

Genesis week 13  
Genesis 3  
: Paradise Lost pt 2

Back on Dec 3, the first Sunday of Advent, we dipped into Gen 3 and got a quick look at how sin entered in the world and how God gave the first prophecy of a Savior.

I'm sure you remember how the term for the prophecy has been labeled the "Protoevangelium," the first announcement of the gospel.

God is promising an offspring of the woman who would crush Satan. 3:15

The tragedy of sin entering the world was described by John Milton as Paradise Lost. Others might call it Arrested Development – the maturity and growth built into the created order was arrested and distorted. All of the messes we see in the world today and throughout human history are a result of the Fall.

We spent several weeks looking at Genesis ch 1-2 and God pronounced it as 'very good'

BUT SOMETHING WENT WRONG, and now we live in a world where we long for villains to be soundly defeated at the end of the arc of history.. And they will be, as we saw in the series on Revelation.

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" 4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 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 loin coverings.

8 They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Gen 3:1-13 summary – The crafty serpent comes to the woman in the Garden and raises questions about the provision of God. He deceives her into eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. She ate and gave to her husband, and their eyes were open, and they knew they were naked and covered themselves. They heard the sound of God walking in the garden and hid from Him.

NOTE HOW THE fall into sin happens quickly and subtly.

We don't have a timeline regarding how long Adam and Eve have been in the Garden. But I'm reminded of the Narnia narrative where upon the Founding of Narnia, Aslan says,

"Creatures, I give you yourselves," said the strong, happy voice of Aslan. "I give to you forever this land of Narnia. I give you the woods, the fruits, the rivers. I give you the stars and I give you myself. The Dumb Beasts whom I have not chosen are yours also. Treat them gently and cherish them but do not go back to their ways lest you cease to be

Talking Beasts. For out of them you were taken and into them you can return. Do not so.”...

“And now,” said Aslan, “Narnia is established. We must next take thought for keeping it safe. I will call some of you to my council. Come hither to me,—we must talk together. For though the world is not five hours old an evil has already entered it.”

The creatures he had named came forward and he turned away eastward with them. The others all began talking, saying things like “*What* did he say had entered the world?—A Neevil—What’s a Neevil?—No, he didn’t say a Neevil, he said a weevil—Well, what’s that?”

**3:1 – The serpent, an evil, is introduced without comment. We don’t know where he comes from, but he has already entered the Garden.** He knows what God has told Adam and Eve; he is a subtle tempter, and Revelation identifies him as Satan. Rev 12:9

From the perspective of Adam and Eve, the serpent is a creature over whom they are to exercise dominion, so the temptation is coming from a lower level being; they are not coerced from one above them.

The origin of this evil tempter is NOT a primary interest of the author of the text.

Joe Morecraft gives some insights into this subtle fall into sin.

1. **Satan injected doubt into Eve’s mind...”Has God said ‘You shall not eat from ANY tree of the Garden?’**

He raises doubt and he distorts what God says.

I hate to go there, but this is the beginning of Fake News, misinformation, and disinformation. Satan is the father of lies. He is seeking to change the meaning of what God said and then to lure Eve into a discussion based on a false premise. He gives the worst possible spin on what God said by misrepresenting it.

**3:3 Eve was already swayed by the serpent to some degree as she adds to what God ‘said’. “You shall not eat it OR TOUCH IT”.** God ONLY said that you shall not eat it. In adding her own prohibition, she is buying into the narrative that God is unreasonable.

EX: How often does that happen? Something is said, then the next person gives a different spin, and the next person adds a little more distortion and pretty soon you can’t find the original statement or the truth..

EX: Have you ever played TELEPHONE or Telephone Pictionary? Sadly, the game mimics real life.

When we take God’s commands as mere suggestions, and we do what is right in our own eyes, we are following the model of the serpent. When we take our own ideas or distortions of truth and elevate them to the level of divine commands, we are following the model of the serpent.

2. **Satan attacks the integrity and goodness of their Creator by giving the idea that God is holding out on them and keeping them from being all that they could be.**
3. **He is seeking to win a place in Adam’s heart that rightfully belongs to God alone.**

APPLY\*\* Parents, here’s a good game to play with your kids...”Spot the Lie”. As you as a family or your kids are watching something or listening to something, challenge them to spot the lie, and the prize is \$1. Do that until you’re broke.

**v.3:5 (serpent)... For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”**

Thaddeus Williams Hebrew for “knowing” – knowledge from being the maker. God has a maker’s knowledge of us .

Satan puts forth the idea that they might 'know good and evil.'

These are Not just moral categories, but for the ancient Jewish audience, writers would use polar opposites to describe everything in between.

EX: if you want to refer to all colors, an author might say "black and white" – opposites and it stand for everything in between

So "good and evil" is a way of saying, "know everything.." It goes beyond basic moral categories.

**The serpent's temptation is to say, "You can be the knowing maker and definer of everything."**

I think the serpent would be very pleased with how our culture today has latched onto that lie -i.e. we can define our own lives, identities, our values, our truth, or our pronouns (which in reality are simply a grammatical part of speech that we should learn in middle school),

**This is the Big Lie from Satan – We can and should be in a place of being our own interpreters of reality. We should be our own law givers and the ones who define ourselves.** Notice how quickly 'a Neevil', Satan, set out to reverse and distort the Created Order.

In The American Paradox, David Myers (2000) he notes that Americans have more freedom and wealth and less happiness than ever before. We are freer to be ourselves yet are more miserable in doing so. We are free to be the kings and queens of our own tiny skull-sized kingdoms, alone in the center of all creation (David Foster Wallace – This is Water).

But as in Gen 3, our personal autonomy leads to alienation from God and others.

**v. 6-13 Adam and Eve chose moral autonomy and independence from God and what did it get them? Knowledge of their nakedness, shame, and alienation from God. It wasn't as liberating as they were led to believe.**

NOTE HOW THE fall into sin happens and is reported without much fanfare. One might expect a longer detailed explanation of the origin of sin, given the importance of this event. This narrative doesn't even go into the theological ramifications of sin. That comes later in scripture, especially in the NT.

Source Unknown...The reality of the exceeding sinfulness of sin is seen in...

**The One who is sinned against** – a gracious Creator who put them in Paradise where it was all good.

**Those guilty of the sin** – creatures made in God's image who enjoyed direct fellowship with God and the wonders of the garden paradise.

**The command that was violated** – something simple and direct.

**The setting of the sin** – a place of bounty and provision. Every tree in the Garden was good for food.

**The caution of the sin** – If you eat from it you will die. – God graciously gave them a warning and a motivation to obey.

Isn't sin like that in our lives?

We can be doing the most routine things and then BAM, temptation comes, an idea, an outside influence and quickly and subtly we can forget everything that God has said on the situation and walk right into sin. We determine that God's word can't be trusted, that we know better, and after all, the command seems to pointless. It can't be THAT important. "God wants me to be HAPPY, right?"

We need to spend some time on the one to whom the SIN is attributed...Adam

**6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.**

Vodie Bauchum - "Where was Adam when satan came rolling up on his Boo?"

Larry Crabb wrote a whole book on this – The Silence of Adam.

Back in November we saw the Hebrew and Greek words that relate to being created male in God's image, i.e. biblical masculinity

**Zakar means "to leave a mark, to make an impact."** In ancient Near East culture, the word referred to a king's assistant, to a man charged with the important privilege of reminding the king of matters that required his royal attention. Zakar came to mean someone who remembers something important that moves him to do something important.

**ARSEN – the Greek word used by Jesus means "to lift, to carry."** It points to the strength needed to move something from one place to another.

**Together, arsen and zakar suggest the beginning idea that a man reflects God by remembering what is important and moving into a disordered situation with the strength to make an important difference.**

That is how Adam failed.

"Adam said nothing. He stood there, heard and watched the whole thing, and didn't say a word. He failed the woman he loved. He failed God in his first spiritual test. He failed as a man!

Crabb. "The silence of Adam is the beginning of every man's failure, from the rebellion of Cain to the impatience of Moses, from the weakness of Peter down to my failure yesterday to love my wife well. It is a disturbing picture of the nature of our failure." - Men of Courage (The Silence of Adam)

You doubt God, believe a lie, and see the enticement of the thing and the HOOK IS SET.

And then you find someone else to go along with you. Envy, gossip, slander, ungodly prejudice, and immorality are sins that are quick to spread among "friends" or enemies.

Here, Eve was tempted, deceived, ate, and then gave it to her husband with her, and he ate.

The sin per se is attributed to Adam, as we see in the NT teaching. 1 tim 2:14 / Rom 5

**Rom 5:18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. 20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The description in Gen 3 fits with 1 Jn 2 regarding love for the world.

**1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

The narrative of how "a Neevil" entered the world is important for the original audience and for us.

Moses is showing how the people of Israel (and us) are all too much like Adam and Eve. The Garden narrative was a warning to the people – Don't rebel and disobey God as they did. God is giving you a place, a Promised Land, like Eden to cultivate, to be fruitful and multiply, and to reflect who God is to the nations.

While writing the narrative, Moses was still outside of the Promised Land so Adam and Eve served as a reminder to the people to be loyal or they would miss the blessings of the Promised Land. Moses was calling on the people to a life of faith and covenant loyalty.

OBVIOUSLY, evil remained in the world and the people didn't obey, but from Israel came the promised Messiah who would obey and save His people from their sin.

**THE TABLE-** God has graciously given us a sacrament to remind us and feed us spiritually as we remember and proclaim the work of Christ.

Adam sinned in regard to that tree in the garden. As a result, Jesus was condemned to die on a tree and as the Second Adam, he obeyed perfectly.

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