

“The Proto-Evangelium – The First Gospel!” Genesis 3:1-15, 21

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December 1, 2019

Teaching Aim: To explore the circumstances surrounding the Fall of Man. To realize theologically, the Fall of Man does not so much refer to the original sin as to the results of that sin. To recognize this event sets the stage for the coming of the Messiah as we find “*the proto-evangelium*” or “*the first Gospel*” in **Gen. 3:15**. To understand the Christmas story and the story of our redemption begins right here in the Garden of Eden.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Eve’s conversation with a cunning serpent in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-5)

1. Many people consider **Genesis chapter 3** to be a myth; it is not. If **Genesis 3** is a myth, there was no reason for Jesus Christ to die on the cross for our sins and His death would be in vain. What are some ways that this chapter sets the plot for the rest of the Bible?

2. What can we learn from **verse 1** about the serpent? Is this the only time in the Bible where an animal and a person speak? (See **Num. 22:21-39**) What evil being possessed the body of this serpent? (See **2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:7-9; 20:1-2**) What question did the serpent challenge the woman’s faith with? Note: The imagery here is appropriate since some serpents have been known to devour people. Has Satan ever challenged your faith in God?

3. Interestingly, the woman did not seem surprised by the fact that the serpent was talking to her. In light of Eve’s reaction, is it possible there was some form of communication going on in the Garden of Eden between animals and humans? How did the woman respond to the serpent’s question, “*Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’*” (**vv. 2-3**)? Is Satan still using the question today, “*Has God really said?*” Have you ever doubted God’s goodness because of something that has happened in your life?

4. From which tree were Adam and Eve forbidden to eat (**vv. 2-3**)? Why? What would happen as a consequence if either of them so much as touched the forbidden tree and its fruit?

5. In **verse 4** the serpent directly contradicted God; in essence the devil called God a liar. What did the devil say in **verse 5** that led Eve to question God's motives? Have you ever questioned the motives of God in your own life? If so, what was the circumstance?
6. What do we learn about the devil in **John 8:43-44** from Jesus? What is Satan's ultimate motivation in dealing with humans? In **verse 4** Satan said to the woman, "*You will not surely die*" if you eat this fruit. Was this true? In what ways did Adam and Eve die?

Part II: Adam and Eve's sin and subsequent conversation with God (Gen. 3:6-14)

1. According to **verse 6**, was Satan successful in his attempt to deceive the woman? How was this deception manifest? Have you noticed that sin has a way of spreading? How did Eve's sin spread in this particular case? Did the man enter this sin blindly or were his eyes open so that he was accountable before God?
2. We sin when we fail to do what God commands or when we do what God forbids. In Adam's case, he became the Federal Head of the human race; the perfect representative. When Adam fell in the Garden of Eden, we all fell with him. (See **Rom 5:12-19**; **1 Cor. 15:20-23**) What did the couple realize once they had eaten the fruit (**vs. 7**)?
3. Once their eyes were opened, the man and woman realized they were naked; the age of innocence was gone; sin and guilt had entered the world. What can we learn about this drastic change from **Rom. 3:10-12**? What feeble attempt did Adam and Eve make to cover themselves before God (**vs. 7**)? Is it possible for human works to ever cover our sin in God's eyes? What can we learn about this topic from **Lev. 17:11** and **Heb 9:22**?
4. The first thing Adam and Eve should have done once they realized they had sinned was run to God. Did they (**vs. 8**)? What did they do? Evangelist Billy Sunday said, "*Sinners can't find God for the same reason criminals can't find policemen; they aren't looking.*" Have you ever run from God instead of running to Him? Why?

5. In **verse 9** the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, *"Where are you?"* Did the omnipotent God not know where Adam was? One definition of *"mercy"* is *"God not giving me the punishment I deserve."* How is **verse 9** an illustration of God's mercy towards Adam? What are some ways that God has been merciful to you after you sinned?

6. God is a loving God; He can only do what is just, holy and good. Why do you think Adam was afraid of God (**vs. 10**)? Notice that Adam and Eve had moved from *"innocence"* to *"conscience."* What is the function of the human conscience? What was troubling the new conscience of Adam following the Fall? The longer we ignore the warnings of our conscience, the harder our hearts become and the more prone we are to sin. What sins have you become hardened to by ignoring your conscience?

7. We might be able to con other people, but we cannot con God. God called Adam out on his sin (**vs. 11**). How has God used your conscience in the past to correct sin in your life?

8. How did Adam respond once he had been called out by God because of his sin (**vs. 12**)? Adam had been given the role of spiritual leader from God, but he yielded that leadership to his wife. How do we see this problem still being played out in many homes today?

9. Have you ever blamed someone else for you sin instead of taking personal responsibility (**vv. 12-13**)? What truth can we learn from **1 John 1:9**? Why are we so prone to pass the blame off on other people when we are the ones who have done something wrong?

10. What curse did God put on the serpent (**vs. 14**)? Some have speculated that the creature was originally upright since the curse condemned the serpent to crawling on its belly and eating dust all of its days. Why do you think so many people feel uneasy around snakes? What can we learn about the other creatures mentioned in **verse 14**? What happened to creation itself a result of the Fall? (See **Rom. 8:19-22**)

Part III: God's promise of the coming Messiah and a temporary covering (Gen. 3:15, 21)

1. What does the word "enmity" mean (vs. 15)? Why did Moses refer to "the seed of the woman" and not "the seed of the man?" (See Isa. 7:14) What kind of enmity have you noticed in the world between the followers of Jesus and the followers of the devil? Gen. 3:15 is known as, "the proto-evangelium" or "the first Gospel." Why?
2. The New International Version of the Bible (1984) translates Gen. 3:15 as, "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." How do you see the cross of Christ portrayed in verse 15? How can we as Christians find victory in death? (See John 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:42-57)
3. There are always consequences when we sin. What consequence would Eve and her female descendants face (vs. 16)? How about Adam and his male descendants (vv. 17-19)? What is the significance of the woman's name Eve? (See Commentaries)
4. Adam and Eve had made a feeble attempt to cover themselves once their eyes were opened and they realized they had sinned; this was an act of human works (vs. 7). What did God do for them instead? Why is this significant? (See Heb. 9:22; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; Rom. 5:8-9)
5. Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise at the conclusion of Genesis chapter 3. When will Paradise be restored for those who believe in Jesus? (See Rev. 21-22)

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Satan is a liar and a murderer; Jesus calls him the father of lies.
- Satan will twist God's Word for his own benefit and do his best to make us question God.
- Satan led Eve to believe God was withholding His best from her; he does the same today.
- Adam and Eve committed the sin of disobeying God and attempting to grab more control of their lives than God had allotted to them.
- Adam was the Federal Head of the human race; the perfect representative in the Garden.
- Original sin led to the Fall of Man with the consequence of physical and spiritual death for the entire human race; the result of this sin also included expulsion from God's presence.
- The virgin birth of Christ was necessary to bypass the seed of man and the sin nature that has been passed along to every other human; in doing so, Jesus became the Second Adam.
- Only those who by grace through faith receive Christ will have Paradise restored in eternity.