

## 12. GENESIS SERIES: The Fall - Consequences

'And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life (Genesis 3:8-24).'

Having considered the actual fall itself in the previous study, we now move on to a consideration of the consequences of the fall. It is surely clear as we move on from the passage previously studied, that the man and the woman now understand that they were duped by the serpent (3:13). They have become only too aware of their guilty condition before God as is illustrated throughout the passage we now consider. They had come to know evil through the act of disobedience.

But it was not just Adam and Eve that were affected by this rebellion. The consequences of their fall from original righteousness have been felt by all creation throughout history and will continue to be felt until the final restoration of all things. This was a fall that brought with it monumental consequences for all!

**Verse 8:** In the previous verse Adam and Eve had made fig leaf aprons in an attempt to cover not only their physical nakedness, but also their shame at having sinned. Now their futile attempt (cf Ps 139:7) to cover their shame continues as they try to hide from God (cf Rev 6:16) in the Garden of Eden. Their consciences are playing havoc with them for they truly know their guilt.

The passage tells us that '*they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*' Just what time of the day this occurred is probably not all that

important and is a subject of much conjecture. What exactly occurred is also a matter of speculation, yet what can be said is that in some manner they heard the voice of the Lord in the garden, noting some manner of extraordinary presence (as opposed to His usual omnipresent nature) as He sought communion with His creation. It may well have been a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord (a Theophany), but we have no way of knowing for sure.

Immediately sensing the presence of God (whom they had undoubtedly attempted to shut out of their minds without success), Adam and Eve fled from His presence into the garden in order to escape the holy penetrating eye of God - for they knew themselves to be undone in His presence. But what utter futility! How over-powering was the sense of guilt to these two who had never sensed it before!

**NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY QUESTION HERE:** How was Adam and Eve's response to the presence of God in the garden similar to the response that we now have when we sin? Explain the comparison.

**QUESTION:** What does the presence of God in the garden in this especial way suggest about the position of man now that he has rebelled against God? Why is it that man is not yet dead? Explain.

**Verse 9:** At first glance this verse may appear as though God had no idea of where Adam and Eve had got to, or for that matter, what had occurred only a short time before. Yet this appears upon closer inspection to be something of an 'effectual call (not in the sense of salvation),' for it immediately brings man out of his hiding place and to the bar of God. This is God calling man to be judged, yet in a gracious manner - for he is not yet destroyed! It might even be suggested that the question has more to do with man's state than with his physical location (yet verse 10 would suggest otherwise).

**Verse 10:** Rather than give a full confession of his sin, Adam still attempts to hide the truth from God, throwing up something of a smokescreen in order to avoid further scrutiny regarding his sin. He attempts to explain his absence from the presence of God because of the fear of God's voice and his nakedness. Already it is clear to see the extent of man's fallen nature and depravity.

**Verse 11:** In this verse the poor defences of Adam's guilt are torn down and he is clearly exposed as being a sinner, for all his attempted explanations have done is highlight the fact that he has done what he was forbidden to do by his Creator. Here God questions Adam in order that he might become only too aware of his guilty state before God and that also God knows his state.

How did Adam suddenly know he was naked (he had always been so) and have problems for being so? The answer is very obvious to all in the garden. The man and the woman

have done what they were forbidden to do. After all the futile attempts to hide from God that they had sinned - God exposes them. They can no longer hide.

**Verse 12:** Though thoroughly reprovved by God for his sin, Adam yet refuses to confess to any wrong-doing, rather blaming God for it because it was He who had brought the woman to him, through which instrumentality he had sinned. So Adam, no longer able to hide develops a new strategy called 'blame-shifting.' 'It's not my fault - it's the woman's, she gave me the fruit and you God gave me her!'

**QUESTION:** How is Adam's response to his guilt and rebuke from God typical of all fallen humanity?

**Verse 13:** For the moment God turns His attention to the woman and questions her as to what had happened in Eden, but the woman has also learnt the strategy of blame-shifting, passing the blame onto the serpent who had tempted her (a creature created by God - again blaming God?).

It's important to note that neither the man nor the woman were in any way penitent before God. What we see rather, is a defiant, fallen humanity refusing to bow before God.

**QUESTIONS:** In what way was Eve responsible for her own sin? Can she be rightly held accountable for her sin? Explain your answers.

Explain how has sin damaged human relationships?

**Verse 14:** Having moved from interrogation, God now begins to pass judgment on all the guilty parties. He begins thus with the serpent (note that He did not even question the serpent). Yet it should be noted that the judgment thus pronounced upon the serpent goes beyond that of the serpent itself to Satan also.

It has now become apparent that the form of the serpent today is a direct result of the consequence of sin in the Garden of Eden. The exact nature of serpents prior to the Fall is unknown, for what we now see in the serpent is the consequence of sin. The serpent that was a 'forced' participant in the temptation of Eve is cursed by God with a symbolic punishment reflecting the defeat of Satan and his attempted elevation over God.

**Verse 15:** In this verse judgment upon the serpent moves from the serpent to Satan himself. It could be argued that this verse also applies to the serpent itself (as Calvin also argues), yet Satan would appear to be the chief target of this judgment.

From the time of the curse there would be enmity between the woman and Satan, and her seed on one side, and Satan's seed on the other. In other words there would be great

conflict between the two sides. What this means is that though Satan believed he had carried the day by carrying humanity into rebellion, the final victory would not be his. There would be a continual battle between the two sides. The two sides are redeemed humanity in relationship with God and fallen unrepentant humanity in relationship (Jn 8:44) with Satan.

**QUESTION:** Is there any reason to believe that Eve would be saved in reading this verse? Discuss and explain your thoughts on this question.

Yet the judgment on Satan is more than that, for it is also a promise of deliverance for man through the seed of the woman. Here there is a prophecy that points forward to a child who will come from the woman whom Satan tempted to sin. Satan had caused the fall of the woman through his temptation, yet it would be a child from her line who would bring about the total destruction of Satan himself. This is what is known as '*the Protevangel,*' or the first glimpse of the gospel.

This is the main point of the bruised head and heel part of the prophecy. Satan's head would be crushed (symbolic of complete victory) by the Seed of the woman, while Satan would deliver a minor bruising (the cross) to the Seed's heel in comparison.

The seed of the woman would find their (for it is plural) heel bruised in conflict with the Devil, yet the seed would be victorious in crushing the head of the evil one (Rom 16:20). Here the prophecy points to the victorious church of God in its perpetual conflict with Satan. By means of persecution and temptation to sin, Satan would be constantly bruising the heel of the church, yet through Christ the head of Satan will be crushed and final victory won.

John Calvin says:

'God here chiefly assails Satan under the name of the serpent, and hurls against him the lightning of his judgment. This he does for a two-fold reason: first, that men may learn to beware of Satan as of a most deadly enemy; then, that they may contend against him with the assured confidence of victory.'

**Verse 16:** A part of God's judgment upon the woman is the collapse of marriage as originally intended. In its place will be an inordinate desire of the woman for her husband and the domination of the woman by the man in marriage. The man rules over the woman in a selfish dominating manner, while the woman seeks to control her husband (cf Gen 4:7). Therefore as a consequence of the fall, of the curse meted out because of the fall, there is conflict in human relationships.

There is also the pain of childbirth, which is a consequence of the fall. Prior to the fall, childbirth must have been a whole lot easier than it is now.

**QUESTION:** How is Christian marriage today still plagued by the curse as pronounced by God in the garden? Is there any way to be relieved from the curse in Christian marriage? Explain.

**Verses 17-19:** In these verses the full reality of Satan's lie is realised, for in passing judgment on the man, God also pronounces the sentence of death - that which Satan pronounced to be untrue. Man had chosen to disobey God. There was no confusion over the issue, no being deceived - just a determination to listen to his wife's advice and then to resolutely disobey (1 Tim 2) what he knew God had commanded. This is the reason why he was cursed and why the ground was cursed - because of his sin.

For man to survive there will need to be maximum toil and hard work (Ps 127:2; Pr 16:26). Every gain will now be a result of extreme effort and that with so many things militating against him as a consequence of his sin - the result of the ground being now cursed. In the end, man dies, returning to the ground from which God made man.

The Bible is clear that the soul who sins shall die, yet we see here that man doesn't die - immediately. Here is grace in the very first instance of sin in man. I think that says a lot about God! Yet Adam did deserve to die.

**Verse 20:** It is not until Genesis 3:20 that Adam finally names his wife '*Eve*.' Apart from suggesting that the fall occurred fairly quickly after Eve was made (for she was yet to be named), it also implies that Adam understood the promise included within the judgment of the serpent. The name '*Eve*' means '*life*.' It would be through Eve that life would be regained for fallen humanity.

**Verse 21:** There has been much read into this verse along the lines of 'atonement' for sin, yet the verse itself (nor the immediate context) says little about atonement. The verse does however speak of God's goodness and mercy toward fallen humanity in providing for their immediate needs, even though they have rebelled against Him.

**Verses 22-24:** We see here the real loss of life to humanity, for fellowship with God is cut, resulting in alienation from God. Not only will he now physically die (3:19), but also spiritual death has fallen immediately (3:7-9). The way to fellowship with God is guarded, the chapter closing with man kicked out of the Garden of Eden, barred from the tree of Life and removed from the presence of God.

## INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY

What does Genesis 4:1 suggest about Eve's understanding of God's promise in Genesis 3?

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