

Bible Study 6: In the Beginning: The Original Sin

GENESIS 3:1-13



1. Who or what do people blame for the problems of the world?

Genesis 2:4-4:25 is God's record of the history of the heavens and the earth (See 2:4). It moves from the Garden of Eden to the world we recognize with anger, murder, violence and vengeance. The change happens in chapter 3, which we will look at over 2 weeks.

Read Genesis 3:1-13

2. Let's work through the passage carefully. (It will help to see that "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" seems to stand for the right to govern and rule, to decide what is good and evil).

- a. What does the serpent's question in verse 1 imply about God? (See what God actually said in 2:16-17?) When/where do we see the same lie being believed today?
- b. What evidence is there in verses 2-3 that the woman is already being swayed by the serpent?
- c. What does the serpent deny in verse 4? How do we hear the same lie today?
- d. What is the heart of the temptation in verse 5? How do we see people believing this lie today?
- e. According to verse 6, why did the woman eat the fruit? Do you think she could excuse herself by saying "the devil made me do it"? Why do you think that the rest of the Bible holds Adam responsible for the rebellion?
- f. What consequences immediately flow from the man and the woman disobeying God and seeking to take his place as the one who determines what is right and wrong? (v 7-13). To what extent are these consequences still evident in our world?

3. Theologians speak of "original sin": that by nature we now each repeat the rebellion of Adam and Eve. To what extent do you agree with this quote: "*The transmission of sin seems to us not only impossible, it even seems very unjust...nothing, to be sure, is more of a shock to us than such a doctrine and yet without this mystery, which is the most incomprehensible of all, we should be incomprehensible to ourselves.*" (Blaise Pascal, 1600s)

4. How does this passage help us to understand and/or appreciate

- a. Who/what to blame for the problems of the world?
- b. The Lord Jesus – See Romans 5:12 & 18-19
- c. The ways in which we might be deceived. Are there areas of your life that need to be resubmitted to God's good rule?

5. Pray for each other.

Bible Study 7: In the Beginning: The Original Judgement

GENESIS 3:9-24



1. Some people say that God doesn't punish sin. From your memory of the Bible, how many different 'judgements' (ie. occasions when God punished people for sin) can you list? (Note: Only spend a few minutes on this!)

Genesis 2:4-4:25 is God's record of the history of the heavens and the earth (See 2:4). It moves from the Garden of Eden to the world we recognize with anger, murder, violence and vengeance. The change happens in chapter 3 – with the original sin, where Adam and Eve rebel against God, and God responds with the original judgement upon them.

Read Genesis 3.

2. The Crime. What was the crime committed in 3:6?
3. The Enquiry. Verses 9-13 record a conversation between God, the man and the woman. What do you notice about the answers the man and the woman give to the LORD's questions? Who is responsible? (Also - why do you think God doesn't ask any question of the snake?)
4. The Sentence. What is the sentence on each party (v 14-19)? Can you see any themes / patterns? To what extent do these punishments describe life as we see it today?
 - a. The Snake
 - b. The Woman (Note: See how 'desire' is used in 4:7)
 - c. The Man (Adam)
5. The final punishment is recorded in verses 22-24. Why does God eject Adam and Eve from the Garden and make it impossible for them to re-renter?
6. In 2:17 God said that if the man ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would certainly die. The snake said "No! You will not die". Did the man die? Who was right?
7. When God judges his people, it is almost always tinged with mercy and hope. What signs of God's mercy, or glimmers of hope, can you see in Genesis 3? (You might also like to read the ultimate hope for humanity in Revelation 22:1-5)
8. This passage teaches that much of the suffering and frustrations of everyday life are due to God's judgement on humanity. How conscious are you of this reality? How does this make you feel?
9. (As time permits) How do these New Testament passages help us to understand and live outside the garden, under the sentence of death - Romans 6:23, Romans 8:18-25 , 2 Peter 3:8-13.
10. Pray for each other.

Bible Study 8: In the Beginning: The First Murderer

GENESIS 4



1. “Murder is in our world, and it lurks deep inside the human heart”. To what extent do you think this is true?
2. Have you ever been so angry/frustrated that you’ve lashed out at someone – perhaps with your tongue, or an object, or a fist, or just in your heart?

After Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden, they begin to multiply. Genesis 4 records the birth of 13 offspring! Will the next generation do better than their parents? It doesn’t take long to find out!

Read Genesis 4

3. From verses 1-5, why do you think God had regard for Abel and his offering, but not for Cain and his offering? (Proverbs 15:8 and 1 John 3:12 may also shed some light on this).
4. From verses 6-16
 - a. What echoes of chapter 3 can you see? (ie. what is similar?) What do you think this implies about the nature of sin in the offspring of Adam and Eve?
 - b. In what ways does the account show that sin has spread/got worse? (Apart from the nature of his sin, consider his culpability, his response when confronted, and his punishment).
 - c. How do verses 17-24 further confirm what you’ve seen in a and b?
5. Although sin seems to have spread, this is also matched by God’s grace. What evidence of God’s care/mercy/grace can you see in Genesis 4? (See esp verses 6-7, 10, 15 & 25)
6. The New Testament directly refers to Cain and Abel in 3 places.
 - a. Read Hebrews 12:24. How does this comfort us when we are conscious that we are guilty of sin?
 - b. Read Hebrews 11:4-6. What can we learn from Abel?
 - c. Read 1 John 3:11-15. In what specific ways are we in most danger of being like Cain, rather than following Jesus’ teaching to love one another? (See also Matthew 5:21-26).
7. Pray together. Confess your sin to God. Thank God that his grace extends even to murderers, and that there is nothing we have done that Jesus didn’t die for. Ask God to help you follow in the footsteps of Jesus who loved his brothers, rather than Cain who murdered his.