

13- Genesis 3.1-7 Fall of Mankind - Temptation & Transgression

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We start Genesis 3 which explains a lot of things that we see today. Genesis 1 ends with God seeing all He had made and calling it very good.

Genesis 1-2 - Creation

1.31 God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

So chapter 1 ends on that positive note, but in chapter 3 we see a little of the unraveling of what God has called very good. In large measure everything in the universe has been changed after the fall of mankind. Most people stress the spiritual aspects but it had physical aspects and in fact affected every aspect. So we live in a fallen world today.

Word of God

1. Genesis 1 - Creation
2. Genesis 2 - Command
3. Genesis 3 - Changed

The emphasis of chapter 1 is on God speaking all of the creation into existence, a universe in 6 days. He could have done it instantaneously, could have said, 'Let there be a universe' and there would have been a universe, but God spoke things into existence for 6 days.

In Genesis 2 we have a clear command that is spoken, clearly quoted by the writer, so we have a command of God that is spoken, quoted and written.

Unfortunately in chapter 3 the Word of God is attacked and *changed*. We battle this up to today as part of the fallen world we live in: there is a lot of deception, lies, misuse of language and attack on the Word of God.

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We have already noted the transition from chapter 1 with the details of day 6. The passage on the woman is longer and we found principles for the foundation for marriage.

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| I. | The Primeval History (ancient, beginning) | 1:1-11:26 |
| A. | The History of the Creation | 1:1-2:3 |
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| 1. | Creation of Mankind -in innocence | 2:4-25 |
| 2. | Fall of Mankind | 3.1-24 |
| a. | Dangerous Temptation | 3.1-5 |
| 1) | Description of Tempter | 3.1 |

Even in the creation God has a created order where He has given man authority. One way to apply this which is severely neglected in our culture is the idea of 'headship'. *Headship*, in terms of the Genesis account is that God gave man *the responsibility to accomplish tasks according to God's desire* and with the creation of woman she is to be the helper. There would a need because man cannot accomplish by himself all that God intends.

And a failure of men today is that often they don't have a clear vision of what God has designed for them and they select mates on the basis of looks or of personality or other issues rather than on the basis of how he can fulfill what God has called him to do by the mate that God has provided. This is just a little application that we had not brought out before.

Also, God calls some individuals to 'singleness'. In general they are few, but the Lord will compensate, men or women, and we have to keep in mind that ultimately the Lord Jesus Christ is their husband—we are the bride of Christ, so He is the one that wants to meet all those needs that individuals have.

The next passage is the fall of mankind, the most tragic chapter in all the Bible. And there are lots of applications that we can draw from this passage, the whole area of temptation. Satan

is not really creative as humans are, but when we see this temptation we see that Satan uses the same tactics on us. They worked on Eve, so they are effective on us as well. As we read the passage you might be able to see that the way Eve was tempted is very similar to the way we are tempted. Of course we live in a fallen world whereas Eve lived in a very good world.

And, if you study the life of Christ you see that Satan followed similar patterns with the temptation of Christ as well.

First we will see the temptation of Eve:

3.1 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’?”

Verse 1 begins with a description of the tempter. The first sentence is this description of the serpent: the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field. A creature more crafty than any beast of the field. I think it indicates a literal description. There are different views: a common one, even amongst Jewish interpreters, is that the serpent is *symbolic*, it stands for evil, symbolic of all that is bad or evil.

Others focus on the literal aspect: an animal that is very unusual because he speaks, seems to think, have rationality. But I think a better view of who this serpent is: he is an agent of Satan himself. The word Satan is used 6 times in this passage. I think it is more than an animal—that there is a creature behind the serpent who is simply the *agent*. We say that because there are passages like Revelation 12.9 *the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old* [Genesis 3] *who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world*; Therefore I believe that the serpent was the agent that Satan used. Also in Revelation 12.9 the fall of Satan is described: *he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him*.

Also in Revelation 20.2 *...he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years*; So I see him as an agent. Romans 16.20 *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet*. I think this is an allusion to Genesis 3.15 where Satan is under condemnation. I think Paul is linking Satan to the serpent as the one behind, and the serpent is simply the agent. Also 2 Corinthians 11.3 *But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ*. Attention is called to the serpent but in combination with these other verses, like Revelation 12 and Romans 6 I think we can view the serpent as the *agent* of Satan. Again in 2Corinthians 11.14 *No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light*. This ties in to 11.3.

So, I take it that it was a physical serpent that encountered the woman, a creature perhaps possessed by the demonic creature, Satan himself.

Serpent

1. Views
 - a. Symbolic
 - b. Animal
 - c. Agent
2. Word Play
 - a. *arum* - crafty
 - b. *arom* - naked

Interestingly, also, we have a little bit of a word play in the Hebrew text. There are two words that are very similar, the serpent was described as *crafty*; the Hebrew word there is *arum*. Notice the similarity of sound with another word that we already looked at *arom* which is the word that described the man and woman at the end of chapter 2: they both are *naked*. So there is kind of contrasting play on words. One is *crafty*; if you do a word

study on it, it is used in a positive sense, shrewdness even wisdom, but in this context it is used for evil, a negative sense.

That is a little bit of a description of the tempter in verse 1.

3.1 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’?”

...which the LORD God had made. We saw the names LORD God throughout chapter 2. The writer identifies Yahweh Elohim who is not only creator but enters into relationship with man. So, from that and the description of the tempter we can see that there is already *evil* before the first man and woman fall. So the origin of evil comes from the angelic realm and not on earth. Angels and demons have access to heaven, so evil is from heaven, not earth.

Origin of Evil

1. Angels - heaven, not earth

This is the occasion when evil comes down to earth and man is tested to see if he will choose evil and or to obey and love God.

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| | 1) Description off Tempter | 3.1 |
| | 2) Distorting Doubts | |

Now in the second part/sentence of the verse we have the distorting doubts that the tempter raises, making it a dangerous temptation.

3.1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he [the serpent] said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?”

...said to the woman, ‘Indeed,...’ Using this word, ‘indeed’ he creates doubt, ¿Is it really what God said?

3.1 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’?”

Did God really say this? So, the first questioning of the Word of God is from the mouth this creature that is being used by Satan himself. We can identify changes that are being made of the Word, verse 1:

‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’ Gen 3.1

This and the ‘indeed’ and the following raises doubts. The Hebrew word for ‘not’, *lo*, is actually the beginning of a denial that will culminate in a full-blown denial later on.

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| > Doubt - | ‘Indeed...’ |
| > Denial - | ‘not’ |
| > Distortion - | omission |

There is also something of a distortion. The full passage/ quotation of what God said has a slight omission.

We will list the stages or aspects of temptation and we will be able to identify with many of them at different points of our walk

with the Lord. The first is about the man—he wasn't with Eve when she was tempted. Commentators debate whether she was there listening or was not there. Because of the wording later on it appears, verse 7, that that is when the man comes.

Probably the best view is that the man is not present.

Otherwise you would think that he would intervene in order to protect; and if he were present, the he would be negligent and that would have been his sin, for not protecting the woman. The application: temptation comes when we are most vulnerable. The woman was by herself without the protection of the man. We need to think about the situations when we are most vulnerable and do the best we can to avoid those situations. An example very obvious would be about a person who is inclined to alcoholism needs to stay away from the bars, stay out of the areas that bring him down. All of us have vulnerabilities, perhaps not that blatant, but analyzing who we are and in what areas we are most 'temptable', we should take the necessary steps to avoid the situations of vulnerability.

Temptation

1. Vulnerability - alone
2. Doubts - questions

Another thing involved in temptation is the doubts about God's Word and in this case there is a raising of doubts concerning the goodness of God, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden, implying God is withholding, is not good—a good God would let you eat from *every* tree of the garden. So questioning, especially the Word of God, we begin to doubt.

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| | 3) Deception of Woman | 3.2-3 |

Now we have the clear deception of the woman. How does she respond? First, she listens; second, she enters into conversation and is arguing.

3.2 The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

3 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, or you will die.'"

Temptation will take hold if we play around with those dangerous, vulnerable areas rather than fleeing and resisting.

Compare what the woman said:

'...From fruit of trees of the garden we may eat;' 3.2

with the statement that God made:

'...From any tree of the garden you may eat freely'... 2.16

God said they could eat from *any* tree and eat *freely* which is an infinitive absolute that we mentioned when studying that particular verse. So already a Word had raised doubts but now even the specific wording is changed somewhat.

Temptation

1. Vulnerability - alone
2. Doubts - questions
3. Judges - authority
4. Minimization - goodness

There are 2 things that we can comment on here. One is the woman standing in judgment on the Word of God and actually

minimizing what God has said, that is, the goodness of God, when the doubts are already raised. So she puts herself in the position of evaluating what God has said and in her evaluation she is minimizing the goodness of God. There are maybe thousands of trees with all the goodness that God provided, and she leaves out the word *any*.

And God also says *freely*, that is, you can eat and eat and eat—the intensification using the infinitive absolute: eat eating (‘freely’). We sometimes think that we are being restricted but are minimizing the goodness of God, recognizing that God has made all the provisions that we need for every moment and He is not withholding anything from us. Certainly there are restrictions but they are for our own benefit.

She continues: but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden...

3.2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

3 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, or you will die.’”

Now that she has minimized the goodness of God, she *magnifies* the restriction.

3.2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

3 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, or you will die.’”

To the *restriction* that God had said, and *adds to it*: or touch it

‘...**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, or you will die.’** 3.3

And then she quotes God with or you will die [also translated: lest you die], actually *minimizing* what God had said, in 2.17...

‘... **but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.**” 2.17

...you will surely die. Another infinitive absolute, emphasizing in the Hebrew, which can be translated ‘you will die dead’.

Temptation

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|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Vulnerability - | alone |
| 2. Doubts - | questions |
| 3. Judges - | authority |
| 4. Minimization - | goodness |
| 5. Magnification - | restriction |

So she magnified God’s restriction adding or touch it...

3.2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

3 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, or you will die.’”

...and leaving out the surely die aspect, she is actually de-emphasizing the consequences.

‘...but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.’ 2.17

I think that happens to us as well: we think that God is restricting us, that we are confined, that we are limited—so we magnify the restriction which also minimizes God’s goodness, sovereignty, His care for us; we don’t need anything other than what He has provided. Then we think that ‘well, it’s not that bad, it’s not going to hurt. One time is not going to matter that much; we have the same tendency of de-emphasizing the consequences.

Temptation

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|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. Vulnerability - | alone |
| 2. Doubts - | questions |
| 3. Judges - | authority |
| 4. Minimization - | goodness |
| 5. Magnification - | restriction |
| 6. De-emphasis - | consequences |

So that is the deception of the woman; she rather buys into the suggestion of doubts and adds and subtracts to God’s word as she is feeling the pinch of the temptation.

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| 3) Deception of Woman | 3.2-3 |
| 4) Denial & Defamation | 3.4-5 |

Then in verses 4 and 5 we have a denial. This is from the serpent and even a defamation of the character of God.

3.4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!

5 “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.”

He simply *negates* the clear words that God had spoken. You surely will not die, a blatant lie—the first lie in all of Scripture, denying and negating what God had actually said. That is the overt denial.

3.4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!

5 “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.”

And now he is going to *defame* God: For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened. In other words, God is withholding something, restricting you, being mean, doesn’t want you to enjoy life or have the fulness of everything that is possible. He doesn’t want your eyes to be opened. Now that is even a positive thing, sometimes Satan uses *good* things to trip us up and to tempt us, good things that in that particular time He doesn’t want us to have.

3.4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!

5 “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.”

So there are a lot of things happening here. Then there is a very positive thing: ‘don’t you want to be like God’? Satan says, you will be like God. Isn’t that what God encourages us, Christ-likeness, Godliness? That is being like God, taking on the *character* of God. This is very positive; it’s not blatant evil, but

even a positive and good thing, ‘be like God, know good and evil’—that is a half-truth.

Certainly God knows good from a subjective prospective and evil from an objective perspective since He is omniscient. Adam and Eve knew good experientially and I think they knew enough about evil from an objective perspective—God had informed them enough; within the command there is something not good by violating what God has said, which is evil from more of an *objective* sense. As they partake we will see that their eyes are opened, but they are not like God in the way that *He* knows good and evil. Now they will know evil from a *subjective* perspective, what God wants them to avoid.

Temptation

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|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. Vulnerability - | alone |
| 2. Doubts - | questions |
| 3. Judges - | authority |
| 4. Minimization - | goodness |
| 5. Magnification - | restriction |
| 6. De-emphasis - | consequences |
| 7. Alternative - | appealing |

In a temptation there is always an alternative to what God desires. We will see this in verse 6.

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| b. Damaging Transgression | 3:6-7 |
| 1) Disobedience | 3:6 |

So, in verses 1-5, a dangerous temptation; then in 6-7 we have the damaging transgression and it includes *disobedience* which I think is the basic definition of the sin—rebellion or disobedience.

3.6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food.

Interestingly, there were not the appetites for the flesh like we experience in a fallen nature, but there is *desire*, so when she saw it was good for food, we can see that it had a physical appeal to it. It wasn't necessarily an apple, but it was a fruit.

Appeal

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|--------------|----------|------------|
| 1. Sensual - | Physical | 1John 2.16 |
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3.6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Also Eve saw that it was a delight to the eyes, so the aesthetics were involved; there was a beauty to it, appealing to the emotions. Sometimes when we are tempted it is purely physical, sometimes purely emotional, sometimes a combination of both. We are looking at it from this applicational point of view, so that we can detect it, recognize it when it comes; we can do the things we need to ward it off.

Appeal

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|----------------|----------|------------|
| 1. Sensual - | Physical | 1John 2.16 |
| 2. Aesthetic - | Emotions | |

And there was a third component:

3.6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

...that the tree was desirable to make one wise. So it not only appeals to our physical nature and to our emotions, but also to the intellect or mental aspect: the wisdom aspect.

Appeal

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| 1. Sensual - | Physical | 1John 2.16 |
| 2. Aesthetic - | Emotions | |
| 3. Wisdom - | Intellect | |

Again, sometimes temptation is in our minds; we can sin mentally by the thoughts that we think, and sometimes those thoughts can lead us to overt actions that are also sin, but sometimes it does start with sin in the mind.

1John 2.16 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

So temptation is not from God; it is from the world. We can be tempted in the flesh, the visual aspect and the prideful or internal as well.

3.6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

And now we have the choice: she took from its fruit and ate. She rebelled, rationalized...

Appeal

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|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1. Sensual - | Physical | 1John 2.16 |
| 2. Aesthetic - | Emotions | |
| 3. Wisdom - | Intellect | |
| 4. Rationalization - | Will | |

...and we rationalize away the sin ourselves, thinking that it's not so bad.

3.6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

and she gave also to her husband with her. That little phrase 'with her' almost seems to indicate that her husband arrives and is now there. This is the first that he is there.

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| b. Damaging Transgression | 3.6-7 |
| 1) Disobedience | 3.6 |
| 2) Downfall | 3.7 |

Next, after the disobedience we see the downfall. Again, the temptation itself is not sin. Sin is the violation of what God has

stated, rebellion against God—now that can be mental, but it usually involves an overt act of actual disobedience.

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 loin coverings.

The downfall: they did experience some change—Then the eyes of both of them were opened, so they were able to see differently, understand perhaps differently, so something definitely happened, and we will see more in chapter 3.

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 loin coverings.

and they knew that they were naked, that is, they knew that something changed and for the very first time they had *shame*. This is in contrast to what we saw in 2.25 . They were naked now and needed covering...

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 loin coverings.

...which introduces us to a concept of *redemption*, we need sin to be covered. they sewed fig leaves; we have the beginning of man's own way or his attempt to cover or deal with sin. ...and made themselves loin coverings. Man-made religion is not going to work. Everything except what God has specified in His Word is man-made religion, attempting to cover man's guilt—which never works.

Origin of Evil

1. Angels - heaven, not earth
2. Mankind - sin on earth

A Romans 5 passage attributes the fall of mankind to Adam; also in 1 Timothy 2.14 Paul comments on Genesis 3 where the man was not deceived, but the woman was. The guilt was placed on the man who was the head and was responsible.

The tragedy of all tragedies is the Fall of Mankind! All the universe including the animals, all creatures were affected by the fall.