

Cartoon--Wizard of Id

We are all sinners. We all struggle with sin. Why is that? We struggle with sin for two reasons. One, we are sinners because we sin--that is, every one of us has transgressed God's commands. In fact, we do it daily. We sin. Our acts of sin make us sinners. We are sinners because we sin.

But there's more. Secondly, we sin because we are sinners--by that, I mean we are born sinners. Theologians call this original sin. When Adam sinned, he acted as our "federal head." We inherited Adam's sin (Rom 5:12 "Wherefore as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin"). The reason we are born totally depraved is because of our tie to Adam ("There is none righteous, no, not one" Rom 3:10).

Last week, we began a 4-part series in Genesis 3-4. The world has never been the same because of what happened in Genesis 3-4.

There are five scenes in Genesis 3 which not only address the origin of sin, but can help us learn to overcome sin.

Last week, we looked at the first three scenes. This evening, we'll pick up the narrative at v 9, and examine the final two scenes.

Before looking at the parts of the story, I want catch the flow of the whole (see Youngblood, 59). The serpent sins (1-5), then the woman, and finally the man (6). The Lord confronts their sin by speaking to them in the reverse order: first the man (9-12), then the woman (13), and finally the serpent (14). Then the Lord judges them in the order in which they sinned: first the serpent (14-15), then the woman (16), and last of all the man (17-19). The story ends with what is one of the saddest sights in Scripture: The Lord banishes the man and woman from the Garden of paradise which He had created for them.

Outline:

I. The Dialogue (1-5)

A. Serpent (1): "Did God say?"

B. Woman (2-3): "No, but..."

C. Serpent (4-5): "Not so."

Note: Satan's temptation strategy hasn't changed.

1. He seeks to confuse.

•Confuse God's character

•Confuse God's Word

2. He seeks to contradict.

II. The Decision (6)

A. The woman ate.

**Her sin was deception.

B. The man ate.

**His sin was defiance.

III. The Discovery (7-8)

A. They were exposed.

- B. They were ashamed.
 1. They tried to cover themselves.
 2. They tried to hide from God.
- IV. The Second Dialogue (9-19)
 - A. God (9): "Where are you?"
 - B. Man (10): "I hid."
 - C. God (11): "Have you eaten from the tree?"
 - D. Man (12): "The woman YOU gave me..."
 1. He blamed the woman.
 2. He blamed God.
 - E. God (13): "What have you done?"
 - F. Woman (13b): "The serpent deceived me."
 - G. God (14-19): "Because you have done this..."
 1. Curse on serpent (14-15)
 2. Curse on woman (16)
 3. Curse on man (17-19)
- V. Disruption (20-24)
 - A. Life goes on, but not the same (20).
 - B. The consequences for sin are severe.
 1. Coverings are needed (21)
 2. The tree of life is off limits (22-24).

Tonight: "The Effects of Sin: Hiding and Hurling"

What are the effects of sin? In the final two scenes of Genesis 3, we'll see two effects of sin, effects which plague us when we sin. As we study this, may God help us learn to experience victory over sin.

IV. The Second Dialogue (9-19)

After eating the fruit, here's what happened. V 8 "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden (an anthropomorphism--using characteristics of a man to represent God). And Adam and his wife hid themselves..." The dialogue begins in v 9.

A. God (9): "Where are you?"

God's first word to fallen man was a question. Remember, God is omniscient. He knows everything. He already knew the answer to His question. It was for the man and woman's benefit that He asked. His question is marked by grace. God wanted to draw them, rather than drive them, out of hiding.

So He asked, "Adam, where are you?" What a tragic question! To this point, Adam had loved to be near God. Now he hides from God. The fellowship is gone.

By the way, sin always destroys fellowship. It always alienates. If I sin against my spouse, our fellowship is strained. If I sin against my boss, our working relationship becomes tense. If I sin against God, the sweet fellowship is gone. Thank God, in Christ Jesus, the fellowship can be restored (1 Jn 1:9)!

How did Adam respond to God's question?

B. Man (10): "I hid."

In v 10, Adam said, "I heard your voice...and I was afraid...and I hid myself." What was Adam's problem? Fear--he was terrified of God. What effect did this sin-produced fear have on him? He hid from God.

Here's the first effect of sin. We hide. We shrink from God.

God followed with two blunt questions.

C. God (11): "Have you eaten from the tree?"

The first question (11), "Who told you that you were naked?" And the second, "Have you eaten from the tree?" Notice how God is very specific--"the tree whereof I commanded you that you should not eat."

God confronted the bottom-line issue--disobedience. He didn't even wait for Adam to answer His first question. "Adam, have you disobeyed My command?"

The air was thick. Adam was guilty before a holy God. How did he respond?

D. Man (12): "The woman YOU gave me..."

V 12 "And the man said, The woman...she gave me."

Now we see the second effect of sin. After we hide, we hurl. We blame others. In Adam's case, he hurled in two directions. First, he blamed the woman.

1. He blamed the woman.

The woman gave me the fruit, God! What's Adam doing? He's making excuses for what he's done. He's even making excuses for avoiding the presence of God. He blamed his partner. He also hurled in a second direction.

2. He blamed God.

Notice carefully what Adam said to God, "The woman whom THOU GAVEST to be with me." God, you put this lady here. The implication? God, if you hadn't done what YOU did, I wouldn't have done what I did.

Application: Sin has the same affect on us that it had on the first man and woman. Sin causes us to hide and hurl. We try to hide from God, and hurl at other people. We've all seen the process many times (in our own lives and in other's).

We sin, and don't deal with the sin biblically. What happens? Not only do our hearts grow cold, but we try to hide from God. Now we know we can't hide from God, but we stop coming to church, and stop reading our Bibles, because we feel uncomfortable around the things of God. Then what happens? We feel guilty for hiding, so we start hurling. We look for others to blame for our sin, or to at least take the focus off of our sin. We blame the church for not caring for us. We blame the deacons for not visiting us. "I wouldn't be having this problem if I had a caring church." We hide and hurl.

Listen. Hiding and hurling doesn't solve anything. It doesn't get rid of the problem. Another common example--A husband loves his job more than his wife. He sins against God and his wife by failing to be the loving leader God calls him to be. What happens? His heart grows cold towards his wife. His marriage goes sour. So what does he do? He blames his wife for not meeting his needs. He becomes a critic of her faults. Then, when the marriage disintegrates, what does he do? He blames God for allowing him to marry a woman with whom he wasn't "compatible."

Hiding and hurling is a dead end street. Just ask Adam. God wouldn't let him get away with it. The dialogue continues. God turns to Eve next.

E. God (13): "What have you done?"

Do you hear the sadness in God's voice as He asks, "What have you done? (13)"? The woman responds to her question the same way Adam did--she blameshifts.

F. Woman (13b): "The serpent deceived me."

V 13 "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." By the way, the excuses that Adam and Eve used to rationalize their sin are the same ones that often flow from our lips.

When confronted with sin, what do we often think and say? Like Adam, we say "God, YOU gave me more than I could handle." For Adam it was, "You gave me this woman". For us, it is, "God, YOU gave me this strong-willed child. I wouldn't lose my temper so much if You hadn't!" Wait--does God ever give us more than we can handle? Not if 1 Cor 10:13 is true.

Sometimes we make the excuse Eve did, "The devil made me do it. I couldn't help myself. I was deceived." It may be true that the devil deceives us, but does he MAKE us sin? Not according to James 1:14, "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

One thing is clear from Genesis 3--God accepts NO excuses for sin. Not one.

In the dialogue, the serpent is next. You'll notice God doesn't ask the serpent any questions. Nor does He give the serpent a chance to respond. For the serpent, God pronounces immediate judgment.

G. God (14-19): "Because you have done this..."

V 14 "Because you have done this, you are cursed."

One of the striking facts of Genesis 3 is that after eating the fruit, Adam and Eve didn't fall over dead. We may wonder, "Didn't God say if they ate the fruit, they'd die?" Yes (2:17). What's the explanation? In part, we need to remember that in the Bible (Blocher, 171), to die does not mean to cease to be, but to be "cut off from the land of the living." Death is the reverse of life, not the reverse of existence. After Adam sinned, he was cut off. He was placed under the curse of God. Eventually, he did die physically--it was but for the mercy of God that it did not happen immediately.

God pronounced a 3-fold curse.

1. Curse on serpent (14-15)

God's curse on the serpent involved five elements.

- You are cursed above all cattle, and every beast of the field (14).
- You will crawl and eat dust (14).

Apparently, before Genesis 3, the serpent moved in an upright position. No longer.

- There will be enmity between you and the woman (15).
- There will be enmity between your seed and the woman's seed (15).
- The woman's seed will crush your head (15).

I agree with an important statement made by commentator G. Ch. Aalders (106), "There is more here than a victory of people over snakes." The force behind the serpent was the devil himself. This curse is for him. One day, he would strike the heel of the woman's seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. But in the end, Christ would crush the very head of the devil. There in the garden, God gave Adam and Eve a glimmer of the hope of the gospel. As Aalders writes (107), "Here in Paradise God gives the first revelation of His eventual victory. Thus Genesis 3:15 has been rightly called the 'maternal promise,' the 'protevangelium,' the first proclamation of the gospel of grace."

Then came the second part of the curse.

2. *Curse on woman (16)*

God's curse on the woman involved 3 elements.

- She would have pain in childbearing.
- Her desire would be for her husband.
- Her husband would rule over her.

The pain in childbearing is clear, but what about the second part of the curse? "Thy desire shall be to thy husband" (16)--how is that a curse? I agree with the assessment of John MacArthur who says this is a prediction of marital strife.

In his excellent book, Different By Design, MacArthur points out that the Hebrew word for "desire" is difficult to translate. The term comes from an Arabic root that means "to compel, to impel, to urge, or to seek control over." It's used in Genesis 4:7 where God warns Cain, "Sin desires to control you, but you must master it." That's the word-- control.

We could well translate Gen 3:16, "Your desire will be to control your husband, but he will rule over you." The curse on the woman was that her desire would be to control her husband, to usurp his headship. What would he do?

The other component of the curse (16)--"he shall rule over thee." The word "rule" means "to reign," and can mean "to elevate to an official position." Prior to the fall, the husband and wife worked together as a wonderful team. But after the fall, that all changed. The effect of sin would be that the man would seek to be an authoritarian over his wife.

MacArthur observes (23), "With the Fall and its curse came the distortion of woman's proper submissiveness and of man's proper authority. That is where the battle of the sexes began, where women's liberation movements and male chauvinism were born. Women have a sinful inclination to usurp man's authority and men have a sinful inclination to put women under their feet."

Then he says this (23), "Only a manifestation of grace in Christ through the filling of the Holy Spirit can restore the created order and harmony of proper submission in a relationship corrupted by sin."

Don't miss the implications. Why do we have marital strife today? Why is there a constant battle over the roles in marriage. It goes back to the Fall of mankind and curse in Genesis 3. Is there hope? Yes! Jesus Christ can transform husbands and wives!

3. *Curse on man (17-19)*

Why was Adam's problem? V 17 "Because you listened to the voice of your wife"--instead of the voice of God. Notice the elements of the curse on Adam.

- The ground is cursed for your sake (17).
- It will take painful toil for you to eat (17).
- You'll now eat the plants of the field. The Garden is off limits (18).
- The ground will bring forth thorns and thistles (18).
- You'll sweat in life, and eventually return to dust in death (19).

The curse on Adam was actually a curse on his dominion (Morris, 59). God said in v 17, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Prior to sin, the earth cooperated with man. Adam tilled and dressed it, and it produced readily. After sin, that all changed. God said

the earth would resist man's dominion. It would yield thorns and weeds. Adam would have to break his back with toil and sweat to get the ground to produce the food he needed to live.

Listen. The creation we see today is beautiful, but it's not what it once was. We see a creation under the curse of God. That's why Paul could write this in Romans 8:20-22 (NIV), "For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."

It's all because of Adam's sin in Genesis 3. Which brings us to scene 5.

V. Disruption (20-24)

Two things are apparent from the verses that conclude Genesis 3.

A. Life goes on, but not the same (20).

Adam changed his wife's name to "Eve." Why is this verse here? Perhaps to indicate the change in roles. Remember, Adam named his wife "Woman" in 2:23--to show her identification with him. Now he gives her the name "Eve"--which points to her role as a mother.

B. The consequences for sin are severe.

1. Coverings are needed (21)

By the way, why do we wear clothes? Merely to keep warm? Some "free" thinker will say, "Weren't Adam and Eve naked and unashamed? Then we shouldn't be inhibited by clothing either." Wait a minute. When were Adam and Eve naked and unashamed? Pre-sin (2:25). But sin changed all that. After sin, they were naked and ashamed (3:7). They covered themselves with fig leaves (3:7).

And what did God do? He made clothes for them. V 21 "For Adam also and for his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." By giving Adam and Eve clothing, He was revealing that it's His will that people wear clothing.

How does God want us to dress? Think about something. Because of sin, Adam knew he was naked, and hid. As sin grows worse, people know they're naked, and don't hide. They flaunt it.

God doesn't give His people a dress code in the Bible. He does give us principles. One is modesty. He wants us to dress in a way that calls attention to Him, not to ourselves (see 1 Pt 3). Certainly, clothing that is provocative doesn't draw attention to God.

A second principle is the culture. I doubt if God gave Eve a dress or Adam a three piece suit. To a degree, culture helps determine modesty. What is modest in Papua New Guinea is not here. Again, the aim is to dress in a way that makes God attractive.

2. The tree of life is off limits (22-24).

God sent Adam and Eve away, and placed cherubim at the edge of the Garden to insure they would not return.

May we never forget the tragic consequences of sin. We don't have to be people that hide and hurl. Jesus Christ can set us free from sin!

Ministry in Music: "Adam, Where Are You?" (Kevin P.)