

I. Introduction

- A. Welcome to part 8 in our Summertime Scripture Stories series.
- B. Today, we will look at the most pivotal chapter in the whole Bible. Erase this chapter, and the whole Bible becomes meaningless.
- C. Please think with me today about Genesis 3 and the story of *The Fall*.
- D. This is the record of the most catastrophic and far reaching event in all of world history. That event would be the entrance of sin. And coupled with that event would be entrance of the gospel into the world.
- E. I think the biggest surprise you're going to have as we open this chapter of God's word is this: you are going to be surprised at how much the teachings of Genesis chapter 3 play out in your life every single day.
- F. Yes, it is an ancient story — but it is the only story that really makes sense of your life and your world.

II. *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 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, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" (Genesis 3:1-3)*

- A. God has created a good and beautiful world.
- B. God has placed the original Adam and Eve into this good and beautiful world. It is the perfect environment for them. It is the place where they can thrive.
- C. I see no compelling reason to take the creation accounts of Scripture any other way than as literal history. I understand those who mythologize or allegorize or interpret otherwise, but I don't agree.
- D. If God is real, every bit of this story is not only possible, but purely logical too.
- E. This is from earth's earliest ages. We are looking at Genesis chapter 3. As I see it, there are no dates in the Bible that we can be reasonably certain about until Genesis 11 and Abraham. So I call this the dateless past, thousands of years before Christ.
- F. Eve is enjoying the garden. She's picking flowers. Breathing in the scented breeze. Watching hummingbirds drink. Drinking from an unpolluted babbling brook. Playing fetch with a tiger.
- G. This is Paradise. All the beauties and wonders of Eden are open to Adam and Eve. They are free. Adam and Eve face only one law, one prohibition. There is one tree that they cannot harvest—it is not for them. But this has never been a problem for Adam and Eve, because there are thousands of other options.
- H. Ten thousand yeses, but only one no.

1. *Lesson 1: The world God designed for you was beautiful, perfect, and good.*

- a) Adam and Eve lived in an absolutely perfect environment.

I. Everything changed when the serpent started speaking to her. But we should actually say that everything changed before that. Everything changed when she started distorting God's truth in her own mind.

- 1. God said don't eat the fruit of that tree.
  - a) Eve distorted that.
  - b) Eve said that she couldn't even touch the tree.
- 2. God said you shall surely die, as a judgment from heaven.
  - a) Eve distorted that.
  - b) Eve said we can't touch it, lest we die, as if the fruit were toxic.
  - c) The fruit wasn't toxic... disobedience to God was toxic.

(1) Eve was deceived (2 Corinthians 3:11).

3. *Lesson 2: The quality of your life depends less on your environment, and more on your "invironment," the universe inside you.*

- J. The "where" is never as important as the "who."
- K. It will become clear this is the devil. This is Satan himself, speaking through the serpent.
- L. What happens next is the devil speaking to the mother of us all.

III. *Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:4, 5)*

- A. This one conversation triggered a history's most catastrophic, cataclysmic, apocalyptic chain reaction.
  - 1. Curiosity > Suspicion > Doubt > Unbelief > Disobedience > Ruin
- B. The devil instigated the whole thing.
  - 1. *Lesson 3: The history of the world tells the story of a ceaseless battle between the forces of good and evil.*
- C. There is a spiritual battle going on. The old serpent will never give up his fight. And he has always felt that he can hit God by hitting us.
- D. Never underestimate and never overestimate the power of the devil.
- E. Do not underestimate him.
  - 1. He has exercised his diabolical powers for thousands of years to ruin humankind. There is not a saint he has not attacked, and not a sinner he has not misled. Along with his hordes of demonic minions, the devil is the master of temptation.
  - 2. No doctor ever understood the human body as well as Satan understands your heart. He has explored every crevice of the human soul. He knows perfectly well how to entice you into his web of lies.
  - 3. The devil is the greatest fool that has ever lived, but he is the craftiest of fools, so not underestimate him.
- F. And do not overestimate the devil either.
  - 1. *Lesson 4: The devil's power over us is only the strength of his lies and of your belief in them.*
  - 2. Don't be fooled.
  - 3. Don't even entertain the conversation. You can question God, you can doubt God, you can argue with God, but the minute you deny God, you have put your foot into Satan's trap.

4. Had she resisted at the very outset, she would not have fallen. It is a universal truth that if you resist the devil and his lies, he will flee from you (James 4:7).
  5. Write it down. Never forget it.
    - a) The devil is powerless to overcome you except by your own consent.
  6. If we resist, he flees. If we consent, he wins.
  7. Never, never, never, never, let yourself believe even one lie from the devil.
  - G. God said, You will surely die. And Eve knew it.
  - H. Satan said, You will not surely die. There's the denial. There's the trap.
  - I. And Eve stepped right into it.
  - J. "You will not surely die, for God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
  1. *Lesson 5: The driving force of sin is always our desire for self-assertion and independence from God.*
  - K. The devil promised "you will be like God."
  - L. The devil's sin was declaring, "I will be like God" (Isaiah 14:14). Now, he was sucking Eve into that same sin.
  - M. He is sucking you into that same sin too. Any temptation to violate any of God's Word is an invitation to a fall.
  - N. And Eve fell. So did Adam.
- IV. *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:6)*
- A. Look how fast it went down for Adam.
  - B. God had said "Do not", and for the first time, the human race said, "But I will."
  - C. There's no going back from that, humanly speaking.
  - D. The story the Bible tells is true to experience. The story is the exact opposite of the story being told by the spirit of the age, by the philosophies of the world, and by the presuppositions of non-objective science.
  - E. One story says humans are evolving. We are improving physiologically, intellectually. We are even improving morally. The human race is ascending. This is the spirit of evolution.
  - F. But the Bible's story smashes that story in the face. Not evolution, but devolution. We are not stepping up. What we are today is a massive step down from what we once were.
  - G. Which story rings true to experience? Which story better explains the world? Your world? Does history show us being less brutal? No. Technology has improved, but we're the same brutes we've been since Genesis chapter 3.
  1. *Lesson 6: You cannot trample the authority of God and his Word without trampling the dignity and worth of humankind.*
  - H. This is the message of Romans 1. This is the message of Scripture. This is the uniform experience of the whole human race. No society ever rises above its concept of God, and no society ever rises above its respect for God.
  - I. What we do to God, we will multiply and do to our neighbors.
  - J. The world has never found a better explanation of our difficult experience than Genesis chapter 3. Of all the teachings of the Bible, the easiest one to prove, the one that can really have no argument, is the teaching that evil happens and humans cause it.
  - K. There is Eve. There is Adam.
  - L. They have crossed a line. There is no going back.
  - M. Now what?
- V. *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Genesis 3:7, 8)*
- A. The first effect of sin was to make them feel vulnerable. There is no safer place than innocence. There is no safer place than fellowship and friendship with God.
  - B. In a flash that was gone, and they felt vulnerable. They felt a need to cover themselves. They felt a need to hide. The whole world is still doing the exact same thing.
  - C. This is the essence of shame.
  1. *Lesson 7: Sin has consequences, and those consequences are catastrophic.*
  - D. This is very bad news. When the New Testament picks up this story it says, "sin reigned in death" (Romans 5:21). "In death," death was the realm. "Sin reigned," meaning sin took control.
  - E. It has been that way ever since. Innocence lost. Sin in control. Death spreading its tentacles into everything.
- VI. *Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." (Genesis 3:9, 10, NKJV).*
- A. Fig leaves.
  - B. This is earth's first false religion.
  1. *Lesson 8: Nothing humans stitch together can undo the effects of sin.*
    - a) No performance can obey sin away.
    - b) No rituals can send sin away.
    - c) No religions can enchant sin away.
    - d) No logic can rationalize sin away.
    - e) No philosophy can explain sin away.
    - f) No good works can wash sin away.
  - (1) It was human power that handed the scepter to Sin, Satan, and Death, and no human power can ever take it back.

- C. Anyone with even half a conscience will struggle over what to do with guilt. What to do with shame. What to do with sin.
  - D. We need an answer. We're built that way.
  - E. But we ourselves can't provide that answer because we ourselves caused the sin.
  - F. We need an answer, and God is about to provide it. So he asked them what happened.
  - G. God knew perfectly well what they had done. He just knew they needed to own up to it.
  - H. And they do, in the first comedy bit in the Bible.
- VII. *Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:12, 13)*
- A. I told you it was a comedy bit.
  - B. Adam said, don't blame me, blame her.
    - 1. Husband of the year.
  - C. Eve said, don't blame me, blame "It," and she pointed at the serpent.
  - D. The serpent said... well the serpent didn't say anything, because it's about to get real.
- VIII. *So the LORD 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. 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."*
- 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."*
- 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. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 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." (Genesis 3:14-19)*
- A. This is the day everything changed. God allowed them to play out the negative consequences of their choice. Okay, have it your way.
  - B. You wanted an existence cursed by me, you have it.
  - C. I want to take these backwards, first Adam, then Eve, then the Serpent, and then Satan.
    - 1. Adam, life is hard because your world is cursed.
    - 2. Eve, childbearing is painful, because your world is cursed. Plus, there will conflict between the sexes. Well done, everybody.
    - 3. Serpent, no more legs for you. You shall crawl around forever.
    - 4. What does all this mean? Why is it such a big deal? Here's why it's such a big deal:
  - D. *Lesson 9: The Fall is the event when humans invited sin into the world and into our being. Since Adam represented all mankind, when Adam sinned, we all sinned with him. (Romans 5:12-19)*
    - 1. We inherited his corruption, we shared his guilt.
    - 2. What he did affects you. It messes with you every single day.
  - E. *Lesson 10: This Fallen World is a morally broken Pain Machine.*
    - 1. Evil happens. Pain happens. Death happens. Sin happens. Heartbreak happens. Loss happens. War happens.
    - 2. The Fall affected the whole creation.
    - 3. And the Fall affected human nature too.
  - F. *Lesson 11: The Fallen Human Heart is a morally broken Sin Machine.*
    - 1. I want to dig into this.
    - 2. There's a before and after picture for the human race. Let's draw it out, body, soul, and spirit, mind, will, and emotion.
    - 3. Body—
      - a) Before they sinned, Adam and Eve's body would last indefinitely. They would not grow old, they would not get sick, they would not have to eat low carb.
      - b) After they sinned, their body was damaged, the process of death began, the process of disease began, and their bodies would return to dust.
        - (1) We are all born like Adam and Eve after the fall.
    - 4. Soul—
      - a) Before they sinned, Adam and Eve were perfect souls, created by God.
        - (1) Their minds were genius IQ, man 4-500.
        - (2) The wills were uncorrupted, with no pull toward evil.
        - (3) Their emotions were joyful and pure and without any sense of guilt or shame.
      - b) After they sinned, everything got broken.
        - (1) Their minds were mostly shut down.
        - (2) Their wills were inclined to do evil.
        - (3) Their emotions tilted toward sadness and anger and sorrow and dysfunction.
          - (a) We are all born like Adam and Eve after they sinned.
    - 5. Spirit—
      - a) The spirit is the part of you that interfaces with God.
      - b) Before they sinned, Adam and Eve were spiritually alive and in fellowship with God.
      - c) After they sinned, Adam and Eve died spiritually. Their spirit deflated like a popped balloon, and they lost their fellowship with God.
      - d) The before picture was indescribably awesome.

- e) But the after picture was horrible.
- f) It's a double hit.
  - (1) Sin corrupted their very being.
  - (2) Sin made them guilty before God.
- g) Corruption and guilt. This is the Fall.
  - (1) We are all born like Adam and Eve after the fall.
  - (2) This is the moral profile of every descendent of Adam and Eve born into this world. Corrupted by sin, and guilty before God.
- h) I can only imagine Adam and Eve and how miserable they felt in that apocalyptic moment.
- i) But it's when God speaks through the serpent to Satan, that he opens a window to hope.
- G. Genesis 3:15 is one of the most important verses in the Bible.
- IX. *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."* (Genesis 3:15)
  - A. This verse so important that it has its own name. It's a Latin name, but we can decode it.
  - B. This verse is called the Proto-evangelium. Proto means first. Evangelium means gospel. Genesis 3:15 is the Bible's first statement of the gospel, the first good news of a Savior. In other words, this is the Old Testament equivalent of John 3:16.
  - C. You look at that verse and say huh? How's that?
  - D. Whenever we reach a tough place in the Bible, it's time to shift into super-low gear, and churn it up line by line.
    - 1. *And I will put enmity between you and the woman.*
      - a) God tells the serpent, and the devil through the serpent, that there will be hatred [enmity] between him and the woman.
    - 2. *And between your seed and her seed...*
      - a) The seed of Satan vs the Seed of the Woman.
      - b) The seed of Satan refers to every person who fits the profile of Adam and Eve in this moment. This is what Satan gives birth to: guilty, ashamed, vulnerable, alienated from God. That was Adam and Eve in this moment, and that is every person who is born after them.
      - c) But there is a battle.
      - d) On one side you have the seed of Satan.
      - e) On the other side you have the Seed of the Woman.
      - f) The Seed of the woman is Christ. Thousands of years after this day, Jesus would be born of a woman. Jesus would be the Savior of the world.
      - g) From this moment onward, all of Scripture, and all who heard these words, began looking for this person who was to come.
      - h) What would he do?
    - 3. *He shall bruise your head,*
      - a) To bruise the head means to inflict a mortal blow.
      - b) The seed of the woman, Christ, will inflict a mortal blow against Satan. He will destroy the one who has the power of death, and will cast him into the Lake of Fire forever.
      - c) But before that happens...
    - 4. *And you shall bruise his heel.*
      - a) To bruise the head means to inflict a non-lethal blow.
      - b) The devil will inflict a non-lethal blow against Christ. Does this ring any bells for you?
      - c) This is the promise of a Savior who would die and not stay dead. A blow that proves not to be lethal in the end.
      - d) He can reverse the fall. He can defeat the devil.
      - e) He can crush the head of evil at its source.
        - (1) *Lesson 12: The Gospel of Grace is promised at the Dawn of History so all of history looked forward to the Savior.*
        - (2) As if to prove it, God does something awesome at the end of the story.
- X. *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.* (Genesis 3:21)
  - A. The divine gift took the place of their own self-made clothing. And now, they are covered by God himself.
  - B. This implies something huge.
  - C. Where did he get the tunics of skin?
  - D. This implies the first sacrifice for sin. There will be millions of sacrifices through the ages, but all of them can only point to the coming Savior, whose head would be bruised that he might crush evil at its source, and open salvation for all who believe.
  - E. One last lesson and we're done.
  - F. The Bible tells us that no one has seen God the Father, ever (John 6:46, 1 Timothy 6:16). So in those times when people saw God in the Old Testament, they were not seeing the Father, they were seeing the God the Son. They were seeing a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ.
  - G. It was Christ who sacrificed the animals.
  - H. It was Christ who covered their guilt and shame in coats of skins.
  - I. And it was Christ who initiated the gospel of grace that would only be finalized at the Old Rugged Cross.