

GENESIS 3:14-24

LESSON: DREADFUL CONSEQUENCES — October 14, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

God takes a walk through the garden and asks that blatant question of Adam: "Where art thou?" Adam and the woman hide from God because they were naked which made them ashamed. The second question God asks, "Who told you that you were naked?" God confronts them with what they had done, and Adam immediately blames the woman, and the woman immediately blames the serpent. And neither owned up to the sin to say they were wrong (3:8-13).

LESSON: I. JUDGMENT GENESIS 3:14-19

3:14 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;— God didn't even ask the serpent to explain himself as He had asked the woman and the man. God just pronounced a curse upon him right away. To me this passage covers the first curse ever pronounced upon the earth. The "*Sentence*" is passed, beginning with the serpent who is Satan himself. Satan, the devil had used or transformed himself into this beguiling creature as an instrument to deceive Eve. He was cursed above all creatures; Why? Because he beguiled the woman, and drew her in, to eat of the forbidden fruit. This sin also effects judgment upon the cattle and every beast of the field. The animals did not sin, but the serpent was cursed above the rest. But, in the end there will be a final destruction of Satan (Rev.12:9, 20:10).

3:14b ...upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:— The curse goes on to say that the serpent will be cursed upon his belly all the days of his life. Well, you say did he stand upright before? Well the scripture **never said** that *you will crawl upon thy belly*. It said *upon your belly shall you go and dust shall you eat...* So the scripture is depicted as the serpent who is a liar and a traitor; who is the devil/Satan. So, we do know...

1. **First**, God pronounces a curse upon him right away because he had done this (3:14). This meant the serpent is to be detested, degraded, and, miserable all the days of his life.
2. **Secondly**, he is to be upon his belly to go and eat dust all the days of his life. In scripture *to eat or lick dust* (Ps.72:9) means to be defeated and humiliated. There is no hope for Satan and he will never attain the defeat of man. He would never be freed from his judgment and condemnation; never freed because of his terrible atrocity against God and man.

3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed;—

3. **Thirdly**, God placed enmity between Satan and the woman; between Satan's seed and the woman's seed. The word "*enmity*" (*ebhad*) means hatred, antagonism, hostility.

The point is: The godly seed of the woman is in a struggle against the ungodly seed of the devil. He was to be the object of enmity—enmity was to be waged between him, and the woman and her seed.

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And it is God who puts enmity between the serpent and man. It is God who stirs man to oppose evil. Believers are to always be angry at sin and stand against all evil.

James Montgomery Boice points out that Satan hated woman from the moment she was created. But now—from the moment of this judgment—woman was to hate Satan. She might love her sin, but she would also hate it.

The Promised Seed was conceived of a virgin and He would destroy the serpent in order to reconcile man to God! The Savior would miraculously come. The Promised Seed of the woman destroys the works of the devil (1Jh.3:8). The seed of the woman was made sin who knew no sin for us (2Cor.5:21) and He was made a curse for us (Gal.3:13), thereby saving us from both.

The offspring of the serpent are:

- Persons who live after the lusts of the flesh.
- Persons who are enemies of God, those who deny, curse, neglect, and ignore God.
- Persons who depend upon their own self-righteousness to get them into heaven.
- Persons who are false teachers and pretenders (counterfeiters), wolves in sheep's clothing.
- Persons who are unrighteous and do not love others.

3:15b ...it shall bruise thy head,—

- Christ crushed Satan's head by never giving in to the devil's temptations and never sinning.
- Christ crushed Satan's head by dying for man; by bearing all of man's guilt and punishment for sin.
- Christ crushed Satan's head by being raised from the dead.
- Christ crushed Satan's head by His Incarnation, that is, by coming into the world and being revealed as the Son of God.

Those ungodly men and women are the seed who follow the devil and those who hate God. And godly men and women are the seed; the offspring of Christ who follow God.

3:15C ...and thou shalt bruise his heel. This would refer to Satan bruising Christ's heel, a wound that would not destroy him. When Jesus was nailed to the cross and continued suffering on the cross, it wounded Him, but did not destroy Him. The serpent wounds the heel that crushes him. A bruise on the heel is not deadly, but a strike on the head is.

3:16 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. As the woman stands before God, God places judgment upon her.

1. **First, "God will greatly multiply thy sorrow"**—when the woman fell into sin, she was bound to feel and suffer greater sorrow. God was going to intensify, multiply this sorrow. The perfect body and nature, God had given her would now suffer the trouble, sorrow, and pain of the imperfect life she had chosen.
 - a. This also refers to her pain of conception; her distress and pain of childbearing. The pain in childbirth did not enter the world until after the fall of woman who chose not to live in God's perfection. "
 - b. *In sorrow the woman shall bring forth children*", means more than just conception and birth. It also means the bringing up and the rearing of children. The woman feels and suffers greatly for her children when they suffer or go astray. However, the



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mercy of God is still seen because even in sorrow and pain, it arouses a person to call upon God for help. Sorrow and pain stirs repentance, trust, dependence, and hope in God. This is probably one of the reasons women seemingly turn to God more easily and sooner than most men.

2. **Second, "God places a yearning desire toward her husband."** This is not merely sexual attraction, but it involves a longing and a settling down with her husband. The desire of woman to settle down with a husband is usually more intense than it would be for the man. As the woman had acted independently of her husband, she was now to have a deeper attraction and yearning toward her husband, depending more and having a closer bond.
3. **Third, "God places a rule over the woman."** God's judgment dealt with function and order within the family: her husband shall have rule over her. This does not mean man is to be domineering and demanding. She is to be under the very authority that she had attempted to usurp. This judgment applies not to all men over all women. It means every wife is subject to her own husband, not subject to all men. This is what the New Testament says, *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church"* Eph.5:22-23. His rule is to be with compassion toward her.

3:17 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;— The first man on the earth sinned as he listened to the voice of his wife and ate of the forbidden tree in the garden. Don't sound too good! Adam stands guilty before God. In fact, he was guilty of at least three things.

1. First, Adam listened to the woman's enticements and persuasions.
2. Second, Adam did not try to lead the woman back to God.
3. Third, Adam himself chose to eat the forbidden fruit.

God cursed the earth because of Adam's sin—he listened to the voice of his wife and ate of the tree which he was commanded not to eat of. Why did the earth have to suffer a curse when it was Adam who sinned? Very simply, Adam and the earth were interrelated. Adam was now imperfect, a fallen creature. God could not let imperfect Adam continue on in a perfect world. Therefore, whatever fall Adam suffered, the earth had to suffer the same fall as well.

The words **"for thy sake"** show that man was condemned because of himself. He would struggle for survival and be condemned to struggle against nature for his most basic need: food. Before the fall of man into sin, his labor was not a strain. He was never miserable. His work and activity were always a pleasure and a joy, but not now.

3:18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;— We know that thorns are on the stem or branch of a rose. The flower may be beautiful, but the thorn is painful. We also know that while Jesus was being crucified He wore a crown of thorns upon His head, causing excruciating pain and suffering. A *"thistle"* is a sharp prickly leafy plant growing as weeds and herbs among the crops.

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¹The thistle can be eaten. The young stalks, leaves, roots and flowers can be eaten. Milk thistle root can be eaten raw or cooked. Leaves can be eaten raw or cooked however the very sharp leaf-spines must be removed first. When cooked these leaves make a great spinach substitute.

Consequently, man is condemned to struggle for survival; struggle against the thorns and thistles of the earth; for the very basic necessities of life all the days of his life because the ground would no longer be under control; no longer perfect, but under the curse's control, because of Adam's sin.

3:19 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. With the hard work of Adam's hands he will sweat. He will be able to eat bread till it's time for him to go back to the earth; until his dying day. He was taken out of the dust and to dust he will return. This is the judgment of God!

II. PROTECTION GENESIS 3:20-24

3:20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. This is the first time the name **Eve** appears in Scripture. She has been called "*female*" (1:27); a "*help meet*" or "*suitable helper*" (2:18); "*wife*" (2:24-25; 3:8, 17, 20-21); and usually "*woman*" (2:22-23; 3:1-2, 4, 6, 12-13, 15-16). The name Adam calls his wife means to live, to give life, or the mother of all living. This is exactly why Adam named his wife Eve. He might have remembered the command in 1:28 of "*be fruitful and multiply*"; also hearing the judgment in 3:16, "*thou shalt bring forth children.*" There would even be children, even though the conception was going to be in sorrow, in other words—pain.

3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. After messing up, Adam and Eve realized they were naked; wearing only sown together fig leaves to hide their shame and nakedness (3:7c). God had mercy and stepped in and provided what they needed. What was He to do? Was He to let His purpose for man be defeated? He could not, for He was God, and God's purpose can never be defeated. Therefore, God fulfilled His Word: He judged man and then covered man—the way of deliverance for man. He protected man by covering them with coats of skins from the animals He Himself killed. This meant an animal had to be killed and blood had to be shed. This symbolized God's compassion; a shadow of what Christ would do on the cross for sinners.

Why did God have to do this?

- God still wanted to show His great love and care for man and woman.
- God's nature is always to reach out to show us His love and care.
- God wanted to teach man and woman that He would take care of their necessities.

What did Adam and Eve learn from this?

- This taught them that sin causes the most terrible and unimaginable things to happen.
- This taught them that the animal kingdom was thrown into utter disorder and confusion. It caused terrible suffering and pain for the animal world of the earth.
- This taught them that even their own personal lives were thrown into utter disorder and confusion.
- This taught them what death meant. God had warned them, if they ate the fruit of the

¹ www.ediblewildfood.com/milk-thistle.aspx
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

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forbidden tree, they would die. Now they know, and every death they witnessed in the future would forever remind them, they too were soon to die.

- This even taught them what mercy meant—when God clothed them and delayed their deaths.
- This taught them that the sacrifice of life was necessary to clothe their shame; a life was being taken in order to clothe them; a life was being substituted in order to cover the shame and guilt they felt, in order to reconcile them to God. And thereby, the only other life there, were the animals. The life of the animals had to be sacrificed.
- The last point that this taught them was that God truly loved his creation—Adam and Eve, just as He loves us. And Adam and Eve were going to be the parents of the whole human race

3:22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil:— The LORD God brings the Trinity into this discussion by saying "us." Yes, man was made in "**our**" image, so it's quite well that He would say man has become as one of "**us**." God is Omniscient (All Knowing), and the plan for man to have life did not include for man to know evil, good yes, but not evil. The phrase: **Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil** meant that man has become with the possibility of knowing what God knows; equipped with what the Deity knows, but with a twist of defiance. The knowledge he attained was in the wrong way that God did not want for him. God knew what good and evil could do, and now at this time man knows. Knowing the knowledge of good and evil and giving into the knowledge of good and evil are two different things.

1. *To know evil means that man has personally corrupted himself.*
2. *To know evil means that man has personally experienced evil.*

This is what evil does:

- Evil turns you away from God
- Evil disobeyed God's command
- Evil rebelled against God.

Adam now knew evil:

- Adam had walked away from God. He had chosen to alienate himself from God; chosen to do his own thing. When God placed him in the Garden and commanded that every tree was for him to eat freely, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for he would surely die? (2:16-17), it came to a moment of choice for him. God was very clear! When I look at it again, I don't think Adam really knew what "*surely die*" meant. He had never seen anything die. Everything was about life. But, he had to know when God speaks, what He spoke came about. And God's care for him should have been enough for him to not go against God. However, it was something he had to know. And Adam now felt the guilt and conviction that sin and evil bring. He now knew evil for he has personally experienced evil.

I don't know why God had to create the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As I said earlier, it gives us free will to choose **Him** and not be robots. But, their act of disobedience brought so much into the world, and into our lives that we didn't ask for. In this world we have to make choices! And still, there was one more problem God had to handle. God must save and deliver man from living forever as a sinner in what was paradise in his fallen state or anywhere else.

3:22b ...and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for

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ever:— God knew that man could not be allowed to take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever as a sinner. That was not the plan of God for man! Note, Adam was still in the Garden and Adam could still eat from the tree of life that would allow him to live forever in that fallen state.

- However, God could not allow man to live forever as a sinful and corrupt being who would never again know the fullness of God's presence, love, grace, provision, etc...
- And God could not allow Himself to be cursed, rejected, disobeyed, and often denied, not forever, not by just any man who would deliberately choose to, for God had to react against such.

3:23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. One reason man was sent out from the Garden: The LORD God had no choice. This was God's problem and God's decision. He had to send man out from the Garden. Man's responsibility was to keep and dress it (2:15), but now man was not allowed to even do this. He had to leave the Garden. What was man to do now? Well, he is to till (plow, plant, cultivate, and work the ground) which is different from what God had in mind. This would take more effort than what was implied before. The ground would not work with him. It would be harder to work and plow. And he will sweat to master it until his dying day. He could not dress and keep the Garden, but would be sent into the fallen world where evil exists.

3:24 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. Man had to be driven out of the Garden.

- *another reason is:* God wanted to give man another chance; put him in a different environment; put him in another probation period, and under new terms. God had to force man out, meaning there had to be some resistance. Adam didn't want to leave.
- *another reason is:* God had to deliver and save Adam in such a way that Adam could be freed from sin, made righteous, and perfected forever. God had a plan. After providing clothing of righteousness (the coats of skin) (3:21), God would later send the Promised Seed, the Savior for mankind (3:15).

While man is being driven out of the Garden, God places Cherubims with a flaming sword at the east of the Garden of Eden to keep man from re-entering the Garden. This places man on the outside of paradise. "*Cherubims*" are large mighty winged angelic beings, able to fly; acting as guardian spirits, assigned to guard the tree of life. A flaming sword whirled every way guarding the entrance so man could never return to the perfect world in a fallen state; keeping man out.

SUMMARY:

Well, the LORD God puts a stop to this blame game and turns to the serpent, not asking for an explanation and says because you have done this awful thing, He places a curse upon the serpent above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. He would be upon his belly to eat dust all the

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days of his life. Satan, the devil had used or transformed himself into this beguiling creature as an instrument to deceive Eve. There will be feuding between the woman and Satan and the seed of both. The woman's seed will bruise the head of the serpent and the serpent will bruise the heel of the woman's seed. At this point God had made a way of escape for mankind through the woman's seed who would be Jesus Christ. God does not excuse the woman or the man. Judgment upon the woman brings sorrow and pain; it will be greatly multiplied in many ways. There will be intensity of labor pains and including the birthing of the child itself. The woman will have a longing desire for her husband and he will rule over her. And to the man, God lets him know because he listened to his wife and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the ground of the earth is cursed. He will now have to work at and struggle to get basic food to survive all the days of his life. including the thorns and thistles. By the sweat of his brow will he struggle for food to eat until he returns to the ground from which he was formed (3:14-19).

Adam called his wife Eve, for she was the mother of all living. Because of their sin, the LORD God made coats of skins to cover them of their nakedness and shame. He showed mercy which was needed to continue God's purpose for man. God now says that man had become one of us. The knowledge man attained was in disobedience to God. And thereby having this knowledge of good and evil, he could not go further to eat from the tree of life, lest he live forever in his fallen state. God made the choice to send man from the Garden, and till the ground from whence he came. So He drove man out of the Garden of Eden, and placed Cherubims at the east of the entrance, with a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep them from the tree of life (3:20-24).

APPLICATION:

Man was placed into a perfect world and he was perfect. Man had all the fullness of life, and he was to live forever. And on top of this, he was given authority and dominion over all things God placed before him. But, even more than this, man had the very presence of God. However, when man sinned, he turned away from God, disobeyed God's command, thereby, rebelling against God. *Man had the very presence of God and still messed up. Thereby, having all you want in the world is still a struggle to get back to Him. Our struggle is with choices, but including the right Creator of choices means to always ask God!*