



After their own kinds. Or dinner with the first family.

Much too often we have trouble remembering Adam and Eve as living in a real place and in a real time. Maybe it is because we live in a world that is desperately searching for something new and good, but sadly discover what King Solomon discovered years ago: ‘there is nothing new under the sun’.

Disfunctional’ly, we just cannot imagine a time when everything was brand new and very, very good. But, should we consider the possibility and a solution? After all, we are all related to Adam and Eve and share a commonality, like, we all are here because of a distant cousin. In keeping with this notion, I would like to present a hypothetical story that might help bring the beginnings into the present.

“Quality Time Around the Dinner Table”

After the fall, and after being expelled from the Garden of Eden, and sometime after the birth of Adam’s and Eve’s 2 sons Cain and Abel, I could just picture the family sitting down to dinner after a sweaty days work among the thorns and thistles.

After the blessing said by Adam, and all said Amen, Abel starts the conversation by saying “Wow, those animals sure were cantankerous today. For some reason they were less obedient than at other times; especially that Zonkey!” “All look puzzled.”

Then Cain jumps in and says “That’s nothing, you should have seen all the weeds growing in my vegetables. Maybe we could learn to appreciate a ‘weed salad’.” Of course all laugh and the meal continues. Eve believes she may be pregnant again, and is politely anticipating more ‘joys’ and more ‘pains’. And Adam just sighs, remembering what it was like before they found a snake in the Garden, the garden that God had made.

But Cain continually laments the harshness of the family’s situation. Abel agrees, “Yea Mom and Dad, if God loves us so much why are things so hard”? Adam and Eve just look at each other and both think, the day has finally come to speak of such things.

Adam recounts the days of bliss in the Garden. And Eve talks about how they were both tricked by a talking ‘snake like thing’ into eating of the forbidden fruit and gaining the thing called the ‘knowledge of good and evil’. “So much for bliss” says Adam. “We had it really swell, but the price of disobedience is what we deserved.” “And here we are, making the best of things.”

Then Abel says “Gee, you guys really messed up huh?” “Do you think if we really cleaned up our act God would let us back into the Garden?” Adam replies “I did hear God tell the snake

that one of our offspring would step on his head.” “That may mean that the snake will be dealt with before we could return to that place. But we will just have to be patient and wait”. And Eve starts to sing something like “trust and obey”. And Abel says “Mom you sure sound nice and those words are really nice too”. “Can we call that a ‘praise hymn’?”

And of course Cain starts to moan “Hey, that’s not fair”. “Why should we have to wait? Why can’t God just trust us to do better?” And Cain just could not control his anger. “Even if God tells me himself to be patient, I just will not wait.” “I can fix things, and I will make a new garden, and call it something like ‘Utopia’.” And do not get in my way!

Adam and Eve just look at each other in dismay, and think, well one seems to understand. Maybe Cain will come around, and maybe Abel or one of the new offspring will be the one to deliver us from that awesome and evil Serpent. But He would have to be so Special and so Perfectly Able!

And then Adam, trying to lighten the conversation says to Eve, “What’s for dessert?” And all reply, “What is dessert?” Eve thinks to herself, “Why must I come up with something new, again?”

Well, back to the future. Hopefully remembering the beginnings will help us to remember the end of it all, and the new beginnings that are still yet ahead. Maybe, it is just as simple as ‘trust and obey’, and don’t forget the One who made it all. And the one called Jesus of Nazareth, who will make all things new again and very, very good again, forever.

Four Old Photographs

Abraham Lincoln 1862?



Bethlehem 1862



Nazareth 1862



Jerusalem 1893



Somehow Lincoln's November 19, 1863 Gettysburg Address (a version) sounds appropriate:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war.

We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.