

GENESIS 3:7-13 (NAKED AND EXPOSED)

Introduction: Our last sermon closed with this verse – “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.” Before we go forward, let’s go back...back to chapter 2 –

“Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

A question needs to be addressed and answered before we can move on. This is an issue that comes up many times in the remaining 1187 chapters of the Bible and needs to be remembered by everyone willing to accept the Bible’s overall premise.

The question is, “If God said that Adam would die on the day he ate of the fruit, then how could we be doing more sermons on the life of Adam, starting with today? Did God lie?”

The answer is, “No, God didn’t lie.” Well, if God didn’t lie and Adam didn’t die physically, then something else must have happened. From today’s passage on, even until this first day of 2012, man has been dead... spiritually dead. We are born dead and remain that way if and until Christ works in our lives.

Adam and the woman died spiritually the moment they ate of the fruit and all people are born into Adam, spiritually dead. This is the premise of the Bible – that all are born into sin and are thus separated from God at conception. The only thing that can correct this is a new birth – to be “born again” as Jesus declared.

Paul, in the book of Romans, explains this. Although he is writing about the Law of Moses, the same premise applies to the disobedience of Adam and the woman.

⁷ What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “*You shall not covet.*”⁸ But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin *was* dead.⁹ I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.¹⁰ And the commandment, which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death.¹¹
Romans 7:7-11

Paul says, “I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.”

Death resulted from the law, even though the law coming from God was good. Our last sermon resolved this when we looked at how two things, both created in a “good” state, can produce evil. The law, in this case staying away from the tree of knowledge, acted on the deficient will of Adam and the woman.

This is what brought about death and death continues in man until this day. Apart from a rebirth, we will remain spiritually dead and separated from God for eternity.

Text Verse: Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. John 3:3-6

May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Covering Up

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.

Adam and the woman (I'm calling her the woman because she hasn't yet been named – not as an offense to her. Eventually she will be called his wife, and then later, "Eve.") Anyway,,, they had their eyes opened. They saw the effects of evil because they had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and they suddenly realized their naked state.

They knew what it was to feel shame and they tried to hide the shame they felt. They did this by sewing fig leaves together. There are several things we can get from this one verse and deeds are the focus of the three aspects –

The first aspect is that they realized their sin because of their deeds. They had been given a law and they disobeyed it. Paul, speaking of the Law of Moses, said the following. I'm using his logic in a way comparable to what Adam did –

... as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;) Romans 2:12, 13

Adam and the woman failed in the law they had been given. Their deeds testified against them.

In Galatians 3:11, he compliments this same logic –

But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

I hope you are beginning to understand or are more fully able to comprehend what I explained in the sermon on Free Will from Genesis 2:16, 17. No one is justified by the law. Adam and the woman needed faith,

but their deeds, which weren't based on faith, are what brought about their pitiful situation.

The second aspect in sewing fig leaves is that they knew their helpless state. They relied on their deeds to make them to "be like God." But even though this did occur – that they became like God, to know good and evil – it also made them less like God in another way. Their spiritual death at that moment and their works testified against them. This is amazingly similar to the dead church of Laodicea in Revelation chapter 3 –

Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Adam and the woman thought that they would gain everything and have need of nothing, but instead, like the church in Laodicea, they became *wretched* – creatures that would live a toilsome existence from the soil that would stubbornly provide for them.

They became *miserable* – creatures that would long for a return to the garden they had lost and who were destined instead to have trials, troubles, pains, and sorrows.

They became *poor* – creatures who no longer had the riches of heaven, but the thorns of the earth. They would no longer have the waters of life. Instead, their waters came from wells dug into the land and which needed to be drawn up by the strength of their arm.

They became *blind* – creatures without spiritual life or eyes to discern spiritual things. Instead, they would grope through a world of darkness and evil.

And they became *naked* – creatures that were exposed both physically and spiritually. Their nakedness testified against them then and it continues to testify against us even to this day.

Do you think it's any coincidence that Jesus brings up these points to the church of Laodicea? No. God was speaking to them and is speaking to us that all the deeds in the world will do nothing for us unless they are done by faith.

The third aspect of their attempt to cover themselves is that they tried to make things right on their own initiative. In other words, here they have disobeyed, they've sinned, and they've seen their nakedness, and they tried to cover it with fig leaves. Fig leaves are unsuitable to cover a person. Here's a few reasons why –

They aren't *strong enough* for the task – a leaf can't withstand the stress that's applied to them. They aren't *durable enough* for the task – they wear out as they dry and will fall to pieces quickly. They aren't *protective enough* for safety as the material isn't user friendly for the hardships we face.

Each of these points parallels our deeds in trying to obtain God's favor. They aren't *strong enough* to cover our sin. Our deeds cannot hold up to the stress of sin's consequences. They aren't *durable enough* for the task; temporary deeds can't satisfy an infinite penalty.

And they aren't *protective enough* for the safety of the person. The fiery darts of the devil, the internal struggles of sin, and the weakness of our souls cannot be overcome by deeds. Instead, they leave us in the same sad shape, or even worse, than we were in.

This pattern has been repeated countless times since sin first entered the world. We do wrong and we try to hide our wrong.

When Bill Clinton was discovered to have had an extra-marital affair, he lied about it and did what he could with his presidential powers to cover it up. He even went as far as publically mulling over what the definition of "is" is. He shamefully sewed fig leaves together in an attempt to hide his guilt.

In the same way, Jim Bakker, the disgraced TV evangelist was accused of offering a \$265,000 bribe to a secretary in the ministry to cover up their adultery. He was also tried and convicted on charges of fraud, tax evasion, and racketeering stemming from his involvement in several illegal financial transactions during the construction of Heritage USA.

Even the first King of Israel, Saul, attempted to cover up his wrongdoing. When he found that his sin was exposed before God, he had the nerve to say to Samuel “I have sinned; *yet* honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, ...”

In contrast to these people, Job held onto his righteousness as a badge of honor and even compared his acts against the unrighteousness of Adam.

But whether it’s a politician, a minister, a king, or Job, whether we have done something amiss or not, we stand naked and exposed before the God who searches the hearts and minds of His creatures.

II. A Moment in Time

⁸ 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.

It’s surprising how many theologians deny the literal reading of this verse. The LORD God, Jehovah Elohim – the God of Power and Perfection walked in the garden in the cool of the day – in Hebrew, the “wind of the day.” Adam Clarke gives us his comments on this passage –

“The voice is properly used here, for as God is an infinite Spirit, and cannot be confined to any form, so he can have no personal appearance.” In other words, He doesn’t believe God walked in the garden.

The main premise for people who follow the literal method of Bible interpretation is that we should be satisfied with the literal interpretation of a text unless very substantial reasons can be given for advancing beyond the literal meaning.

In the case of this account, the LORD GOD walking in the garden, there is no good reason to deny it being taken literally and there is the authority of God's word that it should be. In other words, Jehovah Elohim really walked in the Garden of Eden just as He did when He met Abraham in Genesis 18; just as He did when He wrestled with Jacob in Genesis 32; just as He appeared to Joshua before the battle of Jericho; and just as He did on many other occasions in the Old Testament.

This same Lord God walked among His people after the Incarnation, when the Holy Spirit united with human flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the master of time and space and He walked in the Garden and elsewhere, appearing in His own history.

People speculate on how long it was before Adam and the woman actually ate of the fruit in disobedience. In one of my Bible classes I was asked this and my answer was, "Probably not very long."

One Jewish commentary, which includes a timeline of all of history, says this, "On the very day he was created, man committed the first sin of history, transgressing the divine commandment not to eat from the 'Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.' Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden, and mankind became subject to death, labor, and moral confusion."

This seems to be validated by the term "the cool of the day." It was the end of the day, the evening, that Jehovah Elohim walked in the Garden... plenty enough time had gone by for his innocent and precious creatures to have their eyes opened.

If this is so – if they really sinned on the first day they were created – it brings about an immensely profound theological concept and so I would caution you to take my personal thoughts here with a complete grain of salt and yet ponder them as if they were the choicest of fruits.

In Genesis 1, it said at the end of the sixth day of creation, "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

If Adam fell before the end of the sixth day, and everything was very good on the sixth day, then God's plan included His creatures to be complete and not lacking knowledge by the end of the sixth day. Is an innocent creature – one that doesn't know good from evil – complete or not?

If the man was placed in the garden to worship and serve His Creator, could he do it without this knowledge? Personally, I would say not. And therefore the book of Revelation where we see the restoration of the Garden to creatures who **have** the knowledge of good and evil is even more significant than we might imagine!

Out of 7000 years of human existence which is 2,520,000 days, only 1 day was as it should have been and Oh! how we wait for the restoration of that perfect day.

I think this is supportable by God's rest on Day 7. God rested from His labors on that day and the purpose of man was to enter God's rest. Because this is so, then it makes complete sense that He was expelled from the Garden before the 7th day.

Only when the fullness of time had come when Jesus was crucified and resurrected was man allowed to actually enter God's rest. As it says in Hebrews 4:3, "For we who have believed do enter that rest..."

That Adam and the woman fell on the sixth day of creation is also supportable by the comment in Revelation 13:8 – "All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was "slain from the foundation of the world." Sin is what necessitated the death of the Lord and therefore sin occurred at the foundation of the world – known to us as the six days of creation.

We look around us and see death, troubles, misery, and pain, but God sees a plan that will bring many sons to glory and one which is worth the cost to have creatures that can appreciate the greatness of His marvelous plan.

Never underestimate the immense glory of what God has done and is doing in this on-going bubble of time and space!

III. Hiding Away

**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.” 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?”**

Man o man... nothing has changed in the last 6000 years. The Lord called to Him. “Adam... hellooooo Adam.” Where are you? Of course He knew where Adam was, but He was drawing him out in a tender manner, just as a parent would to their wayward child. Jeremiah asks this rhetorical question from the Lord –

Can anyone hide himself in secret places,
So I shall not see him?” says the LORD;
“Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the LORD. -Jer 23:24

The great King of Israel, David, tried to hide his own sin from the Lord after having slept with Bathsheba and then having her husband Uriah killed. Let’s take a few moments and read the account –

And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, “I *am* with child.” ⁶ Then David sent to Joab, *saying*, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered. ⁸ And David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.” So Uriah departed from the king’s house, and a gift *of food* from the king followed him. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ So when they told David, saying, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?” ¹¹ And Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are

encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and *as your soul lives*, I will not do this thing.” ¹² Then David said to Uriah, “Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him drunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. ¹⁴ In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵ And he wrote in the letter, saying, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.” ¹⁶ So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there *were* valiant men. ¹⁷ Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And *some* of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also. ... (And going down a few verses) When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. ²⁷ And when her mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

2 Samuel 11:5-17 & 26, 27

David tried to cover up his sins with fig leaves but the LORD knew what had happened. Instead of working wickedness and trying to hide our shame behind foliage, Paul gives us a much better way of handling things in the book of Romans –

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts. Romans 13:13, 14

Because what David did is so intricately tied to Adam’s account, let’s go back there and see the continued comparison – “Then the LORD sent Nathan to David.”

Nathan is the king’s prophet. Right here, can’t you hear the LORD calling Adam... “Aaaadam, Oh Aaadam.” But instead of Adam, the LORD is calling out to His beloved King – “David... Oh Daaavid.”

And he came to him, and said to him: “There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. ² The rich *man* had exceedingly many flocks and herds. ³ But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴ And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.”

David listened intently to the account, this parable about his own sin being given to him by his prophet Nathan. He was the king and the one to judge legal cases. As he sat and listened, he wasn’t clueing in to what his own prophet, his mouthpiece of the LORD, was trying to tell him.

Who else would he be talking about? But just like Adam, he was secretly hiding in his own little garden. He was naked and covered in fig leaves, just like his first father.

And just like the Garden, the woman he had conspired with was securely hidden with him, behind the walls of his palace. “Oh, Zion is nice and comfortable and the LORD doesn’t see a thing.” But the LORD found Adam who was hiding in Eden and the LORD found David hiding in Zion.

The Garden of Eden means a “Garden of Delight” and Zion means a “Parched Place.” From one extreme to another, “the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.”

IV. Passing the Buck

¹² Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

I get to do this a lot. Whenever I’m found out for some misdeed, I simply pass the buck to my Beauty. “It was all Hideko’s fault, can’t you see this. She made me do it, the little devil.”

Well, maybe not all the time...

But this is our natural proclivity. We blame our co-workers when things don't go right at work. We blame our brother or sister when mom and dad find out the thing we did. We blame McDonald's for making the coffee too hot when we stupidly drop it and burn ourselves. We blame the rich for our financial woes. We blame God for every bad thing that we can't control. We love to point the finger and pass the buck to someone else.

Adam passed the buck and it landed at right Eve's feet. But what is also included here is a bit more... "The woman whom **You gave** to be with me..."
ha-issha asher nathata imadi

"The woman made me do it, but really, it's **Your** fault. **You** put her in my lap. Things sure would have been better without her." And this is the pattern of the unrighteous of human beings down through the ages. Not only do we pass the buck, but we somehow find a way of blaming God in the process.

This really is the mark of the unrighteous soul. This is what King Saul did when he disobeyed God's order to destroy everything belonging to the Amalekites when he fought against them –

Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed *are* you of the LORD! I have performed the commandment of the LORD." But Samuel said, "What then *is* this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

Saul passed the buck on to God, "I did it because it's what God would have wanted." But this unrepentant attitude after being found out... the attitude which was so similar to Adam, wasn't at all like David. How could the LORD call David "a man after my own heart" even after he committed adultery and murder? Let's continue with David's trial before the LORD –

So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity." Then Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if *that had been* too little, I also would have given you much more! Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife *to be* your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.'"

V. Kicking the Can

Most of you have probably heard the term "kicking the can down the road." We use this to say that someone who's getting blamed for something turns around and blames someone else. In the world's first cast of "kicking the can down the road," the woman taught us how to do it.

Women have given us other firsts as well. After tedious research on the internet and elsewhere, I found 7 women who accomplished wonderful firsts – 1) Bette Nesmith Graham invented liquid paper; 2) Sixteenth century noblewoman Lady Mary Wortley Montagu discovered the smallpox vaccination; 3) Helen Greiner invented the first bomb diffusing robot; 4) Sarah Blakely, comedian turned entrepreneur, invented SpanX – in her case, I'm not sure if she ever left the field of comedy; 5) Margaret Knight invented paper bags... she didn't invent paper or bags, but she did invent paper bags; 6) Marion Donovan invented disposable diapers; and 7) Hideko Garrett invented a workable method of turning a completely helpless soul into an effective dish washer and husband. All notable firsts...

Women accomplished all of these notable tasks, but our first mother, Eve, gets sole rights to "kicking the can down the road."

**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.”**

Adam was very careful to assign blame directly to Eve and indirectly to the LORD, but Eve – without missing a beat, turned around and blamed the serpent. Paul made sure to note in the New Testament though that kicking the can only goes so far –

For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

I appreciate Paul reminding of this. By the time we get to 1 Timothy, which is 55 books into the Bible, it can be tough to keep all these things in order.

In all seriousness though, this pattern has remained pretty much uninterrupted since it first occurred. It’s so easy to pass the buck and kick the can and it’s rare when someone will own up to their own failings.

In the case of King David, what did he do after he was confronted with his transgressions? He stood fast and took the heat –

¹³ So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. ¹⁴ However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also *who is* born to you shall surely die.” ¹⁵ Then Nathan departed to his house.

Yes, sin has consequences and David paid for them in his family and in the many trials he faced, but because of his repentant heart and the depth of his emotions when confronted with his own sin, God favored him.

The 51st Psalm is David’s heartfelt acknowledgment of his misdeeds and it has filled the souls of people for over 2700 years with a deeper understanding of the type of person God rejoices over in His dealings with the sons of men. When we sin, let’s be strong enough to admit it and to not attempt to cover ourselves with fig leaves and then assign blame when we’re found out. Rather, let’s openly acknowledge our sins and move on.

I'll leave you with this final verse to remember tonight –

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account. Hebrews 4:13

Tragedy in the Garden

The woman was enticed, and she ate of the fruit
She passed it on to Adam and he ate as well
He became the second willing recruit
And together they left a sad story to tell

Their eyes were opened to their exposed state
They realized that life in sin just ain't so great

They sewed together figs to hide their shame
And made coverings that just wouldn't suffice
The Lord questioned them about their hiding game
And they realized that sin just ain't so nice.

"Where are you?" called the LORD. (Though he already knew)
"I was hiding because I realized something wasn't right
I was afraid to answer, I'm naked ... yes it's true
And so I hid myself, like a shadow in the night."

"Who told you that you were naked? What is this you did do?
Have you taken of the fruit which I told you not to eat?"
"It was the woman who did it... the one made by You
She told me of it's yumminess,,, and how it was so sweet."

I thought it would be so good, but I guess I paid the price
I'm beginning to see that sin really ain't so nice

"Woman, what is this thing that you have done?
Traded life under the heaven's for life under the sun."
Oh my LORD it was the serpent. He deceived me and I ate
And now I'm seeing that sin just ain't so great."

Oh God that we could take it back and undo what we have done
Life was wonderful under the heavens
But it's terrible under the sun.

What can we do make things right?
Where can we turn to be healed?
How long will we be cast from Your sight?
How long until the grave is unsealed?

I have a plan, children, but you'll have to wait
Many years under the sun toiling in the heat
But I will someday open wide heaven's gate
When my own Son, the devil will defeat.

I will send my own Son, the devil to defeat.