



STORY

9/1/06

The Fall into Sin / The Promise of a Savior - Genesis 2:8-17; 3:1ff

TEACHER PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as I teach Your lambs about sin and grace today, give me the words to say. Let Your wisdom and truth be in everything I teach. The world is so casual toward sin and wants to make sin look inviting. Oh, help me to lead the children to understand what sin is and to see it in all its seriousness, but never let them experience the despair of a fearful heart. Rather equip me to build on their faith's foundation with the sure and confident forgiveness that You proclaim in the Gospel. Send Your Holy Spirit, I pray. Amen.

VOCABULARY

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (2:17) - This tree in the center of the garden is the one (and the only one!) tree from which God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat. This tree was the tree of the "knowledge of good and evil" because if Adam and Eve sinned against God by eating from it, they would then know evil. Without sin they would not have known evil.

"shall surely die" (2:17) - Literally in the Old Testament Hebrew: "**dying you WILL die!**" God leaves absolutely no doubt that if Adam and Eve sin they WILL DIE in that very day. This strong emphasis in God's Word becomes significant when Eve tells the Serpent that God said, "lest perchance you die" (3:3).

Enmity (3:15) - "hatred; ill will" The enmity between the Son of God and Satan is evident by their opposing goals for mankind, the Truth of God vs. the lies of the Devil, etc. Satan opposes everything that God supports; they are in complete opposition. This is important for there is no middle ground in which a person can pursue sin and still rationalize that it as "OK with God."

OUTER AIM

Adam and Eve fell into sin when they disobeyed God.

INNER AIM

Sin infects us all but, we have God's undeserved love and salvation in Jesus Christ.

BACKGROUND

Genesis chapters 1 and 2 are a demonstration of God's power. By the power of His Word, God created the heavens and the earth and perfectly so. The name God uses for Himself in chapters 1 and 2 is *Elohim*-the Hebrew name for "God" that emphasizes power, might, perfection. Beginning in verse 4 of chapter 2, God further identifies Himself as *Jehovah* - the Hebrew name of the True God which identifies Him as the God of promise, salvation, and grace toward His creation, especially mankind. (The Hebrew, "*Jehovah*" is usually noted in English translations by the use of all upper case letters in the name: "LORD.")

In this lesson, mankind (the crown of God's creation) fails to show his love to God, fails in following God's will, i.e., he SINS! Sin offends the holy and almighty creator (*Elohim*), but He is also a gracious God who provides a Savior (*Jehovah*) for His fallen creation.

Jehovah's love is evident toward mankind even before the fall into sin and promise of the Savior. The LORD God (Jehovah Elohim) provided a home for man in the beautiful and bountiful Garden of Eden. In Eden, He richly provided for food and all other needs. He gave meaningful and enjoyable work in the tending of the Garden. He provided a "matched set" of companionship and unequalled human love when He created woman and established marriage. He gave Adam and Eve the promise of children.

As great as these blessings were, the greatest gift from Jehovah was evident when He still showed His love *after* Adam and Eve fell into sin and immediately promised them a Savior.

The Garden of Eden v. 8-14

God planted a special garden for the crown of His creation, man and woman. God's design was that Adam and Eve would live in the Garden, tend it, and enjoy its rich bounty. Everything was perfect! And still Eve became dissatisfied when the Devil tempted her.

God, through Moses, provides quite detailed description of Eden's location as well as its natural resources. The Garden of Eden was destroyed together with all other things on the earth during the Flood. Moses was inspired to provide this "road map" to give the people an idea of where the Garden of Eden was; but even more so to simply establish the truth that this was a REAL place, not just a make-believe location. The Garden of Eden was REAL in THIS LOCATION, even though, because of the Flood and changing rivers, we cannot know with certainty where it was. Two of the four rivers are still in existence today, the Tigris and Euphrates, but it is unlikely that their flow is the same as it was in Moses' day. The other two rivers, Pishon and Gihon, are unknown. Scholars can only speculate which rivers they might have been, even if they still exist.

Among the trees were two significant trees, the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Bdellium is a fragrant gum resin obtained from a kind of tree found in Arabia, Babylonia, Media, and India. The Onyx is probably the stone which still goes by that name - a variety of stone that shows somewhat even bands or layers of white and black or dark tints.

God's Command v. 15-17

God put Adam and Eve into the Garden to live there and to tend, cultivate, and keep it. Tending the garden in the days before sin would have been completely enjoyable and satisfying work. Even now, work can be enjoyable and rewarding, but also tiring, frustrating, exhausting. Not so in Eden.

God told Adam and Eve that they could FREELY eat of every tree except one - the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam and Eve had limitless access to the full variety of trees in the garden! Out of the whole garden there was *only one* tree from which they were not to eat. Not being able to eat from that one tree did not harm them, it did not deprive them of anything needful. The Devil deceived Eve into thinking she NEEDED to have that fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and that no other fruit could satisfy her desire. Eve was led to believe that God was UNFAIR ("What do you mean I can't eat from this tree! That's not FAIR!") while forgetting that God had given them full and free access to the whole beautiful garden, with just this one small exception. The Devil continues to tempt in the same way today by leading us to concentrate on what we don't have and to become dissatisfied and angry, rather than to concentrate on all that God has given us and to be filled with thanksgiving.

The Fall v. 1-13

Sometime between the creation of the world and the fall into sin, the Devil and the other evil angels sinned. Then the Devil began working to bring mankind into the same destruction that he and the other evil angels face. When the Devil came to Eve with the destructive goal of leading her into sin, he chose an appropriate form in which to appear because "*the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field.*" The Devil's first words to Eve were framed in the form of a question intended to bring doubt into Eve's mind. "Did God really say. . .?" Notice how, from the very beginning, the Devil presents God's Word in a negative way: **God said:** "Eat freely from ALL the trees except one." **The Devil said:** "Did God say you could NOT eat from all the trees?"

When Eve repeated God's command to the Devil, she subtracted from God's Word, added to it, and revised it. Eve subtracted from God's Word by not mentioning that they could FREELY eat from EVERY tree of the garden

(except the one). Eve added to God’s Word by saying His command included “nor shall you touch it.” Eve revised God’s Word by changing “dying you will die” to “lest perchance you die.”

Satan continued his temptation by assuring Eve that she would not die but would instead become like God knowing good and evil. The Devil played on the desire to become greater and to attain the stature of God. This is the same temptation He uses today. He continues to say, "Did God really say that? Here, let me show you a better way and I will make you great!"

The result of sin was that Adam and Eve did know good and evil, whereas before they knew only good. So they did gain what the Devil said they would, but not in the way or with the effect Eve had desired.

The truth of God, the lies of Satan, and the affect on Eve are compared in the table below. From this story we are able to see very well the true nature of Satan and the danger he poses to our souls. As Jesus said, “[The Devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” (John 8:44)

Table of Comparison

<u>God’s Truth</u>	<u>Satan’s Lies</u>	<u>Effect on Eve</u>
<p>Genesis 2:9, 16-17 <i>And out of the ground the LORD God <u>made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.</u> The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. . . And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “<u>Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.</u>” -</i></p>	<p>Genesis 3:1 <i>Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “<u>Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?</u>”</i></p>	<p>Genesis 3:2-3 <i>And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, <u>nor shall you touch it, lest (perchance) you die.</u>’ ”</i></p>
<p>Genesis 2:17 <i>“...but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”</i></p>	<p>Genesis 3:4-5 <i>“Then the serpent said to the woman, “<u>You will not surely die.</u> For God knows that in the day you eat of it <u>your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.</u>”</i></p>	<p>Genesis 3:6 <i>So when the woman saw that the tree was <u>good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took</u> of its fruit and ate. <u>She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.</u></i></p>

We cannot really say exactly when Eve sinned. However, we can say with certainty that it was before she actually took the fruit. By the time Eve took the fruit she had doubted God which is a sin. By the time Eve had taken the fruit she had seen the fruit and was enticed by it. By the desire in her heart, Eve had already sinned in disobedience to God.

After taking the fruit, Eve brought it to Adam and he also ate. Adam took the fruit knowing full well what he was doing. "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression" (1 Timothy 2:14).

In addition to the obvious disobedience against God by eating the fruit, Eve also sinned in her role as a wife. God had given Eve to Adam as a “helper comparable” to him. Leading one’s husband into sin is certainly not a fulfillment of the role as his God-given helper. Eve sinned by failing to faithfully fulfill her role in God’s design for marriage.

As soon as sin entered the world, Adam and Eve knew they were naked, were ashamed, and fashioned coverings for themselves. No longer were sexual impulses pure, innocent, and completely in harmony with God's will. Now they were corrupted by sin and the naked body was a thing of shame and an opportunity for lust.

God had said, “*in the day you eat of it you will surely die!*” Adam and Eve did not instantly die in a physical sense. They did, however, die instantly in spiritual death.

“Death” is “separation.” “Death” as a whole encompasses three specific kinds of death: SPIRITUAL DEATH = the separation of the soul from God; TEMPORAL DEATH = the separation of soul from body; and ETERNAL DEATH = separation of soul and body from God forever in hell. Sin brought DEATH into the world. In the instant Adam and Eve sinned, they died. Their spiritual death was immediate. Their temporal death would not come immediately, but was unavoidable. Their eternal death would have been unavoidable as well if not for God’s promise of a Savior.

When God came to the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve hid. GONE was the blissful knowledge of God. Now they had FEAR. Adam and Eve first tried to deny their sin and then tried to blame someone else. GONE were the holiness and righteousness in which they were created. Now SIN and DENIAL had taken over their hearts. Fear of God, denial of sin, unrepentant hearts, alienation from God, blaming others for their sins—all of these entered the world with sin and continue to be manifest in the world today (also in the Old Adam/sinful flesh of believers).

God demonstrated His love for sinners by calling Adam and Eve to repentance and patiently leading them to repentance (cf: vv. 9,11, 13). God will also show a similar patience in His attempts to lead Cain to repentance after he murdered Abel (cf: Genesis 4:1ff ~ Lesson 3), and in all of His dealings with sinners.

God's Love v. 14-24

God cursed the serpent because of its role in bringing sin to the world. Verse 14 is directed to the serpent itself. Based on this passage we are left with the understanding that when God created the serpents, they were not the ground dwelling/crawling creatures we know today. Rather, seeing them “on their belly” is part of the curse at Eden.

In verse 15, God directs His words to the one who had made use of the serpent, namely, the Devil. Verse 15 is the first Gospel promise. God declares that He will establish enmity between the Devil and the woman’s Seed. The woman’s Seed (descendant) of whom God speaks is Jesus, the Savior. The woman’s seed, Jesus, would bruise the serpent’s (Devil’s) head. The best way to kill a snake is to step on its head. God uses this imagery to foretell how Jesus would defeat the Devil and leave him powerless over God’s children when He died on the cross and rose again. God also notes that “you (the Devil) will bruise His (Jesus’) heel. A heel wound may be painful, but not fatal; fatal is the end of life. Jesus would die and at that time the Devil would seemingly have the victory. However, Jesus would rise again to life and no more be “wounded” by the Devil. Thus, the “bruising” of Jesus would not be the end.

God’s promise of a Savior first made to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is repeated and expressed in ever greater detail throughout the progression of the Old Testament. Then when the fullness of time came God sent Jesus to be born as our Savior (cf: Galatians 3:4-5).

Next, God announced the effects which sin would have on Adam and Eve. The changes which God put into place as a result of sin also show His love and concern for mankind. Had God not established these consequences for sin, there would have been (and would not be) any lasting reminders of man's sinfulness. If the world would have remained perfect, Adam and Eve would have quickly forgotten their sinful state and the eternal destruction which their sins brought upon them. To this day, the effects of sin in this world are what help us to realize weaknesses, our needs, to understand the frailty and temporary nature of this life, and to help us understand that this world is not the goal for which we should strive.

In announcing these consequences of sin, God never cursed Adam and Eve. He cursed the serpent and He cursed the ground, but He did not curse Adam and Eve. Eve would bear the pain of childbirth and Adam would bear the misery of a cursed ground, but they themselves were not cursed. Because Adam and Eve were the whole human race at that time, had God cursed them then all of mankind would have lived under His curse. It is yet another of God's mercy that He did not curse Adam and Eve directly.

Even in the results of sin we can still find God's grace and mercy: Pain in childbirth yields God's great gift of a child. Pain in childbirth for one mother (Mary) would lead to God's ultimate gift-God's Son incarnate. Death is a consequence of sin, but for a child of God it becomes the gateway into eternal life.

After announcing to Adam and Eve what the results of sin would be in their lives, God again demonstrated His love in two more ways. First, He provided clothing for them and secondly, He drove them out of the Garden of Eden. God cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden so that they would not eat of the Tree of Life and live forever in their sinful condition. Instead, even though they would die, yet through their coming Savior, Jesus, they would live forever.

Additional Scripture:

Romans 5:12-21

Resources:

Bible History Commentary, Franzmann - pp. 37ff

Bible History References, Rupprecht - volume 1 p. 13ff

The People's Bible - Genesis, Jeske pp. 42ff

STUDENT PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for promising and then sending Jesus to be our Savior from sin. I know I sin every day. Forgive me and help me to run away from sin in the future. Make my faith strong so that I am not tricked by the Devil. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Law & Gospel:

This story so wonderfully rich in both Law and Gospel that the teacher will not find it hard to bring both into the presentation. Adam and Eve's disobedience, God's curses, and the lasting consequences of sin show the law very well. God's love and mercy throughout the account and especially in the promise of a Savior show the Gospel.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why did Adam and Eve not die on that day? God could certainly have stricken Adam and Eve dead, and rightfully delivered them to hell for eternal judgment. However, in His mercy He gave them a time of grace on the earth even as He continues to do for all people. Each lifetime is a time of grace for an individual to hear the Gospel, be brought to faith, and receive salvation through Christ Jesus. God's warning to Adam and Eve was nevertheless correct, because they DID die that day. They died *spiritually*. Temporal and eternal death flow out of spiritual death (See discussion in notes above).

If God knows all things then He knew Adam and Eve would sin. But if He knew this, why did He create the tree and then tell them not to eat from it? We cannot determine nor understand every part of God's reasoning in this nor any other matter because we simply cannot fully understand God's ways. However, what we can say is this: God created the tree and gave the command so that Adam and Eve would have a way of showing their love to Him. God created Adam and Eve with a "free will" - the ability to obey or disobey Him. God *could* have created Adam and Eve without the ability to sin, but He didn't want love from his creatures that was forced and automatic. God desires actions of love that flow from *real* love, so he created them (and the tree) in the way He did. Since the fall into sin, mankind no longer has the will to choose to obey God. We are born in sin, enemies of God, and by nature have only a will that opposes God. Jesus has redeemed us from this. Now, the New Man which the Holy Spirit creates does obey God. Just as Adam and Eve had the opportunity to show their love for God by keeping His commandments, so we too show our love to Him by conforming our lives to His Word.

What kind of fruit was it? In spite of the typical artist's impression that the fruit was an apple (Luther also referred to it as an apple), we don't know what kind of fruit it was. It could have been a banana, a pear, etc. or even a fruit that is unknown to us today. The kind of fruit is not important to the account. Therefore, God did not identify it.

APPLICATION

By this sin we all stand condemned. This story shows the beginning of our "original sin." Original sin is the sin we inherit from our parents and can be traced here. After sinning, Adam and Eve gave birth to sinners (cf: John 3:6), who gave birth to sinners, who gave birth to sinners...etc. Everything that is true concerning Adam and Eve's sin is also true for us. This counters the worldview that "there is a little good in everyone." Such a statement is simply NOT true. ALL are born sinful, totally corrupt, and enemies of God. Only by being brought to faith in Christ by the Gospel does that change.

Through this Savior we all have forgiveness. Ever since the beginning of time, Satan has been tempting people to sin. However, God is more powerful than Satan. Through Jesus, God's Son, we have the way to escape Satan's hold over us. Jesus has lived His life to fulfill what God demands of us in His Law. By His death, Jesus has bought us back from the punishment in hell which our sins deserve.

Peer pressure: Peer pressure can be both a positive and a negative force. There are many warnings in our day against negative peer pressure, and rightfully so. The pressure to sin which is directly or indirectly placed on an individual by others is similar to the Devil's words to Eve. Had Eve clung to God's Word (as Jesus did when tempted by the Devil, cf: Luke 4:1-13) she could have resisted the pressure the Devil was placing upon her with his temptations. For Eve temptation came saying, "If you eat of the tree you will be like God." Temptation now comes in the form of "If you do _____ or say _____ or have an attitude like _____ you will be _____." The blanks are filled-in differently throughout the years, but the temptation remains the same.

Instant gratification: Eve saw that the fruit was good for food and pleasing to the eyes, and her desire turned away from pleasing God to pleasing herself. In our world, instant gratification and self-pleasure are far too often the guiding forces in life. Wanting to please our "selves" on demand will surely lead to danger and spiritual harm because our "selves" are sinful. Rather than fulfilling our self desires, we should seek to fulfill and follow God's Word.

Temptation: A thorough study of Satan's temptation of Eve teaches that he uses the same tools (deception, half-truths, lies, making something wrong appear pleasing, believe God is unfair, etc.) to tempt us today. Knowing the weapons of the enemy is the first step in holding off his attacks.

Twisting God's Word: The Devil twisted God's Word for his purposes. Under the influence of the Devil's deception, Eve likewise molded God's Word to fit her desires. Today, many change God's Word to make God seem unfair and thus create a "reason" to sin; or they make God's Word seem lenient enough to allow for their sin; or they simply ignore God's Word altogether. When someone either changes or ignores God's word, the Devil has already won a huge victory.

Withholding something is not necessarily unfair or a lack of love: Our prosperous times and society's materialistic/humanistic attitudes have created a sense of entitlement in many. It is shown in the attitude that I am entitled to have everything I want. Or, "I am entitled to have at least the same kind of finances, benefits, advantages as someone else who is similar to me." Discontent and jealousy rule in many hearts. Christians need to stand watch against these attitudes. If God, parents, teachers, or others refuse to give something to us-something that might have been given to others else-it is not necessarily unfair. "Love" at times includes NOT giving. Also, the feelings of discontent often grow out of a failure to truly see how richly God HAS blessed us.

God's Word of promise creates and sustains faith. God's Gospel promise in Eden is what created faith in Adam and Eve to believe that a Savior would come. Still today, God uses the Gospel to create and sustain faith. This is what makes it so important to know and to share the Gospel. If Genesis 3:15 were never spoken by God in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve would have been left in despair. So too, God's Gospel promises sustain us.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

1 Corinthians 15:22 - "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

Romans 6:23 - "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Middle (either of the above and...)

Genesis 3:15 - "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Upper (any of the above and...)

Romans 3:23-24 - "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Romans 5:12 - "Just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."

HYMN CHOICES

God Loved the World So that He Gave - TLH #245

All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall - TLH #369

Grace! 'Tis a Charming Sound - TLH #374