

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:11-21

“9 Then Jehovah God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" 12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." 13 And Jehovah God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." 14 So Jehovah God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And 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." 16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." 17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."”

'Jehovah God Judges Eve & Adam'

Lord willing, this week and next I will bring our final two messages from Garden in the Book of Beginnings before we enter the Advent season. It is a very appropriate way to wrap up the season of ordinary or normal time for this year as we consider the effects of the fall of man and God's response.

This week we will be more focused on the negative impacts so there will not be a lot of Good News... That will come next week! However, I trust we will learn to better understand the world that we do live in today and how we are to respond.

If we are going to faithfully follow Jesus as His disciples, which the ordinary season each year is intended to encourage, then we must have the proper foundation as Jesus told His disciples at the end of the Sermon on the Mount: One of rock & not sand. We cannot 'assume,' or believe that the real order of this world is something it is not & then expect great results. *[tell the cow story]*

The reason God has given us and expects us to study the Book of Beginnings is because it is here that God tells us how things work in this world and we must be so careful not to go around looking for 'round cows' because they would work better or be more to our liking. Think about it this way as we approach what is for most of us our favorite time of year: We celebrate the comings of Jesus in the Advent season looking forward to His return as judge...

- And rejoicing in how Jesus came as a little baby boy to be the Savior of the world.

That is a story of salvation that is rooted in real history and was necessary because of what we have been learning here in Genesis about the fall of man.

- The world on the other hand gives us things like Santa Claus or Kwanza or Black Friday.

They try to fill all of them with great meaning, but in the end they are still the result of making someone's poem a real event or revisionist history or just plain greed and covetousness.

So yes, we must be faithful in reminding people that "Jesus is the reason for the season" but we must do so understanding the reason that Jesus had to come in the first place!

- That brings us back here to the Book of Beginnings.

When last we were here we looked at the judgment of the snake and Satan along with the promise of the Gospel where Jesus comes to crush Satan. As we consider God's judgment of Eve and Adam which follow we should remember again the structure that we find here in chapter three:

- God created Adam and then took Eve from his side.
- Satan entered the Garden as the father of lies.

Eve is deceived and then Adam defies God in open rebellion leading to the fall of all mankind fulfilling God's promise that in the day you eat thereof you shall die or die the death! As God comes to them after this rebellion in His Garden we see the same order of things... God first calls out to Adam and then God speaks with Eve looking for repentance but knowing there cannot be any without His Gracious Salvation.

- God then turns to Satan to pronounce his judgment and give mankind the promise of salvation.
- God then pronounces His judgment on Eve
- And finally Jehovah God pronounces His judgment on Adam.

It is those final two judgments that we will consider this morning...

- And once again we have some brief verses that are both simple and VERY profound.
- To properly understand them we must see how closely related these judgments are the purposes & blessings God intended for the human race!

After the creation of Adam & Eve, God blessed them and told them: "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food."

Adam and Eve were to bring forth a host of obedient Saints who would fill the earth, subduing it and taking dominion over it so that the whole earth would be a glorious Garden/City reflecting all of God's Glory.

- This of course is still where history will culminate as we see at the end of the Book of Revelation...
- But in the course of history, things were radically changed after man's rebellion.

The plans & purposes of God for mankind and the earth will not be thwarted...

- But now the journey there will be filled with sin and curses and man must have a Savior!

God promised that Savior before He pronounced the judgments we will consider this morning...

- And as we shall see next week,
He immediately begins to take the steps needed to carry out His grand plan of salvation!

In our time, we have already witnessed and will celebrate the coming of Jesus to be the Savior of the World as that baby born in Bethlehem.

- And we look forward to the end of history when He will return to defeat the final enemy, death.

In the meantime we have been given a commission which if we have ears to hear, should sound very familiar to Jehovah God's first command given to Adam and Eve there in the Garden.

"18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus defeated Satan on the cross & Satan is now bound so he can no longer deceive the nations we are called on to disciple: But we still live in a fallen world. So with that in mind let's consider what God said to Eve and Adam and why it is still important for us today.

At verse 16 we read: To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

Eve's original calling was to be one flesh with her husband Adam and to be fruitful, to bring forth God's children!

- **Both of these are changed as women live under this curse.**

Eve, and all the women who follow her will still bear children [because God's plans cannot be thwarted] but they will come with much pain! If any of you men do not think that was significant, be sure to discuss it with any of our mothers during our fellowship meal!

- **God did not do this to be mean, but to give Eve and all women a very real reminder of the consequences of Eve's deception.**

This pain is very real for any woman who bears children, but there was more to the curse which impacts not just individual women but entire cultures...

- **Eve was created to be one flesh with her husband Adam, to be his helpmeet and to show forth the glory of God's character as they demonstrated a loving relationship where both the one and the many are significant.**

As we saw with the initial blame-game when God confronted them in the garden Adam & Eve are now at odds with each other and it is just a foretaste of the ravages sin would bring forth. Here is an important place where we must understand the results of man's sin in real history AND the power of Christ's redemption...

- **When God told Eve, "your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." He was not saying that the created order was wrong and would now cause problems!**

That should be obvious but you would be amazed at how wrong many get what the Bible says about women. Rather than have the type of loving and ordered relationship like the Father & Son have enjoyed from all eternity the man and woman would now be advisories: The women would no longer be in submission to her husband as a loving helpmeet who was herself loved and protected, she would now be little more than his chattel property.

Women living under the curse would be subjugated and abused. They would be man's playthings and slaves. They would be temple prostitutes and in many cultures considered less important than the animals. Even far into man's 'enlightenment' era, men without God wanted the real women to be the ones that bore children & did the chores being little more than their slaves!

On the other hand, their "ideal woman" was another woman, which in some cases they never even met, but imagined as part of a glorious relationship: True romance!

- **Yes, there is a real war on women in this world and it is the result of the fall of man into sin, not some political agenda.**

Whenever we see women being abused, or neglected or used or even just not being properly appreciated we must remember that this is a result of the fall of man...

- **It is sin that must be confessed and forsaken!**
- **It was sin that Jesus carried to the cross and defeated so that the proper relationship of men and women could be restored!**

And if you doubt that His cross brought real change in the real world just consider that general state of women two thousand years ago around the world and compare it with their state today.

- **We have a LONG way to go in this restoration and that is why Jesus says, if you love me keep my commandments!**

This is why we must be so careful about the agendas of the humanists, the feminist or even many confused Christians who argue that the Bible has a bad view of women...

- **Such thinking is a call for a return to their subjugation... Not their freedom in Christ!**

The curse on the nurturer of the relationship rightly focuses on the relationship of men and women and when God turns to the provider the focus shifts to the material matters.

In verse 17 we read, "Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

"Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.""

Man was tasked with taking dominion, with filling the earth and subduing it seeing God's gracious provisions with the bounty of the Creation. Again, this was not a bad commandment nor one that God abandoned after man's fall, it just came under God's curse: As with the woman's painful reminder in childbirth, man would now be reminded of the fall as he set about doing the work of his calling. His work would be toilsome and often futile.

AND just as there were real changes in the relationship of men and women, the very creation itself would now be impacted by the fall of man bringing forth thorns & thistles rather than bounty. And we know from Romans chapter eight that it was a very broad change indeed. At verse 18 the Apostle Paul says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans & labors with birth pangs together until now."

- **It is not hard to look around and see the groaning of the creation if we have eyes to see!**

We saw some very serious groaning recently as the Pacific winds slammed into the Philippines at almost 200 MPH. As Christians we must come to understand that these are NOT just natural events that are sad for those involved. We must believe the truth that Paul reveals about the curse that God pronounced here in the Garden:

- **The fall of man has impacted all of creation!**

We must also remember that these events and struggles in the created order are NOT outside of God's control... The fall of man did not set the world spinning out of control so God has to sit back and wonder just how devastating the results are going to be.

- **As the Disciples learned on several occasions, even the winds and waves obey the voice of their master, Jesus.**

It is in the context of Paul teaching us about the groaning of the creation that he reminds us that ALL things work together for good to those who love God & are called according to His purposes.

Now we think we can get our arms around these truths in limited cases...

Little Jack falls and breaks his arm and later we find out that a nurse at the hospital comes to the Lord because of the witness of the Pettyjohns and we beam because we think we can see how God works all things out for good! Try that with the situation in the Philippines: There is so much death & destruction and despair that we could not even begin to imagine how it all could work out for the good of God's people. And yet we serve a God who is a mighty God and ALL the forces of nature cannot exceed His power to control the events of history. That is the comfort and confidence that we can have as His Children IF we are serious about understanding the fall of man and the curses that follow.

- **As we continue on in Genesis we will see how God unpacks the truth of our salvation AND how He shows more of the results of sin in our world.**
- **We will see these in God's covenants and in people's personal relationships as well as physical events: It will be, Lord willing, an informative journey!**

As we continue on and consider how these truths impact us today there are once again two ditches to avoid:

- 1) The first is to think that the fall is not real and question God's plan of salvation when we see the wicked prosper? This is especially true in our modern world where we seem to have an abundance of leisure time and little sweat on the brows and where even the pain of childbirth seems to be avoided.**
- 2) The other ditch is where we are overwhelmed by the effects of the fall and think there is no meaning in the tedious tasks that we seem to have to do all the time in this fallen world?**

For the first we turn to Psalm 73 where Asaph is honest about his struggle over the prosperity of the wicked: "Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked." The Psalmist goes to great length describing his despair and concludes, 16 "When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me-- 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end. 18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. 19 Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment!"

Asaph is reminded that the fall of man was no surprise to God and that He is in control of history so that there will be justice in the end in all matters. The Psalmist then reflects on what his proper response should be and concludes by saying...

28 "But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in Jehovah God, That I may declare all Your works."

We must remember that God's works include not only the great redemption we have in Jesus BUT all the works He carries out in history under the fall.

- **Putting our trust in the Lord means trusting His good purposes even when we are frustrated by what we see in the Creation day by day.**

And for the second ditch, we will close with Psalm 90: This Psalm is a Prayer of Moses and you can see how important the Book of Beginnings was to this Man of God!

Moses begins with a reminder that God is the Creator of all that exists:

"Jehovah, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God."

- **Next comes another honest assessment of man's fall into sin:**

3 "You turn man to destruction, And say, "Return, O children of men." 4 For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night. 5 You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up: 6 In the morning it flourishes and grows up; In the evening it is cut down and withers. 7 For we have been consumed by Your anger,

And by Your wrath we are terrified. 8 You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance. 9 For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; We finish our years like a sigh. 10 The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 11 Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath.”

12 So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom. 13 Return, O Jehovah! How long? And have compassion on Your servants. 14 Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days! 15 Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us, The years in which we have seen evil. 16 Let Your work appear to Your servants, And Your glory to their children. 17 And let the beauty of Jehovah our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.”

Asking God to establish the work of my hands has been a prayer I have often lifted up remembering what the Apostle Paul declared in his letter to the Ephesians: “10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Communion Meditation: I Thessalonians 3

“5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain. 6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you-- 7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. 8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. ...

12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, 13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”