

Lesson 5 SIN AND ITS RESULT

READING: GENESIS 3

AIM: To show how sin entered the world and how, despite man's failure, God in His mercy provided a hope of redemption for mankind.

1. BACKGROUND

In beautiful surroundings, for "the Lord God planted a garden in Eden eastward" and caused to grow "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food", God blessed Adam and Eve and supplied them with everything they needed. They were able to commune with God, they were given dominion over the animal kingdom and a command to people the earth.

God desired freely given obedience from man and therefore He imposed a simple test which made possible either willing obedience or disobedience. God told them that they could eat of the fruit of any tree in the Garden of Eden, with the one exception. They were not to eat the fruit of a certain tree called the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil".

God commanded them, "**Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**" (Gen. 2:17)

2. SIN ENTERS - Gen. 3:1-6-

Among the living things created by God was the serpent. It was "more subtle" than other creatures, with more highly developed faculties. It told Eve "**Ye shall not surely die 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**" (Gen. 3:4-5) Eve was tempted. She saw that:

- (1) the tree was good for food,
- (2) it was pleasant to the eyes, and
- (3) she wanted to be wise, as the serpent said.

Eve knew what God had commanded, but her own desires were strong, so she ate of the fruit. Adam decided to do the same. They had disobeyed God. The serpent's lie that they would not die had deceived Eve while Adam, knowing that Eve had transgressed, chose to join his wife in sin rather than remain at one with God (1 Tim. 2:14)

It is written that "**Sin is the transgression of the law**" (1 John 3:4). Right at the beginning, man had broken God's law. They had the choice of obeying God or of taking the fruit. They had themselves to please. They used their free will to satisfy their own desires, and so they fell from grace (see James 1:14-15).

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3. **RESULT OF SIN** - Gen. 3:7-24

Adam and Eve were filled with fear. No longer were they upright. They were now sinners and conscious of guilt. They tried to hide themselves from God amongst the trees of the garden. They knew that their sin had put a barrier between themselves and God (Gen. 3:7-8)

God passed judgement on the serpent (Gen. 3:14) on Eve (Gen. 3:16) and lastly on Adam, including the earth (Gen. 3:17-19) Sorrow, hard toil and the sentence of death became the bitter lot of Adam and Eve, and their descendants. Man was condemned to return to the dust from whence he came- "**Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return**". So death passed upon all mankind for all have sinned (Rom. 5:12)

Adam and Eve were aware of their nakedness. They made aprons of fig leaves but this was not satisfactory. It was necessary for God to clothe them with coats of skin. The shedding of blood (giving up of life – which is in the blood) was needed to provide the skin to cover their nakedness, the consciousness of which was a sign of their sin (Heb. 9:22)

Adam and Eve were thrust from the Garden of Eden and the way to the "tree of life" was guarded. So their state was hopeless unless God should help them (Gen. 3:22-24).

4. **THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION** – Gen. 3:15

God in His mercy did not leave the human race to perish because Adam failed. From that very time God promised a **Redeemer** and so provided a way whereby man might gain eternal life. This important promise of hope is found in Genesis 3:15:

"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".

This verse cannot be interpreted literally – the language is figurative.

- (1) **The serpent and its seed represent sin** because the serpent's thinking was opposed to the mind of God (Gen. 3:4). This is manifest in men and women who follow the will of the flesh.
- (2) **The seed of the woman refers to the Lord Jesus Christ** who was descended from Eve but always manifested the mind and ways of God.

Between sin and Jesus was enmity. On the one hand sin was to bruise **the heel** of Jesus. He died, but a **bruise** on the heel is **not** fatal. **Sin** could not conquer him because he did God's will and not his own. God raised him from the dead.

On the other hand Jesus was to bruise **the head of sin**. He did this by overcoming the weakness of the flesh. Sin had no dominion over him and the grave could not hold him. Moreover by his sacrifice he made it possible for others to be forgiven their sins. These too, will be raised from the dead, even as Jesus Christ was.

So Christ by his perfect obedience to God, dealt sin a deadly blow. He bruised its head and so destroyed its effect. Ultimately there will be no more sin and consequently no more death (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:4) Thus the promise in Eden pointed forward to the grand purpose of God throughout the ages.

5. IMPORTANT POINTS ON IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL LIFE

Since all men are descended from Adam, they have Adam's nature, and are subject to sin and death. By nature they please themselves and do what they want to, instead of seeking God's will and doing it.

A man who does his own will is termed natural man. One who does God's will is termed **spiritual**. He has the mind of the spirit. God has promised to give immortal life to those who try to overcome their natural selfish desires and be spiritually minded.

Concerning **immortality** the Bible declares:

- (1) Only God has it (I Tim. 6:15-16)
- (2) Man does not possess an immortal soul (Ezek. 18:4)
- (3) That we are to seek for immortality (Rom. 2:7)
- (4) That we are to put it on at the Resurrection (I Cor 15:53)

Note also the following points about eternal life:

- (1) It is promised (I John 2:25)
- (2) It is a gift (Rom. 6:23)
- (3) Jesus came that we might have it (John 10:10)
- (4) God gave His Son on the cross that men might be saved (John 3:16)

6. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Eternal life is made possible through the sacrifice of Jesus, because if we make Jesus our Saviour, God will forgive us our sins. We "put on" Christ in baptism and in doing so "our sins are covered" (Rom. 4:7)

We are then clothed with the garments of salvation and must be careful that we keep them clean "unspotted from the world" (Rev. 3:4), in anticipation of the time when we hope to be clothed upon with immortality (Rev. 19:8).

REFERENCE LIBRARY

"The Visible Hand of God". Chapter 4
 "Elpis Israel", part 1, chapter 3.
 "God's Way", chapter 3
 "Christendom Astray", lectures 2 to 4

7. QUESTIONS

1. What were the results of Adam's and Eve's disobedience in Eden?
2. Explain the statement: "man is mortal and does not possess an immortal soul".
3. Explain how Gen. 3:15 promises a redeemer
4. What was God's promise of redemption in Eden and to whom did it point?
5. How should we resist temptation?