feet, it could only be God Himself who would be the father. St John describes Jesus as being born “Not of the desire of the flesh, nor the will of man, but by God”.

Luke chapter 1 v 26 - 28 in the New Testament makes it very clear who the father of Jesus is. Since it can only be through Jesus that the serpent would be crushed His father had to have been God or He would not have been able to do this, or he would become deceived himself. It is clear then that nobody can do anything to add to or contribute to this happening, all we can do is in our hearts believe and receive the true word of God - which is all we are ever required to do. If we do this, then His love and care for others will be manifest through our lives also.

It is clear through God talking to Cain and Abel in Genesis chapter 4 that even after mankind fell into sin God still wanted to fellowship with man, though on a very different level until the work of redemption had been completed. God showed Adam and Eve in the Garden Of Eden, after they had sinned and tried to lie their way into avoiding God's judgement, that He was still concerned for their welfare. We see here in verse 21 of Genesis chapter 3 that God clothes Adam and Eve Himself. Clearly He still wants to care for them, and for them to know His great love for them.

It is the same today, although mankind continues to sin God has opened up a way they can come back from that road and into fellowship with Himself once more. That way is to receive (by asking Him to come into your heart and life) the one who will finally crush Satan beneath His feet, to tell Him that we are sincerely sorry for our sins, asking Him to forgive us and cleanse us from all our sin.

Just pray the following prayer. If you have been in churches for many years but never said this prayer, do it now, it is necessary for you to say it aloud.

“Lord Jesus, I acknowledge that I am a sinner and that I need a saviour. I acknowledge that you are truly God, born of a virgin, led a sinless life and died to take upon yourself the consequences of my sin, then rose from the dead to show to all peoples that you are the true Messiah promised by God, and that nobody else could take away any sin. I ask you now to come into my life, forgive all my sin, cleanse me from it and be my Lord, my God, my Saviour and my friend for evermore. I promise now to day by day walk in fellowship with yourself and try to avoid all the things that I know would cause you hurt. I give you my whole life and dedicate every part of it to be lived for your glory, now and forever, amen.”

One of the other characteristics of God is forgiveness. He will joyfully forgive you, cleanse you and receive you into a daily walk of fellowship with Himself, if that is what you truly desire. If you do all these things, your walk with God will have only just begun. He will use you to tell others of this opportunity of living forever in a place where there is no more suffering, no more sadness, no more pain and no more death, but only life as good as God always intended it to be - forever.

God will see the fulfilment of His heart's desire “Now at last God's dwelling place is with man, and He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation ch. 21 v 4).

Blessed be God forever.