

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-23 Punishment for the Fall

In our previous lesson we learned that the Garden of Eden was the perfect place for Adam and Eve to live. They were childlike, naive, and innocent. There was fruit growing on many of the trees within easy reach, so meals were nothing more than deciding what to pick. Adam's and Eve's life in the garden was easy. The weather was perfect, food was plentiful, and there were no dangers. Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed.

We also learned that God walked with Adam and Eve each day in the Garden. This was the time of day for them to be in His presence. And like a Father with His young children, God had begun the process of revealing himself to them. Each day He would express His love to Adam and Eve through His presence. The only thing that God sought in return, was for them to love Him. But something tragic happened. Satan, who had been seeking a means to take revenge on God, had deceived Eve into doing the one thing that God had commanded them not to do. Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. On that day they understood evil for the very first time.

They looked at each other with great sadness. Their innocence was gone. They had chosen to disobey God and they would never be the same. And for the first time they recognized that they were naked, and so they became ashamed. Adam and Eve picked leaves and wove them into coverings to wrap around their waists. Then they heard the sound of footsteps in the garden. It was that time of the day when God came to spend time with them. But they were so ashamed they hid.

Now God already knew what had happened. He had foreseen the events of this day even before He had created the universe. It was going to be a day of great pain and sorrow. But it was a day that His children had chosen. It was the day that they were about to learn something new about God their Father.

"Adam, Eve, where are you?" God called.

"I heard you in the Garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." Adam called back.

"Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" God asked, already knowing the answer.

"The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it!" Adam said blaming both God and his wife for his own sin.

"Eve, what is this you have done?" God asked.

"It's the serpent's fault! He deceived me, and I ate." Eve said, trying to pass the blame onto the serpent.

God then turned his attention to the serpent and Satan who had been quietly watching with satisfaction. Satan wanted to be there to gloat at his revenge on God.

“Serpent, you are cursed above all animals. You will crawl on your belly from now on. And Satan, from this day forward there will be conflict between you and the descendants of the woman. One of her descendants will crush your head and destroy your power and authority. You will strike his heel.

“Eve, from now on you will have great pain in childbirth. You will have desire for your husband and he will rule over you.

“And Adam, because you listened to Eve and disobeyed me, life will no longer be easy for you. The ground will now be cursed. It will be difficult to plant and harvest. Weeds and thorns will grow in the midst of your labor and life will be very hard. You were created from dust and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:14-19).

So God killed two animals and from their skins fashioned clothes for Adam and Eve to wear. He then made a proclamation to all of the angelic beings. "Man has become like us, knowing good from evil. He must not be allowed to eat the fruit from the Tree of Life. If he does so, he will live forever." All of the angels understood the implication of what God was saying. They had witnessed Lucifer's fall and how he had led his angelic armies into evil and darkness. Since angels are immortal, evil continues in the spirit world to this day.

If God had allowed Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of Life, then they would have remained in their sinful condition in the physical world for eternity, separated from their Father, God. Thus, in an act of love, God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden. They would no longer have access to the Tree of Life and their bodies would grow old and eventually die. Then, to keep mankind from ever entering the Garden and accessing the Tree of Life, God placed cherubim with a flaming sword to guard the entrance.

Satan had declared war on God. Mankind would be the battlefield. God had created mankind to be His children. But Satan would make every effort to destroy them and thus continue his revenge upon God.

But none of this came as a surprise to God. He had foreseen these very events from before the beginning. Remember, God had created the universe as a place where He could have children to love, and where the children would choose to love Him. Love requires a choice. Satan's fall had created the opportunity for there to be choice in the universe. Adam and Eve chose themselves over God and they sinned. And in so doing they learned something about their Father God. They learned that He is holy and anything that is not of God is evil. God's holiness is absolute. It is pass or fail. There is no in-between. You either are holy, or you are not. They also learned that what God says, He means. He does not change His mind. God said, "Do not eat of the tree; if you do you will die." He said it, and He meant it.

One of the first lessons that every parent must teach their children is to obey. Children must learn what is right and what is wrong. Learning good from evil is crucial for children to be able to grow into responsible adults. God told the angels that mankind, His children, had become like them, knowing good from evil. This lesson for Adam and Eve, and hence for all of us, was a

very painful lesson, but one that every child must learn. And through this they also were introduced to God's holiness. Satan had caused great pain, but through this pain God's children began to grow and develop into the children who would choose to love, obey, and serve their Father God.

It would not be easy or without pain. There would be much loss, but for those who truly chose to become His children of love, it would be worth it.

This lesson is **important** because it teaches that God will always be faithful to His Word. What He says, He will do. What He promises will come to pass. There are always consequences to disobedience of God's commands. The serpent and the ground were cursed; Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden and suffered greatly in their lives, ultimately dying and returning to dust.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that when Adam and Eve were given a choice, they chose to go their own way, not God's. They disobeyed His instructions, not realizing the consequences for themselves and all their descendants. Yet God loved them, clothed them with skins, and continued teaching them his ways.

Let's **review** what you learned in this lesson.

1. When God spoke judgment upon Eve He said that one of her descendants would do something to Satan. What was it that this descendant would do to Satan? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - A. If you said that one of her descendants would crush the head of Satan, you answered correctly.
2. What caused Adam and Eve to eventually die? [Pause]
 - A. If you said God punished them and made them die, you are incorrect. The correct answer is that Adam's body was designed to slowly grow old and die. He needed to eat the fruit of the Tree of Life to live forever. The correct answer is that Adam and Eve died because they were banished from the Garden of Eden and thus no longer were able to eat of the Tree of Life.
3. Was God shocked or surprised when Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? [Pause]
 - A. If you said no, that He had foreseen these events before creation, you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to review it and the previous lesson until you are able to repeat the entire story to someone else. Then, tell someone this story about the fall and punishment of Adam and Eve.