

LESSON 10: GENESIS 3



Introduction - The Fall

The third chapter of Genesis has been called the most important chapter in the entire Bible. I happen to agree with this, because if you don't "get" what happened in this chapter, the rest of the Bible will not make sense to you. Genesis 3 is the pivot on which the whole Bible turns. What's wrong with the world? Why do we need to be saved? The only answer to these questions is in Genesis 3.

In this chapter there are the answers to questions like "Why is there suffering in the world?", and "Where does evil come from?" In this chapter you also see the gospel presented in seed form for the first time, and you also see the first manifestation of religion - man's attempt to make himself right with God. I think you will find this to be a fascinating study.

- Dusty Rhodes

Five parts to Genesis 3:

1. Temptation of the serpent (Verses 1-5)
2. Sin of Adam & Eve (Verse 6)
3. Results of Sin (Verses 7-13)
4. Imposition of divine judgments (Verses 14-19)
5. God's provision in spite of the sin (Verses 20-24)

Part 1 - Temptation of the serpent

Genesis 3:1 *Now the serpent was more shrewd than any of the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Is it really true that God said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard?'"*

- Who/what is the serpent?
 - Rev 12:9, 20:2 - serpent is Satan (the Bible is a self-interpreting document)
 - Satan was either taking the form of a serpent, or possessing a serpent, or...
 - Some think that Satan, who was originally a magnificently beautiful creature, appeared perhaps in human form, counterfeiting as closely as possible the Person of God who also regularly appeared to Adam and Eve in the garden. In the New Testament Paul says "...for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light..." (2 Corinthians 11:14). Satan is symbolically identified with snakes and dragons throughout the Bible, in the Book of the Revelation this enemy of God and man appears as a "great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads." (Revelation 12:3).
 - We underestimate the super-intelligence of Satan - he is the highest ranking angel (Ezekiel 28:14, Jude vs. 9)
 - We can't outthink or outmaneuver Satan Rev. 12:9 - he deceives the whole world
 - In the New Testament the Apostle tells us that Satan appears, often, as an angel of light. If the devil appeared to us with pitchfork, horns and hooves he

would not be taken seriously. He is most successful when he comes counterfeiting the appearance and activity of God.

- “He is the being whom Jesus Christ called “the ruler of this world.” He is the one whom Paul refers to as “the god of this age,” the malevolent being who is behind the philosophy of men, who dominates the thinking of the world, who has the ear of humanity and whispers into it a lie, an outrageous but very attractive lie, that makes men drool with desire.” - *Ray Stedman*
- The devil is “a murderer and a liar from the beginning” according to Jesus. But he approached Eve not with an outright lie at first, but with a question which seemed harmless enough. How was Eve to know that the person speaking to her was not God and not a friend of God's? This was her first encounter with a stranger and how could she know that his purposes were opposed to God and that he sought to destroy her?
- His craftiness is evident right from the beginning in that he sought out the woman. It was a desire to play on her emotional nature that led the Devil to seek out the woman and to begin his temptation with her.
- Why was Satan doing this? What was his purpose?
 - Remember that Genesis 1:26-28 shows us that God’s plan was for there to be a hierarchy in creation - God → rules over man and woman → who rule over the animals
 - Satan was trying to pervert the natural order that God had set up, trying to get them to listen to the animals instead of ruling over them and in the process disobey God
 - Satan always tries to pervert what’s natural, and to reverse the natural hierarchy
- One of the primary approaches of Satan even today is to plant doubt.
 - Doubt stands against the other main word in Scripture, and that is Belief! Doubt is Satan’s big gun.
 - God is so pleased when we believe. Hebrews chapter 6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God.” It is the only way of approach to God. So when people say, “Well I can’t really believe this”, then they have no fellowship with God, they can’t have.

Genesis 3:2-3 *The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the orchard; but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, 'You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it, or else you will die.' "*

- Notice here that Eve either doesn’t know fully what God has actually said, or she has forgotten it. She has left out the words “freely” eat and “every” tree and added a command that God did not give - to not touch the tree. (Gen. 2:16-17)

Genesis 3:4-5 *The serpent said to the woman, "Surely you will not die, for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil."*

- That’s the first lie in the human experience. This is a bold-faced lie. Because what had God said? The day you eat from it you will surely die!
- Do you see what Satan is saying? That is the lie that is still being thrown at the human race! And people are gobbling it up by the thousands - by the millions! It is called “THE lie” in 2 Thessalonians 2:11. Many groups, many of the cults, say that you will one day become like gods.
- Within the human makeup there is that desire that if only we could have complete

control of everything! If only we could be our own god. That appeals to the human mind. To be like god. To have control.

- Up until now, Adam and Eve knew no evil. They knew nothing of sin. They knew nothing of death. But now, Satan is making it look as if that is something to be desired.
- There is an appeal here to hidden or esoteric knowledge. Many cults and false religions (for instance the mystery religions and secret societies) use this device to draw in recruits. Only after initiation and solemn promises (even "blood oaths," as with the Mormons), is this secret wisdom given to the new member. Satan's fall was through his pride and he appeals to Eve on that basis. She lacks something, he suggests-- God is hiding truth from her and if she had that truth "her eyes would be opened." Curiosity and a desire to learn is built into man and is not wrong in itself. What God prohibits (for instance the study of the occult), is for our own protection. Satan subtly suggests that God is jealous and does not want anyone sharing his power---He is not really acting in her best interests after all.
- James tells us there are two kinds of wisdom in the present world. One of these is from the Evil One: "Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct he should show his works done in the gentleness that wisdom brings. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfishness in your hearts, do not boast and tell lies against the truth. Such wisdom does not come from above but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and not hypocritical. And the fruit that consists of righteousness is planted in peace among those who make peace."

His first task is to make the woman want to sin. That is not very difficult with us. We respond quite readily to these desires, these urges within us to do wrong. But it was quite a different story with Eve. Remember, at this time she was innocent, she trusted and loved God. She felt no wrong desire springing up from within her, such as we must wrestle with. The Tempter had to awaken a wrong desire in her heart. His opportunity was provided by the gift of choice which God has given to man.

This helps to explain the question that many ask: "How is it that the Devil was allowed access to the garden of Eden in the first place? Why does the Tempter appear in this story? How did he get into the garden?" The only possible answer of course is that God allowed him to come in. He was permitted to come. He came with the full knowledge and consent of God because it was necessary that man be tempted. He must be able to respond *voluntarily* to God. The greatest gift God has given to us is the ability to make moral choices; we have the right to be wrong if we insist. God himself does not violate this. He does not coerce us. He does not force us to be right. We have the right to reject his love, and the right to turn off his grace, refuse his mercy, and go our own stubborn way. God allows that to be. It is the greatest dignity given to man.

Many people struggle with this. They say, "Why doesn't God make us behave?" Well, if he did, he would have taken away this great dignity. These same people are the ones who say, "Well, I don't want anyone telling me what to do. I want to make up my own mind." But you can't have it both ways. Because God is a God of love--and love never coerces, never forces someone to love in return--it is absolutely essential that man be given the chance to choose whether he wants to continue to love God or to go another direction. So the Tempter comes into the garden and because of the gift of free choice he is given the opportunity to tempt the woman. Our will is that which makes us men, but it is also what makes us temptable. Even the Lord Jesus faced this same relationship. He was given the gift of free choice, too, and therefore he was exposed to the power of Satan. *Ray Stedman*

Tactics of Satan - nothing new, same tactics he used in the garden he still uses today (2 Cor. 2:11) This is good to know so we can use that knowledge against him

1. Adds to God's word (vs. 1) - still happens today - Gen. 1:29 is what God said
 - Always trying to add some other authority than the Bible
 - Cults will tell you need something else besides the Bible
 - Jude says in vs. 3 that God's truth was delivered ONCE for ALL
 - Roman Catholics add the apocrypha, church traditions
2. Challenges the goodness of God
 - Trying to make it seem God is more restrictive than He is
 - This is a lie that keeps many people away from Christ
 - Great secret is that God does a better job running our lives than we can (John 10:10)
3. Subtracting from God's word (vs. 4)
 - Directly challenges the authority of the word of God
 - Higher criticism - subtracts from God's word - same strategy as Satan uses
4. Offers wisdom without submission to God (vs. 5) Proverbs 1:7
 - We become fools if we live lives outside of God's authority

Adam and Eve's mistakes with Satan

1. They subtracted from God's word (vs. 2) - Matthew 4 - Christ always quoted scripture accurately
 - a. Eve's knowledge of the word of God is deficient
2. Added to God's word - vs. 3 Genesis 2:17 Revelation 22:18-19
3. Began to doubt God's goodness
 - a. She left out the word "any", added "do not touch", and bought into the lies that God is restrictive
4. Initial breakdown of the male headship (Gen. 2)
 - a. Commands given to Adam, because Eve was created later
 - b. She should have learned these things from Adam
 - c. He may not have taught her correctly
 - d. Adam did not correctly fulfill his role of male headship in the marriage
 - e. This is still a big problem today, men are not taking the lead spiritual role

Part 2 - Sin of Adam & Eve

Genesis 3:6 *When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.*

- We do not know whether the serpent worked his subtle deceptions for minutes, hours, days or months before Eve yielded her will to Satan.
- Doesn't Satan always know when to catch us? Every one of us, I don't care how mature we are in our Christian faith, have to be constantly on guard, because when we least expect it, that's when Satan is going to hit us. And he will hit us from the blind side. He will take us at our weakest moment. We never get past that. It is the only thing that we can come back to the Word and realize that we have to be on guard constantly. So, I think Eve was caught at a moment when she was alone. It was a

moment of weakness. And it was a time that she had no support from her other half, because he wasn't there.

- Temptation only comes at us in 3 ways - 1 John 2:16
 - Lust of the flesh
 - Lust of the eyes - coveting what doesn't belong to us
 - Pride of life - live your life on your own terms, without God
- Jesus was tempted in each of these three ways in His contest with Satan - Hebrews 4:15 - Jesus was tested in all things - means all of these three ways
- Jesus, the "last Adam", succeeded where the first Adam failed
- Breakdown of marital relationship - male headship totally gone - Adam followed Eve in sin. Now Adam is taking orders from Eve instead of God, and both are taking orders from an animal. God original hierarchy is upside down.

Part 3 - Results of the Sin

Genesis 3:7 *Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

- Man and woman got religious
 - First recorded act of religion in the Bible
 - Religion - man's attempt to work himself into God's presence through an act of his own self-righteousness - trying to do something to cover yourself
 - most of the world does this - we want to be in verse 21
 - God will not accept this! Isaiah 64:6
 - God will only accept an innocent sacrifice slain in place of the guilty

Genesis 3:8 *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard.*

- It seems that God visited the man and his wife in the Garden regularly for fellowship and instruction. In an unfallen world the quality of the relationship between God and mankind was obviously orders of magnitude better than it was now after the Fall. Time as we know it now was damaged by the fall, so life had an entirely different quality for our first parents in those days of Innocence. ("With the Lord one day is like a thousand years..."). For man to now be frightened and hiding from God because of the mere sound of God walking in the garden tells us something about the horrendous damage sin has already wrought.
- God had said that eating the forbidden fruit would mean "you shall die." Instant spiritual death (a broken link, separation from God) had occurred and the long slow, inexorable process of dying on the inside in soul, and spirit, and body had begun. This is what we would expect for any dependent organism which became cut off from its one and only central source of life. The living God is the Source of all life in the universe--life of many kinds and levels.
- Hiding is an instinctive reaction to guilt, and reveals the fact of guilt. When a child is caught doing something wrong they will instinctively try to hide themselves or what they did. Now, how do they learn that? No one needs to teach us such things; these are instinctive reactions. They hide because they feel guilty.
- Here, then, is the first description of a human conscience beginning to function; that inner torment we are all familiar with which cannot be turned off no matter how hard we

try. In fact, often the harder we try to ignore it the deeper it pierces and the stronger it becomes. Psychologists agree that guilt is a universal reaction to life, that without apparent reason or explanation all of us, without exception, suffer from guilt. This sense of guilt haunts us, follows us, makes us afraid. We are afraid of the unknown, of the future, of the unseen, just as Adam and Eve discovered themselves to be.

Genesis 3:9 *But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"*

- not asking for their location, but He knows something is different, relationship is different
- not asking the question for himself, but for Adam and Eve, getting Adam to see that the relationship is broken
- Open theists - this heretical idea says that God does not know everything, He has to wait to see what we'll do, does not have omniscience of the future, these people are even in evangelical churches
- God is saying - "Your relationship with me has changed - why are you afraid of me, why are you engaged in religious acts to cover up?"

Genesis 3:10-11 *The man replied, "I heard you moving about in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." And the LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*

- Fellowship between God & man is broken - now man is afraid
 - When sinful man comes into the presence of a Holy God, he is fearful Isaiah 6:5, Rev. 1:17, Luke 5
 - Man does not like fellowshiping with God when he is in sin John 3:19-21
 - He is in the presence of a perfect being who has the right to judge sin
 - Example - police officer - if you've done something wrong, you're uncomfortable in the presence of officer
- Paul in Romans 3 says, "No one seeks after God." From the very beginning of man's estrangement from God (a result of sin), man has not sought God. Religion reflects man's constant self-efforts to reconnect himself to the source of power and life in the universe, but all such efforts are in vain. We really do not want to find God, we want to find a substitute which will give us what we want on our own terms. God must seek man, and man can not be restored to God apart from God's unique solution to human evil. Jesus said... "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."
- God asks "where are you?"-- still the most relevant question for every generation. One immediate effect of sin is self-consciousness, shame, and a desire to hide from God (and from one another).

Genesis 3:12 *The man said, "The woman whom you gave me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it."*

- Buck-passing - blame someone else for your sin
 - Fallen man does anything to deny responsibility for his sin
 - This is what's behind modern psychology and criminal justice - people are evil, they are products of their environment, they're poor, or they were abused

- The implication is that sin is really God's fault. After all, if he had not given Adam the woman, Adam would never do such a terrible thing as disobeying God. All of us rationalize or excuse sin when it first becomes evident to others that we have sinned. However God persists in His interrogation until He obtains an admission of guilt. This is the path of repentance we must follow to this day. "If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:6-10) When we agree with God in His assessment of the problem in our lives, we have immediate access to His forgiveness and He is ready to restore.

Genesis 3:13 *So the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman replied, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."*

- The woman, when confronted by God, blames the serpent. She is closer to the truth that Adam was when he justified himself. But she is honest with God about her failure and so Eve, like Adam, is forgiven, spiritually reborn, and restored to fellowship with her Creator.
- Creation hierarchy is now totally reversed - totally perverted
 - Original plan - God—Man→Woman→Creation
 - Now it's - Satan(Creation)→Woman→Man→God
 - Satan becomes the God of this world

Part 4 - Divine Judgments Imposed

2 judgments each on the serpent, man, and the woman

Genesis 3:14 *The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the wild beasts and all the living creatures of the field! On your belly you will crawl and dust you will eat all the days of your life."*

- Humiliation of the serpent - serpent's body is altered - to give a perpetual reminder to mankind about what happened in Eden
- Adam & Eve's sin affected not only human race and the animal kingdom but the whole universe (Romans 8:20→), Micah 7:17

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put hostility between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring; her offspring will attack your head, and you will attack her offspring's heel."*

- Proto-Evangelion (first gospel of Jesus Christ) - called the most important verse in the whole Bible - epicenter of scripture - ties the whole Bible together
- A descendant of Eve will crush the serpent's head
- Prophecy that says Satan's days are numbered
- Here is the beginning of the redemptive program of God - the entire Bible is about this!
- How would Satan bruise the heel of Eve's descendants and the coming redeemer?
 - Satan is always trying to keep this prophecy from coming true
 - He would try to snuff out the messianic line
 - The line leading to Messiah was jeopardized over and over again in O.T.

- 1st example is in next chapter when Cain killed Abel
- Satan has used pre-emptive strikes throughout history to prevent fulfillment of this prophecy
 - Pharaoh tried to kill all of the male Jews in Exodus 1
 - 2 Chron. 22 - Athaliah began to exterminate the royal offspring of the house of Judah - Joash survived
 - Esther - Haman had the idea of exterminating the Jews
 - Matt. 4 - Satan tried to get Jesus to jump off the temple
- These attempts to stop the messiah explain why there has always been anti-semitism
- In the end Satan will be defeated, not all at once, but progressively
 - Initial defeat was being evicted from heaven - Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:12-17
 - Then Satan defeated here in Gen. 3:15
 - Satan defeated in the pre-flood world (Gen. 6) another attempt to destroy the Messianic line
 - Jesus after crucifixion went to the lower parts of the earth and announced that defeat
 - Satan was defeated at the cross - Heb. 2:14, Col. 2:15
- Prince of the world cast out - 1 John 3:8
- Rev. 12:9 - mid-point of tribulation - here he will permanently lose access to heaven. Yes, he was thrown out earlier, but still had access (Job)
- At the beginning of the Millennium Satan is bound for 1000 years
- Rev. 20:10 - final defeat - taken and thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented forever

Genesis 3:16 *To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labor pains; with pain you will give birth to children. You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you."*

- Judgement of the Woman
 - Childbirth was made painful
 - Relational conflict within the marriage - Gen 4:7
 - Desire here in some translations is not sexual, but means desire to dominate the husband
 - Woman would now desire to dominate her husband by usurping his headship
 - Husband must now exercise authority over the wife so she does not dominate him - otherwise she will try to
 - Power struggle in the marriage - woman will try to dominate and the man will try to subjugate (stomp down) the woman
 - Sin affected their vertical relationship with God, but also affected their (horizontal) relationship with each other
 - Sin brought conflict into the marriage - Christ came into the world to fix this - not only to restore the vertical relationship, but to restore the horizontal relationship, undo the power struggle. How?
 - Ephesians 5:22-33 - only way
 - If you're not committed to living out the principles in Ephesians 5, your marriage is stuck in Gen. 3, the power struggle
 - An unbeliever or immature believer will not understand this at all, that's why it's important to marry a believer
 - When even believing husbands and wives have conflict, it's because one or both is not acting out the principles of Ephesians 5 - the wife goes back to the natural state

of dominating her husband, the husband goes back to the natural state of subjugating his wife

- Historically, many marriages have lasted because one spouse, typically the wife, submits to her husband no matter what
- Christianity has, for the most part, had a positive effect on marriage everywhere the gospel is taught because of Ephesians 5
- Cultures where the gospel has no influence - marriages are typically dominated by the husband and the woman is forced to submit, even treated as property like livestock - Islamic countries, for example

There is something very interesting here. God's approach to the woman is always different than to the man, and certainly different than to the serpent. Notice that he says to the serpent, "Because you have done this", and also to Adam, "Because you have listened but to the woman" he makes no such charge of responsibility. There are consequences in her life that follow sin, but it is significant that he does not charge her ultimately with being at fault. We will see why when we come to God's word to Adam.

First, there is the factor of pain. Undoubtedly this verse does refer to the pain and danger of childbirth which women alone can experience. No man knows what a woman goes through in the birth of a child, but every mother understands. But the word refers to more than mere physical pain; it is basically the Hebrew word for sorrow. In Hebrew there is no word for pain but sorrow is the word universally used. It comes from a root which means "to toil"; thus, heartbreaking toil. This is perhaps why there has come into our language a description of birth pains as "labor," toil of a heartbreaking variety. It is evident, in view of the way the whole context has been developed, that this means more than simply physical pain; it refers also to the heartbreak associated with having children.

This is woman's primary experience as a result of the fall, the heartbreak of rearing children. It means that a mother's sense of success or failure in life is related to her children. A threat to a child is pain to a mother's heart. Perhaps every mother feels more sharply than the father does any sense of danger to or failure in her children. Mothers' hearts are bound to their children. We know this from experience and it is in line with what this passage suggests. The mother becomes so involved in the life of her children that what they feel, she feels; if they fail, she feels the heartbreak of it particularly strongly. *Ray Stedman*

Genesis 3:18 *But to Adam he said, "Because you obeyed your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground thanks to you; in painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, but you will eat the grain of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat food until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you will return."*

It was the Apostle Paul who tells us that Adam was not deceived in the fall. The woman was deceived. She was deluded, for she believed the enemy. She thought he meant it when he said they would become like God if they ate the fruit. But Adam was not fooled. He knew that if they ate the fruit the fall would follow; that they would lose their relationship to God, and that death would occur. He knew it, but he deliberately disobeyed God and set his wife above God. He denied the headship of Christ over himself and surrendered his own headship over the woman.

This has been the major failure of man in marriage ever since, and the second major cause producing chaos in marriage today; a man who refuses to lead, a man who turns over to his wife the ultimate responsibility of the family. He views his sphere as that of making a living and gives to her the job of making a life. He refuses to make decisions, refuses to give direction or to show concern over the way the family is going, or to enter into the problems of child discipline and training. All this constitutes failure and the breakdown of the headship of man over woman and of God over man.

There are basically two false concepts in marriage which this highlights for us. One of them is that man, when he gets married, is to please his wife by doing whatever she wants to do. Usually this results in the chinless, spineless, supine, Caspar Milquetoast kind of individual. But it is a widespread approach to marriage today, and sociologists are telling us it is rapidly producing in our country a matriarchal society. When boys, raised at home, do not have a male image to relate to, they do not know what a father is supposed to be--they never see one--so they relate to their mother and the mother becomes the dominant factor in the family. This turns society upside down and produces much of the weakness, conflict, and violence we are seeing so widely today.

The second false concept in marriage is for the man, regarding himself as the head, to interpret this to mean he may do whatever he wants; that he is to run the home to suit himself and his pleasure is the determining factor in what occurs. He becomes a tyrant, a dictator. This is as wrong as the first view and equally contrary to the Word of God. The truth is that he, too, is under authority. He is to submit to the headship of Jesus Christ. He is to follow him. If a man refuses to do that, then his home is bound to go on the rocks one way or another, either in internal conflict or in actual outward break-up. He is to follow the Lord Jesus Christ as he is revealed in the Word of God and by prayer. Man is to follow him whether he, or his wife, feels like it or not--that's the whole issue. He is kindly but firmly to insist that they are to do what God wants. *Ray Stedman*

- Judgement of the Man
 - Painful labor - work itself is not the curse, but it will be painful and difficult - now man has to work just to survive
 - work will continue eternally, but it will not be difficult, but rewarding and enjoyable
 - remember we live in a country where the standard of living is so high compared to the rest of the world and any other time in history, so it's hard to appreciate. Most of the world struggles just to put food on the table
 - divine sarcasm? - Adam rebelled against God, so now the earth, which was under the authority of Adam, will rebel against Adam
- Physical death comes to humanity - is unnatural
 - Death is not part of the original plan of God!
 - Our bodies are decomposing - we get 70-90 years then we go back to the ground
 - If you doubt the curse of death, just look at your high school yearbook picture - we're falling apart, that's why we need a new body!
 - Evolution says death is normal part of existence
 - Bible says death is abnormal - God designed a world with no death, and when God recreates the world, death will not be a part of it (Rev. 21:4)
 - Death happened as a result of the fall
- Why is There So Much Pain and Suffering in the World?
 - Theistic evolution says God designed it that way
 - That makes God responsible for death, pain, and suffering
 - But it's not God's fault, He didn't design it that way, didn't set it up that way, it was man's rebellion against God that introduced all these things
 - Evolution is a really bad idea, it's even worse to blame it on God

Part 4 - GOD'S PROVISION THROUGH 3 GRACIOUS ACTS - God will still work to redeem and restore creation

Genesis 3:20 *The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.*

- Human race will still continue, in spite of death

Genesis 3:21 *The LORD God made garments from skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.*

- Forgiveness - How does God forgive?
 - God can't ignore sin - He is pure and holy, He must judge it
 - His nature demands that He judge sin, but He loves humanity and is merciful. So what does He do?
 - He judges an innocent sacrifice on behalf of people
 - God killed an innocent animal in place of Adam & Eve so he could forgive them, clothe them - He poured out His wrath on the animal

- This is the first teaching in the Bible on substitutionary atonement for sin
- This is why animal sacrifices are so dominant in the Old Testament, but it was only temporary, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice (John 1:29)
- God himself will act as the substitute
- To satisfy His holy nature of judging sin and being merciful to humanity, He decides to pour out His wrath on Himself
- One member of the Trinity poured out His wrath on another, so He wouldn't have to pour it out on us
- ***If that doesn't do something for you, I don't know what will. If that doesn't inspire you to love God, nothing will***
- When you understand that transaction, that should make us want to serve God with every fiber of our being - not out of duty, not to earn something, but because we're overwhelmed at the grace of God
- Verse 7 shows man's way to earn forgiveness from God - he tries to clothe himself, does religious acts to gain acceptance
- Verse 21 is God's way of forgiveness
- This is the difference between religion and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus
- Every human being who has ever acknowledged the existence of God is either in the category of verse 7 or verse 21
- We're either trying to merit favor with God by some kind of religious act, no matter what religion, or you trust Christ's substitutionary sacrifice alone for your salvation

Are you in verse 7 or in verse 21?

- If you're in verse 7, you have a problem, because God won't accept anything you've done. If you're in verse 21, you have it made because God now sees you through the shed blood of His son
- You now have perfect standing before a holy God. Because your righteousness before God is no longer your own, God has clothed you in Christ's righteousness

Genesis 3:22 *And the LORD God said, "Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."*

Genesis 3:23 *So the LORD God expelled him from the orchard in Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken.*

Genesis 3:24 *When he drove the man out, he placed on the eastern side of the orchard in Eden angelic sentries who used the flame of a whirling sword to guard the way to the tree of life.*

- Adam & Eve kicked out of Eden - why?
 - Tree of life - gives man ability to live forever - God doesn't want man to live forever in his sinful corrupted state. Can you imagine the evil that would perpetuate in the world if we lived on and on? (Think Hitler, Hussein)
 - So this is a gracious act that limits evil limiting men's lives
 - Note the doctrine of the Trinity hinted at in verse 22 - plurality in the Godhead - you see this in Gen. 1:26, Gen. 11, Isaiah 6:8 - explained more fully in the New Testament

God at Work

For centuries a dirty lie about God has been making the rounds. This lie suggests that at the fall of man God ruthlessly lowered the boom on guilty Adam and Eve, that he gave them no chance to explain but simply tracked them down, sternly rebuked them (my children would say he yelled at them), began cursing everything in sight, and ended by booting Adam and Eve out of the garden--slamming and locking the door behind them. Nothing could be further from the truth! We must trace very carefully the actions of God in this account because, of course, this is the same way God will treat us after we fall into temptation.

God begins his dealings with man by raising three questions. The first one is found in verse nine. ...**the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"** It is most striking to me that all religions, apart from Christianity, begin with man seeking after God. Only the Bible starts with the view of God seeking after man. That highlights an essential difference between our Christian faith and the other great religions of the world. If we take this account in the garden literally (as I believe we must), then it is clear that God habitually appeared to Adam in some visible form, for now Adam and Eve in their guilt and awareness of nakedness hide from God when they hear the sound of his footsteps in the garden. This indicates a customary action on God's part. He came in the cool of the day, not because that was more pleasant for him but because it was more pleasant for man.

We know from Scripture that whenever God appears visibly in some manifestation it is always the second Person of the Godhead, the Son, who thus appears. If that is true then we have here what is called a theophany, that is, a visible manifestation of God before the incarnation.

Ask it of yourself now. Where are you? In the course of your life, from birth to death, moving (as you hope you are moving), to develop stability of character, trustworthiness, integrity of being, all these qualities which we admire in others and want in ourselves--where are you? How far have you come? Until you can answer that, in some sense at least, there is no possibility of helping you. What do you say? Perhaps you will have to say, "I don't know where I am. I don't know. I only know that I am not where I ought to be, nor where I want to be. That's all I can say." If that is all you can say, at least it's an honest answer and therefore the most helpful answer you can give, and in that sense is the only right answer. "I don't know. I only know that I'm not where I ought to be."

Now God's second question to man is even more significant: **He [God] said, "Who told you that you were naked?" (Genesis 3:10)** God is not asking Adam, "Look, who let the cat out of the bag about this?" No, this is a rhetorical question. God does not expect a direct answer; it is a question designed to make Adam think.

An Inner Change

God is asking "how do you know this? You say you're naked; you didn't know that before. From what source has this knowledge come? Something has happened, a change has occurred; where did your knowledge come from?" The answer, of course, is that no one told him. Then how did he know? It came from within. A change had occurred within him and instinctively he senses that change and knows something that he did not know before. An evil knowledge has come to man, just as God said it would. The tree of which he partook was the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil," and by partaking man immediately gained an evil knowledge. It is the birth of conscience, that strange faculty within us that tells us often what we do not want to hear. This is what God awakens Adam to see.

It is what I am within which makes me ashamed and guilty, and sends me scrambling for fig leaves to cover myself up. Someone has well said, "If the best of men had his innermost thoughts written on his forehead, he'd never take his hat off." We know this is true. The basic, fundamental issue of humanity is not what is happening outside, but what is happening inside, within us.

Now God moves to his third question and it is in two parts, one addressed to the man and one to the woman. **"Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate" (Genesis 3:11-13).**

Now there is something very interesting here. God asks them both the same question. He is saying to each, "Tell me, what is it that you did? Specifically, definitely, clearly; what is it that you did?" But there is an exquisite touch of delicacy and grace here, which I hope you do not miss. He does not put the question in the same form to each. To the man he is forthright and blunt. "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

But to the woman he puts the question much more softly and gently. Every married man knows that his wife does not like a direct question. A man may say to his wife, "Where did you buy this meat?" Her answer is not usually, "At Safeway," but perhaps, "What's wrong? Why do you ask?" or, "I bought it where I always buy it." If he says to her, "Have you seen so-and-so lately?" she says, "What's happened?" Or perhaps she says, "Well, I never get out to see anybody--you know that." Or, "Why would I want to talk to her, anyway?" It is comforting to me to realize how fully God understands women and to see him put the question to her very gently. He says, "Tell me in your own way now, what is this that you have done?"

In their answer it is significant that both of them come out at the same place. Each blames someone else (we now call this "human nature," it is so widespread, so universally true), but when they come to their final statement they both use exactly the same words, "and I ate."

Reduced to the Facts

This is where God wants to bring them. This is what the Bible calls "repentance." It is a candid statement of the facts with no attempt to evade them, color them, or clothe them in any other form. It is a simple, factual statement to which they are both reduced; "and I ate." This is the point God has been seeking to lead them to.

Do you see how these questions have followed a certain course? God has made them say, first, "We're not where we ought to be--we know that. We ought not to be hidden here in the garden. We ought not to be lost. Then God has made them see that it is because something has happened within them. They have seen that they are where they are because of what they are, and that it all happened because they disobeyed, because they ate the forbidden food, they sinned. God has led them gently, graciously and yet unerringly to the place where each of them, in his own way, has said, "Yes, Lord, I sinned; I ate."

That is as far as man can ever go in correcting evil. He can do no more. But this immediately provides the ground for God to act. This is where he constantly seeks to bring us. This is seen throughout the whole Bible, in the Old and New Testaments alike. When God is dealing with men he seeks to bring them to the place where they acknowledge what is wrong.

Now this is what God wants to do with us. He finds us in our failure, our estrangement, our guilt, our sense of nakedness and loss, and immediately he moves to bring us to repentance. We misunderstand his moving. We think he is dragging us before some tribunal in order to chastise us or to punish us, but he is not. He is simply trying to get us to face the facts as they are. That is what he does here with Adam and Eve. As John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all on righteousness" (1 John 1:9).

As soon as Adam and Eve say these magic words, "and I ate," there are no more questions from God. There is no more prodding or probing on his part. God begins now to speak to the serpent, to the woman, and to the man. What he says to the man and the woman is not punishment, as we will see shortly, but grace. How badly we have misread these passages in Genesis. And when he gets through, we read these wonderful words:

And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them (Genesis 3:21).

Here is the beginning of animal sacrifices: God sheds blood in order to make clothing for Adam and Eve. He made them from the skins of animals and therefore those animal lives were sacrificed to clothe Adam and Eve. This is but a picture, as all animal sacrifices are but pictures--a kind of kindergarten of grace--to teach us the great truth that God eternally attempts to communicate to us as men and women. Ultimately it is God himself who bears eternally the pain, the hurt, the agony of our sins. As John the Baptist said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away [who is continually taking away] the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Orphan Lambs

Paul uses a wonderful phrase in Ephesians, "accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6, KJV). When we have acknowledged our guilt, when we have acknowledged that what we have done is contrary to what God wants, and we stand before him without attempting to defend ourselves, but simply in honest acknowledgment of our own doing, then, Paul says, we are "accepted in the beloved."

There were many sheep farms in the area of Montana where I grew up. Spring was the season when the little lambs were born. But spring in Montana can be brutal; sleet storms can come whirling down out of the north, and snow can still be three or four feet deep on the prairies. Often there are long, protracted seasons of bitter cold during lambing season. Of course, when the sheep must bear lambs in that kind of weather many of the lambs and ewes die. As a result, sheep farmers have many mothers whose newborn lambs have died, and many newborn lambs whose mothers have died. A simple way to solve the problem, it would seem, would be to take the lambs without mothers and give them to the

mothers without lambs, but with sheep it is not that simple. If you take a little orphan lamb and put it in with a mother ewe, she will immediately go to it and sniff it all over, but then she will shake her head as though to say, Well, that's not our family odor, and she will butt it away, refusing to have anything to do with it.

But the sheep men have devised a means of solving this problem. They take the mother's own little dead lamb and skin it, and take the skin and tie it onto the orphan lamb. Then they put the little lamb with this ungainly skin flopping around--eight legs, two heads--in with the mother. She pays no attention at all to the way it looks, but she sniffs it all over again, and then she nods her head, all is well, and the lamb is allowed to nurse. What has happened? The orphan lamb has been accepted in the beloved one. There came a time when God's Lamb lay dead on our behalf and God took us orphans--he does it all the time--and clothed us in his righteousness, his acceptability, his dearness and nearness to him, and thus we stand "accepted in the Beloved One," received in his place. That is where repentance brings us.

It Doesn't End Here

But repentance is not only for the beginning of the Christian life. It is the way you start as a Christian, true. You come to God, like Adam and Eve, and say, "Yes, Lord, I'm the one. I've been running from you, I've been hiding from you, I've been estranged from you. It's because of what I've done. No one else is to blame but me." Then immediately God says, "I've taken care of all that. My Lamb has died for you and you stand in his place, acceptable to me." That is the way you begin the Christian life. But that is only the beginning.

I find I must repent of my self-dependence, and so must you. "Without me," says the Lord Jesus, "you can do nothing." If you attempt to do anything apart from that sense of dependence upon him to work through you, you need to repent, to change your mind, to accept again the covering of God, the clothing of his grace, the cleansing of his love. This can, and perhaps will, occur dozens of times a day until we learn at last, little by little, to walk in this way, to count on his working. He is ours, and all that he is belongs to us. This is standard operating procedure, not just emergency treatment. Now that Adam and Eve are standing before God, having acknowledged their sin, having said the same thing about it that God said, having admitted that they did the thing God said was wrong, his whole relationship to them has changed and he is on their side, he is "for" them, as Paul tells us God is "for" us (Romans 8:31). He has been this way all along but Adam and Eve could not enjoy it until they repented.

The situation then is clear. All those who have come into this race through the normal line of descent from Adam, as the seed of Adam, were born into the control of the Devil. But God is calling out a seed of promise. Any who exercise faith in this promised One, whether it be faith before he came or faith in him now, are "in Christ" and are also the seed of the woman. Between these two (the Devil's seed and the woman's seed) is enmity--unending enmity. Because of this unending enmity between these two, we are constantly exposed to attack and temptation.

It extends to individuals as well. Galatians speaks of those born of the flesh who persecute "the children of promise" (Galatians 4:28,29). We well know that the world hates the truth of God, and seeks to ridicule it and to stamp it out; the world bans the Bible and burns the saints.

Strange Twist of God

But then a remarkable thing happens. The Devil's burden is that his, very victories become also his defeats. There is this strange twist by which God in his power and wisdom turns the Devil's victories into utter defeat. He succeeds in bruising Christ's heel, but that bruised heel is what finally crushes the serpent's head. You can see this clearly in the cross. It was the bruising of the cross that made possible the smashing triumph of the resurrection. You can see it also in the events of your own lives and in the events of world history.

Take the matter of the death of those six million Jews under Hitler. We can hardly contemplate such a hideous thing occurring in our world. Yet it was that event, ghastly as it was, that made possible the birth of the nation Israel and set the stage for the fulfillment of promises which had lain unanswered in the Scriptures for century after century. The attempt of the enemy to stamp out the people of God--this strange nation, marked out by God as peculiarly his own among the nations of the earth--was turned into defeat and is now used to establish them in the land of promise.

In a most remarkable way, the distortion of truth in the stupid rituals and empty ceremonies of the medieval church in Martin Luther's day prepared the hearts of Europe for the blazing glory of the Reformation. People were so disgusted by what they were seeing, their hearts were so empty, they were so fed-up with materialistic indulgences and external approaches to God, that they were simply crying out in desperation for a note of reality. When Martin Luther nailed the ninety-five theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg, he struck a spark that caught fire throughout the tinder of Europe--tinder prepared by the Devil. It was the Devil's efforts that made possible the blazing fires of the Reformation.

Today as well, God is turning the tables on the Devil. Satan is overreaching himself today as he always does. It is his fate

to end up as those villains used to do in the old western melodramas: having trapped their victims and thinking they're on the very verge of success, the hero arrives and saves the day, and the villain stomps off, muttering through his mustache, "Coises! Foiled again!"

You can see this principle in your own personal lives. Which of you has not had some experience similar to that of the Apostle Paul who had that nagging, wretched thorn in the flesh given to him, prodding him and probing him? How he hated it, and asked God to take it away. But God said, "No, I won't. My grace is sufficient for you." As Paul pondered that there came a realization of what God meant, and he writes it down for us. He says, "I see now that it was given to me by God. It was the 'messenger of Satan,' true, yet God allowed it to come and God permitted it to remain, so that I might be kept from becoming proud and thus no longer useful to God. It is this that humiliates me, humbles me, makes me depend upon God and not myself, and therefore," he says, "I will glory in my infirmities, for out of weakness I am made strong" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

That is the Devil's burden. Do you know anything more encouraging than that? The God we serve is the kind who is continually taking the worst the Devil can do and turning it into glorious victory. You will find that principle running through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. This is Christianity, entirely different from the principles by which the world seeks to work out its problems.

It looks as though truth is pinned down, crucified, and wrong sits forever on the throne. Evil seems to rule, walking with unhampered tread across the lives and hearts of millions of people. Yet it is not evil that ultimately succeeds; it is the cross!
Ray Stedman

Closing comments:

I'm sorry this study is so long, but I just couldn't leave out Pastor Stedman's insights on this chapter. They are worth taking the time to read!

Do you understand now why we need a Saviour? Can you see why this chapter is so important to our understanding of the Bible? The themes in Genesis 3 are carried through and expanded on throughout the rest of the scriptures, and culminate in Revelation.

In our next lesson on Chapter 4 humanity moves on after the garden, the Devil begins his efforts to stop God's prophecy in Gen. 3:15 from coming true.

In Christ,
Dusty Rhodes