

January 3-Genesis 3

Genesis 3 begins, in earnest, the story of redemption that encompasses the rest of the Bible. While Genesis 3 is a sobering and mostly depressing passage as we read about man's disobedience and subsequent fall from grace, it does include the glorious truth that while man is fallen with no way to save himself we serve a God who has a plan of redemption and who is mighty to save. Indeed, Genesis 3 includes the first prophecy about the coming Savior Jesus Christ and in this wonderful prediction of the future we find hope for our salvation and joy in Satan's coming defeat.

It is important to note that Genesis 3 begins with a glorious creation in which man enjoyed a flawless relationship with God. Adam and Eve knew God in a personal and intimate way as we see in Genesis 3:8. He had created the perfect environment for mankind to flourish and had given them all of the beautiful resources in the garden for their enjoyment, except of course one tree. The fruit of this tree was forbidden explicitly by God for consumption (3:3). The divine design was for mankind to lovingly and faithfully obey God as they enjoyed Him forever. Truthfully, the task God gave man was not all that difficult but it was vitally important.

The rest of Genesis 3 reads like a horror story. The creation that was once perfect is immediately thrown into absolute turmoil by virtue of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. Pain, agony, and frustration enter into the fold. Nature, which was once man's friend, is now one of his greatest obstacles. Work moved from a pleasurable reality to a daily chore and, most devastating of all, death is now a certainty for everyone who is born. As a product of the sin of Adam and Eve everything in creation that was once perfect is now marred.

Paul speaks about this very reality in Romans 8:20 saying "For creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it..." Paul tells us that God subjected creation to futility because of man's sin as we see clearly in Genesis 3 but the question remains, why would God do this? Well, Paul answers that question and in doing so points us back to the hope we can find in the midst of the chilling account of man's fall in Genesis 3. Paul says that God subjected creation to futility "in hope, that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God."

While God undeniably cursed the world we live in as a product of mankind's sin of disobedience, He did not totally abandon us. In fact, from that moment forward we read that God has a plan of redemption. One day, God will redeem this fallen world and the people who reside in it. He will do this of course through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. In fact, Genesis 3:15 records God's first promise of a coming Savior. God promises to Satan that He will "put enmity between your offspring and her offspring." We know from the Word that those who are born only of the flesh are not children of God but of the devil, this group of people comprises the devil's offspring. Jesus says as much in John 8:44 when He speaks to the unbelieving Jews who are claiming to be God's children saying "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires." Truthfully, all of us are enemies of God prior to our salvation (Romans 5:10), but in God's great mercy and love He sends His son Christ so that "all who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12).

In this prophecy of the coming Messiah, God informs Adam and Eve that Christ is coming to clean up their mess! He goes on to state that Christ's sacrifice would not be easy, no Satan would "bruise his (Christ's) heel" according to verse 15. This points to the reality that Christ's sacrifice would be painful, in fact He would be "pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities" as Isaiah 53:5 tells us. However, in His physical torment He would ultimately victoriously bruise Satan on the head rendering him totally defeated. Satan might have created a situation that would cause Christ to suffer but ultimately God has prevailed!