

## **Bible Readings**

### **Old Testament Reading**

#### **Genesis 3:1-24**

**3** Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

**2** The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

**4** "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5** "For God knows that when 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 fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

**8** Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

**10** He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

**11** And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

**12** The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

**13** Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

**14** So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all livestock

and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

**15** And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and hers;

he will crush your head,

and you will strike his heel."

**16** To the woman he said,

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;

with painful labor you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband,

and he will rule over you."

**17** To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from

the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;

through painful toil you will eat food from it

all the days of your life.

**18** It will produce thorns and thistles for you,

and you will eat the plants of the field.

**19** By the sweat of your brow

you will eat your food

until you return to the ground,

since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return.”

<sup>20</sup> Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

<sup>21</sup> The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. <sup>22</sup> And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” <sup>23</sup> So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup> After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

## **New Testament Reading**

### **Hebrews 2:14-18**

<sup>14</sup> Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— <sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. <sup>17</sup> For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Sermon

The Fall (Genesis 3:1-24 and Hebrews 2:14-18)

06-Dec-20

It would be great to have your Bible turned to Genesis 3

Let me **pray** before we begin...

Let's pray...

Intro

First up then

There are a few common misconceptions about God:

[PowerPoint 1-Misconceptions]

1. *God can't be a God of love if h\He allows suffering and tragedy and death*
  2. *A loving God would not send people to Hell*
  3. *Looking at the world - God is not in control - otherwise He'd intervene*
  4. *God wants me to be happy*
  5. *God will understand if I do x y z*
  6. *The Bible and God's rules are just guidelines*
  7. *We don't need God - we can do everything that God can do*
- You might have **heard people say** some of these statements?
  - You might have even **said some of them yourself?**
  - Where do these **misconceptions** about God **come from?**
  - Well they have their origin right back at the **beginning of the Bible**
  - Please turn your Bibles to **Genesis - chapter 3**

## The Temptation from the Serpent (Genesis 3:1-5)

- We pick up the story - where the first humans - the man, Adam, and his wife
- Living in a perfect Garden called Eden in the presence of God
- But then in verse 1 of chapter 3
- A crafty serpent speaks to the woman

### [PowerPoint 2-Serpent and Woman]

- What are we to make of a talking serpent?
- We need to understand that the serpent is actually Satan
- Ezekiel 28:13-19 tell us that **Satan was in the Garden of Eden**
- [And Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 refer to Satan as the serpent of old]
- **Ezekiel 28** also tells us that **Satan was an angel of the highest rank in Heaven and Isaiah 14** tells us that **Satan was kicked out of Heaven by God because of his desire to be equal to or greater than God**
- Something that is not possible
- So, Satan has taken up residence in the serpent and is speaking through the serpent
- And being crafty he speaks to the woman rather than the man
- Because the original rule God gave not to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil - that rule was **given to the man - not the woman**
- So, Satan goes to the **weakest link** in the chain - the woman - because perhaps she's not fully aware of God's rule?
- And **notice** how subtle Satan is
- "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

- He **sows a seed of doubt** - did God really say? Making the woman question what the rule is?
- He also takes what God said which was **positive** "you are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' - and **turns it into a negative** "did God really say, 'you must not eat any tree in the garden'
- What Satan is doing is **attacking God's Word** - if the woman doubts **God's word** then Satan will have some success
- The **woman confirms God's rule**
- But her understanding of the rule is a little **vague**
  - She **refers to the tree** of the knowledge of good and evil **as** simply the **tree in the middle of the garden** - she doesn't even remember its proper name
  - And she **embellishes the rule** - by saying she can't **even** touch this tree
  - That's not what God said - his **rule was not to eat** - rather than not to touch
  - But she is right about the **consequences** - eating the fruit **will lead to death**
- So, the **serpent attacks God's word further** - see v4
- The serpent says "You will not certainly die"
- This is a **blatant contradiction of God's rule** - the serpent is **lying**
- And then in v5 the **serpent tries to back-up his lie**- the serpent **suggests God only gave that rule** to them because He **doesn't want the man and his wife to be like God**

- Again, this sows the seed of doubt in the woman about God
- It **suggests God is being mean** - by not wanting humans to be like Him
- That's how Satan works - by **causing people to doubt & question God's rules;** and by **causing people to question God's fairness** and to **question whether God is really in charge.**

### Application

- Perhaps we are **tempted** to "break" or "bend" **God's rule?** Falling for the misconception that **God will understand?** God never understands sin!
- Remember in our studies in 2 Samuel - the **consequences** that **King David suffered** as a result of breaking and bending God's rules
- **Let us learn from his mistakes** - rather than making the same mistakes as him
- Perhaps we are **doubting God's Word?**
- Let us not fall for Satan's temptations and lies

### The Sin of the Man and the Woman (Genesis 3:6-10)

- The **serpent's tactic works** - see v6
- The **woman eats fruit** from the forbidden tree

### [PowerPoint 3-Sin]

- She gives into a **three-fold temptation**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> - she gives in to her flesh - the **fruit is good for food**
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> - she gives into her eyes - the **fruit is pleasing to the eye**

- **3<sup>rd</sup>** - she gives into her pride - the **fruit** is **desirable** because it **gives wisdom**
- To the woman this **fruit** is too good not to have - so **she eats** it
- She even gives some to **her husband** - and he eats it
- And v7 - **they get wisdom** alright - but not quite **what they expected**
- Suddenly their **eyes are opened** to the fact that they're **naked**
- Before they ate the fruit - being **naked** wasn't a problem - they were innocent - like toddlers running around naked - and not caring
- Now the man and his wife have **lost** that **innocence** - it's not cool to be naked anymore
- They've **lost that connection with God** - and they feel ashamed about being naked
- And they even sew prickly **fig leaves** to cover themselves up
- And they're **so ashamed** of themselves **they hide from** the presence of **God**
- What has happened to them?
- Before they ate the fruit, they fellowshiped with God
- Now they feel guilty
- **Sin** has **entered** the world
- They **try to hide** from God
- But no one can hide from the omniscient (all-knowing) omnipresent (ever-present) **God**
- Worst still - the **saddest verse** of the lot - **v10** - the man said **they hid** because they were afraid of God

### Application

- Why did they sin?
- Yes, they were **tricked by Satan**
- But they had a choice as to whether to **believe Satan's lies** and deception - or follow God's rule
- But the fruit looked **good** and according to Satan **eating** the fruit would **make them like God**
- They **believed the lie** - that they could have equality with God - but we **can't be equal with God** - He is the Creator - we are the creatures - Believing that same lie - **got Satan kicked out of Heaven**
- The man and woman also **believed the lie** that **God wants them to be happy** - so why would He mind if they **ate some fruit** that looked so inviting - what could be wrong with that? **God will understand**
- The truth is **God's priority** is not for us to be happy but for us to obey **Him** and follow His way and not our own way -
- **God won't** understand them **helping themselves** to the forbidden fruit - **God's rules** are not just guidelines that we can follow if we wish.
- **God's rules** are **mandatory** and **designed** to **keep us safe** and to **keep order** in the world.
- When God's rules aren't followed - we get **disorder, chaos, hatred, jealous, fighting, wars** etc.
- **Friends** don't fall for the misconception - that **God wants us to be happy**
- First and foremost - **God wants our obedience**
- **And don't think we can hide** anything from God
- Psalm 139 tells us that **God knows all about us** - every detail of our lives
- Psalm 139 also tells us wherever we go - God is there - **God is everywhere**

## God Confronts the Man and Woman with their Sin (Genesis 3:11-13)

- Back to the Garden and **God confronts** the **man** and the **woman**
- See v11 - God asks - 'who told you that you were naked?'
- God sees **their innocence is now gone**
- And God knows they've **disobeyed His rule**
- But look how the **man responds** to the accusation

### [PowerPoint 4-Blame]

- The man **starts the blame game** - He **blames God** for giving him the woman
- And the man **blames the woman** for giving him the fruit
- *A couple of years ago - our granddaughter wrote her name in texta on a piece of our furniture - and then blamed it on her brother, who couldn't even write*
- The blame game starts early doesn't it?
- When God confronts the woman
- She blames the serpent - because the serpent **deceived her**
- But that's no excuse - the **man and woman** knew the rules

### Application

- What about us?
- When we are confronted with our sin - whether that's **directly through God**, or indirectly through God's Word, or by **someone else pointing out our sin**
- Do we start the blame game - it's always someone else's fault - never ours
- Do we say - the **devil made me do it?** Well - we have a choice whether to **listen to God** and His Word - or listen to the Devil and his lies

- **When we are confronted with our sins - are we be **genuinely** sorry for our sin, do we confess it and **repent**?**
- Remember how King **David reacted** when confronted about **his sin** with Bathsheba
- In Psalm 51:4 - David said "**Against you [God], you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight**" - **that's how we must fess up to our sin**

### The Punishment [Curse] (Genesis 3:14-24)

- Things could have been so different
- If only the serpent had minded his own business
- If only the woman hadn't been tempted?
- If only the man had said to the woman "*Don't eat the fruit from that tree it's really dangerous and we will die?*"
- But no, the man followed the woman's lead and followed her disobedience
- And their disobedience led to punishment for everyone involved

### [PowerPoint 5-Punishment Satan]

- The **punishment** for the **serpent** - v14 & 15
  - Notice **God** doesn't ask the **serpent** why he tempted and lied to the woman
  - That's because the serpent is **Satan**

And in John 8:44 **Jesus describes Satan as a murderer from the beginning, not holding to truth, that there is no truth in him, and when he lies, he speaks his native language; he is the father of lies**

- The punishment for the serpent is:
- The serpent must now **crawl on its belly** and **eat dust**, presumably the serpent had legs before this?
- From now on there will be **hostility between the serpent and the woman**
- There will be a **natural aversion** from now on between **humans and snakes**
- And as the **serpent is Satan - Satan will continue to tempt and lie and trick human beings**
- And there will also be **hostility between the Satan and humankind - there will be a **spiritual battle - darkness versus light - evil versus good****

### [PowerPoint 6 - punishment woman]

- The **punishment** for the **woman** - v16
  - **Childbirth** will be **painful**
  - **Raising children** will be **difficult**
  - There will be **tension** in a **marriage** relationship - the husband as head of the house - will try to rule over his wife - but this will sometimes be difficult because a) the **husband doesn't lead properly** and b) the **wife doesn't let the husband lead properly**

### [PowerPoint 7- punishment man]

- The punishment for the man - v17 & v18 & v19
  - The man won't be able to just pick food from the plants in the garden
  - **Gathering food** will mean **dealing with weeds and thorns** because **creation is broken** - it will be **hard work** to put food on the table now
  - Until **one day** - the man [and the woman] will **return to the dust** he was created from - he will **physically die**
  
- **Because of the sin of Adam and Eve** - we too inherit their punishments too
- We're living in a **fallen world** - **broken people** - **broken creation**
- And one day we all die too!
  
- **God shows** some **grace** here as He gives out His punishment for sin
  - He understands **Adam and Eve** feel **ashamed** of being **naked** now - and so he **provides garments of skin** for them to cover their shame
  - This meant an **animal had to die** for them to be covered over
  - This is the **first hint of animal sacrifice** to cover over the shame of sin

### [PowerPoint 8- consequence]

- And there's also a **further consequence** for Adam and Eve - **they must leave the garden of Eden** - away from the close presence of God
- They don't have access to the tree of life - so **they can't live forever**
- Their **relationship with God** is **damaged**
- There is a **spiritual death** - God and humans - separated by sin
  
- What a **mess!**

- The **situation** cries out for someone to come and fix this

### The Fix (Genesis 3:15, Hebrews 2:14-18)

- And the **fix is promised** in **Genesis 3:15** - the **KEY VERSE**

#### [PowerPoint 9-Jesus crushes Satan's head]

- And I [God] will put enmity [hostility] between you [the Serpent] and the woman [Eve] and between your [the Serpent's] offspring [which is Satan] and hers [Eve's offspring - which is Jesus] - He [Jesus] will crush your [Satan's] head, and you [Satan] will strike his heel
- We **fast forward** to **Jesus' birth** (some 2020 years ago)
- And **God chose** that time to **step into history** and **fulfil the promise** He made in Genesis 3:15
- This **answers people who say** - *'why doesn't God intervene in this world'*
- He already has intervened - He **sent Jesus!**
- Which brings us to our **NT reading** from **Hebrews 2:14-18**
- [Please turn there now]
- **God sent His Son Jesus** - to **share in humanity** - v14 - born as baby Jesus
- **Jesus grew up to die on a cruel cross** for sin to be forgiven
- But **He didn't stay dead** - He rose 3 days later -
- By Jesus' death and resurrection - He has **broken the power Satan** had in holding death over our heads - vv15 - **He crushed Satan**, the serpent
- We no longer need to fear dying - v16 - if we believe in Jesus' death & resurrection

## Application

- What a gracious God we have
- He could have wiped out Adam and Eve
- He could have given up on humans altogether
- But no - He chose to send Jesus to fix the problem
- Why?
- Because He loves us
- This should clear up the misconception that God is not loving
- He allowed His only Son to suffer - so we can go unpunished!
- Jesus' offer of eternal life in Heaven - should also clear up the misconception that a loving God wouldn't send people to Hell
- God doesn't want anyone to go to Hell
- But in His love - He doesn't force us to follow Jesus - He gives US the choice of accepting Jesus' fix

## Conclusion/Response

- To finish up then
- A couple of final thoughts

### [PowerPoint 10-The Bible]

- Just like Adam and Eve were tempted and lied to by the serpent (aka Satan)
- Jesus was also tempted in every way by Satan - but He didn't give in to the temptation [Luke 4; Matthew 4 and Mark 1]
- Jesus used God's Word to reject Satan's temptation
- We can do the same - when tempted - we can say - NO! The Bible says this...

- **We can't do that though - if we don't read and know God's Word**
- For example, when the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Corinth
- He explains how they can resist temptation
- Let me read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13:

[PowerPoint 10-1 Cor 10:11-13]

- **<sup>11</sup> These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. <sup>12</sup> So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.**
- **These verses tell us that all the **stuff written in the OT** was written for us as warnings and lessons to learn from - like all the stuff written down about **King Saul's disobedience** and **King David's obedience and disobedience**.**
- **It's all in the Bible to help us learn to stand firm and safe from disobedience and sin.**
- **This passage also gives us a beautiful promise that - everyone gets tempted - and **God knows we get tempted** - and He won't let us be tempted by more than we can bear. **AND** - when we are tempted - **He also** provides a way out**
- **When King David** stood on the balcony of his palace and **saw the beautiful Bathsheba bathing** - he should have said NO - **I won't act on this** - The

Bible says adultery is a sin - and he should have gone inside and played his harp

- **When Eve went to take the forbidden fruit - Adam should have said - "No Eve! God commanded that we must not eat this fruit or will die; let's find a nice banana tree instead"**
- **God provided a way out of our sin and death - through faith in Jesus**
- **And God provides a way out of the temptations which come our way**
- **But we need to take the way out He provides ...**

Let's pray...