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(Genesis 3)

**Intro.** Dr. Ralph Sockman writes about an experience he had while standing on the edge of Niagra Falls one clear, cold March day. Wrapped in white winter garments, the falls glistened in the bright sun. As some birds swooped down to snatch a drink from the clear water, Sockman’s companion told how he had seen birds carried over the edge of the precipice. As they dipped down for a drink, tiny droplets of ice would form on their wings. As they returned for additional drinks more ice would weigh down their bodies until they couldn’t rise above the cascading waters. Flapping their wings, the birds would suddenly drop over the falls (*Today in the Word*, October, 1990, 14). In many ways, “Man’s Fall” & sin does that to us. As we continue our series in Genesis 1-11 on “Building the Foundation of Your Faith,” we look again at Genesis 3 and “Man’s Fall, Part 2.”

Theme: Sin & hope

Background: Shortly after God created everything, Adam & Eve fell in sin.

➤ Theological understandings rooted in Genesis 3 (1<sup>st</sup> 3 are overview from last time)

1. **The serpent is Satan, who had already fallen & will fall again (3:1, 15; cf. Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:1-2, 6, 13-16; Revelation 12:9; 20:2)**
2. **Satan tempts & deceives (3:1-6)**
3. **Humans have fallen in sin (3:6-7)**—sin introduced death to the world & all of life has been affected by Adam’s sin, including every facet of our lives
4. **Yahweh cares for sinners (3:8-11, 21)**
  - a. **He initiates the search for sinners (3:8-11)**
    - Once Adam & Eve sinned, they covered themselves, having lost their innocence & hid from the Lord
    - The Lord came looking for them & that’s the same way He works in our lives today—no one seeks for God (Romans 3:11) initially, but He seeks first
    - Jesus did this in choosing His disciples (John 15:16)—yes, they chose to follow Jesus, but only in response to His choosing of them (cf. 1 John 4:19)
  - b. **He offers common grace to all sinners (3:21)—cf. Matthew 5:45**
    - Once Adam & Eve sinned, God could have wiped them out on the spot, but He showed them common grace by making garments from animal skins—some say this is a sacrifice God made by killing animals, looking ahead to a greater sacrifice, but nothing in the biblical witness points this out—God could have used animals which had just died as a result of the Fall
    - God offers everyone common grace—rain to just & unjust—simply because He is a good God

Illus: Yahweh’s care for His creation sets Him apart from all other gods, for many of them are impersonal & uncaring, but Yahweh’s greatest care is shown through redemption, which leads us to the next key truth in Genesis 3

## 5. **Yahweh planned for redemption (3:14-15)**

- When the Scripture talks about the “seed” or “offspring” of the woman, it is singular (cf. Galatians 3:16) & it is talking about Christ
  - a. **He passively allowed evil**
    - We know God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13) & He is the Giver of all good things—He cannot sin & do evil, so evil’s existence isn’t something He actively planned
    - God is sovereign & in control, but He never does evil, so He passively allowed it so that He could...
  - b. **He foreordained Christ to die for sinners (1 Peter 1:19-20; Revelation 13:8)**
    - God’s plan to send Christ to crush Satan wasn’t planned willy-nilly in response to the serpent’s deceptive ways, but God always planned to send Christ for sinners (cf. 1 Peter 1:19-20; Revelation 13:8)
    - As soon as the Lord confronts Adam & Eve in their sin, He announces good news for the first time—the serpent/Satan would strike at the heel of the Seed (singular) of the woman but that Seed would crush his head

Illus: What do you do when you find a snake on your property? How many of you kill it? Why? To protect your family or get along with your wife—Anthea says, “Either the snake goes or you go”

- God planned it this way because He receives more glory through redeeming some from the Fall than redeeming all (we would take it for granted) or not allowing the Fall at all (we would never know God’s grace, mercy or the extent of His love)

## 6. We receive consequences for our sins (3:16-19)

- After the Lord dealt with Satan, He announced the curse of sin in the lives of man & woman, showing them there are consequences for breaking God’s holy law—they would experience pain for the first time & throughout their lives
  - a. **You can receive forgiveness for your sins for eternity (cf. 1 John 1:9)**
    - The good news is that even though we all sin, if we confess our sins (agree with God about them), He is faithful & just to forgive us our sins & cleanse us from all unrighteousness—we can have a home with our Creator when we repent
  - b. **You may reap the curse of sins on earth**
    - Not only did Eve pay for her sin, along with all women who became mothers, by experiencing pain through child-bearing & child-rearing (because of their sins) & not only did Adam pay for his sin, along with men who work to provide food, by experiencing pain in work (it was supposed to be easy, tireless work)

Illus: Many people today pay for their sins in this life—people who smoke for 30 years & then give it up often still face lung cancer; people who chew tobacco face mouth & throat cancer; people who were alcoholics may face bladder cancer; overeating or eating the wrong kinds of food can lead to heart disease or heart attacks; sexually immoral people often get STDs; etc.—doing those things & then giving your life to Christ means He forgives you & provides you a future in eternity, but He may make you pay the consequences for sinful habits in this life, just like He made Adam & Eve pay for their sins in this life by kicking them out of the garden

## 7. Yahweh protects His holiness (3:22-24)

- a. **By removing sin from His presence (cf. Matthew 27:46)**
  - The Lord would not allow man to live eternally as sinners—He wouldn’t even finish His thought, it was so grotesque
  - The only time God turned away from the perfect fellowship He shared with His Son was when Jesus became sin for us on the cross
- b. **Because holiness is His chief relational characteristic (cf. Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8)**
  - All throughout the Bible, God’s holiness reigns supreme—in the judgment of the Flood, in His giving of the Law (throughout Leviticus He says, “for I, Yahweh, am holy”), in the way He revealed Himself as “holy, holy, holy” (cf. Exodus 3)

### So how can I be right with God & in fellowship with Him?

- Recognize God’s holiness, your sinfulness, your only hope in Christ & His work & repent while trusting in Him

**Conc.** A no-trespassing sign in west Texas reads: “STOP. I know you’re thinking about crossing this gate. What you should know is that if the Coyotes, Cactus, Mesquite, Heat, Dust or Rattlers don’t get you, I will”—with rancher’s name signed in blood red paint at bottom (sermonillustrations.com). That’s sort of like God’s guarding of the Garden of Eden after banishing Adam & Eve. He gives us warnings that if disease or cancer or a heart attack or a stroke or an accident or any other number of things which could take our lives earlier than anticipated, we cannot stand before Him in our sin or He will cast us into hell. God is holy & our sin deserves hell. But He’s given us hope in the Seed of Eve who crushes the head of the serpent, but you must trust Him today.