

First Things – Genesis

Genesis 3:7-21

“When You Fall”

1. **GOD SEEKS, SO YOU CAN TURN TO HIM**
 - A. You can't hide your sin from Him
 - B. You can't hide yourself from Him
2. **GOD SPEAKS, SO YOU CAN TALK WITH HIM**
 - A. The clarity with which God calls
 - B. The confession for which God calls
3. **GOD SAVES, SO YOU CAN TRUST IN HIM**
 - A. Trust His Word
 - B. Trust His work

1. In 1964, American playwright, Arthur Miller, premiered his newest play called *After the Fall*. The closing scene of the play gives some explanation of the title.

2. One of the characters in the play says, "...we meet unblessed; not in some garden of wax fruit and painted trees, that lie of Eden, but after, after the Fall, and after many, many deaths."ⁱ

3. It is certainly true that the world in which we live is quite different from the Garden of Eden. We know that what the Word of God reveals here is no lie, as the line in the play says, but it does seem like another world.

4. Adam and Eve fell while living in a perfect paradise, after they were tempted by the fruit of a tree.

5. We live a long time after that fall, in a broken world where we are tempted by things like pornography, materialism, drugs, and entertainment.

6. We've come a long way east of Eden, into a modern world filled with every kind of selfish philosophy and sinful pleasure. Satan certainly has more than one tree from which to lure us.

7. The reality is, however, no matter how far we are removed from our first parents and their fall into sin in the Garden of Eden, the truth remains that just as they fell, so have we fallen, and continue to fall more times than we care to admit.

8. Among the many other lessons we can learn from Genesis 3, I believe we find some truths here regarding what we should do when we fall.

9. Whether you are just now realizing how fallen you are, or whether you've known your condition for a while, and are just trying to recover from another stumble, I believe the Word of God offers help to you.

10. There are some things you need to remember when, just like your first parents, you fall into sin. Looking at the text, we I believe we find first of all, this truth:

I. GOD SEEKS, SO YOU CAN TURN TO HIM

1. Verse 7 records for us the immediate reaction of Adam and Eve following their sinful decision. It says, *"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."*

2. The very next verse begins with a somewhat surprising statement. It says, *"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day..."*

3. Literally, they heard the sound of God moving through the garden. This is the sovereign God, who knows all things, not only *when* they happen, but even *before* they happen.

4. This means that He knew exactly what Adam and Eve had done. He was fully aware of their sin. And yet, He still came down looking for them.

5. He could have killed them at the moment of their sin. Or, He could have simply abandoned them, and left them to face the natural and eventual consequences of their sin.

6. And yet, He came seeking them. It reminds us of what Jesus said of Himself in Luke 19:10. *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

7. Understanding that God pursues and seeks after sinners, the only sensible response is to turn to Him! Sooner or later you will have to account to Him.

8. Unfortunately, this is not what Adam and Eve did, nor is it what we normally do. Notice what we learn from them about responding to the God who seeks us. First of all, they teach us that:

A. You can't hide your sin from Him

1. Again, in verse 7 we are told that Adam and Eve crafted for themselves aprons of leaves with which they tried to cover their nakedness and shame.

2. The truth is, however, no matter how many leaves they used, they were not enough to hide their sin from the sovereign sight of their Creator.

3. In much the same way, though you may try to cover up your sins with a righteous smile and a religious style, you have never hidden the truth about yourself from God.

4. Proverbs 28:13 says, "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*"
5. Nobody else on earth may know what you have done. You may be successfully hiding it from your wife, your kids, your friends, and your neighbors.
6. Be assured, however, you cannot hide your sins from God. His eyes scan the whole of earth, and He beholds both the evil and the good. (cf. Proverbs 15:3)
7. Adam and Eve remind us that when you fall, it is best to turn to the Lord, not only because you can't hide your sin from Him, but also because:

B. You can't hide yourself from him

1. Look again at verse 7. It says, "*...Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*"
2. As if their make-shift aprons were not silly enough, Adam and Eve actually tried to hide themselves from the very Lord who had formed them.
3. God called for them, but it was not because He did not know where they were. They were like children playing "hide and seek" with their feet sticking out from under the bed. God saw right where they were.
4. We laugh at Adam and Eve, but men and women are still running from God, trying to hide themselves from His presence in the forest of this world.
5. Some even try to hide from Him while sitting in the middle of His house on Sunday mornings. They are just as foolish as Adam and Eve.
6. In Psalm 139, David asks of God:
"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (7-8)
7. When we fall, though we are ashamed and afraid, we must fight that human tendency to run *from* God, and we must redirect our hearts and our feet and run *to* God.
8. The good news is that when we run *to* God instead of running *from* God, what we find is that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is out looking for us and seeking to bring us home.
9. When you fall, learn from this great chapter, and remember, *God seeks, so you can turn to Him.*

10. Consider a second thing we need to remember when we fall. That is this:

II. GOD SPEAKS, SO YOU CAN TALK WITH HIM

1. It is not only surprising that God shows up in the garden after Adam and Eve's sin, but it is equally surprising that He has anything to say to this couple who has rebelled against His goodness.

2. He didn't have to speak to them at all. He could have simply wiped them out, without a word, and moved on with His eternal existence.

3. Yet, we find Him speaking. Verse 9 says, *"And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"*

4. One of the first principles that we learn about God in Scripture is that while He is invisible, He is not inaudible. He speaks! He communicates with sinners like us!

5. Understanding that God calls to us and communicates with us, when we fall, it is the wisest move for us to not only to turn to Him, but to talk with Him as well.

6. Think with me about this idea of God speaking, and how we ought to respond to Him. Consider first of all:

A. The clarity with which God calls

1. Look again at verse 9. It says, *"And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"*

2. Look at that word "called". It is translated from a word that means to summons. God issued a summons, and He specified the name of Adam.

3. There are those who look at Scripture, and they contend that if the Bible *is* the Word of God, it is awfully hard to discern what He is trying to say.

4. The reality is, however, that God has spoken with absolute clarity to mankind. He has made Himself known, and He summonses all men to respond to Him.

5. I think of Paul's words in Acts 17, during his sermon on Mars Hill. Paul said in verse 30, "[God] *now commandeth all men every where to repent.*"

6. Oh, fallen sinner, you say, "God has not spoken to me. I've never heard His voice." I say to you, He has spoken through His Holy Word, and He has spoken in it with clarity to all men, including you!

7. I heard about an old grandpa who purchased a new hearing aid, and was bragging about it to his family. He said, "It is so small, nobody even notices it." One of the family members asked, "How much did it cost?" Grandpa answered, "Half past four."

8. Many people do not listen to God, but the problem is not that He has not spoken clearly. He speaks with absolute clarity in His Word.

9. Thinking further about this idea of God speaking and our response to Him, consider not only the clarity with which God calls, but think also about:

B. The confession for which God calls

1. In verse 10, Adam and Eve come out of their hiding place, and they explain to God why they hid. Adam says, *"I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."*

2. Now remember, God already knows what has happened. He is sovereign and omniscient, and He is fully aware of what these rebels have done.

3. Yet, He says in verse 11, *"...Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"*

4. Now you know that at this point, Adam and Eve start playing the blame game and trying to shift the responsibility for their sin onto someone else.

5. What I want you to see is the fact that what God wanted from them was a simple confession. He just desired that they be honest with Him about what He already knew they had done.

6. Meditating on this text, I think about Isaiah 1:18. Speaking to His people who were sin-sick and corrupt, the Lord God said, *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*

7. When you fall, remember, there is a God who will hear your confession. He desires for you to come and be honest with Him, humbly admitting your sinful condition.

8. For those of us who have repented and believed the gospel, we have the privilege to come to the Lord Jesus, and confess our sins.

9. In so doing, He is, as John says, *"...faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

10. There is a third thing we find in this text that you need to remember whenever you fall. Remember, *God seeks, so you can turn to Him*, and *God speaks, so you can talk with Him*, and remember lastly that:

III. GOD SAVES, SO YOU CAN TRUST IN HIM

1. After Adam and Eve's eventual confession, God begins to pronounce judgments upon them for their sin.

2. Yes, there were consequences for their sin. Let us never deceive ourselves into thinking that when we fall, if we will just confess, there will be no consequences.

3. God always deals with His children about their sin, but at the same time, He is gracious to them.

4. Even in the midst of these judgments, there is the grace and mercy of God. He judges His creatures, but also provides a way of ultimate salvation for them.

5. One of my favorite authors is D.A. Carson. He has a new book out called *The God Who Is There*. In it, he deals with this passage in Genesis 3, and he calls the chapter, "The God Who Does Not Wipe Out Rebels".

6. When we fall, we need to remember that though He could "wipe us out", God is willing to save us rather than watch us perish.

7. Fallen sinners like us can receive His gracious salvation simply by trusting Him. "The just," the Bible says, "shall live by faith." (Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:17)

8. To enjoy the God who saves, and the salvation He offers, we must first of all:

A. Trust His Word

1. As you read through this chapter, there is a verse that kind of sticks out and seems sort of out-of-place. It is verse 20.

2. It falls right after Adam's judgment is handed down. God tells him of the toil he will endure, and then we read, "*And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.*"

3. Though it may seem a strange thing for Adam to say on the heels of God's judgment, in reality, it is simply Adam's response of faith to what God promised in verse 15.

4. There we find that *protoevangelium* – first gospel. God swore to the serpent, "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*"
5. God promised that a seed would come from the woman that would one day crush this enemy who had led to the corruption of the world and the fall of the human race.
6. What Adam was saying when he named Eve was this, "I believe God! This woman will give birth! God's Word will be true!"
7. In order for us as fallen sinners to experience the salvation God offers, we must first take Him at His word!
8. If He says you are a sinner, then you are a sinner. If He says that He loves you anyway, then you are divinely loved. If He says that you can be born again, then believe Him, you can have a new birth!
9. If He says you are forgiven, then rest on His Word that your sins are gone! God saves, so we can trust his word.
10. We must not only trust His word, but we must also:

B. Trust His work

1. Adam and Eve made a feeble and foolish attempt to cover their sin and shame back in verse 7. However, in verse 21, God gave to them a covering, not of their work, but of His.
2. Verse 21 says, "*Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*"
3. R. Kent Hughes, in his wonderful book on Genesis says of these coats of skins, "God's provision here of robes of animal skin both recognized their sin and was an act of grace."ⁱⁱ
4. Think of that. A sacrifice took place to deal with their sin, and a covering was provided to deal with their shame. What we see is that God's work for them was enough.
5. All Adam and Eve had to do was receive this gift of grace from God, and trust that it was sufficient both to satisfy His holiness and to cover their sinfulness.

6. Today, you and I live in a world not only east of Eden, but the other side of Calvary as well. We know these coats of skins were only symbols and signs of the ultimate work of grace that God would do for sinners like us.

7. At Golgotha, the innocent Lamb of God, the precious Lord Jesus, was slain on the behalf of Adam's fallen race.

8. His righteousness was taken off as He hung like a common criminal on the cross. In grace, God now provides that righteousness to all the rebels and sinners who will come to Him by faith.

9. If we will but trust that work of grace, demonstrated in the cross of Jesus, we can know and enjoy the God who saves!

10. Clinging to nothing but the work of God in Christ, we say with the songwriter:

*My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness,
I dare not trust a sweeter frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name*

11. When you fall, don't ever forget that salvation is of the Lord, and you can trust in Him!

1. I think it is safe to say that none of you have ever seen a talking snake. Likewise, you've probably never been tempted by fruit.

2. Nevertheless, you have all fallen. Just like our first parents, we have believed the lies of the enemy, rebelled against the commands of God, and suffered the consequences of sin.

3. You are a fallen creature, and because of that you still fall. Even those of us who have been saved by God's grace, still fail God, and fall into sin.

4. All those who are fallen can be helped by God's grace and God's Word.

5. Let the fallen among us learn from Genesis 3, and remember today that God seeks, so you can turn to Him. God speaks, so you can talk to Him. God saves, so you can trust in Him when you fall.

ⁱ Miller, Arthur, After the Fall, (Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1964), quote taken from p. 79, *Google Books*, accessed 10/14/10,
http://books.google.com/books?id=GNBEbmbSpqUC&printsec=frontcover&dq=After+the+Fall&hl=en&ei=qUO3TN2EicT58Ab83qipCg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=book-thumbnail&resnum=1&ved=0CDAQ6wEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

ⁱⁱ Hughes, R. Kent, Genesis: Beginning and Blessing, (Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 2004), p. 94