

Genesis 3:1-7

"The Serpent, The Sin, The Shame"

Before we jump into Genesis 3, let's take some time to talk about marriage. We read in the 7th Vs of the 2nd Ch of the book of Genesis, The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, & breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; & man became a living being... God took him & placed him in the Garden of Eden & in essence said to him, "It's beautiful & it's bountiful, enjoy it all, eat of it all w/one exception. Of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil you shall *not* eat, for in the day you eat of *it* you shall surely die." There would be both *separation & condemnation* on the day he partook of that "forbidden fruit".

God put that tree there & in so doing He legitimized, He ratified Adam's free will. Now Adam has a choice. He can love God, serve God, submit himself *to* God; or he can choose to rebel; to sin & in essence to set himself *against* God. Apart from that tree man *has no choice*, now he can choose, now there is value, there's meaning, there's worth to the relationship...

But God looked upon Adam & He said of Adam (Vs 18), "It's not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." Man was not created for isolation, seclusion or loneliness, it's not good to be alone, we need fellowship, companionship, contact & community.

Vs 21-25

Perhaps you recall that last week we noted the ambiguity around the translation that God took one of Adam's "ribs". More literally it states that God took from his side, exactly what it was we don't know. What we do know is that every cell in your body contains the entire genetic blueprint *for* your body. So God took of Adam's side, He in someway reconfigured the genetic blueprint found in Adam & He created Eve; she was of the same essence, the same nature as was Adam.

He then brought her to the man & Adam said (read Vs 23). He recognized that they shared the same nature, yet they were distinct & different. In our day it seems we're all too eager to blur the lines between men & women. Many want to purport that there's no real difference, & perhaps that would be true if we all evolved from the same cesspool. But if we're to *recognize* that "male & female *He created them*" than we need to *realize* that the differences between men & women are there by Divine design & that those differences are both good & meaningful... Listen, one of the saddest signs of our culture's depravity is the amount and the degree of gender confusion that there is today.

This idea of “Who is better, the man or the woman? Anything you can do I can do better” is ridiculous. Let me solve that dilemma for you; a woman is absolutely superior at being a woman & a man is absolutely superior at being a man. It’s when the man tries to be a woman or the woman tries to be a man that you have something *inferior*.

Adam recognized distinctions, differences, yet he also understood his essential oneness in his relationship w/Eve (bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh). Your NT recognizes this fact again & again. Remember what Paul told the Ephesians? He said, “*So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...*”¹

When you walk into a room you don’t typically look for the most uncomfortable seat, the natural concern you have for yourself causes you to take care of yourself. Even so in a healthy marriage relationship the husband will recognize the essential union that he has w/his wife. To bless her is to bless himself; to mistreat or neglect her will be to mistreat or neglect himself, she will reciprocate his actions, intentions toward her. Your actions/intentions toward your wife will have a very direct impact upon you as well, (how many of you have discovered that) you’re one.

That doesn’t mean you’re the *same*, you’re 2 different people becoming one through the marriage bond; a bond that is both physical & spiritual. Of course you literally become one in your children, but there is a bonding between the man & his wife through the sexual union physically & there are dimensions to this oneness that take place spiritually.

But I want you guys to notice that marriage union isn’t the institution of *man*, it originated in the heart of *God*. One man, one woman for life; that was God’s original intent. He didn’t create multiple women for Adam, multiple men for Eve. His intent was that one man would be w/one woman for life.

This isn’t polygamy, adultery, homosexual co-habitation; it’s not promiscuity or living together outside of the marriage bond. This is God’s intent for family. You might think that marriage & divorce is only a recent epidemic, it was rampant in the days of Jesus as well. The people of His day sought to justify it just as do the people in *our* day.

Perhaps you remember there in Matt 19 the Pharisees came to Jesus & asked Him if it were lawful for a man to divorce his wife for whatever reason?

Jesus quoted from Gen 1:27 & 2:24. Then He said, “Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

¹ The New King James Version. (1982). (Eph 5:28-29). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Then they thought they had Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce & put her away?” “Hey, the law says we can do this!” He said, “*Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.*”² Jesus preceded the law, took them *back to the beginning* & reminded them of God’s original intent. One man, one woman for life, the foundation of the family was God’s institution, not man’s.

“Therefore man shall leave his father & mother & be joined to his wife,” it’s the “leave & cleave” principle. There is no other relationship on this earth that’s to be as important as is your marriage relationship. Your relationship to your spouse is (outside of God) your largest priority in life. One of the areas that bring trouble into marriages is when another person becomes closer to you than your spouse. It might be a parent. Sometimes one marriage partner can’t let go of mommy or daddy, & it becomes a real problem. It might be a friend, nothing wrong w/good friends but when your friendship is more important to you than your marriage relationship something is radically wrong. It could be someone of the opposite gender (often due to spending time w/them at work); again it’s a danger to be avoided at all costs. We’re to leave other relationships & cleave to our spouse... Notice Vs 25 (read).

Again the idea is far more than nudity; it’s transparency, no sin, nothing to hide. Marriage isn’t about privacy/secretcy, it’s about transparency...

Ok, Genesis 3 turns the page of human history. Enter the serpent; enter sin; enter shame.

Vs1-7

(What a beautiful mother’s day passage right? 😊) The mother of us all listened to the lies of the serpent, (a case study in what *not* to do😊).

So from the work of the Spirit, to the work of the serpent... Vs 1 tells us that the serpent was more cunning, more crafty, more subtle or shrewd than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. Now we’re going to discover that the serpent we know today is not the serpent that Eve saw then. Part of the curse was that the serpent would go on its belly & writhe around in the dust, God would *curse* the serpent more than any other beast of creation. But prior to that it was *wiser* than every other beast of the field.

Remember Jesus said that as His disciples He would have us, “*...be wise as serpents and harmless as doves*”. (Matt 10:16) Now as for its pre-curse mode of propulsion (did it stand upright, did it fly, walk on 4 legs or 2) we don’t know.

² The New King James Version. (1982). (Mt 19:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Something else that's worthless to speculate about is the fact that it spoke. Was that common for the serpent prior to the fall, was it that Eve hadn't seen every animal/reptile as had Adam so she didn't know if it could/should? **We know that there was no sin, there was total innocence so there was no reason why she would be shocked or scared, but the focal point of this verse isn't *how* it communicated, but rather *what* it communicated.**

We also know that (though it's not plainly stated in the text), it was *Satan* who either *possessed* the serpent or appeared *as* the serpent. Other passages of scripture make that clear. Ezekiel 28:13 states plainly Satan was in the Garden of Eden. Rev 12:9 refers to Satan as, "the great dragon", "that serpent of old" who deceives the whole world. Again in Rev 20 he's called "the serpent of old" taking us all the way back to the beginning in this Genesis account.

Here we find Eve, completely innocent, oblivious to evil of any kind, but Satan knows all about it, & he'll use his cunningness, his craftiness to draw her in to his deception (just like he does w/you, & like he does w/me).

Now one the 1st things we learn about his subtlety is that he doesn't appear to her in his true form. But rather he comes to her in the form of this serpent; what this ought to suggest to us is that temptation always comes *in disguise*, it never reveals it's true form or true intent, it comes upon us (often times) subtly/unexpectedly.

Satan disguised himself. He's not an originator, he's a brilliant imitator who disguises his true character & his true intent. Paul told the Corinthians (2 Cor 11:14) that he transforms himself into an *angel of light*. Something attractive, something that seems so appealing, so trustworthy, so safe & so good. When he approached Eve here in the garden he used the body of a serpent, something that God had previously pronounced as "good" (Gen 1:31). There was no reason for her to fear or freak out; Satan comes to her as something "good" ... & isn't that what he always does?

He still comes to you as an imitation, an impersonation of something good; something that appeals to you that in the end will bite you, bring you down & destroy your life. (Jesus called him the father of lies & a murderer from the beginning [John 8:44]).

Another dot that you may or may not have connected regarding this passage whereby sin is brought into the world through the means of the serpent is the account there in Numbers 21 whereby Moses saves Israel through lifting up a bronze serpent for them to look to... You're thinking, "Well that seems kinda strange, how does *that* come together?"

Especially when *Jesus* identifies Himself w/the serpent that Moses raised up in John Ch 3. Jesus said, *“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”*³ Perhaps you recall the situation, it was just another day in the life of the man Moses as the people were whining & griping & complaining to him in the desert, “Why have you brought us out here to die? We have no food, no water, our soul loathes this worthless bread.” (Completely discontented w/God’s provision, [boy that can ring a bell can’t it])? So God sent fiery serpents throughout the camp & they bit the people & many of the people were dying & so they came to Moses, confessed that they’d sinned & ask him to pray that God might take away the serpents from among the people.

Moses prayed to God & we read where God said to Moses, *“Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.”* So *Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.”*⁴

Flash forward some 1400 yrs or so & there’s Jesus talking to Nicodemus & He says, “Most assuredly I say to you that unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nick is all, “What are you talking about, how can one be born when he is old?” Jesus said, “I’m not talking physically Nick, I’m talking spiritually, you’ve got to be born not only physically, but you’ve got to be born again spiritually.” Then He dropped this illustration of Moses & the bronze serpent... Jesus was saying, all of mankind has been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin, & we’re all dying (physically & spiritually), but just like when Israel looked to that bronze serpent which Moses raised up in the wilderness, that He was going to be raised up on the cross, & if people would just look to Him (trust *in* Him), they would be saved.

You see, the serpent is a picture of sin/rebellion; bronze (in the scripture) is a metal associated w/judgment. That bronze serpent was a picture of Israel’s sin being judged & God was saying that if they would believe Him for that, they would be saved... It was upon the cross Jesus became sin for us, He bore the judgment of our sin on our behalf & Jesus says if we will just *believe* God for that, we’ll be saved.

So here sin is introduced through the serpent; Moses lifts up a bronze serpent in the wilderness (a picture of sin, judged) & Jesus says that was just a foreshadowing that would be fulfilled in Him, He was lifted up to bear the judgment of our sin. It all comes B2TB...

³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 3:14–15). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Nu 21:8–9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The serpent says to the woman; BTW do you ever wonder why he came to the woman? Why not approach Adam? Evidently (in his craftiness) he perceived that she would be more vulnerable to the attack. It would seem as though she didn't receive the command to not eat from the tree directly from God (as did Adam), but it would've been Adam who communicated that message to her.

But for whatever reason he perceived her as the weaker of the two & Satan will often attack a chain its weakest link; so he would get to Adam by tempting Eve.

& The very 1st thing he does is begin to cast doubt, bring confusion & corruption to her understanding of God's Word through *interrogation* & *misrepresentation*. According to 2nd Cor 11:3 his *target* was her mind & his *weapon* was deception. Paul said, **"But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."**⁵ Satan was seeking to complicate the clear cut instruction of the word of God. "Has God *really* said that, do you think He *really* meant that?" He's planting seeds of doubt in her mind.

Listen, he still does this today. Satan employs the "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" principle. "Maybe that verse doesn't *really* mean what it looks like it's saying. Maybe God didn't mean for us to take that *literally*..." & Satan seeks to cause us to doubt the reliability & the applicability of the clear teaching of the word of God.

But underneath it all is the goal of getting you to doubt God's intentions toward you. He's holding out on you. He's seeking to squelch you or keep you from something good. "If God loved you why would He restrict you?" You see, that's the idea. How many of you have heard something like that whispered in your conscience before?

That God's word isn't *for* you, it's *against* you, it doesn't *free* you, it *restricts* you? That's the lie of the wicked one. The fact of the matter is that God never said, "You shall not eat of every tree." It was just the opposite, He said that they *could* eat of every & any tree they wanted to. Satan was placing a negative spin on a positive thing.

The fact that God had commanded them not to eat from the one tree wasn't to *squelch* them; it was to *save* them. God's not looking to ruin your life, He's seeking to save your life by warning you of the path that leads to perdition! It wasn't for God's sake that He told them not to eat of the tree; it was for their sake! God's motivation was *selfless* but Satan wanted it to look *selfish*.

⁵ The New King James Version. (1982). [2 Co 11:3] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

So the 1st tactic was to question God's word. Listen, when you have ideas or you have people making suggestions to you that there is something wrong or unfair w/God's word... be careful...

"It's ok to party, get drunk, smoke weed or whatever. Hey sex before marriage is a good thing, there's nothing wrong w/homosexuality." Really? What does the word of God say? "Hey, it doesn't really mean that, not literally." You see, the attack is still the same, to get you to doubt & undermine God's word; to think that God's not fair because He's restricting you. But just as w/Eve if he can get you to doubt God's word, question God's character or confuse you as to His intentions toward you, the battle is partially won.

Satan wants to *twist* God's word; you & me, we are to *trust* God's word. Don't be ignorant of your enemy's devices.

Eve would've done well to not even engage the serpent, she shouldn't have sought to *reason* w/him but rather she should've *resisted* him, fled from temptation & sought her husband.

But instead she entered into sin, Adam entered into sin, which brought shame & *separation*... But praise be to God that before this Ch is over comes the promise of *salvation*; amen?

We thank God that where sin abounded, grace abounded much more & though by 1 man (Adam) sin *entered* the world even so by 1 Man (J.C.) salvation was offered *to the world*. Through *one man* came *condemnation*, even so through *one Man* stands the offer of *justification*. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to Condemn the world, but that the world *through Him* might be saved. Praise God? Praise God.

Prayer Points:

God we're so grateful that where sin abounded, Your grace abounded much, much more. That where we brought upon ourselves condemnation, You took the initiative to bring salvation in the Person of J.C. God may we be quick to see temptation, to flee from temptation & gain victory through the power of the Holy Spirit & obedience to Your word.

Listen, we're studying here where sin entered the equation of human history. What we'll discover next time is that because of this; there are none who are w/out sin. All sin & have fallen short of the glory of God; we've all failed, we've all fallen short. But if we will look to J.C. trust in J.C. who paid for all our sin, we can be saved. It's that guilt & shame that causes us to feel like we need to pay for the things we've done, we need to do something to make up for it, but we can't what's done is done. However Jesus did pay for it & we can have our guilt & shame removed, our slate wiped clean if we'll believe upon Him. You've been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin & if you'll believe upon J.C. you'll be saved.