

4. Curse and Cure

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In my opinion, this chapter is the most important chapter of the entire Bible. Without understanding why and how Adam and Eve fell into their sins, the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ become a mute point.

With these in mind, we are going to study the curse that came from the fall of man and the cure that came from the love of God.

A. PUTTING DOUBT IN OUR HEARTS

Genesis 3:1 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'?"

Apparently, before the curse pronounced in Genesis 3:14-15, the serpent was different than what we know today as a serpent. It became one.

One interesting thing, from what we have learned in first two chapters, when God spoke, He brought life and order, when satan spoke, he brought chaos and death.

Satan brought his temptation against the woman because he knew that she was more vulnerable to attack, since she didn't hear God's command first hand. He also knew that woman has more tendencies to long for spiritual things than man in general. In fact, that is why many of the founders of cults and isms have been women.

Satan's first attack was against the Word of God. From the beginning, satan has tried to deceive God's people by undermining God's Word. He can undermine just as effectively by getting us to neglect God's Word as by getting us to doubt it.

B. THE CONVERSATION THAT SHOULD NOT BEEN TAKEN

Genesis 3:2-3 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat 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 has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die."

Eve's first mistake was in even carrying on a conversation with the satan. The devil is the father of all lies as Jesus said. There is nothing worth conversing with him.

Eve misquoted God's command to Adam. To make the matter worse, she added to the command and put words in God's mouth when she said, "*nor shall you touch it.*" God never has said that. She could hang upside down from a branch if she wanted or they could have built a tree house on that tree. God's command to them was "*not to eat it.*"

When we start to exchange God's Word with men's, that is when we really are digging ourselves into a massive trouble.

C. MIXING TRUTH WITH LIES

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

Satan effectively laid the groundwork. He drew Eve into a conversation with him and planted the seed of doubt about God's Word, and he exposed Eve's incomplete understanding of God's Word. Now he moves in for the kill, with an outright contradiction of what God said.

Satan first wanted Eve to forget all about what God said about the consequences of sin which is death. When we know and remember the consequences of sin, we are more likely to give up the passing pleasures of sin.

Satan tried to portray God as a conniving jealous mean master who doesn't want to share good things, such as the fruits from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with Adam and Eve.

Then, here comes the ultimate bait for the mankind: "*You will be like God.*" This old lie has been repackaged in many different wrapping materials. Mormonism claims that we are little gods. New Age movement cries out that there is gods within all of us. All we have to do is enlighten ourselves to achieve that divine stage.

Even within the rank of Christianity some false teachers teach their congregation with this garbage. Kenneth Copeland said, "Cow begets cow, dog begets dog. Since we are children of God, we are little gods." That is an utter heresy and it is damnable. Yes, those who are born-again are children of God, but we are not gods.

Before you get all upset with me and storm out of this church, because I talked against Kenneth Copeland, I want you to borrow this CD 'Defending the Faith' by Pastor Paul Scozzafava who is a renown apologist of the Word of God and listen to the recording of Kenneth Copeland's own voice. As long as you don't worship the ground he walks around, his comment will send a chill down your back.

The liberal and the atheist take from the Word of God to dilute it, and God has warned against that. The cults and false teachers add to the Word of God to suit their needs, and God warns against that.

Please note that satan does not come up with pure lie which rarely effective. He mixes lies with truth and gives some credit to his lies.

D. THE FALL OF MAN

Genesis 3:6 So when (1) the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that (2) it was pleasant to the eyes, and (3) 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.

Eve surrendered to this temptation in exactly the way John describes in 1 John 2:16.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.

First, she gave in to the lust of the flesh – "*saw that it was good for food*", then she gave in to the lust of the eyes – "*pleasant to the eyes*", then she gave in to the pride of life "*desirable to make one wise*".

Jesus was tempted in the same three-fold way in Matthew 4:1-11: an appeal to the physical appetites, an appeal to covetous and emotional desires, and an appeal to pride. Yet, He didn't fall for satan's temptations. How did He fight back? Each time He was tempted, He fought back with the Word of God. For Eve's case, she already distorted the words from God, so she was going south.

I do not think that the devil has changed his tactics today. He uses the same tactics with you and me, and the reason that he still uses them is that they work. He hasn't needed to change his tactics, because we all seem to fall for the same line.

Even though Eve was tempted by Satan, Satan couldn't cram the fruit down her throat. Eve was completely responsible for her own action. She couldn't rightly say, "the devil made me do it."

Not only did Eve sin, but she became the agent of temptation for Adam. But when Adam ate, he was not deceived as Eve was. Adam sinned with his eyes wide open, in open rebellion against God.

E. EXCUSE, EXCUSE

Genesis 3:7 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.

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened" – this refers to their conscience. Before the fall, man did not have a conscience. He was innocent. Innocence is ignorance of evil. Adam and Eve did not confess their sin. They just attempted to cover it up. They were not ready to admit their lost condition.

I was told that fig leaves are a prickly quality, which would make for very itchy coverings. Every attempt to cover up our own sins before God is just as foolish. We need to let Jesus cover us with His blood.

Adam's attempt to covering his own sin is like religion. Religion is man's effort to reach to God which is nothing more than futile effort of man's part.

Genesis 3:8-10 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. 9 Then the Lord 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."

Folks, this is what we do when we are sinning against God knowingly. This is what backsliders do. Some try to hide away from the voice of God while God is actively asking them to return to Him. Where can we go from His presence? Where can we run from His Omni-Presence? You can run, but you cannot hide from God.

This shows that Adam and Eve knew that their attempt to cover themselves failed. They didn't proudly show off their fig-leaf outfits to God. They knew their own covering was completely inadequate, and they were embarrassed before God. There is a theological term for Adam's fig-leaf outfits - 'Adam's Fall Fashion Line'.

V9 is the heartfelt cry of an anguished father. God obviously knew where they were but He also knew a gulf just had been made between Himself and man by the first Adam.

Genesis 3:11-13 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 the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Sin made Adam to be afraid of God's presence and His voice. But God wanted Adam to confess his sins. Ever since Adam, men run from God's presence and don't want to listen to His Word.

We all sin. But when we sin, we can still give glory to God by openly confessing without shifting the blame onto others. There is nothing you can do about yesterday's sin. Yet you can do what is right before God right now by confessing and repenting.

Adam's attempt to blame Eve is completely consistent with human nature. Few of us are willing to simply say as David did, "*I have sinned against the Lord*" in 2 Samuel 12:13.

By saying "*the woman whom You gave to be with me,*" Adam essentially blames on God for the sin.

F. THE FIRST GOSPEL

Genesis 3:14-15 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. 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."

Note that the satan in a serpent form was still hanging around with Adam and Eve. I believe that he was condemning them for their disobedience to God. That is how satan operates. First, he tempts us. Once we fall for it, he condemns us. We don't have to listen to his temptation only, but also his condemnation. Because both are from the pit of hell.

Adam and Eve must have been terrified as this once-beautiful creature called a serpent was transformed into the creeping, slithering, hissing snake we know today. They must have thought, "Uh oh, it's our turn next!"

In this, God prophesies the doom of satan, showing that the real battle is between satan and the Seed of the Woman. There is no doubt this is a prophecy of Jesus' ultimate defeat of satan. God announced that satan would injure the Messiah, but the Messiah would crush satan with a mortal wound. Jesus did that through His own death and resurrection. Some people call this chapter as the first Gospel in the Bible.

God's plan wasn't "set back" when Adam and Eve sinned. Because God's plan was to bring forth something greater than man in the innocence of Eden. God wanted more than innocent man. His plan is to bring forth REDEEMED MAN.

G. CURSES FOR THE MANKIND

Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; (1) In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

I don't think I have to explain about the pain in child bearing and all the other things you ladies go through for that to you ladies. When you get to heaven, have a long talk with Eve, ladies.

The principle of Adam's headship as a husband was established before the fall. Now the curse on Eve makes it much harder for her to submit and flow with God's institution of male headship in the home. As a result of the fall, marriage has constant power struggles between husband and wife.

Genesis 3:17-19 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; (2) In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both (3) thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 (4) In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread (5) till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And (6) to dust you shall return."

Because of Adam, there is a curse upon all creation. Before the curse on man, the ground only produced good. After the curse, it will still produce good, but thorns and thistles will come faster and easier than good fruit.

This is the judgment upon man. Death now comes to man. But Adam did not die physically the day that he ate. He did not die until more than nine hundred years later. He died spiritually the moment he disobeyed. He was separated from God.

- 1) Sin brought pain to childbirth, and no one knew more pain than Jesus did when He, through His suffering, brought many sons to glory.
- 2) Sin brought toil, and Jesus endured great toil to bring our salvation.
- 3) Thorns came with sin and the fall, and Jesus endured a crown of thorns to bring our salvation.
- 4) Sin brought sweat, and Jesus sweat, as it were, great drops of blood to win our salvation.
- 5) Sin brought sorrow, and Jesus became a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, to save us.
- 6) Sin brought death, and Jesus tasted death for everyone that we might be saved.

H. THE REDEMPTION CURE THROUGH SACRIFICE

Genesis 3:20-24 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. 22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

In order for Adam and Eve to be clothed, a sacrifice had to be made. An animal had to die. Without shedding of blood there is no remission.

Adam and Eve were clothed in a garment that was purchased with the life of another which only covered their sins temporarily. But we are clothed with a garment of righteousness that was purchased with the life of Jesus Christ and with that righteous garment our sins were forgiven and washed away.

With disobedience of the first Adam, the mankind was separated from God. But because God loved us so much that He sent the second Adam, Jesus Christ to bridge that gap.

Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I. APPLICATIONS

- 1) We will fall straight into temptations when we neglect God's Word and prayers to Him.
- 2) What we fleshly desire is contrary to what the Holy Spirit wants in our lives. Let's ask ourselves the consequences of what we want is worth.
- 3) There is often nothing you can do about yesterday's sin. Yet you can do what is right before God right now by confessing and repenting.