

GENESIS 3:1-5:32

SO THEN, WHO IS THE REAL LIAR?

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays. We missed two lessons during our break – Genesis Chapter 3 which tells the account of man’s first sin (commonly referred to as “the fall of man”); and Genesis Chapter 4 which recounts the first murder in human history, of course the story of Cain and Abel. This morning we’re going to catch up and focus on Genesis Chapters 3 thru 5. Next week we will look at the great flood.

There is a lot of ground to cover so I’m not going read every verse. We actually studied Genesis Chapter 3 in great detail back in December of 2020 – more detail than what I plan to do this morning. I would encourage you to listen to it on the Level Ground website when you get the chance. It was really interesting and the discussion was good. Anyway, here we go starting in Genesis Chapter 3 and verse 1...

READ Genesis 3:1

So, who is this crafty serpent? Twice in the book of Revelation it says that the “ancient serpent” (a reference to the serpent here in Genesis) “is the devil and Satan.” (Revelation 12:9 and 20:2). Eve doesn’t know it but this talking snake is actually the devil in disguise. The serpent who we find out later is Satan is questioning God. He begins by questioning what God had told Adam and Eve, the ONE rule that God had given to Adam back in Chapter 2. And what was that rule? Let’s flashback to Chapter 2... “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17). So the serpent is misrepresenting what God had actually said.

We know that Eve is fully aware of this rule because she quotes it back to the serpent...

READ Genesis 3:2-3

Even though she doesn't quote it exactly the way God said it, we know that Eve is aware of this rule. God gave this instruction to the man, to Adam, and then at some point later he passed it on to Eve. Now, do either one of them know what "you will surely die" means? Well, how could they? Up to this point there has been no death. But whatever "surely die" means, it cannot be a good thing because it is mentioned by God as a punishment.

READ Genesis 3:4

In response to Eve the serpent says, "You're NOT going to die." In other words, God's a liar! But the serpent isn't finished and continues by questioning God's goodness...

READ Genesis 3:5

"God's holding out on you, Eve! That's not right. You deserve better!"

So the serpent is accusing God of NOT being good. He's contradicting what God said. He's casting doubt upon God's good character. This serpent, Satan makes a false claim – "If you eat of the forbidden fruit then you will become like God." The serpent, Satan is a liar. Later in John 8 Jesus will refer to Satan as "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). The truth is that Adam and Eve are already like God in the sense that they were created in God's image and they were made to represent God on earth.

Well, instead of believing and trusting God, who Eve should know IS good, she believes the serpent. Rather than defending God and His goodness, she considers the serpent's evil words and is deceived.

READ Genesis 3:6

Eve evaluates the situation based on her own desire and reasoning. She begins to crave the forbidden fruit despite God's clear warning not to eat it. She believes the serpent's words, that by eating the fruit she'll become like God. She doesn't believe that if she eats it that she'll die. So Eve is led astray by the serpent's lies. She reaches out to fulfill her own lustful desire for the forbidden fruit. And in doing so she ignores God's warning. Eve picks the fruit off the tree and eats it. Then she gives some of

the fruit to Adam. Because Adam IS WITH Eve he should be aware of what's going on! He should realize that the fruit he has just been handed by his wife is from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He should! We know that Adam was not deceived by the serpent (apparently he doesn't hear the conversation). How do we know that Adam was not deceived like Eve was by the serpent? Because 1 Timothy 2:14 tells us, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." So Adam can't use the excuse that he was fooled by the serpent. Adam never questioned Eve's actions. He goes along with her. He takes the fruit from her knowing what tree it came from – remember, Adam is with Eve – and he eats it. What should Adam have done instead? As spiritual head he should have refused the fruit and rebuked Eve. But he doesn't do that does he? So both Adam and Eve are guilty.

In 2 Corinthians 11:3 Paul tells the believers at Corinth "I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ." The old devil's tactics have not changed since the Garden of Eden. He is a liar and a deceiver.

READ Genesis 3:7

Adam and Eve are now aware of good and evil. Their eyes were opened. They had known good all along because the world around them was good. But now they know evil. They realize that what they have just done is WRONG. Having violated the expressed command of God, they are filled with deep senses of guilt and fear. Prior to eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve had been naked and not ashamed (Genesis 2:25). Like little children they had lived in a complete state of blissful innocence. Now their guilt makes them feel ashamed. They try their best to cover up their nakedness with fig leaves.

Well we know how the rest of the story. Suddenly, Adam and Eve hear God moving around in the garden. Driven by fear, they attempt to hide from God among the trees. But you can't hide from God, can you? When God finds them, they begin pointing fingers at each other. Adam says, "It's

her fault." Eve says, "the serpent deceived me." But an all-knowing and wise God determines that all three parties are guilty – Adam, Eve, and the serpent. God renders His divine judgment against them. He curses the serpent to crawl on its belly and makes it the enemy of mankind from that point on. Nobody likes snakes!

God renders his judgment upon Adam and Eve. But before He does that, God makes a promise...

READ Genesis 3:15

God promises that one of Eve's male descendants will eventually come along and destroy the serpent and make things right. We know from reading our N.T. that Jesus is that promised person. First John 3:8 says, "Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God (speaking of Jesus) appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." The serpent introduced sin into the world. This eventually led to death – both physical and spiritual death. As a part of God's divine judgment – not only will life become much harder and more painful for both the man and woman but now they will face physical death.

READ Genesis 3:19

Mankind was originally created to live forever. But now because of his sin, physical death is introduced. "For the wages of sin is death," right? God renders a judgment of physical death not only on the man and the woman, but on all living things. Not only will physical death result, but spiritual death as well. We humans are both physical and spiritual beings. Ephesians 2 says that we were "dead in our trespasses." That's a reference to spiritual death. However, there is good news. It goes on to say that we "are made alive with Christ – by grace you have been saved." (Ephesians 2:5)

So, while sin and death are the works of the devil, the N.T. assures us that Jesus, the Son of God defeated Satan at the cross by atoning for, by making payment for the sins of all mankind. Our faith in what He did on

the cross is what makes us spiritually alive. Jesus then proceeded to conquer physical death as well when He was resurrected, a physical bodily resurrection, from the tomb.

Even in judgment God is merciful. God doesn't strike Adam and Eve dead right then and there. Remember from earlier, God had warned them, "When you eat from [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] you will surely die." Instead God allows Adam and Eve keep on living for a while. God banishes them from their garden paradise and they are never allowed to return to the place they once called home. Their relationship with God has been severely strained, but not completely severed. God provides Adam and Eve the ability to get food from the ground so that they can eat. But unlike the ease of life before in the paradise of Eden, life now will be a constant struggle. They'll have to work hard to get their food.

God shows His goodness by taking an animal, killing it, removing its skin and clothing Adam and Eve. This is the first recorded death in the Bible. The death of an innocent animal covers the shame produced by Adam's and Eve's sinful actions. Why does God do this? Because He really is a GOOD God and He loves them despite what they've done. What mercy and grace!

Well, time passes and Adam and Eve have children.

READ Genesis 4:1-2

When her first son, Cain is born Eve expresses delight in having a male descendant. Thinking back to the promise that God had made in Genesis 3:15, perhaps she believes that this son of hers might be the one who will fulfill that promise. Of course we know that Cain was NOT the fulfillment. He was not the promised one. That person would come along much later. Eve acknowledges that it is God who has given her a son. Soon afterward she gives birth to a second son, Abel. Despite their transgression in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve continue to be followers of the one true God and they raise their children to believe in Him and worship Him. We are told that Abel is a shepherd while Cain is a farmer.

READ Genesis 4:3-5

We are never told WHY God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's. Many Bible teachers focus on the two different kinds of offerings that the two brothers brought to God. They conjecture that God accepted Abel's offering because it was of the best of his flocks while rejecting Cain's offering because it was of the fruit of the ground. They'll say the reason God rejected Cain's offering was because it was not the proper kind of offering. But the Bible doesn't actually say that.

I believe the fundamental reason why God "had no regard" for Cain's offering was that Cain's heart was not right. Here's why I say that. In Psalm 51 David had great insight when he said... "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17). Isaiah knew the kind of heart God was looking for when he said this... "But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My word" (Isaiah 66:2).

OK, so what SHOULD Cain have done when God rejected his offering? Should he have gone back and got a sheep from Abel's flock and made a blood sacrifice before God? Some people will tell you that. What Cain should have done is repented and confessed his sin before God. There was something inside of Cain, in his heart that wasn't right. God knew this and He exposed it. Cain should have done whatever it takes to make things right between him and God. That's what David did when he was confronted with his sin. But instead we read this...

READ Genesis 4:5-7

Cain is NOT repentant. He's angry. Did Cain "do well"? Did he make any attempt to do what was necessary to please God? No. The Apostle John gives us this insight: "For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one..." (1 John 3:11-12a). Apparently Satan has gotten hold of Cain. He had filled Cain's mind with evil thoughts. Well you know what happens next.

READ Genesis 4:8

Cain had an ungodly, evil heart. Again, John gives us further insight: "We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12). Cain was a child of the devil rather than a child of God. The evil that was inside his heart revealed itself in an evil outward action – the first murder. Abel, a righteous man became the first human in history to die.

READ Genesis 4:9-10

Cain lies to God. "I don't know where Abel is." He lies because he is a child of the father of lies, the devil. By the way, the answer to Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is an emphatic YES, you are! Cain should have known better. You can't lie to God. He knows the truth.

READ Genesis 4:15-16

God's judgment, His curse on Cain forces Cain to wander as a fugitive constantly looking over his shoulder fearing that someone will try to kill HIM. Though God protects Cain from any retaliation that might come his way, we're told that Cain ends up going away from the presence of the Lord. This is a very sad commentary on Cain's life.

The rest of Genesis Chapter 4 mentions that Cain's descendants were pretty much like Cain and also evil. Not a big surprise. The fact is that children and grandchildren learn behaviors, they adopt their morals and formulate their world views from their parents and grandparents. Only divine intervention will be able to break this downward spiral.

This chapter ends on a high note. Adam and Eve have a third son named Seth. In contrast to Cain's descendants, Seth's descendants are godly and they call upon the name of the Lord.

Genesis Chapter 5 follows Adam's descendants all the way up to Noah. We will look at him next time. John MacArthur in his commentary about this chapter says this: "Two recurring phrases carry redemption history

forward: 'he had other sons and daughters' and 'he died.' These lines which get repeated for each successive descendant of Adam, echo two contrasting realities; God had said 'you shall surely die,' but He had also commanded them to 'be fruitful and multiply.'"

So, with that thought in mind, listen to what these verses say about Adam...

READ Genesis 5:3-5

Emphasis on "and he died." God, in His mercy, gave Adam over 900 more years of life after the sin in the Garden of Eden. I looked this up: Adam lived long enough to see his great, great, great, great, great, great grandson born. That was Lamech who would later become the father of Noah. But eventually "he died." Adam DID physically die.

So then going back to Genesis Chapter 3, who was the real liar? Was it God as the serpent claimed? "You shall not surely die!" Or was it the devil? Well, Adam died and so will we someday. Satan is the liar. He's the deceiver. He always has been and he always will be.

In closing how can we protect ourselves from the schemes of Satan?

James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." First Peter 5:8-9 says, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith..." Finally, Ephesians 6:11 reminds us to "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

Prepare yourselves. The old devil is alive and well and he's going to attack you. More than likely he will tell you something that runs contrary to what God's word says. Are you ready? Have you armed yourself? The old devil is just around the next bend or over the next hill. You had better get ready!