

Paradise Lost Genesis 3:1 – 19

Proposition: Sin entered the human race ruining our relationship with God, each other, nature and even with self.

Application: Receive the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

At the end of Genesis one and two, we read everything was “very good.” So, what happened? Why is there sorrow and sickness? Why is there cancer and crime? Why tears and tragedies, death and destruction? The reason is because sin entered the human race. If we remove Genesis 3 from Scripture, we have no answer for why the world is the way it is.

Because of sin our relationship with God, with each other, with nature and even with self is ruined. In this passage, we will explore how sin entered God’s very good creation? How will the Lord will reverse the effects of sin?

I. Satan (3:1 – 5)

Casting Doubt (3:1): Just as an angel spoke through Balaam’s donkey, satan spoke through a serpent (Rev 12:9). The word serpent means “*to practice divination.*” Satan is the master of cunning. He knows how to trap. He knows our weak spots. As a result, he was able to cause a God-fearing woman to question God’s Word. What God said was clear but satan, the ultimate liberal theologian, confused Eve by distorting God’s Word. The Lord outlawed only one tree, satan claimed He outlawed all trees. Distorting the Word of God, induced doubt in Eve’s mind. Notice the serpent approached Eve not Adam. God gave the command to Adam who then likely passed it on to Eve. What Eve knew about God’s command she knew from Adam.

Confirming then Adding to Scripture (3:2, 3): God allowed all trees but one. God’s prohibition is for our protection. There are limits to liberty. Eve affirmed God’s command, but she added to it. God did not forbid touching the fruit He outlawed eating it. Eve may have echoed what Adam told her. Adam may have said to Eve *you shall not even touch it!* If she does not touch the fruit, she will not eat the fruit. Adam added *a fence around the law.* A “*fence*” keeps us from breaking laws. For instance, if I have a *no trespassing* sign on my yard and notice people trespass, what do I do? I put a fence around my yard to ensure no one trespasses. This is an example of a *fence around the law.* If Eve is not allowed to touch the fruit, she will not eat the fruit. Yet adding to the Word of God leads to sin. How? Say Eve touched the fruit and nothing happened to her. Since there was no harm touching the fruit, she believed there will be no harm eating the fruit. In this way adding to the Word of God opens the door to sin (Prov 30:6; Deut 12:32).

The Word of God was quoted three times in these verses but never rightly. First it was *distorted*. Then it was *amended*. Lastly it was *denied*.

Consequences Denied (3:4, 5): Satan convinces us God will not punish sin. He denies that disobedience has consequences. Here is the first lie in Scripture; a lie that leads to death (John 8:44). Satan is the worst mass murderer in history. Every death is a result of his lie. The Hebrew text says, “*you will not die, die.*” In effect, satan said to Eve “*you will not die twice*” – you will not die spiritually, and you will not die physically. Or “*you will not die when you touch the fruit, you will not die when you eat it.*” He deceived Eve by telling her, and I paraphrase, “*God forbids the fruit because He does not want you to be enlightened. He is a jealous God. He does not want any rivals to His deity. Eat and you will know what God knows.*” Satan’s lie convinced Eve that rather than suffer for disobedience she will benefit. She can decide for herself what is good and what is evil. Although Adam and Eve gained new insight, the knowledge of evil enslaved them. All of humanity now knows good and evil not as God knows good and evil. God knows evil like a doctor knows a disease. A doctor may know a great deal about liver cancer without having liver cancer. In the same way, God knows about evil without being evil. We know evil by experience. We know good and evil as sinners.

The Word of God was quoted but not rightly. It was distorted. It was amended. It was denied. Now we arrive at the most tragic verse in Scripture and the most tragic event in history.

II. Sin (3:6, 7)

Convinced of the Lie (3:6): Often, we are not content with the good we have. We want more. Eve looked at the tree with a new longing. Her desire for what was outlawed surpassed her desire for what was lawful. She fulfilled her God-given desires in a wrong way. The fruit likely tasted good. It was pleasing to look at. It enriched the mind. Eve was tempted in three spheres: *lust of the eyes; lust of the flesh; pride of life* (1 John 2:16). *Lust of the flesh* – good for food; *lust of the eyes* – delight to the eyes; *pride of life* – making one wise.

Sin has a way of involving others. Because Eve did not die after she ate, she gave some to her husband. Satan used deceit to convince Eve to eat the fruit. Adam did not need clever words. All Eve had to do was hand Adam the fruit and say *here eat!* Adam put his wife’s offer ahead of God’s command. Maybe he felt that if he did not eat the fruit, he would be estranged from his wife. She would have knowledge he would not have. Wanting to be one with her he ate. Eve was deceived, Adam was defiant. He willingly and knowingly defied God’s command (Hos 6:7).

Sin has consequences. Some consequences are immediate, others kick-in later and still others are permanent. In this case the consequences were immediate, long term and permanent.

Consequences of Sin – Shame (3:7): The source of the new knowledge they received was not from God it was from satan. With this new knowledge they became aware of the shameful features of their sexuality. The very organs that reproduce the human race will now transmit sin through its seed (Ps 51:5). The word naked in 2:25 is *arummin* meaning *innocent nakedness*, such as the innocence of an infant when getting their diaper changed. The word for naked in this verse is *ayrummin* which means *shameful nakedness*. Adam and Eve lost their innocence. Their shame was instant and intense, so they covered it.

Satan tempts us by distorting, amending or denying the Word of God. Sin has consequences, the worse is a severed relationship with the Lord.

III. Suffering (3:8 – 14, 16 – 19)

Consequences of Sin (3:8 – 11): Sin causes us to avoid God. But the awesome truth is this: *we may run from God, but He pursues us still*. The Good Shepherd seeks His lost sheep! God went to Adam first because Adam was the first to receive God's command. God asked Adam a question so Adam could confess his sin,

Psychiatrist Dr. Abraham Twerski once said, *Human beings need four things – air, food, drink and someone to blame*. Adam blamed Eve. Eve blamed the serpent, and the serpent was left without a leg to stand on.

Confession from Adam (3:12): When caught in sin, we often downplay our role and blame others. We may blame our sin on a poor childhood; we may blame our spouse; we may blame our boss at work; we may even blame God. When Adam first met Eve, he was thrilled! Now he blamed God for giving him Eve as his wife. After blaming God and Eve Adam at last admits his sin – *I ate*. Eve also played down her role in sin and blamed the serpent.

Confession from Eve (3:13): At least she did not blame God for making the serpent. Before this event it was all blessing now a curse is pronounced.

Curse on Satan (3:14): Some snake fossils have a pelvis and hind limb structures. A vestigial pelvis bones and hind limb structures are clues those snakes at one time had limbs for movement. Snakes use their forked tongues to collect chemicals from the ground. An organ at the top of the mouth decodes the chemical profile of the ingested dust helping the snake find its next meal or its future mate (Mic 7:17a). To eat dust means to lick dust. As long as the serpent lives, it will lick dust. This curse will not even be lifted in the messianic age (Isa 65:25).

Because of Adam's sin there is chaos. God cursed satan and now describes the trouble women would face as a result of sin.

Consequence for Women (3:16): It seems pain in childbirth was always part of God's plan. Because of Adam's sin, labour pain increased from bearable to unbearable. Yet even in sorrow there is joy (John 16:21). Because of Adam's sin, marriage will also have conflict. Some may not agree with what I am about to say – you may even bristle upon hearing what I believe this verse teaches. The Hebrew word for *desire* is *teshuka* found only three times in the OT. Other Hebrew words for desire are used. But *teshuka* is only found here, in 4:7 and in Song of Solomon 7:10. In Song of Solomon, *teshuka* means desire for intimacy. Sexual intimacy existed before the fall. We believe *teshuka* in this verse means the *desire to rule*. Just as sin desired to rule over Cain, a wife will desire to control her husband. Before the Fall, man was ordained to the leader in the marriage (1 Cor 11:3). The Lord declared to Cain what he should do – *you must master it*. In the same way, the Lord declared that the husband will at times need to assert his authority in the marriage. Some believe *society needs men to step up more now than ever. A healthy society needs men to be good husbands and fathers*. Paul deals with this issue when he exhorts husbands to lead their wives in love and wives to willingly submit to their husband's loving leadership (Eph 5:25, 5:22, 23). Sin ruined the loving headship of the husband and the willing submission of the wife. But in Christ Jesus the damage can be reversed.

The present state of the world is not what it was supposed to be. Natural disasters, famine, poverty, disease and death, corruption and crime can all be traced to Adam's sin.

Curse on Nature (3:17 – 19): Work is not part of the curse. Before the Fall work was devoid of burden. Now work is toilsome. We struggle to earn a living. The world resists our efforts to succeed (Gen 5:29). Dust not divinity is our future. We are dust not gods. God did not design us to die. Death came through sin (Rom 5:12). In the midst of curse there is blessing. The ground will still yield produce. The womb will still bear children. One day those in Christ Jesus will rise from the dust and receive glorified bodies that will never die.

Satan's plan is death, God's plan is deliverance. The answer to the sin question is spelled out 3:15, the first messianic prophecy in Scripture.

IV. Saviour (3:15)

Coming Saviour (3:15): A future offspring of a woman will crush the head of satan. Notice the offspring is from Eve's seed not Adam's seed. This suggests the Saviour will have no biological father. This seed traced through a woman is the Messiah. He brings salvation to Adam's last race by dying for our sin by raising us up from the dust and by crushing the head of satan, whose final defeat is yet to come (Rom 16:20).