

Genesis week 12

Genesis 3

ADVENT #1: The First Prophecy of a Savior

There is a reason why children and adults are drawn to stories of adventure and good vs evil. It's the world we live in.

CS Lewis understood this, and he was opposed those who wanted to reform and totally sanitize children's stories so that they would not be frightened. Lewis took a different view. He didn't want to create pathological fears, but he didn't want to give kids a false impression and escapism. In *Three Ways of Writing for Children* he says,

Since it is so likely that they will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise, you are making their destiny not brighter but darker. Nor do most of us find that violence and bloodshed, in a story, produce any haunting dread in the minds of children. As far as that goes, I side impenitently with the human race against the modern reformer. Let there be wicked kings and beheadings, battles and dungeons, giants and dragons, and let villains be soundly killed at the end of the book

This sounds a bit like the *Chronicles of Narnia* doesn't it?

We can't hide the reality of the real world. We've been looking at Genesis ch 1-2 and so far it has been 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 book. And they will be as we saw in the series on Revelation.

That ending was foretold in the earliest pages of scripture in Gen 3.

Stay with me and we'll see how this is an ADVENT PASSAGE...

Gen 3:1-10 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.

. 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."

14 The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

16 To the woman He said,

"I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

18 Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;

19 By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

The text of Genesis 2-3 makes up a long literary narrative. We've broken it down by looking at several themes in Chapter 2, so today we'll look at the big picture of Chapter 3. After the Advent season we'll come back to chapter three because there is so much there.

Do ever lose things – keys, phone, glasses, book, etc?
How do you find them? RETRACE YOUR STEPS

Dr. Pratt helps us understand the way this narrative was used for the original audience and for us. As we look at ch 2-3, we'll see that Moses wrote about Adam and Eve losing paradise to encourage Israel to retrace and reverse the steps Adam and Eve took in that Garden of Eden. Only as Israel learned from this story could they hope to find paradise again, and we will see that the encouragement Moses gave to Israel is also God's message for us today. By going back to the steps of Adam and Eve, Christians today can find paradise too. By trusting and remaining faithful to Christ, we will discover the salvation of paradise, lost and found.

THE BIG PICTURE:

Richard Pratt – Primeval History #2

What we see from Ch 2 to Ch 3 is a partial reversal of the blessings given to the man and the woman: I say it is 'partial' because Adam and Eve don't lose the image of God. We see reversal in the following ways...

Innocence and harmony with God.....hiding from God
Naked and unashamed shame with one another
Be Fruitful and multiplypain in the process of giving birth
Tend the gardenbanished from THE GARDEN and the ground is cursed

We must remember that Moses is writing this early Primeval narrative for his original audience first. The people freed from Egypt are being led to a promised land, and Moses gives clues that they are going back to the broader land of Eden, the "Fertile Crescent", i.e. the Promised Land.

The geographical markers from Gen 1-2 indicate the western boundary of Eden at a river near Egypt (NOT THE NILE) AND eastern boundary at the Euphrates.

This is very similar to the way God described the borders of the Promised Land in Gen 15 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).

Moses also gives descriptions that show that Eden was a holy or sacred place like the Tabernacle that represents the localized presence of God among His people: God walked with them in the Garden as He would walk with His people – Lev 26:12. Much of Lev 26 describes a land of blessing for Israel if they walk and follow Him.

References to the Tree of life, gold and onyx, cherubim or angels, were all referenced in Eden and were included as part of the décor or design of the Tabernacle.

Moses is conveying the message that to draw near to Canaan, the Promised Land, was to draw near to God and find rest and safety. (Deut 12:10ff) Just as God placed Adam and Eve in the wonderful temple garden in the beginning, God was now bringing Israel to Canaan, and once they dwelled in that land, the nation would begin to experience the blessings of living in the special presence of God.

God required Loyalty in both Eden and Canaan – Gen 2:16-17 / Deut 8:1

Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers (Deuteronomy 8:1).

Chapter 8 of Deut is filled with blessing of obedience and warnings about disobedience. Moses is showing how the people 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 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.

The Garden/ Fall narrative also served to show the consequences of rebellion against God: death, pain, and separation. Gen 2:17 You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:17).

The words “You will surely die” reflect the seriousness of the violation and are echoed in the Mosaic Law in Lev – Deut. Certain violations warranted the death penalty that would be carried out. God did not carry out an immediate death penalty in the Garden, but it became certain that death would follow sin. Moses uses this narrative to explain how sin and death entered the world. The people of Israel certainly knew the reality of both sin and death. The older generation of those who left Egypt died in the wilderness because of their sin and unbelief. – Numb 26:65

Adam and Eve experienced pain as a consequence of their sin. Childbearing would be greatly painful for Eve, and the ground was cursed resulting in painful toil for Adam. The people of Israel knew the pain of slavery for 400 years, and now they were looking for a place of safety and ‘shalom’.

A third result of sin was that of separation. Adam and Eve were sent out of the Garden which was the place that represented the presence of God. The people of Israel were seeking the Land of Promise that was seen as the place where God would dwell with them.

The Garden narrative was a way for Moses to teach the people about the story of mankind, sin, and death. It was also a way to teach the people about their own opportunity to live a life of blessing in a place like Eden – the Land of Promise.

Moses showed how Paradise was lost and how it could be regained if the people retraced and reversed the steps of Adam so they could find paradise by living by faith in the land that God would give them.

SO, WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH Christmas?

In line with OT prophets, the NT writers see Jesus as the second Adam who comes to retrace and reverse the narrative of the Fall. The people of Israel were not faithful to walk in the ways of Yahweh (Deut 8:1), so they needed a Savior, a true Deliverer. The prophets indicated that one would come who would bring salvation. Through Him we find freedom from the penalty and power of sin. Death, pain, and separation are ultimately reversed. Salvation in Christ is a way of returning to paradise – not in this life, but in the life to come. As we walk with Christ, we get glimpses or foretastes of what is to come.

Jesus comes as a baby to inaugurate the Kingdom. His coming is foretold by the prophets and in the Garden Narrative itself.

You may be familiar with the concept, but if not, it is important to note that the first prophecy of a Savior is in Gen 3:15.

In speaking to the serpent, God says,

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

THIS has traditionally been understood as pointing forward to the defeat of the serpent by a future descendant of the woman, and this interpretation fits well with the words and the context. This defeat is implied by the serpent’s being bruised in the head, which is more serious than the offspring of Eve being bruised in the heel.

For this reason, v. 15 has been labeled the “Protoevangelium,” the first announcement of the gospel.

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

The reality of Garden salvation, rest, relationship, and safety is a PERSON we meet before it is something we experience.

We can't understand who Jesus is and what He came to do apart from understanding the context of Genesis Ch 3 and its connection to the rest of scriptural prophecy. The Advent season is about the waiting and expectation of the Savior to come. That expectation is first announced in Gen 3.

This 'protoevangel' interpretation is built on our understanding that the serpent is more than a mere snake. This is verified in Rev 12:9 and 20:2 in which the serpent is identified as Satan.

The future savior motif is seen in Gen 4 as Eve notes that she has "gotten a man with the help of Yahweh." This note of optimism comes in light of the promise of 3:15. Perhaps this child would be the man to overthrow the serpent.

That didn't happen so the motif then follows the line of Seth. The hope of this deliverer is connected with a king / savior who will be "David's son." This hope comes to fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who is clearly presented in the NT as overcoming Satan while at the same time being bruised. (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8; cf. Matt. 12:29; Mark 1:24; Luke 10:18; John 12:31; 16:11; 1 Cor. 15:24; Col. 2:15), 1 John 3:8. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

Gen 3 introduces the first Advent – waiting for the savior to come. Now on this side of the cross, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost, we are in a Second Advent mode.

1 Thess 1:9 or they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

The only way for us to find paradise again, i.e. to 'get back to the Garden', is through the perfect obedience of Christ that is applied to us through faith in Him. We dare not seek to stand before God based on our own merit. Our resume is just not good enough. While all sorts of institutions in our culture today are lowering their standards, God has not. Our only hope is to be found righteous in Christ alone.

For us to understand and appreciate the person and work of Christ, we simply need to consider His name.

Matt 1:21 – the purpose of Christ is IN HIS NAME

20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." 22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us."

The GOOD NEWS of the Gospel is that Jesus the Savior has come, and He has defeated Satan, sin and death. Satan's defeat is full and final so we can prepare ourselves to stand firm in the grace of Christ.

Discussion questions:

Do you have a favorite Messianic prophecy?

Why is it important for Christians to understand Gen 3:15?

How does the reversal of the Creation Order show up after the Fall?

How did Adam and Eve fail in their roles as discussed in the previous sermons about being made in the image of God?

How did Moses use the Garden / Fall narrative to instruct the people coming out of Egypt?

How should the judgement of Satan impact our lives as believers?

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