

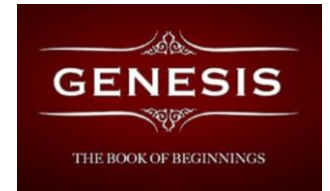
The Failure of the First Couple¹
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
July 5, 2020

Diaspora XVI – The Church Scattered, Sixteenth Sunday

Text: Genesis 3:1-13

Purpose: To help us understand how critical and significant the first couple's decision impacted all of humanity. Their disobedience brought sin and the nature of sin into every human being. Satan deceived Adam and Eve. Satan's character demonstrates he is a liar, deceiver, accuser, and murderer.

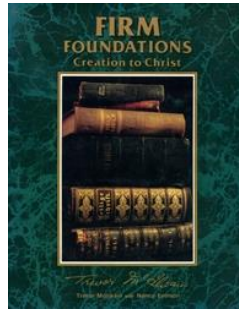
Many people in our society think that they know a great deal about the Bible. They have heard about God; they have heard about Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden; they have heard about Adam and Eve's sin; they have heard about Satan.



But to many people, these things they have heard are only a story or a myth. They may have been taught to view the story of Adam and Eve as an allegory or a myth. Or they might even tell you that they believe the Bible, but in actuality, they have not taken the time to read or study God's Word nor have they allowed what little they have heard to have any application in their own lives.

¹ Outline from Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ by New Tribes Mission, lesson 10.

I saw a note of a Pastor this past week on Facebook asking for suggestions for curriculum for the Youth in his church to help them understand the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. He stated that he found that his youth know very little about the Bible and needed some guidance.



What a tragedy and shame this is when we have the Bible so readily available to us and yet we do not read or study it. We will be held accountable to God for what we have decided to ignore or blatantly reject!

A. Introduction / Review of prior weeks

Before we begin this morning with Adam and Eve in paradise, we need to back up and review what we have discussed over the past few weeks.

1. God had placed Adam and Eve in the most beautiful place in the world. He created the entire world that would support and give life to these first two individuals. God made everything perfect.
2. There were two very important trees there in the Garden of Eden. The first tree was the Tree of Life. This tree was the source of eternal life. They were able to eat freely from this tree. They could also eat from the other trees, but this Tree of Life was special.



The second tree was the tree of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. God was very specific in the instruction concerning this tree. They were not to eat of that tree.

3. The result of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would be death. The exact words God said was, *"In the day that you eat of the tree, you will surely die."*
4. When God said that they would surely die, it meant three different things.
 - a. This separation would result immediately and they would no longer be in fellowship and friendship with God as they once were.
 - b. That one day, maybe not immediately, their bodies would die. Their soul and their body would be separated from each other.
 - c. That death would result in their body, soul and spirit being separated from God eternally. There would need to be reconciliation between God and man if this separation were to ever be bridged. For those that have not been reconciled back to God, their eternal place of separation is what we have come to call the Lake of Fire, or Hell.
5. After the instructions concerning the tree were given, God created Eve for Adam. She was to be a helper for him.



She was to be his wife. There were no other animals that would be suitable as a companion for him. She was created from the rib of Adam to be a part of him. They were to live in peace with God and procreate.



In many wedding ceremonies we hear these words:

*Woman came from the rib of man and not
the head of man or foot of man.
A man is not to rule over a woman,
nor a woman rule over a man.
She is to be with him.
She was made of the rib
because it is close to the heart,
for man to love his wife.*

Repeatedly, the scripture tells us men to love your wife. They are to help and assist us – not be our slave or servant. They are to be our “help meet.”

B. Life in the Garden of Eden

Life in the Garden was perfect. They had everything they needed. God was their friend: He loved them, and they were very happy. God had placed Adam as manager or steward over the creation. There was no sickness or disease. There were no pests. I am sure there were no mosquitoes!

They were given a variety of plants as their food. They didn't have any financial worries. They didn't have all

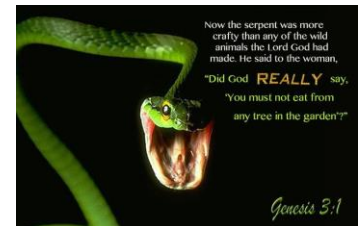
the stress in life we have today. They had not sinned, so they didn't have to worry about the consequences of sin. There was not division, or separation, between man and God. The relationship was not broken.

But God’s enemy, Satan, had plans to disrupt this perfect creation. Satan knew about God’s warning to Adam concerning the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Satan knew that if he could convince Adam and Eve to disobey God, he had the chance to receive the glory for himself that only belonged to God. Therefore, Satan planned to deceive Eve.

C. Satan disguised himself as the serpent to deceive Eve.

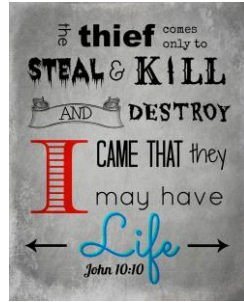
Genesis 3:1 says, “*Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?*”

This wasn’t just any snake talking to Eve. It was Satan that had entered into the snake. This serpent was more crafty or clever than any of the other animals that God had made. The characteristics of Satan may not be obvious to some, but they are brought out in this passage.



First, Satan is a deceiver. In this passage we see that the serpent made a statement that was *partially* true. It was true that God said they could eat of every tree in the garden, except for one that was apparently in the middle of the garden.

John 8:44 describes Satan as a liar and a murderer. His name means he is a “deceiver” or “accuser.” Satan wants to take what is good and make it evil. He wants to take what is bad and make it appear good. In 2 Corinthians 11:14, Satan is described as one that would disguise himself as “*an angel of light*” if he could deceive someone.



Up to this point in time, the animals had not been harmful. This serpent was now doing the work of Satan.

D. Satan still deceives people

Even today, Satan has not changed his tactics or plan for deception. Satan still deceive people. He may not come to us in the form of a talking serpent, but he will use our individual weakness to draw us away from God.

Many times, Satan deceives people by speaking directly into their minds. They may think the thoughts are their own, but they are not of God. We must be careful of the voices that are guiding our thoughts. Are those thoughts good, wholesome, honorable? Are the teachings contrary to God’s holy word as found in the Bible? If they are not good or if they contradict God’s word, then that mental suggestion is not from God, it is directly from Satan.

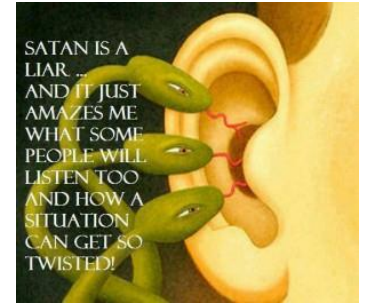
There may be times when you are reading your Bible, or praying, or going to Sunday school when you get a troubling question pop in your mind.

“Why should I believe the Bible?”

“God is asking too much from me.”

“Surely I am not qualified to teach that Sunday school class!”

All of these questions undermine our ability to trust God and follow His plan for our life. Satan hates God and hates God’s word. Satan knows exactly what the Bible says. But he *always* twists it. When Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days, Satan used the scripture to test Jesus. Jesus’ answer to Satan was quoted directly from the book of Deuteronomy.



There are other times when Satan is using other people to speak to us and deceive us. Some are knowingly following Satan while others are only carriers of a lie and don’t know it. Satan will try to make these people look attractive, but they are messengers of a lie. Many times, Satan will make us feel that we are missing out on something important if we don’t experience it. In Eve’s case, Satan told her that if she ate of it, she would become *wise*. We must discern for ourselves the truth, with Gods guidance. It is better to take a stand for right, than to follow a group or a person that is wrong.

Sometimes Satan will use our pride against us to do wrong. We may not be caught up in the crowd. Maybe we want to be superior to the crowd and choose the “*wise*” way. Isn’t the attraction of being wise still a temptation for many? Satan has deceived many individuals through this manner, tempting us to be independent of God.

Satan will use whatever way he can to take our eyes off God and depend solely on ourselves.

Sometimes you will hear of individuals that openly worship Satan. Most people do not go that extreme. Just recently it was advertised on Facebook that the Disciples of Lucifer were hosting a March for One World Government in Raleigh on June 21st. I am not sure if this occurred, but Satan is alive and well and working to still deceive people. It appears what Satan once did secretly is being done openly today.



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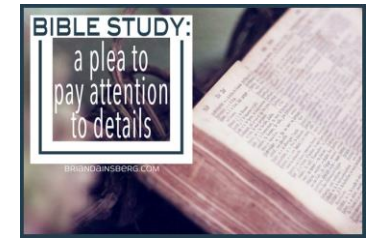
We need to be careful to not become involved in subtle things that cause us to take our eyes off the Lord Jesus Christ and depend upon the ways of the world.

You need to be aware of anything that makes you look to some other source or some other power other than God for answers to life. Be careful of anything that appears to be good, when in fact it is evil. We need to steer away from games, music, or entertainment that exalts killing, lying, immorality, stealing or filthy language. What we watch, what we read, and where we go, all molds us and shapes us. We must steer clear of anything that denies God's existence or minimizes the authority of God's word.

E. Satan tempted and deceived Eve

We read in chapter three, verse one that Satan was giving partially correct answers to Eve. He was leading her into confusion and was tricking her.

Genesis 3:2-3 reveals her confusion. *“And the woman said to the serpent, ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.’”*”



Is that what God said? No. God said that in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. God gave the first command concerning the tree to Adam. Adam in turn gave the instruction to Eve. Eve had added the part about touching the fruit.

How many times have we taken God's clear instructions about a topic and added our own man-made law to it? We don't think that God has limited the subject enough so man adds to it.

The Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus day had taken the laws given by God and added additional regulations on top of it. We are guilty of the same thing.

In Genesis 3:4-5 we see Satan's reply. *“You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*



Satan mixed the lie of not dying with the truth that their eyes would be opened to both good and evil. Satan often mixes a lie with the truth.

You must be careful when someone brings a proposition to you. There are parts of what they want to do that are good, but underneath there is a lie wrapped up in it.

Satan has rebelled against God and wants to take as many people away from God as possible. Satan is suggesting that Eve should also reject God and seek her own way.

F. Eve ate and also gave the fruit to Adam

Satan deceived Eve and she yielded to the temptation. She took the fruit and ate it. She must have turned and given the fruit to Adam. The story never says that Adam was deceived. I have heard many preachers say that Adam stood by and watched to see if Eve would die. Since she didn't die immediately, then it must be all right.

I am unsure where Adam was when Eve was deceived. But the truth of the matter, it doesn't matter. Adam knew God's prohibition against eating the fruit, but did it anyway. It was a deliberate act of rejection of what God had instructed. Adam and Eve wanted independence from God. They wanted to know the difference between good and evil and be like God. Instead of God being first in Adam's heart, Adam and Eve now made themselves their own ruler and king.



G. Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God

Because of this act of disobedience, they were now separated from God.

Genesis 3:7 says, *“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 loincloths. And then 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.”*

They were found naked and ashamed. They hid their face from God. They didn't want to face the judgment of God because they knew that had disobeyed God's clear instructions. In their hearts they knew that things had changed.

H. Signs of Separation from God

There are some specific signs that we can identify that changed in their relationship with God.

First, their attitude toward their bodies changed immediately. Before this sin, they were not ashamed of their body. Now they were. **Secondly**, before they ate the fruit, they anticipated and enjoyed talking with God. Now they were hiding in fear of God. **They also knew** they needed a covering. They fashioned a covering from fig leaves. This was man's first attempt to cover their sin. They were no longer depending upon God. They no longer trusted God.



But God didn't accept their covering. Our righteousness – our man-made fig leaves – our good works – will never measure up to an adequate sacrifice to reconcile us back with God. God knew that the relationship was changed forever. The only way sin could be atoned for was through the shedding of blood.

God fashioned the skins of animals as their covering. Their sin brought about the death of an innocent animal.



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Now that they had eaten from the Tree of Knowledge and Evil, God knew they could no longer remain in the Garden of Eden. They would need to leave the place of paradise. God put them out of the garden.

This gap between God and man was now eternally broken. Man cannot bridge the gap that was formed when Adam and Eve sinned. It would be like trying to jump across the Grand Canyon on a bicycle. The gap is just too great for man to overcome.



Only God could provide the solution to this problem.

Sin brings separation. Disobedience is the reason we have fear and sin in the world. Ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed God, there has been a terrible fear in the heart of mankind. We fear death, sickness, financial ruin, enemy attack, and war. We question if our water is safe to drink, check to see if food is safe to eat, we are fearful of the wars

overseas. We are often paralyzed about whether or not there will be enough money to pay the bills this month.

This fear has permeated our world. But the good news is that God has a plan. God's mercy has not run out. God will provide a way.

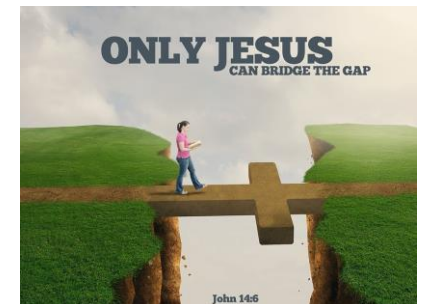
Were Adam and Eve warned about the punishment of their disobedience? Yes. They knew that they would die – but they chose to sin anyway. We are equally guilty. For many years I have wondered if I were Adam, would I have eaten of that tree? I have come to the conclusion I would have. I am equally certain if you were there, you would have chosen to eat of that fruit as well. They were perfect and yet, they chose sin.

What about today? We know what is right and wrong, but we choose to sin anyway. God will punish sin. We will receive our just punishment.

Romans 3:23 says, *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”*

Romans 6:23 says, *“For the wages (or payment) of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

God did not send his Son to condemn the world, but that through His son, the world may be reconciled to himself. God desires that none perish, but that all come to a saving knowledge of God through



Christ Jesus. He who believes in Jesus is not condemned. But he that does not believe is condemned already.

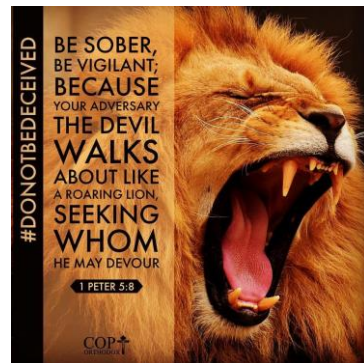
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us. Our promised redeemer is Jesus Christ. Our forgiveness is found in the shed blood of Christ.

I. Conclusion

This is not a simple tale about a woman and a man. It is a story of tragic and eternal consequences for our world. Mankind is now separated from God because of their choices. Adam and Eve passed this sinful nature to their children.

We have learned that when God places a barrier on something, we need to heed it. God placed this prohibition on them for a reason. God was telling the truth. His word can be trusted.

Satan on the other hand cannot be trusted. We need to be cautious. Satan is like a roaring lion seeking whom he will destroy. He will do *anything* to keep us from God. Wherever we are weakest, He will use that to draw us away from God. Satan may even use some good things to keep us out of fellowship with God. Satan doesn't sit around in a red suit and with a pitchfork telling lies. Often his lies are wrapped in half-truth. We need to listen to God's voice and be careful to discern the truth.



This week, as you go, listen carefully to the voices that guide you during the day. Test those voices against God's word. God will not contradict himself. God only wants fellowship with you. Satan wants to destroy you. The choice is yours.

LET US PRAY