

THE FALL OF MAN

BIBLE TEXT: Genesis 3:1-24.

LESSON 3 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 3:1-24.

¹ Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

⁷ And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

⁸ And they heard the voice 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 amongst the trees of the garden.

⁹ And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

¹⁰ And he said, I heard thy voice in

NOTES:

Peace Disturbed

The peace and beauty and harmony in the Garden of Eden were to be short-lived. The sinless perfection in which Adam and Eve lived was soon lost through disobedience to their loving heavenly Father who had wanted to do only good to them.

In the cool of the day God would come down and walk and talk with these people He had made. He enjoyed their friendship and they had sweet communion together. There was no sin in the hearts of Adam and Eve to make them feel uncomfortable in the presence of the Holy God. What a happy world it was in which they lived!

But one day Satan came also. He delights in making trouble. His business, is to deceive people, and try to destroy Christ's Kingdom. All through the history of mankind it can be noted that when God began to work in blessing His people, Satan would come to try to hinder. God is all-powerful, and could destroy Satan and stop him forever, but it is not yet the time. Jesus called him "the prince of this world" (John 12:31), and for a time he is given limited power. However, in the end Jesus will triumph over every power of Satan. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, and there he "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

As soon as God had man set in a beautiful world, Satan came to spoil it all.

Free Will

God wanted man to worship Him because he had a desire to do so. God could have created Adam in such a way that he had to be good, and could never do anything but praise God. But God wanted voluntary praise from the grateful heart of obedient men and women. So He created them with a free will, to do as they pleased. They could worship God if they wanted to, or they did not have to.

You would think that Adam and Eve would have been so grateful to God that they would have been happy to obey Him. Besides that, God had promised to punish them if they did not obey.

There was only one chance for man to sin -- and he took it. God had given them only one commandment to obey: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it" (Genesis 2:17).

Doubt Instilled

Satan now came to Eve in the form of a serpent, and asked, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The Bible tells us that the serpent was more subtle than any beast. He was just the one for Satan to use. Satan knew what God had forbidden, but asked the question in order to put a little doubt into the mind of Eve.

Eve answered unhesitatingly: "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." She knew the commandment of God, and was without excuse. She even knew the punishment she would suffer for disobedience. She should never have stopped to listen to Satan.

We have the Bible, God's written Word. If there is ever a question in our mind about the will of God, we can find God's rules in

the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

¹¹ And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

¹² And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

¹³ And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

¹⁴ And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

¹⁶ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

¹⁷ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

His inspired Book. Satan has come as an angel of light to many people, and has deceived them with promises of greater knowledge, greater power, or what they think is spiritual discernment; and they have listened to him rather than take their stand for the truth of God's Word. May we cling to God's precious Word, and let no one put a doubt in our mind by asking, "Has God said?"

Yes, God had said, and Eve knew He had. Satan did not deny the words that God had said, but he twisted the reason that God had given. "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Good and Evil

Until this time Adam and Eve had known only good. What a happy life they lived, knowing nothing about evil! Why should they want to know anything about evil? Satan spoke the truth when he said that they would know good and evil if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but of what benefit would that be to them? They would bring only sorrow upon themselves by getting such knowledge.

God had also said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Satan denied God's word, and said, "Ye shall not surely die." Some might say that again Satan spoke the truth, for Adam and Eve did not die physically that day. But they did die spiritually and were driven out of the Garden where they had had fellowship with God.

What is death? One time a ruler came to Jesus and asked Him to come and revive his daughter who was dead. Jesus said, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth" (Matthew 9:24). She was truly what we would call dead, but Jesus called it sleep. Everyone who leaves this world before Jesus comes must die, the Christian and the sinner alike, but to the Christian, death is merely a passing into a better life. The death, which the sinner suffers will be torment throughout all eternity.

Disobedience to God brings that eternal death. If Adam and Eve did not repent they suffered that eternal death because they sinned against God in obeying the serpent.

And although Adam and Eve did not die a physical death the day they transgressed against God, the sentence of death was passed upon them. Man could have lived forever, but now God said to him, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Step by Step

In Eve's disobedience, she took one step at a time. First she listened to Satan. Then she looked at the tree and saw that it was pleasant to the eyes. Satan will come to tempt us, too; and if we listen to him, soon we will be looking at the thing that he shows us, and we may think they look pretty good. Be careful! Don't look at the things with which Satan is tempting you. Soon you will find yourself longing for them, if you do.

Sometimes young people do not like to listen to the advice of their parents or older people who know the pitfalls in some seemingly innocent pleasures of the world. They become headstrong and insist on having their own way, thinking they know better. In the end, they are bound by the power of Satan, and unless they repent they will be lost forever. Do not believe the enticements of Satan, even though some of the things he says may be true. By mixing in a little truth with his lies, he has deceived many people who are earnest in their religion. Nothing he says is for your benefit. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

Guilty

Why did Adam and Eve hide that evening when God came to talk with them? Satan had made their eating of the tree sound so innocent. But they had broken the commandment of God, and

²⁰ And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

²¹ Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

²² And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

²³ Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

²⁴ So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

immediately they felt guilty. They knew they had done wrong.

That one disobedience plunged the whole human race into sin. Every child born into the world has been born with that fallen nature. Adam and Eve lost the Image of God in which they had been created, by that one transgression. Can you see how deadly only one sin can be?

When God called to Adam, "Where art thou?" Adam answered that he was afraid. Sin brings fear. Perfect love casts out fear (**I John 4:18**; ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.). If Adam had continued to love God with all his heart, he would never have disobeyed. We are not afraid of God when we live to please Him.

Think of the terror that will be in the hearts of sinners when they face the Judge of all the earth at the great White Throne Judgement!

When Adam was accused of his crime, he immediately began to make excuses. Eve, the woman God had given him, had offered him the food, so he had eaten. In other words, Adam was even blaming God. If God had not made the woman, he would not have been tempted. But that was only an excuse.

All nature was cursed, too, through Adam's sin. The serpent which Satan had used as a channel through which to work, was cursed above other animals. Satan and man were to be perpetual enemies from that time on. Thistles and thorns would grow up to hinder the growth of food-giving plants. Hereafter Adam would have to work hard for his living: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

The Redeemer

It looked as though all were lost. The beauty and harmony of the world and its inhabitants were upset. The Apostle Paul tells us: "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22). Nature has suffered because man sinned.

Still the mercy of God was present. Man deserved no mercy, but God, in His love, gave again. He promised that a Redeemer would come who would bruise the head of the serpent. This was the first prophecy concerning the coming of Jesus, through whose death we all may be saved.

The Shedding of Blood

Adam and Eve had tried to cover their shame and nakedness with fig leaves, but now God killed some animals and made them coverings of skins. Thus blood was shed for the first sin ever committed. God's rule is, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). All the animals that were killed in sacrifices throughout the Old Testament history were a type, or picture, of Jesus who would one day come to die on the Cross -- "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

QUESTIONS

1. What one commandment had God given to Adam and Eve?
2. Whom did Satan tempt first?
3. What question did he ask?
4. What punishment had God promised for disobedience?
5. What did Satan say about the punishment?
6. What did Eve do after she had eaten of the fruit?
7. What did Adam and Eve do when God came to talk with them?
Why?
8. What happened because of Adam's and Eve's sins?
9. Who and what was afflicted by Adam's sin?
10. What was the promise of the Redeemer?