

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The Source that Befalls Us, Pt 1 **Genesis 1:1-7**

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PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: Genesis 3 is the explanation for everything that is broken, vile, and foolish in our hearts and in this world. Up to this point all is good and both the man and woman dwell in pure innocence before one another and before God. But this is all about to change. In these few verses we watch the malignant scheme of Satan work its way out in the life the first couple. But worse is the foolish and selfish decision made by Adam, humanity's head to abandon God and pursue his own way. The rest is history.

I. Introduction.

- A. Read passage, basic review of prior sermon.
- B. The historicity of chapter 3. Just like chapters 1-2 this chapter also is treated shabbily by pastors and theologians.
 - 1. Adam and Eve are seen here as archtypes of humanity, not a literal couple.
 - 2. Some try to argue they are representative of the beginning of Israel.
 - 3. Others will say they are a literary device and should not be seen literal in any fashion.
 - 4. Or perhaps it would be that we ought to see them as an actual couple, but merely one out of many who rose up through evolutionary development that God chose to interact with in a special way.
- C. But if you just let the bible tell you what it thinks about them then the issue is quite simple.
 - 1. They are the first humans. They were real. And their lives and choices had a massive impact upon all of humanity.
 - 2. The New Testament always treats them and the fall of mankind here in Genesis 3 as literal. Always.

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- D. Genesis 3 is the explanation for everything that is broken, vile, and foolish in our hearts and in this world.
 - 1. Up to this point all is good and both the man and woman dwell in pure innocence before one another and before God. But this is all about to change.
 - 2. In these few verses we watch the malignant scheme of Satan work its way out in the life the first couple. But worse is the foolish and selfish decision made by Adam, humanity's head to abandon God and pursue his own way. The rest is history.

II. The serpent (1).

- A. What is it?
 - 1. Simply put it is a serpent in the broadest sense of the term.
 - 2. But it is merely introduced here with no explanation of who or what it is in any detail.
- B. Character:
 - 1. It is the most clever or shrewd than any of the animals made. This is a neutral term. It speaks of one who is good with speech, with words.
 - a. In the mouth of a wise or godly person, this trait is highly prized. They speak well regarding truth and wisdom.
 - b. In the mouth of a rebel or fool it is the opposite. The one clever in speech uses his words to fool and lead astray. This is the sense here in Genesis 3.1 He is a wordsmith—but for evil.
 - 2. This might be making it a creature, a beast. Or it is separated from creation of animals as something unique.
 - 3. This verse emphasizes the pure innocence of the man and woman. There was no surprise in encountering a serpent that spoke. No reason to be surprised, everything was a discovery to them.
 - 4. What is said by the serpent is far more important than the serpent itself speaking.
- C. Its identity.
 - 1. Nothing here is given to tell us more.

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2. In the judgment given in 3:14-15 we see a localized and a universal reality attached to the serpent.
 - a. In 14 it is treated as an animal and that it is cursed to be considered very low in importance or value.
 - b. In 15 it is seen as having offspring that is more than an animal, who will hate the offspring of Eve and that there will be a battle one day between itself and one specific offspring of the woman.
 3. Elsewhere though the bible makes it clear that the serpent is Satan. In Revelation 12 he is described as the dragon, the serpent of old who was cast down in judgment. He is Satan, who deceives the world.
 4. Revelation 13 and 16 we see him again figuring prominently in what is to come. He forms part of what I called the unholy trinity in my sermons.
 5. Finally in Revelation 20 he is bound by a powerful angel for 1,000 years and then cast later into hell for eternity.
- D. There is really only a couple of things in which we find Satan consistent.
1. The first is to resist God.
 - a. As you are reading through the bible this can be a fascinating subject to trace. You will see person after person who seeks to destroy what is known as the offspring/seed of the woman in an attempt to foil the plan of God.
 - b. Think about how God's promises are given and then follow how there is a constant attempt by others to subvert those promises.
 - c. And rejoice in how God always turns them on their ear for His own purposes. Laugh and rejoice in that even as you grow in wisdom in the ways of Satan.
 2. The second is to lie.
 - a. He will use truth as a tool to lead to a lie. But never be fooled, even when he is speaking something true he is using it to cover a deeper lie.
 - b. Again this is why we must develop a strong grasp of biblical truth rather than cultural thoughts. We must always ask what is the foundation of someone's argument.

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III. Satan's plan of attack (1-5).

A. In verse 1 he starts with a question.

1. Innocent seeming.

a. But it is designed to lead somewhere. Something to learn here when you are questioned.

(1) Ask yourself why is there a question? Why is it posed in this manner? What is the end goal in this question? Understand that when you begin to answer a question you are now controlled by that person to a certain degree.

(2) Like the first innocent sounding question asked by Satan, so too are so many first thoughts and steps toward grievous sin. It requires a rigorous mind set to bring all things through the revealed Word.

b. Notice how he phrases it though. It is stated in the negative rather than the positive. Are we not allowed to any from any tree in the garden? Compare this with what God actually said, "From any of the trees you may freely eat...."

(1) God frames His command in our freedom.

(2) Satan seeks to recast it in our restrictions.

(a) Behind this is the implication that later he explicitly gives. God is keeping something wonderful from you. God is not letting you enjoy something. You are missing out on something that you deserve.

(b) And if you think about how you so often choose to sin, this is exactly how you work things out for yourself is it not?

(c) Even now ask yourself what is it that you are not allowed to enjoy lawfully that you therefore take unlawfully? You may be shocked to see you do this far more often than you realize.

2. He lets her answer in verse 2-3.

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3. He then attacks her statement in verse 4 by rejecting the truthfulness of God's warning.
 4. Finally he gives his version of the motive behind God's prohibition.
- B. What you need to see in this is that the place of attack is at truth.
1. Satan is playing with truth here. He is making the argument that truth is something less clear than it really is.
 2. Truth is not elastic. It is not subject to vagaries. It is not open to interpretation. You don't have your truth and I have mine. Truth belongs to God and He defines it.
 3. But the moment you see truth as something outside of God you start down a path that leads to the same pit that Eve found herself in.
 4. Satan wants us to first consider our options. He wants us to step just a half a step from the Bible. He wants us to function as judge and jury. That is what he does with Eve here. "Has God really said?"
 5. Has God really said, "Flee from idolatry?" 1 Corinthians 10:14.
 6. Has God really said, "Abstain from sexual immorality?" 1 Thessalonians 4:3
 7. Has God really said, "let him who steals must steal no longer?" Ephesians 4:28.
 8. Has God really said, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you?" Matthew 5:44.
 9. Has God really said, "Live with your wife in an understanding manner? Or love your wife as Christ also loved the church?" 1 Peter 3:7 and Ephesians 5:25.
 10. Has God really said, "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities?" Romans 13:1.
 11. And the list can go on and on. Cultural standards too often replace biblical truth. Social rights often supplant biblical standards.
- C. Do not get pulled into theoretical arguments on right and wrong. "What-if" arguments seldom produce anything righteous but they do give much room for disobedience.

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IV. Eve's deception.

- A. First, notice her answer to Satan in verse 2-3.
 - 1. She does not rightly respond to him with proper information. It is worth noting that we don't know what Adam told her. But it is a good reminder to be clear and precise when communicating to others.
 - 2. She deletes the word "all" which was given by God to Adam.
 - a. When God spoke He emphasized the expansiveness of Adam's freedom. Every single tree and all of them together were for him to enjoy except one.
 - b. This is diminished when Eve responds to Satan.
 - 3. She adds "not to touch it."
 - a. From where did this come? We are not told. It is my suspicion that Adam may have told her this. Either way, it is more than what God told Adam.
 - b. And it was Adam's responsibility to make the command of God clear to his wife and then, later, his offspring. He is the head and he is responsible.
- B. Second, notice she continued in her conversation even when the goodness of God is questioned.
 - 1. How often do we allow ourselves to continue talking to someone when wisdom is screaming to walk away?
 - 2. How many marriages have been destroyed because a person talking has a "listening ear" or an "understanding attitude" and so we air our grievances?
 - 3. How many times have you allowed a fool to be your counselor? Who has your ear?
- C. Third, she allowed wrong thinking and bad information to remain in her thinking.
 - 1. We are not given the time frame but at some point the woman came to a critical decision. The fruit that was forbidden was "good."

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2. This could have been minutes, hours or days but she was considering his words. She was letting them roll around in her mind and examining them but only in the limited ability of her own mind.
 3. She had divine revelation to judge the words of the serpent. She knew the mind of God. She had a husband to ask and seek counsel. But it was all kept in her own mind.
 4. Consider again how we do this. How often do we read or hear the Word of God on a subject and then sit in judgment of it. We don't agree with that position. We don't think this or that is correct even though it is in the Scripture.
- D. Fourth, she came to decide to believe that she could stand in judgment of God.
1. And the only way she could do this is that she bought into the lie of Satan. God was withholding something good from her and from Adam.
 2. And this type of sin continues to this day. We all buy into a lie time after time that God is withholding something. We usually won't be that crass but it is at the root of our actions.
 3. By the way, there is a word play going on in this passage. Repeatedly the text said that God declared things to be good. Then one thing that was not good. But in both of these types of declarations it is God determining what is good or not. Now it is the woman deciding what is good and it is diametrically opposite of what God would call good. And this continues in our lives to this day.
- E. Note that in all of this she is being deceived.
1. The bible always gives this as what happened.
 2. Paul gives this as his reason that women are not to teach in 1 Timothy 2.
 3. And again in 2 Corinthians 11 Paul is concerned that the church is going the way of Eve and being deceived.
- F. Her act is not treated as an accident or something other than sin. In 1 Timothy 2 Paul makes it clear, she was deceived and therefore transgressed, or sinned. But her sin is not the basis of sin in creation or the fall of mankind. That dubious honor is with Adam.

V. Adam's choice.

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- A. There is no excuse given for Adam's decision.
- B. He knew what God said. He knew his role as head over his wife and creation. And he knew the consequence.
- C. He made a choice.
 - 1. The same choice you and I make over and over again.
 - 2. Will I follow God or something or someone else?
- D. This all brings a focus upon the nature of headship and the representative nature of that idea.
 - 1. We saw in the prior sermons that the bible makes it clear that the man is the head of the marital relationship. There is no real debate over that as it is expressly stated.
 - 2. The challenge for many is whether they like that, agree with it, or are willing to embrace it and submit themselves and their world view to it.
 - 3. But like all things biblical, whether we like or approve of something taught in the bible never changes what the bible actually says.
 - 4. This idea of headship brings to light the ultimate responsibility that every husband has in his home.
 - a. A common point I make in premarital.
 - b. In any household there is a collection of sinners today. It starts with one, becomes two and then expands to multiple as children are added.
 - c. Every one of them sins. Some to a mighty degree and others to a lesser, but they are sinners. They all are, apart from the new life found through the gospel, guilty of rebellion before their Creator.
 - d. But when you look at a household though there are many who are guilty of one sin or another the responsibility of all of it lies with the husband. He is the head.
 - e. This is what you see in Genesis 3. The woman sinned. There is no debate on this. But the responsibility lies with Adam, not the woman. When he took the fruit he did not sin by himself, but he brought sin into the lives of all humanity.

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- (1) If you get your heads around this then many stories in the bible will make more sense to you.
 - (2) In America we are raised to think as individuals. But in the bible the idea of households and corporate relationships are a key component to be grasped.
 - (3) This is why we see things like the sin of Achan in Joshua 7. Achan admits he was the one, the individual, who sinned. But his entire household is destroyed. Why, because he was the head of that home. Therefore the whole household is guilty.
- f. This moment in time when Adam made that fateful decision to eat what was not his to eat is known as “the Fall.”
- (1) I commend to you my series in Romans that you can get on sermonaudio.com entitled Two Men & Two Destinies. In fact I would commend all the sermons I did on Romans 5.
 - (2) Turn to Romans 5 and I will touch on the high, or low, points since they are connected to this passage.
 - (a) 5:1, the meaning of “peace” there, noting the prepositional phrases.
 - (b) 5:6-10, the descriptors of each of us prior to faith in Jesus Christ. Note how we had nothing to commend ourselves to God and how God is described there.
 - (c) 5:12, here is where Adam and Christ come into focus and it all has to do with what happened in Genesis 3.
 - (d) 5:16-21, again Paul makes the connection between Adam and Christ and it all has to do with headship.
 - i) All “in Adam” are partakers of Adam’s sin and guilt.
 - ii) How then can we be free from this? The answer is found in being “in Christ.” Explain.

VI. The Fall.

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- A. Their eyes are opened once Adam eats and what appeared to be good is now seen in its ugliness.
 - 1. It is the way of Satan and sin.
 - 2. All of the sudden everything changes and the ripple effect of Adam's act was creation-wide.
 - 3. It is here that cancer cells began to grow. Where marital infidelity began. Where wars were fomented. Where lies began to pile up. Where friendships died. Where sorrow became our bedfellow. Where brokenness and strife became our constant companion. Where regrets took root. Where dreams died and vision became blindness. Where death was born.
 - 4. It is a time to weep and wail. It is a time to look with horror on the new reality. It is time to mourn.
- B. It also becomes a time of reckoning for God is still God but now humanity's relationship toward Him is utterly different.
- C. And it is now that the mystery and wisdom of God will be revealed.
 - 1. Humanity is doomed. There is no coming back from this. Satan is the god of this new age. Sin and death are the powers of this new age.
 - 2. We need a deliverer
- D. And it is here that the gospel becomes truly good news.

Small Group Questions

- How might this sermon and passage help shape how you should view this world and its events better?
- Try to think together on what that first sin must have "felt" like once it was accomplished. Try to climb into their minds to see what they saw rather than what we all are too comfortable with in our own lives.
- Were there any thoughts, emotions or such that came to your mind as you heard the sermon? Can you vocalize them?