

GENESIS

3:1-24

Genesis 3:1-24

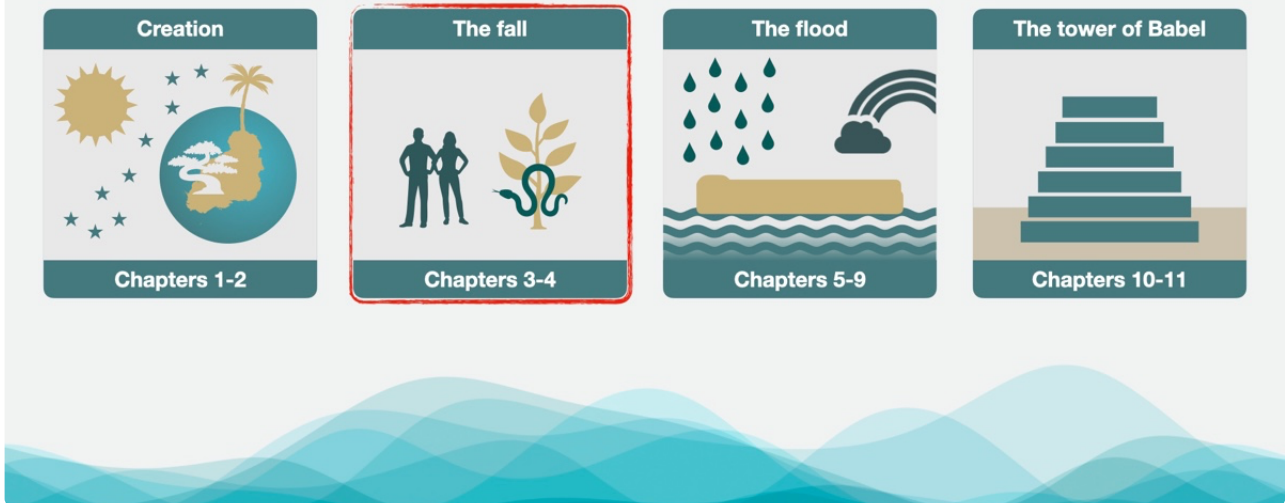
Taught by Simeon Forder on Sunday morning, 30th July 2023 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

Reading: James 1:12-15

Introduction

We're studying the book of Genesis, and over the last four weeks we've looked at the first of four key events in history that this book records — that being the creation of the world and everything in it, including mankind.

The events of Genesis



This morning, we'll study the *second* of those key events, being the fall of mankind where sin entered the world for the very first time.

This was a turning point in history. In fact, many have called this the most important chapter in the Bible. I think you could make a good argument that Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, or John chapter 19 are more important, given they record Jesus' death in our place. Or perhaps the following chapters in the gospels that record Jesus' resurrection.

But indeed, it's impossible to escape the fact that without Genesis chapter 3, none of the rest of the Bible makes sense. Without sin, there is no need for a Saviour. Without a gracious God, we would not have a Saviour. And we see both spoken of clearly here in this chapter.

And so it's important that we read this, study it, and think on it in the week ahead. This chapter doesn't merely explain the actions of Adam and Eve, the strategy of Satan, or the consequences of Adam & Eve's sin on *them*, but it explains the world around *us* today; for sin (and our relationship with it) is the root cause of every problem we face.

Jon Courson wrote this in his commentary:

Several years ago, a medical mystery baffled the physicians at Pelonomi Hospital in Free State, South Africa, when, for ten consecutive weeks, whichever patient was in Bed #4 of the Intensive Care Unit would be dead on Friday morning. After double checking medical procedures, air-conditioning vents, and room structure surrounding Bed #4, it was discovered that at 3 A.M. every Friday morning, the cleaning lady would unknowingly pull the plug of the life support system of Bed #4 so that she could plug her floor polisher in to the vacant socket.

People look around our world and see disaster, disease, and death. They see problems, pollution, and pain. They scratch their heads and say, "How did the world get this way? Why are there earthquakes and volcanoes and hurricanes and tornadoes? Why are there wars? Why can't people get along with each other? Why is there cancer?"

The answer is that someone pulled the plug of our planet's life support system.

When Adam chose to rebel against God, the whole world was plunged into sin. Nature was impacted. Earth's ecology changed radically. Disease and death entered in, and from that point on, man would be born with the nature of depravity.

Jon Courson

If ever you've looked at your life or this world and thought "*it shouldn't be this way*". You're right. It shouldn't. It was never's God's desire that we would sin. But, as we'll see, He knew everyone from Adam to you and I would do so, and He is gracious enough to have provided a remedy for it which we'll see announced here in this chapter.

So, let's zoom in a little further. We can break down this third chapter of Genesis as follows:

Overview of chapter three

Overview of chapter three

- **v1-5** — The nature of temptation
- **v6-7** — The nature of sin
- **v8-13** — Our natural response to sin
- **v14-19** — The consequence of sin
- **v20-24** – The hope for the sinner

In the first 5 verses we'll read about the nature of temptation, and then from verses 6-7 the nature of sin. From verses 8-13 we'll see our natural response to sin, before in verses 14-19 we'll read of the consequences of it. Then, thankfully, in verses 20-24 (and specifically in verse 21) we'll read a foreshadow of what God would do to deal with our sin.

Chapter three

Let's start at verse 1, then. We read:

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

So who was the serpent? Well, the word *serpent* is translated from the Hebrew word **nachash**, meaning *snake*. And the same Hebrew word is used throughout the Old Testament to refer to literal snakes, such as in Exodus when Moses rod was turned into a snake, or of literal snakes mentioned in Numbers, Job, Psalms, Proverbs and more. It is most reasonable, therefore, to take Moses at his word here, that this was a literal snake — not a figurative one such as some, who are unstable and uninformed in their understanding of the Bible, suggest. Indeed, we only need to read the remainder of this chapter to see how God dealt with the snake in a literal way.

But clearly, this literal snake isn't doing regular serpentine things. Rather we see that this snake is used as tool of Satan. Why did he choose the snake, and not the anteater, or squirrel? I don't know, but I'm sure that if it had been to his advantage to choose any other animal, he would have done.

The thing to note here is how Satan *did* use the snake. Eve had no reason to suspect the snake any more than you would to suspect your cat or dog. And that is the way Satan loves to work, so we need to be very careful. We're warned in 2 Corinthians 11:

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

That is, there are ministers in pulpits in churches right now, that not only are unsaved, but are ministers of Satan, teaching things they ought not to teach. And if we can expect to find them there, then we should also expect to find them amongst us. Not everyone who walks through these doors and says they are a Christian, are indeed a Christian. That's why Peter warned:

1 Peter 5:8-9

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Here, in Genesis chapter 3, Satan spoke through the snake to Eve — not the *only* time that an animal would speak in the Bible, nor the only time that animals were controlled through Satan's devices — and he questioned what God had said. *Why?* What was his motive?

I believe it was twofold. First, was pride, which like sin, has *I* at the centre of it. That is, he wanted to have preeminence or superiority. But second, coupled with that, was jealousy. Jealous of whom? Adam and Eve. We read in Isaiah chapter 14:

Isaiah 14:12-14

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."

Satan wanted to be like the Most High. And I believe he was motivated by jealousy at how mankind had been created in God's image. And therefore position wasn't enough — he also had to see Adam and Eve stumble in order to be satisfied. And the one way he could do that, was to entice them to disobey God. So what did he do? He questioned God's word. He says "*are you sure God said that?*" — he doesn't outright say God lied, or that Adam misheard, or even that Adam didn't pass this message onto Eve correctly. He simply sows doubt. Finnis Dake comments:

The character of the temptation illustrates craftiness. Satan and the serpent agreed on the best method to cause the fall of man. Nothing was said at first to awaken suspicion or shock the moral sense; merely a sly insinuation calculated to excite natural curiosity. Then there was a direct lie combined with just enough truth to give it plausibility.

Finnis Dake

Likewise today, he'll try and get you to question God's Word. "Does the Bible really say that" he'll say. "Isn't it open to interpretation?" he'll suggest. But don't fool for it. Rather, be prepared for it, and know your Bible. Have you ever wondered why it was Eve that he spoke to, and not Adam? Because it was Adam, in chapter 2, that had received the command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil — before Eve was made from his side. It seems she had heard the command second-hand. And therein is such an important point to note. That Satan targets the one that didn't hear directly from God, and therefore *you and I* need to go and study it for *ourselves* **daily**, like the Bereans of Acts 17:11 did. That when someone says "does the Bible really say..." we can say. "Yep. And you know what else it says?..."

But also, don't miss out on the Word of God being taught by those whom God has called and given to equip you. When you miss a sermon, which is inevitable, make sure you catch up on it. That's way more important than catching up on an episode of your favourite TV show, or watching the replay of the match, game or race. Or catching up on the news. Don't rely on getting the highlights from your spouse (though you should talk about the sermon), or from your church family (though that should be the basis of much of our fellowship). Go listen for yourself.

Now, we read in verses 2-3:

Genesis 3:2-3

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "

Eve replies, and she's right — to some extent. For God did indeed say that her and Adam should not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But notice she adds to God's words, for she not only says they shouldn't eat from it, but they shouldn't touch it either. Was this a result of Adam saying "Look Eve, God said don't eat from it — but, hey, don't even touch it... it's too dangerous!", or was it Eve being extra cautious? We don't know. But what we do know is that adding a man-made rule to God's Word was of no help to them.

And that's the same as all the legalistic rules that are around today. Wearing a suit to church, or keeping your hair a certain length, or not eating this or that, will not protect you from sin. In fact rules like these may actually become such a burden, that you (or those you try to impose such rules on) cannot bear them, and as a result you move away from God, rather than closer to Him.

And in verses 4 and 5, we read Satan's reply:

Genesis 3:4-5

Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Satan does two things here. First, he contradicts what God has said, telling Eve that she will not die. And, in doing so he is implying *God* lied, once again calling God's Word into question, just as he continues to do today. Second, he calls God's *character* into question, suggesting that God is withholding a blessing. Again, he'll do that today by telling you that you're missing out, and that God is just some cosmic killjoy that doesn't want you to have fun.

But when we step out of the boundary of obedience to God, we cause ourselves so many problems; for while we're free to decide *how* we act, we're not free to choose the *consequences* of our actions. We'll find that sex outside of marriage comes at a high price of sexually transmitted diseases, regrets, and damage to future relationships. We'll find that taking party drugs will leave us with permanent damage to our minds, and that drinking to excess only adds to our problems, rather than solves them. We'll find that overworking to provide for our family, leaves us with no time for them, and that gambling leaves us with less, rather than more money. And the list goes on.

What do we do when tempted with such? We need to look at a different tree. And that is the tree on which Jesus was crucified. When consider how Jesus hung on the cross because of our sin, we'll know that He's not saying no to sin because He is unfair to us, but He's saying no because He knows what sin will do to us, and ultimately what it did to His Son who took our place on the cross.

But here, Eve buys into Satan's lie. We read on:

Genesis 3:6

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Of course, with hindsight both she and we can see how disastrous this was. But in the moment, sin is what we *want* to do. And Eve, like us, was created with free choice which not only made love possible, but evil possible too. And she chose to disobey God. She didn't *need* to eat the fruit of this tree — the garden was full of trees that God had provided for food. And Satan didn't specifically tell Eve to eat — he just gave all the reasons she needed to justify her own decision.

She saw that the fruit was good for food, for her physical needs after all. But that was the lust of the flesh. She saw that the fruit was pleasant to the eyes, and she wanted it. But that was the lust of the eyes. And she saw that the fruit was desirable to make one wise, which was the pride of life. And so she took of the fruit and ate, and disobeyed her Maker.

We are warned to not do the same. We read in 1 John:

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

The problem was not the fruit, it was her heart. Indeed, as has been well said, the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart — not what we eat. We read in Matthew chapter 15:

Matthew 15:16-20

So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

What we might dismiss as "*it's only eating a bit of fruit*" was outright rebellion against the very God who had made her, who gave her life and had provided everything else she saw. But, it wasn't only Eve who sinned, for we read that she gave the fruit to her husband, Adam, and he ate it too.

He knew the commandment from God — it had been given directly to him, and he knew the consequence God had warned of — so his actions were essentially a statement saying "I want to be with Eve, more than I want to obey God". He could, and *should* have spoken up before Eve even ate of the fruit herself. But rather than intervene, he joined in. The fact that *literally* everyone was doing it was no excuse. Sin had entered the world, and it would never be the same. And we read:

Genesis 3:7

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

Adam and Eve immediately realised they had sinned, and felt shame for the first time. And so they make a desperate attempt to cover themselves using fig leaves. Good thing they didn't opt for the stinging nettles I guess! But seriously, this attempt to cover themselves only spoke of the futility of their ability to cover their sin through their own effort. For these leaves would not last long. And while they might be able to hide their bodies from each other, they could not hide their sin from God.

Likewise, no amount of covering our tracks, deleting our browser history, or lining up alibi's will hide our sin from God. No excuse will justify our sin. Neither can we rub religion on the outside in the hope it will remove the stench within. Our hearts, like theirs, are the problem.

Genesis 3:8

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Feeling guilty, Adam and Eve knew they were accountable, but that was uncomfortable. So they chose to hide, rather than take responsibility for their actions. But the crazy thing was that they were trying to hide from God, who had not only made *them*, but every tree that they were now trying to hide behind. In a way, it's like a small child playing hide and seek behind the curtains, and their feet sticking out the bottom — as the adult, you know exactly where they are, no matter how well they think they have hidden. And there was no great hiding spot that could hide Adam and Eve from God. He knew exactly where they were, exactly what they'd done, and He knew the thoughts and intents of their hearts — as He does ours.

You see, God sees everything we do, and knows everything we think. He knows every Google search, every click, every lustful glance as we're driving, every longing of our heart as we look in the shop window, every coveting another woman's husband, or every bit of jealousy over another person's job or salary. And like the last thing Adam and Eve wanted to hear was God's voice, so sin in our lives pushes us away from God to the extent that we don't want to pick up our Bibles and hear His Word to us either.

But if God knew even their thoughts, why does He seem to play along and ask them where they are? Because doing so was not for His *information*, but *their realisation* of what they had done. He wasn't after their GPS coordinates, but after their admission or confession of sin. We read:

Genesis 3:9

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

Notice a small but important detail in this chapter — it was God who sought man, not the other way around. And this is echoed throughout scripture, including in Romans 3 where we read that "*There is none who seeks after God.*", Paul himself quoting from Psalm 14. Jesus Himself said in John 15 "*You did not choose Me, but I chose you.*" And John notes in his first letter "*We love Him because He first loved us.*" God is the author of salvation.

Here, Adam responds:

Genesis 3:10

So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

We see in Adam's reply, that which is written in Hebrews 10:31, that "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*". Many are ignorant of this, and think that if they stand in front of God they'll have it out with Him. But there's no chance of that.

In Revelation chapter 6, as the 6th seal is opened and just *part* of God's future judgement is poured out on the earth (in period of time we know as the tribulation), we see the response of those on the earth will be this:

Revelation 6:15-17

And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

It is foolish to think one can hide from God. The only real hope to cling to is the vain hope that God doesn't exist, or that He is, in fact, comfortable with sin. Because the alternative, if you don't have someone who can save you, is terrifying. However, God is wonderfully merciful and gracious, in that He sent His own Son to die in our place, so that we — you and I — need not spend eternity in hell for our sin. But why, then, doesn't everyone run to Him, throwing themselves at His feet as their Saviour? It's the same reason Adam didn't seek out God in the garden of Eden. And that is sin. DL Moody comments:

The longer I live the more I am convinced that the reason men do not come to Christ is because they do not want to give up sin. It is quite popular to say that they have got intellectual difficulties, but if they would tell the truth it is some darling sin they are holding on to.

DL Moody

Here, Adam is hiding from God, and admits that he was afraid because he was naked — the realisation of which only came about because of his sin. And we see God reply to him:

Genesis 3:11

And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

God poses a direct question to Adam to which He already knows the answer, of course. But Adam, seeking to justify himself, tries to pin his own sin on his wife — and not only that, but points to God being ultimately responsible for giving her to him:

Genesis 3:12

Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

Now, Adam was the one who was given the command to not eat from this tree, and it was his responsibility to pass that on to his wife. And he did, for we know Eve also knew that she should not eat of that tree. But it's like Adam tries to absolve himself of any responsibility here for his own actions. As if it's God's fault for giving him Eve, and Eve's fault for giving him the fruit. Yet, in some ways, he was in a worse state than Eve who was deceived, because he did this knowingly. Rather than protect her, he joined in because he himself wanted to eat. And the excuses start.

Let us not do the same. Because if *we're* not careful, we'll always find a way to *excuse* our sin; "There was too much pressure at work" we'll say, or "there was not enough attention from my wife", "not enough time with my husband", "not enough love from my parents", "not enough food on my table". We use difficulties as excuses for sin, rather than allowing them to drive us closer to God.

Now here in at this moment, God plays along with this charade. We read:

Genesis 3:13

And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So like Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent — that is, Satan — for she was also unwilling to take personal responsibility for her own sin. Yes, it is true the serpent deceived her, but not against her own will. Indeed, we read from James chapter 1 (earlier in our service) that *"each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his **own** desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."*

Like Adam, Eve only had herself to blame. Yet she, at this moment, was not repentant. However, we see such mercy from God here — for not only could He have killed them at this moment (or even as they ate from the tree), but He is also so very gentle toward them. And there's a lesson for us in how we deal with *our* children. Because God doesn't fly off the handle and say *"Guys, there was one tree. ONE tree. Why couldn't listen to the one thing I said not to do, and not do it?!"*

No. Calmly, he deals with the snake and Satan first. We read in verse 14:

Genesis 3:14

So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

So, God curses the snake. Why? Because it was used as a tool of Satan. In what way does He curse it? We read, by it going around on its belly eating dust.

What do we conclude from this? Well, certainly don't be an instrument of Satan! Don't try and thwart the plans of God — remember how Jesus rebuked Peter for wanting to prevent the crucifixion, saying *"Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offence to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

As for the nature of the snake, if slithering around on its belly was part of the curse, then we can conclude that it was not how it once moved around. And for what it's worth, there's some suggestion among secular scientists that snakes once had legs — that's not evolution, for it's actually a loss of information from the genome. But that's something far less important than application, that of course you can dig into if you're interested.

But in the next verse, we see God address Satan directly:

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

This is certainly about more than just snakes. And indeed, this verse explains many of the struggles and battles of the Old Testament, as well as showing us — remarkably — that even from this moment, God had a plan to save us; for this verse is the first of many prophecies of the coming Messiah, the Saviour, into the world.

Notice how in the text, the woman's *Seed* is capitalised. That's because this is speaking of Jesus. From this point on, God would establish a pure line through to Jesus being born. And Satan would do everything, and I mean *everything* he could, to destroy that line to prevent Jesus being born.

He would start with Cain killing Able in the very next chapter of Genesis. And he would then direct his fallen angels to sleep with the women of the earth, producing giant offspring to wipe out that line to Christ, which in turn is why God sent a worldwide flood in chapters 7-8 (but saved Noah and his family, who were pure in their lineage). It's why we see giants after the flood also, and why Pharaoh ordered the newborn baby boys of the Jews to be murdered. It's why so many enemies were set on destroying Israel — such as Haman in the book of Esther. And it's why he used Herod to massacre the babies under 2 years old in Bethlehem, shortly after the time Jesus was born.

With so many failed attempts, and Christ having been born, you might think Satan would have given up — yet he motivated Judas to betray Jesus, leading to His crucifixion... Of course, that turned out, I'm sure to Satan's surprise, to have been God's plan all along. But now Satan had a new plan, to remove the reason for Christ's *second* coming, and that is the nation of Israel — which explains the otherwise unexplainable levels of anti-semitism throughout history, including the holocaust which saw 6 million Jews murdered by Nazi Germany.

Ultimately, however, Satan will not be successful in his attempts, and his head will be bruised — literally meaning he will be overwhelmed. He will be defeated, and thrown into the lake of fire.

We could spend multiple studies on this verse alone. But we'll keep moving through this chapter:

Genesis 3:16

To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

Just as there were consequences for the snake, and for Satan himself, so there were consequences for Eve. And every pain imaginable followed in that which God had blessed Adam and Eve to do, to multiply and fill the earth. From this moment there were fertility issues, miscarriages, still births and much pain in childbirth itself. And furthermore we read that God's established order for the home, would be for the husband to lead.

In the world we live in, that's not a popular thing to say, but that is what God sets out in the Bible, starting here. Why that way around? Well, I don't think it was merely some form of punishment for Eve, but perhaps more reflective of her nature. For who had taken the lead when tempted by Satan? It was Eve, who ate and then gave the fruit to her husband. Who should have led? It was Adam, to whom the commandment not to eat was originally given.

I think in part, God has established this order in marriage because women are too prone to lead, and men are too slow to do so (often creating a needless vacuum that needs to be filled). And in the process of applying this in our marriages our selfishness is tackled head on. God doesn't intend this for our harm, but for our good.

As for the consequences for men, we read:

Genesis 3:17-19

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."

So, we have Adam to thank for the weeds in our garden, and for how hard our work is — whether in our garden, the office cubicle, or site we're working on. But let us not think we would have acted any differently in his position, for we are sinners too — despite having all these warnings in the rear view mirror of history.

What's remarkable to me, is the detail that thorns were a consequence of Adam's sin — and it was thorns that Jesus wore as a crown as he paid for Adam's sin, and ours too — symbolic of the sin He was paying for. There is no aspect of our sin that God didn't anticipate, and no debt of sin that He did not pay for. What grace!

Now, you might pause here and ask *"but I thought God said they would die if they ate from that tree?"* Well, they did — not physically, though that would follow too — but spiritually, right at the moment they sinned and realised they were naked. And this reality is confirmed elsewhere in the Bible, such as when Paul wrote the Ephesians saying *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins"*, speaking of Jesus who made us alive through His death and resurrection. We read in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

It's not automatic, but it's free to all who turn to Jesus in repentance and faith.

Now, the consequences of Adam and Eve's actions were disastrous. Through their sin, death, disease, sickness, pain, suffering, sadness and tears entered the world. And we *read* how Adam had already tried to pin the blame on Eve when confronted by God. Yet, we read:

Genesis 3:20

And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

That is, Adam didn't hold this against Eve, nor did she hold it against Adam — at least that is recorded or implied. For there is this recognition that they would indeed have descendants, through whom would come a Saviour for them, as God had promised.

Of course, some try and attack the Bible by asking *"where did Cain, Adam & Eve's son, get his wife?"* But that's a weak argument, because even the evolutionist has to concede that we all came from one man and one woman, and thus siblings must have reproduced together. The problem for the evolutionist is that they believe a *partially evolved* pair of homosapiens were our ancestors — with all the genetic issues that went with a far from perfect creature. Whereas the one who believes the Bible starts with a perfectly created male and female, without disease, or any genetic defect — meaning that the reasons we have made incest illegal today, would not have been concerns so close to the creation of the world, even in a newly fallen world such as we read of here.

Now, until that promised Seed, our Saviour, was born there was this massive problem of separation from God. But we read in verse 21:

Genesis 3:21

Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

This is an incredible picture, for God rejected their own efforts to hide their sin through the fig leaves, but instead makes the first move to reconcile them to Himself through a sacrifice.

A sacrifice? Where does it say that? Well, where did the skins come from? From an animal. As such, this is the first blood sacrifice made as a temporary covering for sin, pointing to the blood sacrifice that would be required for all mankind, that was fulfilled in Jesus death on the cross. On both occasions, it was God who initiated this, who performed it, and clothes us in righteousness. How humbling that should be to us! And how He should get all the credit — both here, and in *our* lives.

Let's read the closing verses of this chapter:

Genesis 3:22-24

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Of course, there's nothing unreasonable in God doing this — but why did He do it? Well, it seems that there was something special about the tree of life that would have preserved Adam & Eve physically. But God was too good to leave them in their fallen state, living and wallowing in sin. That is, if Adam & Eve had subsequently eaten of the tree of life, they would have been consigned to an eternity in their fallen state. But rather, God had kept the way of life open for man to come to God, but now that had to be by sacrifice.

God had already performed that initial temporary sacrifice, and now we see the cherubim present. A foreshadow perhaps of how cherubim would flank the mercy seat in the tabernacle, or even how two angels would sit at either end of where Jesus, our sacrifice, had laid in the garden tomb.

Conclusion

Oh what a pivotal chapter! There is more and more we'll find here each time we study it. But for now, as I wrap up our study this morning, let me close with three reassurances from God's Word. The first of those is from Lamentations:

Lamentations 3:22

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

God could have destroyed Adam there and then. But instead He Himself provided a temporary sacrifice, and promised a Saviour who would overwhelm Satan and rescue us. Of course that Saviour is Jesus, of whom the apostle John writes in his first letter:

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

And the final encouragement I want to leave with you this morning is this from James' letter:

James 4:7

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Friends, if you are a Christian you do not *need* to sin. You do not *need* to be deceived by Satan. Sin *need not* reign in your life. Take God up on His Word, and go to Him in your moment of need.

Application questions

Today, and this week, I beg you, think about these questions:

- How will satan try to use his strategy in *your* life? What areas of your own desire will he try and use to convince you to sin?
- How well do *you* know God's Word? When Satan questions what God has said, will you be able stand?
- How are you going to deal with sin in *your* life? Will you go to God for His help, or will you try and hide from Him, trying to cover your tracks?

For the audio recording of this Bible study, and for additional studies, please see the DCF web site:



Deal Christian Fellowship
Simply teaching the Bible, simply
<https://dcf.church>