

52 STORIES OF THE BIBLE

by

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3. The Fall

Father, we acknowledge that balance is difficult, that it is so easy for us to come down on one side of the teeter totter and ignore the other. Father, it is easy for us to come down on sin and the devastating effect that sin had on your creation. It's also easy for us to come down on the redemption side that you love us and care for us and did for us and will bring us to yourself to live with you in heaven forever. But, Father, both of those truths are true and we acknowledge them before you. Both of them are taught in Genesis 3. Father, we pray as we work through it, as we go home today, that we will go in the balance of understanding the horrificness of sin, but also the wonder of your redemption for your sinful creation. For that, Father, we thank you that you are not just a God of judgment or a God of redemption. We thank you, in Jesus' name, Amen.

I. Introduction

We started our 52 stories of the Bible and worked on Genesis 1 the last couple weeks. We saw how the one God created all things and we also talked about the image of God and what it means to be created in His image. In Genesis Chapter 2 as I read earlier, Moses retells the story of creation, but this time he tells it with an emphasis on the creation of Adam and Eve and he talks about how Adam was created from the dust of the ground to work the ground and then he tells how Eve was created from Adam in order to be a helper that was just right for Adam. That's what the Hebrew is trying to say and we can't quite say it in English as easily. And by the way, just parenthetically, the word "helper" doesn't mean that she's of less value. The word is actually used of God throughout the Old Testament, but that's what she was created for, to be just right for Adam.

Things are just as God intended them. That's how you end Genesis Chapter 2. God has created everything and things are just the way he wants them. There's no pain; there's no pain between Creator and creation, there's no pain between humans and animals, and there's not even any pain in the marriage. And that's why the last verse in Chapter 2 is so important. They were naked and not ashamed. There was absolutely no tension, no pain in their marriage. And the only thing they had to do, just one thing, was not eat the fruit on one tree. God gave them the entire orchard, the entire garden. "Have at it," he said. There's just one tree and the Creator is holding creation responsible. He's giving creation a way in which they can glorify him and honor him through obedience. And that's what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is all about, it's that one act of obedience.

II. Account of the Fall

With that being said, we move into Genesis Chapter 3, and this has historically been called "the fall," the fall of Adam and Eve and hence the entire human race. The fall from what God intended in creation, to falling into sin and what was not part of God's original intention. So let's work through Genesis Chapter 3. And by the way, one of the things I've been talking to Steve and Robyn about this week is that if we're going to tell 52 stories, I have to be content to tell stories, and this is a little different for me. I'd rather just pick verses and words apart, but we're going to be spending time these next

51 weeks telling stories, but then always bringing the significance out of them so you'll see them.

A. Satan's Question

Genesis 3 starts by Satan asking Eve a question, taking the form of a snake and asking the question. And it starts, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" I mean, from the very first words out of his mouth, Satan is lying, isn't he? And what's the essence of Satan's lie? The essence of Satan's lie is a misrepresentation of God. He's misrepresenting God's abundant provisions and then he's taking that one single prohibition and blowing it out of proportion and twisting it into temptation. The essence of the lie here is the misrepresentation of God and who He is and what He has said.

B. Eve's Answer

So Eve answers him in verses 2 and 3, "And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,'" (and she was right), " 'but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden' " (and she was right), " " Neither shall you touch it' ", (which God never said), " 'Lest you die.'" You see, in answering Satan's misrepresentation, Eve misrepresents God's commands and God's provision. But the thing that is interesting in this passage if you look in the footnotes, the word "you" is plural. Who is Satan speaking to? Well, if you look at artwork, it's usually the snake and Eve, but it's not. The "you" is plural and Adam is standing there the entire time. And in fact in verse 6, it's made explicit. He didn't come into this discussion later on. The whole time this temptation is going on, Adam is standing there not opening his mouth, not lifting a finger, letting Satan tempt his wife. It's very important to see that, and unfortunately the medieval art blew it for us.

C. Satan's Rebuttal

So Eve, not Adam, rebuts Satan and then you have Satan coming back in verses 4 and following, "But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'" " " "

See, Satan comes back with a three-fold lie. It's no wonder that Jesus calls him "the father of lies" because everything that flows out of his mouth is untrue. Look what he does. He tells three lies. First of all, he calls God a liar, doesn't he? Do you see that? "You won't die. God's lying to you." Second of all, he questions God's character. I mean in modern parlance, he's saying, "You know, God is just trying to keep you down. God is just trying to keep you from realizing your full potential. He knows that if you eat of this particular tree, you're going to be like him, so he doesn't want you to be like him. He doesn't want you to realize your full potential and he's keeping you down." See, Satan is questioning the character of God. And then thirdly, there's the lie in saying, "You can become gods." Satan is saying, in a sense, "Ignore everything you have learned. Ignore Genesis 1 and 2. Ignore that you have been told that you are part of creation and that you can't become the creator. You can become the creator. You can become god. Just eat of the tree and you will become gods." The three-fold lie; Satan is truly the father of lies.

D. Adam and Eve's sin

And so in verse 6, Adam and Eve sin. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes," (both of them are true), "and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate and she also gave some to her wimpy husband who was with her and he ate." Notice the progression. Adam and Eve believed the lie, did you see that? That the tree was desired to make one wise. Their hearts had become corrupted, their minds had been corrupted. They believed the lie from Satan. Then it is out of that sinful heart, where all sin originates, right? It is out of the sinful heart, then, that sinful actions come and they take the one tree that they were told not to eat of, and they eat.

Please note the complicity of Adam. This is not often discussed in Genesis 3, but it's one of the major themes in the chapter. Adam is the original wimp; he's a wimp of a man, and he's a wimp of a husband. Can you imagine how many times Adam has had to apologize in heaven? "Oh so you're Adam!" "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, yes..." But he is a wuss. He didn't lift a finger, he didn't open his mouth. And you know how serious that is? Who bears the blame for sin entering the world? Now, if you read Ben Sira, one of the Old Testament apocryphal books, it's Eve. Ben Sira was misogynous, he hated all women and blamed them for everything. But Paul, from the Bible, does not say that sin originated with Eve. Do you know Romans 5:12? "Just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin and so death spread to all because all sinned." And then the discussion goes on in Romans 5 about the effects of Adam's sin. You see, we see the story, we hear Eve talking, but Adam is standing there, not doing anything to protect his wife or to protect his marriage. And he is there, he is part of it, and he, Adam is blamed for the entrance of sin into the world. And it's an interesting question of why? Why did Adam bear the penalty? And there's a bit of controversy attached to the answer to that, and if I have not already said that, let me say it clearly. When there's controversy, I will try to always tell you. When I preach and I don't qualify myself, I believe I'm taking the standard, orthodox position. If it's a controversial passage, I'll tend to tell you, okay? And this is one of those things that's difficult, and hence, it's going to be controversial. I think the answer for why you have Eve doing the talking and ultimately Adam getting the blame, can be found in I Timothy 2. This is the passage of who provides the leadership in a church and Paul says that it is the men who are to have the leadership in the church, and then his reason, I Timothy 2:13, is "for Adam was created first." And what Paul is arguing, I believe, is that as he looks at Genesis 1, 2, and 3, the creation of Adam first and the creation of Eve as a co-equal in value, but as someone who was there to help Adam, indicates male primacy in marriage and then in I Timothy 2, hence, male primacy (not a good word) leadership in the church. That is the only answer that I am aware of that explains why Adam catches the blame because he, as Eve's husband, bore responsibility to protect his wife and to protect his marriage. And he sat there the entire time and didn't say a word. And hence, for all eternity, it is Adam, and not Eve, who bears the responsibility for the entrance of sin into the world. Does that sound a little strange? When was the last time we saw a strong male character on television? The world does not like this message. But it's Scripture, I believe. He sat there, he didn't open his mouth, he didn't lift a finger, and hence, sin came in through Adam.

III. Consequences

Then Moses moves on to the consequences of the sin, starting at verse 7. And underlying all of these consequences is one theme and it's important that we see this. The theme that underlies all the consequences is that God's good creation is no longer working as God intended. Now God wasn't surprised, God knew this was going to happen, he's going to make provisions for it before you get to the end of Genesis 3. But the important theme is that God created creation good. He created it without pain and now that sin and the power of sin has been introduced into the world, things aren't going to work as God intended them. That's what's evident throughout all these consequences.

A. Interpersonal

The first consequence is interpersonal in verse 7. "Then the eyes of Adam and Eve were both opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaved together and made themselves loin cloths." Nakedness is no longer an indication of perfect intimacy, last verse in Chapter 2. Nakedness is now a sign of shame, and the relationship between Adam and Eve is starting to crumble, and they do something as silly as getting fig leaves and trying to hide themselves. We also know from verse 2 that they're going to start the blame game pretty soon. "Not my fault!" But all those personal relationships are starting to crumble.

B. Between God and Creation

But it's not only interpersonal relationships, it's how God and creation relate to each other. Those relationships are also crumbling, starting at verse 8. "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'Oh, I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.' And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" See, the relationships are crumbling, they hear God and shame has separated them and they wanted to hide from God. I mean, sin really causes us to do stupid things, doesn't it? I mean, this is one of those really silly stories in a sense, they know who God is. They know he made them. They know he made everything. They may not be aware that he made nebulas and different galaxies, but they know this is God, who created all things. So what do they do? They try to hide from the Creator of the universe by getting down behind a tree. That's pretty stupid, I think. Almost as stupid as the things that sin drives me to do and drives you to do. Just as the fig leaves were to hide their shame from one another, so also hiding in the garden was to hide their shame from God and both were equally ineffective. Sin results in alienation, doesn't it? I mean, here's Satan with the lie, "If you eat of the fruit of this tree, if you commit this sin, you will become gods." And yet when they sin, the exact opposite occurs, and instead of becoming gods, they find themselves alienated. Not only alienated from themselves, but alienated from their Creator.

C. Blame Game

Then the blame starts, doesn't it? Verse 12 and 13, "Then the man said, 'Well, the woman whom you gave to be with me. She, she gave me the fruit of the tree and I ate it!' The Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' And the woman said, "Well, the serpent deceived me and I ate.'" Now here comes the blame game. Adam's blaming Eve, "It's her fault! It's her fault!" Well, not actually. Who does Adam really blame? "The woman YOU gave me." See, Job's not the only one who gets into trouble along these lines. Adam is sitting here, so to speak, pointing his finger at God. Perhaps he was, I don't know. But he's pointing his finger at God and saying, "It's YOUR fault! It's not MY fault! You did this, and she did this!" I'm talking like this because I want you to understand how stupid this is as they play this blame game. I mean, this is the victim mentality on steroids, isn't it? And all week I've been saying, "Wimp! Just take it like a man, Adam. Just stand there and say, 'I messed up. What's the penalty and how can I fix it?' Just take it." "It's YOUR fault, God. It's HER fault." Can you imagine how Eve felt? I mean, here's a perfect marriage. No pain, no tension, everything is working as God intended. They sin, they realize, "Oh, my goodness, what have I done?" They're making fig leaves, they're hiding behind coconut trees or whatever, I don't know. And then to make matters worse, Eve's nearly perfect husband before God says, "It's her fault." Imagine how Eve felt. I'd be ticked off, too, ladies. I'd be mad.

Well, Eve comes along and she says, "Well, I can't blame God, I'm not going to get yelled at that way. And evidently blaming my spouse isn't going to work, so let's take a different tact. 'I was tricked! It's not my fault! I was tricked!'" And of course, the blame game never worked with God. You and I are always responsible for our sin. Period, end of discussion, right?

IV. Curse

Then comes the cursing. And please note, we call this the three curses, but Adam and Eve are never cursed. The serpent is cursed, the ground is cursed. But God will not curse Adam and Eve. He will judge them, but He will not curse them, that's important. And again, as you go through these curses and judgment, the theme that weaves all the way through it is that God's good intention in creation is now going to be turned upside down. Things that were designed to work smoothly without pain are now going to involve pain. And pain is really the essence of the curse and the judgment. You'll see the word come up through the verses. And then that thwarting of God's creation is going to come redemption, you'll see that.

A. Snake

He starts with the snake and Satan in verse 14, "The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field. On your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity (hatred) between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.'" As God curses the snake in judgment, and I don't really care about snakes that much, so we're really not going to spend time there, but as he curses the snake, he curses Satan. He also at the very same time holds out the promise of redemption. Did you see that? That God is not

only a God of judgment, but in the very same instant, He is also the God of redemption. The trick to understanding this passage is to understand the nature of the word “offspring”. “Offspring” is a collective noun and, therefore, you can refer to it as a plural, as in a bunch of offspring, but you can also refer to it in the singular, as in one offspring, one descendant. And there are actually two things going on. First of all there is the prophecy of future conflict, isn’t there, that the offspring of Satan, in Jesus’ words, “those who have Satan as their father”, in other words, all the unredeemed. Satan didn’t have children and little demons. But the offspring of Satan are all those who are unredeemed, unregenerate in this world, and they will be in conflict with those of us who are the offspring of Eve, those of us who are redeemed. There is this prophecy of the ongoing battle between the redeemed and the unredeemed, “those who have Satan as a father, and those who have God as their Father”, again to use Jesus’ language in the Gospel of John. But the word “offspring” is also singular, and as singular this is a prophecy of redemption.

This is a prophecy that there will be one offspring, one descendant of Eve’s who will one day crush Satan’s head. And of course, that descendant is Jesus. It’s actually the same verb as you can see in the ESV, “He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel”, but because it’s bruising the head which is a mortal wound, versus bruising the heel which is just harmful. That’s why the NIV switches the verbs around and it talks about, “You will strike his heel, but he will crush your head.” So when the very cursing of the snake and in the prophesying of ongoing conflict between the redeemed and the unredeemed, the regenerate and the unregenerate, there’s also the promise of hope held out. The promise of hope that someday this conflict between good and evil, this conflict between Jesus and Satan will someday be resolved, and it will be resolved through the person of Jesus Christ.

B. Eve

So that’s the snake. God then turned to Eve in verse 16 and says, “To the woman he said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing, in pain you shall bring forth children. And your desire will be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.’” God’s intention, Genesis 2, was that Eve would be a helper for Adam, right? It’s what the Bible says. And yet, because of sin, because of God’s judgment on Eve, there are two things that are going to change. God’s creative intentions are being, in a sense, thwarted. And the first one is that Eve will still do her uniquely feminine work of bearing children, someday bearing THE child. But that birth will now be in pain. Have you seen how many times the word “pain” is occurring? That’s the essence of the curse and the judgment, the pain that is now going to enter creation. She will still have children, but it is going to be painful. But that’s not the only place where there’s going to be pain. The second half of the judgment is that there will be pain in the relationship that she has with Adam. This is somewhat controversial, but let me tell you where I am comfortable on this. The text says that “your desire shall be for or against or over your husband.” A lady named Susan Full wrote an article about 20 years ago which as far as I can tell has been taken as the standard position on what the curse on Eve is. Susan argues that the judgment on Eve is that Eve’s desire is to be over her husband, to usurp his role of leadership in the marriage and in the family. It is the best interpretation that I have ever read on this verse and it’s well supported and it’s been well received. But the judgment on Eve is what used to be perfectly pain free, her relationship with her husband is now

going to be flip-flopped, and she is going to have a desire to rule over her husband. And then Moses finishes God's words and it says, "But Adam will rule over you." This is compact theology so we have to be interpretive, but it either means that Eve won't succeed or it means that how Adam and hence all men, execute headship in the family, is also going to change. Some of the translations instead of saying "rule over" have "dominate". That her desire will be to usurp her husband's role and Adam's relationship to her is also going to be damaged and that he will try to dominate her. Controversial passage, the best interpretation that I can find.

I asked Robyn if I could use this as an illustration and she grudgingly said, "Yes." But believe it or not, every once in a while Robyn and I have some disagreements. Is that okay that your preaching pastor has disagreements with his wife? Good. And we work through it and we get to the point of apologizing. Every once in a while Robyn, with a grin on her face, will say, "Ah, the curse is strong with me today." And I may have been born at night, but not last night, and I never say, "Yeah, that's right!" Normally I think I say, and I'm sorry if I don't, honey, "Well, I'm not doing my part either. I'm not being the kind of husband that I should be." This is the judgment on Eve that was passed down because that's part of what Genesis 3 is all about, isn't it? This is the doctrine of original sin: that the judgment on Adam and Eve changed what it means to be a human being such that they did not have the propensity to sin, but you and I are born with the propensity to sin. You and I are born with this pull to do what is wrong. This is what Romans 5 is all about. Read it this afternoon if you'd like to. You and I are born under the power of sin and we eventually will sin. Our human nature has been corrupted because of Adam and Eve's sin. And that is how Eve's sin changed women and perhaps men.

C. Adam

Then we move to the real problem, and the real problem is Adam. Make no mistake about it, the real problem in Genesis 3 is not the snake, it is not Eve, the real problem is Adam. That's why there are three verses among other things on Adam's judgment, starting at verse 17, "And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it', cursed is the ground.'" He doesn't curse Adam, he curses the ground. "Because of you and in pain, you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken, for you are dust and to dust you shall return." See, God's intention was that Adam was going to work the ground. And evidently the ground was going to cooperate with him. It was going to bring forth its bounty without a lot of effort, without pain. But the curse on the ground now means that the ground is not going to cooperate, and it's going to put forth thorns and put forth thistles, inedible food, which is going to make Adam's work a work of pain. It's going to make it toil. And evidently God's intention was not only that, but it was that Adam and Eve would live forever. Now that is not explicitly stated, but I think implicitly we have to come to that conclusion. That's what makes the curse in Genesis 2 so strong. "On the day that you eat it, you will die." He didn't say, "You will die early." He said, "Die." And that was how God created things to be, Adam to work the ground and it would cooperate, and then live forever in the perfect pain-free presence of God. And yet because of sin and the curse on the ground, this is the

judgment on Adam. Two things: Adam will still do his work now, but it will be done with pain. When your little kids ask you, “Mommy and Daddy, why are there thorns?” It extrapolates out to the question I always asked growing up in Minnesota, “Why are there mosquitoes?” And the answer is because our first father sinned and God cursed the ground because of sin and move right into the story of redemption. But that’s in the next couple verses.

And then the second judgment and that is, eventually Adam will return to the ground from which he was created. That’s his judgment and Eve shares in that, too. Adam just died spiritually. His relationship with God as Creator crumbled. And the process was put in motion and someday, eventually he will die physically.

V. What Do We Learn

That’s the story of Genesis 3. What do we learn about sin and what do we learn about ourselves from Genesis 3? A gazillion things; here are two.

A. The Essence of Sin is Questioning God

Number one: the essence of sin is questioning God. The essence of sin is questioning God’s character, it’s questioning his goodness, it’s questioning his wisdom, and it’s questioning his love for his creation. See, when you and I sin, we are saying that God is wrong. When you and I sin we are saying that we don’t trust His character. When you and I sin, we are saying that God doesn’t know best, that he has put these things before us and he said, “This is what is good. This is what is best for you.” And we look at it and say, “God, you don’t know what you’re talking about.” God says, “Whatever is pure and lovely and honorable”, Philippians 4, “think on these things.” And we say, “God, you don’t know what you’re talking about. And I’m going to read any book and watch any movie I want. I’m not going to dwell on what is pure and lovely.” God says, “Give and it will be given to you, press down, running over.” And we say, “No way! That’s my money! You are in no place to tell me what to do with my money.” God says, “Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy”, that there’s something special and separate about Sunday as we gather to worship. Sabbath is Sunday for Christians. And we say, “Don’t tell me what to do on Sunday. And if I decide to go to church, well, you ought to be happy with that.” Do you see the conflict that’s going on? I’m overstating it for some, maybe not for others, I don’t know. But when we sin, what we’re doing is looking at what God has said is good, and right, and just, and holy and we’re saying, “I know better, and I’m going to do what I want to do and You can’t make me stop.” Well, he can. Genesis 3 is not ancient history, is it? Genesis 3 is current events and sin hasn’t changed. It’s just the same now as it was in Genesis Chapter 3. Satan is still telling us the same lies that we can become gods, we can make our own decisions, that we are the captains of our fate and the masters of our soul. Nothing’s changed, nothing’s changed.

B. God Is Judge and Redeemer

The essence of sin is questioning God, BUT, the other message of Genesis 3, and you can’t leave Genesis 3 without this, is that God is both judge and redeemer. That God is just not the judge of sin, but He’s also the redeemer of sin and His judgment and his redemption start right now. Look at verse 21, “And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skins and clothed them.” See, Adam and Eve tried to deal with their sin on their own with something as silly as a fig leaf. And God says, “No you are

sinners, you have sinned, and I will and I have to judge you for your sin, but I am also your redeemer." Where do skins come from? They come from dead animals. This is probably the institution of the entire sacrificial system. And we're not told any details, but you can imagine what it was like. Adam and Eve got along with the animals fine. Adam had named them, there was not tension, there was no conflict. Some people even argue that animals could talk at this time. But Adam looks out and he sees God take one of the animals that he was responsible for, that he had named, and God slaughters the animal. And then he rips the skin off the animal and he wraps it around his creation and he says, "Sin is horrible. Sin requires death. I will always judge sin. There are always going to be consequences to sin. But I am not only the judge, I am the redeemer, and I, not you and your fig leaves, I will provide the redemption for your sin. The redemption for sin is only through death and then I will wrap you in my redemption and you will live the rest of your days wrapped in the skin of dead animals, wrapped in the skin of God's provision for your sin." See that's something else, isn't it? God is judge, but He's also redeemer. And then it continues, so please read the rest of Chapter 3 when you go home because God kicks them out of the garden. In one sense, it was an act of judgment.

But in another sense, it was an act of redemption because if Adam and Eve had stayed and had eaten of the tree of life, and this is a difficult thing to understand, God says they would have lived forever, but it is not good for you and me to live forever in our sin. That's the worst thing that could happen, to be forced to live forever wrapped in the skins of our redemption, living in our sin, never being able to move beyond it. And so God says, "Leave. And just as I judged you, Adam, for your sin, and have said that you will die, that also is your redemption that someday this life of sin will be done and you will be gone. And my redemption will wrap itself around you in a way that you can't possibly imagine. And we know that the redemption was finally provided in the life of Jesus Christ on the cross. When the disciples went out and came back with news of victory to Jesus, Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall from heaven." Jesus was in the process of crushing the head of the serpent. But at the cross you have both judgment and redemption, don't you? Because on the cross you have the punishment of sin, that it is serious and that it requires death, ultimately the death of God. Why do you think the cross is so prominent in our logo? Because the cross is prominent in all of history. It is the place of judgment of sin and at the very same second, it is the place of redemption where God has his Son be killed so that you and I, if we admit our sins, if we believe that the death on the cross pays the penalty for our sins, we give up the fig leaves. And the world is trying to cover itself in fig leaves, isn't it? The world's trying to take care of its sin and it can't do it. It's as silly as the picture of fig leaves in front of naked people. But God provides the sacrifice and the ultimate sacrifice was at the cross. And as for those of us who admit our sin believe that his death on the cross paid the price for our sin and commit ourselves to him as our Savior and our Lord. We are those who are the redeemed, who will be on Eve's side, not on the serpent's side. And someday we get to go home. Someday we will live in perfect harmony with God, we will live in perfect harmony with one another, we will live in perfect harmony with our spouses and our children, and our coworkers, and our bosses, and our employers. Someday! For those of us who understand the cross we get to go home to where there is no pain, where there is no tension, where there is no sin. And we will see God face to face and we will be like him. Is it no wonder that the early cry of the church was "Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!"

Let's pray: Father, we confess that even though our hearts have been changed, even though the power of sin has been broken in our lives, we like Adam and Eve, struggle with this. We understand that Genesis 3 is true this morning, it is true this afternoon and that Satan hasn't changed his lies. And Adam and Eve's susceptibility and weaknesses are our own. But, Father, we also understand that through the cross, you judged sin, you judged everyone in this room, and through it, you have wrapped your Son around us. And we wear him like a garment, a garment of sacrifice, a garment of payment for sins, but a garment of hope. Because we know beyond a shadow of a doubt of what lies ahead for us in heaven: a time of peace and painless existence in eternity with you. Oh, Lord Jesus, may you come quickly. Amen.