

## GENESIS 3

### THE FALL OF MAN: A TALE OF TWO KINGDOMS

#### Message Notes

January 22, 2023

Let's walk through Scripture. Before you continue, please read Genesis 3-4. Go ahead, I'll wait right here.

Ready? Let's go!

We are walking through the book of *Genesis*. In my last blog, I talked about the creation narrative. Specifically, the Bible shows us that mankind (meaning man and woman alike, for Eve was there as Adam's suitable partner, not servant) is created in *God's* image to be His representatives, His authorities on earth, and to reflect His holiness that we can glorify Him on earth.

God had given Adam and Eve simple but firm rules for governing over the *Garden of Eden*, over animals, birds, and fish. They were to exercise dominion, but that does NOT mean to dominate with a heavy-hand. They were to treat *God's* creation as the gift that He intended: Man was given the whole of the garden to sustain him. He was to

regard every plant and living creature with the same love that God feels when He looked upon all that He had made on earth.

God wanted man to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth. Why? Because the heavens and earth are His kingdom, and He is its Sovereign Lord. We are His image. For us to fill the earth is to spread His image to all corners of creation, proclaiming it as His realm and drawing others to His glory that they could share in relationship with Him and experience His goodness and holiness for themselves.

Finally, Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat from two of the trees at the center of the garden. One was the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. The other tree was the Tree of Life. God had purposes for these trees, but the time for those purposes had not yet arrived.

Man's commission to exercise dominion over creation and to multiply and fill the earth with God's image was the EDENIC COVENANT. It was the first half of what would become the ADAMIC COVENANT. But, we'll get to that in a few minutes.

Why is that necessary? Because there is another kingdom at work on earth, a kingdom that opposes the authority and sovereignty of God. Scripture is the story of God's plans to redeem mankind from the sin that enters the picture here in GENESIS 3. The undercurrent of biblical history is the struggle between God's holy kingdom, His people,

the kingdom of light...and the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of the enemy known first as Lucifer and later as Satan.

Earth was not the first kingdom that God created, and we are not the first beings that He created. Sorry, I know that's an ego-punch. Before earth, God created the angelic beings, the heavenly hosts who serve Him. These were the Seraphim and the cherubim. We aren't going to get into angelology at this point. One of those created angelic beings was Lucifer. He was particularly beautiful, particularly high-ranking among the angels, and what's tragic is that God really loved Lucifer.

Unfortunately, Lucifer was a creature who grew prideful, ambitious, vain, self-absorbed, self-directed...in other words, wickedness sprouted within him. Rather than giving God the rightful glory for all his qualities, Lucifer took credit for himself. He started getting full of himself. It was a slippery slope from there: Lucifer started eyeing God's throne for himself. He started stirring up discord among the other angelic beings, inciting a rebellion against God.

That didn't work out for them at all. God ended up casting all those in rebellion out of His realm. Now, there are some who would point out that it was well within God's ability (and right as the Sovereign Lord and Creator) to speak a Word and wipe the rebellious

angels from existence. So why didn't He? The God of Justice is also the God of Mercy, and He decided to delay judgement upon the rebellious heavenly beings. The Book of Revelation, which we will examine later, tells us that the rebellion of Satan will ultimately end with fire from heaven and Satan in the eternal lake of fire.

The point is this: We have to understand God's ways are not our ways. His timing is not our timing. He does not think as a human. God has the Big Picture, the eternal perspective. He sees the whole arch of history from the beginning of earth to the end of days. He has the road map to where we are headed. If He chooses to delay judgement—whether upon the angelic rebels or upon the rebellious human race—He has a very good reason. In our case, that delay is meant to give us time to repent of sin and be saved by faith in Christ.

In the meantime, we read in GENESIS 3 that Satan intends to try to corrupt mankind, just as he corrupted some of the original angelic beings. When sin infected Adam and Eve, man became a corrupted, imperfect image of God. As man multiplied and filled the earth, it would not be a reflection of holiness and glory, but of sin and wickedness, of darkness rather than God's light.

Obviously, God didn't intend for His image to be corrupted by sin. God knew the serpent—Lucifer who is now referred to as Satan

(meaning "adversary")---was going to enter the picture at some point and try to corrupt His new realm and His new created beings. Before Eve and Adam ever bit into the fruit from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, God already had a plan for man's redemption. There is no scheme of man or the enemy that God hasn't anticipated (as we saw in the creation narrative, one of God's attributes is omniscience, meaning He is all-knowing). The enemy corrupted man; the enemy will try throughout history to prevent our redemption. He wants us to be cast from God's Kingdom into his kingdom of darkness, to grow his realm rather than God's.

God's purposes will not be defeated. God will do whatever He says that He will do; He is faithful to keep every promise He makes (as we will discover as we examine the biblical covenants).

How did Satan tempt Adam and Eve?

First: Satan disguised himself. This time, he used the body of the serpent. Eve and Adam knew all the creatures of the garden. They knew that all God had created was good. They had no fear or distrust of the serpent because they had no concept of evil or deception. Adam and Eve were quite innocent, in fact. Evil loves to prey on innocence. We still see that fact in the world today. Evil loves to corrupt and pervert. Satan will come at us in the guise of something we trust,

something innocuous, something appealing, and in that form will test and tempt us away from our walk with the Lord. He can disguise himself as an angel of light. This is why it is so important to know the Word of God, so that we know the ways that are holy and lead to life from the path of sin that leads to eternal death and separation from God. We need to be able to discern right from wrong as God teaches in His Word so that we can recognize and resist when Satan is tempting us to do wrong and to disobey God's will.

Second: Satan appeals to our pride, our lust for whatever catches our eye (money, power, flesh, forbidden fruit, etc.), our anger, resentment, loneliness, grief, or other vulnerabilities. Anything we crave or covet (even if we don't recognize it as a craving or desire) can be used to lure us to disobedience if we aren't vigilant and obedient to God's teaching. God's Word is our shield against these temptations. It protects us from attacks that are meant to exacerbate our hurts and hang-ups until they keep us in spiritual bondage until we lose all hope that we even can be redeemed. He will lie and tells us we are beyond hope, that we are unworthy of God's love and salvation. Please, brothers and sisters: IF THE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD IS HURTFUL, IF THE THING YOU DESIRE IS CAUSING YOU PAIN OR ANGER, THESE ARE YOUR WARNING SIGNS THAT THIS IS AN ATTACK OF THE ENEMY. GO TO GOD IN PRAYER FOR HELP. GO TO THE

CHURCH FOR SUPPORT. GO TO GOD'S WORD FOR HOPE AND GUIDANCE.

God's Word is our sword to fight back against the attacks of the enemy. We see Jesus wield God's Word when Satan tries to tempt Him in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Third: Satan will always distort and deny God's Word. God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil or they would surely die. Eve confessed as much to the serpent. How did Satan respond: "Really? Did God really say not to eat of that tree? No—you won't die. You'll be like God if you eat of the tree."

See what he did there? He distorted God's word ("Did He really...?"), then he outright denied it ("No, you won't die").

You can read what happens next: Eve gives in because of pride (wanting to be like God) and lust/craving/desire (the fruit looks good to eat). Eve eats the fruit. To make things worse, she gives it to Adam and he eats it. Boom. We go from a perfect creation and relationship with God, from life and innocence in the garden, to sin and death and separation from God. Death and suffering instantly become our new reality, as does guilt, shame, and fear.

These were Adam and Eve's first reaction when their eyes were opened and they understood the difference between good and evil: They realized they had sinned, they had disobeyed God, and they reacted with shame, guilt, and fear of God's response. What do they do? They try to hide from God. They cover their nakedness, which is basically trying to hide their sin from God. Folks, there's nothing more futile than trying to hide ANYTHING from an omniscient (all-knowing) and omnipresent (everywhere at once) God. The Lord is literally everywhere, and He knows literally everything we do and think.

If Adam and Eve had gone to God immediately and confessed their disobedience, if they had asked for His forgiveness, their story might have ended differently. Unfortunately, that's not what happened. They tried to hide their disobedience. When God called them out, they tried to pass the blame: Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent.

Why is it that Adam frequently takes the blame when Eve was the first one tempted by the serpent? Well, with great authority comes great responsibility. Adam was the caretaker of the garden. The narrative of the Bible would indicate that Adam was present when Eve was tempted by the serpent. Adam was the caretaker of Eve as much as the caretaker of the garden. His first response when the serpent began to tempt Eve into disobedience of God's instructions should have



been to intervene. He should have removed Eve from the situation, to rebuked the serpent back into obedience as he had authority over all animals and creatures that crawled on the ground (Adam and Eve probably had no concept that the serpent was inhabited by a demon, since they had no concept of evil before eating the fruit). He did none of those things. In fact, he yielded his authority to both Eve and the serpent when he agreed to eat of the fruit. This is why this incident is sometimes referred to as the sin of Adam and not the sin of Adam and Eve.

God is a God of Justice: He had to discipline everyone who was involved in this act of rebellion. Luckily for us, God is also a God of Love. He IS love, grace, and mercy. Jesus tells us that it is not God's will that any person should perish (any of His sheep be lost): "*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). You'll see in the Bible that whenever God casts judgement or disciplines His people, He also offers them hope. He does that right here with Adam and Eve.

Here is where we come to the ADAMIC COVENANT. This is important to biblical history and to our hope for redemption from sin, so pay attention:

A covenant is an agreement between two parties. Most of the time, God's covenants with men rely on God's own work to fulfill the terms and not any actions on man's part (the MOSAIC COVENANT being one notable exception). That is what's called an "unconditional covenant" because there are no conditions that man must fulfill.

We saw that the EDENIC COVENANT was God's first instructions to Adam to exercise dominion (with God's love) over nature and animal and to subdue and cultivate the earth (by giving man the opportunity to work alongside God, because the LORD can certainly care for everything He's created without man's help. He WANTS us to join in His work WILLINGLY).

The ADAMIC COVENANT comes after the fall of man, and I want to point this out: God punishes Adam and Eve, yes, but there's a covenant of HOPE embedded within their punishment...a history-changing covenant of hope. Let's look:

First term: God punishes the serpent for its part in the rebellion. Serpents will now crawl on their bellies in the dust. Crawling this way is meant to humble and shame the serpent.

Second term: God puts enmity between the serpent and the seed of the woman. In this sense, "serpent" refers to Satan, and (obviously) the seed of the woman means Eve's descendants. God says that the

seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent and the serpent will strike his heel. Do you get what God just said? The "seed of the woman" He means is Jesus Christ. God is saying that a Redeemer is coming from the descendants of Eve. That Redeemer is going to make right what Eve did wrong. A Messiah is coming to defeat Satan (the serpent). Goosebumps, people. That's the hope God gives within His judgement. Sin is with us now, as is the serpent, but not forever.

Third term: God said that the serpent would strike the heel of the Redeemer. This is telling us that our redemption comes at a price of suffering and blood, like that caused by a wound from a snakebite. God means the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross and Christ's blood that is spilled for our sins.

Fourth term: God says that nature will no longer obey Adam; Adam's going to have to struggle to bring forth crops from the ground. All men will have to toil and struggle and labor to survive.

Fifth term: The ultimate fate of man is now death. Fortunately, when the Redeemer/Messiah's work is completed on the cross, mankind has the hope of salvation from eternal death by faith in Christ.

Sixth term: Eve (and every woman after her) will bear children in pain that will be heightened.

Seventh term: Her desire will be towards her husband, and he will have authority over her. REMINDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS: This is not a mandate to dominate and be abusive of your wife. As we examined in the creation narrative, the home is meant to model life within the Holy Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, co-exist in a relationship of mutual love, mutual concern, and mutual submission for the good of one another. Husbands and wives are to live in that same kind of mutual love and mutual submission for the good of one another that they may reflect God's holiness and righteousness. Domination is an act of desire for power, an act of anger or hate, an act of self-glorification, and none of those qualities reflect the Lord's holiness.

Finally, Adam and Eve are still to multiply and fill the earth with God's image. This time, they will be beckoning others not just to God's holiness but to God's redemption. Despite Satan's meddling, God is going to allow His holy kingdom to continue on earth until the hour He appoints to bring a new creation (which will include His redeemed people and the final judgement of Satan).

This is why God also puts an angel to guard the Tree of Life. Satan would have us believe that God didn't want us to eat of these trees because of some insecurity that we might become like Him (as if

that were possible). God is above such pettiness. God keeps us now from the Tree of Life because that tree gives eternal life IN ONE'S PRESENT CONDITION. If Adam and Eve were to eat of the Tree of Life while they were sinful and unredeemed, they would be consigned to an eternity in their wickedness, an eternity without hope, living in this state of shame, fear, and guilt, because they would be separated from God (who is holy). They would have nothing to look forward to but an eternity in the lake of fire alongside Satan and his followers. God does not want us to eat of that eternal life until we have been perfected through the work of the Messiah. Once again, we see that God really does have our best interests at heart, even if we don't fully comprehend His ways.

The first animal sacrifice also takes place here as Adam and Eve are cast out of the Garden of Eden. God personally sacrifices an innocent animal to make skins to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness. Symbolically, an animal has died to temporarily block their sins from the sight of the Lord. This is going to have real significance as we discuss the Law of Moses and the system of sacrifices in Old Testament Israel. For now, the connection is this: The blood and death of the animal temporarily covered Adam and Eve's sins. The blood and death of Jesus Christ on the cross will PERMANANENTLY put the sins of

man out of God's sight so that He will remember our wickedness no more.

That's a lot to process, isn't it? We're going to stop here for now. In our next walk, we'll take a look at Adam and Eve's three sons, Cain, Abel, and Seth, who will sadly show us that man continues to spiral further downward into sin after the Fall. But don't worry: God has given us hope through the promise of the Messiah, and God is faithful to do all that He has promised.

Keep reading those Bibles, brothers and sisters!