Genesis 1 – 11 – Fact not Fiction

Chapter 3

God created Adam and Eve without clothes

There was a total innocence with no shame, no insecurities

It was truly paradise in every sense of the word

Everything changes, beginning in chapter 3

It will take 929 chapters and 30,998 verses within Scripture to return back to what the world was originally like in the first two chapters

Yes, what Revelation 21 speaks of is not a reality yet but there’s no question as to what John wrote of becoming true

The Bible’s theme is “to return to what once was, never to return to what now is, all to the glory of God”

Again, we must establish, how the events Moses records within chapter three, just like chapters one and two were literal, historical events

Chapter three is not a fictional story made up to teach lessons about life

I cannot overemphasize the great importance of this

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If what Genesis chapter three records did not really happen, there was no need for Christ to die upon the cross

God created Adam and Eve instantaneously to live forever

Evolution necessities dying being a significant part of God’s original plan for humans

We will examine this in greater depth as we journey through this chapter

As this chapter begins, a sinister character emerges

He comes unexpectedly but yet intentionally, speaking through a snake

Who is speaking through this snake?

It’s none other than Lucifer, the fallen archangel

How do we know it is him?

The last book of the Bible identifies him as such

Revelation 12:9: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

Lucifer had led a great rebellion against God in heaven

Numerous other angels joined with Him

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Of course, this rebellion was unsuccessful, because nothing and no one can overcome God

So if he could not change heaven’s authority structure, why not mess up God’s grand creation?

This is why he encounters Eve, talking through a snake

What is his evil, sinister strategy?

First, he insinuates doubt, then he communicates a blatant lie and he finally concludes by questioning God’s goodness

It’s an insidious, three-pronged attack

Doubt God - Disbelieve God - Disobey God

You can do all of this without suffering any consequences

The tempter’s strategy is to make what is very bad for you look very good for you

Without question, deception is the name of his game

Isaiah 5:20: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.”

This is the devil’s MO

It’s his modus operandi, i.e. mode of operating

He knows the tremendous power of deception

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So he questions the accuracy, authority and fidelity of God’s Word

Are you sure you really got this right?

Perhaps God meant something else than you think He meant

Perhaps what He said isn’t as straightforward as it sounds

Eve, when she replies, gives no hint of vacillating or any willingness to compromise what to turn was a clear command from God

However, she adds something to it, which God didn’t originally include

Now he has laid a foundation of doubt, his next move is to take Eve from doubt toward disbelief

He instills within her a sense of false confidence

In effect, he is calling God a liar

He only gave this warning since He was afraid you, after eating this fruit, would find out the truth He did not want you to know

You will attain a new level of self-realization

You will comprehend in fact you are god-like where you can set up your own moral standards for what is right and what is wrong

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The number one religion today is humanism, which at its cores has total indifference toward the fear of God

It’s the attempt people make to achieve divine replacement through exalting human intellect, resourcefulness and accomplishment

You don’t need God since you can become your own god

It’s the allure of autonomy

To a humanist, God is not sovereign, relevant or necessary to life itself since in humanism, we become the ultimate authority regarding everything

We can see from Genesis chapter three how this kind of God-expunging thinking is as old as humanity itself

So Eve takes the bait

Verse six outlines how she was tempted three ways

The lust of the eyes; the lust of the flesh; the pride of life

She saw it was pleasant to look upon, good for food, and able to make one wise

Christ’s temptation by the devil followed the very same pattern

Matthew 4:1-11 records this encounter

We continually face the same temptations on a daily basis

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After Eve eats the fruit herself, she hands it to Adam and he does the same

What we don’t know is Adam’s proximity through all of this

It seems like from the text the devil purposefully isolated Eve and they had a private conversation

I would have to conclude Adam knew what the fruit looked like because God pointed out to him previously how he was not to eat from this specific tree

What we do know is Eve ate from more of an unsuspecting naivety but Adam ate knowingly, already having a clear understanding of God’s commandment

It’s not that Eve was without responsibility

She willingly succumbed to the devil’s wily deception but with Adam, there’s no indication any of the serpent’s deceptive words were spoken to him

He wasn’t influenced primarily through the serpent but through Eve

However things played out, what is clear is that both of them experienced a tremendously significant change after they had broken God’s commandment

They sensed shame as well as insecurity for the very first time

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Innocence was lost, sinlessness was lost, immortality was lost, paradise was lost

But all hope was not lost

God’s lovingkindness will provide a way of salvation

So let’s reinforce this unchanging, comforting truth today: God is good, He wants what is best for our lives

Psalm 84:11,12 is what we must believe without vacillating

“For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in You!”

Psalm 105:5: “For the LORD is good, His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures to all generations.”

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life.”

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After they sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, they immediately experienced shame

They realized now they were naked, whereas prior to this they had no knowledge of this being unnatural while in their sinless state of total innocence

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Fig leaves are apparently very uncomfortable when placed against one’s skin

This was an appropriate covering for what they were now feeling

Guilt, shame, and insecurity were now their new reality

What will happen to them next?

Adam was told what the consequence would be if they ate from this particular tree

“For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (2:17b)

Were they expecting at any moment to drop down dead?

How would this happen? What would it be like?

We have to remember they had not witnessed anyone or anything die up to that point in time

Or were they living in the full deception of believing the devil’s lie that nothing adverse was going to happen to them?

When Shannon was young, her parents told her and her brother smoking cigarettes is a very bad practice because people die from it

So one time when a man from the neighborhood was visiting in their home and smoking, they snuck up on him as he spoke

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with their parents, curiously anticipated his imminent, impending doom at any moment

They were amazed this man had the power to stay alive while continuing to smoke

I think Adam and Eve, although very much deceived, still must have been wondering what God’s response was going to be

Quite possibly, they may have been wondering if God’s promised judgment would be their immediate reality

What does God do, now they have sinned against Him?

Does he judge them with a divine lightning bolt from heaven?

No, He does not do this even when He would have been totally justified in executing this kind of swift judgment

Instead, God comes to them and in His grace proceeds to grant them the opportunity to explain their actions

How was God present in the garden?

This may have been a Christophany or His bright Shekinah glory

It think it was the preincarnate Word of God because the text tells us God spoke to them

Now notice this

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The devil’s first question recorded in Scripture was, “Has God indeed said?”

God first question recorded in Scripture was, “Where are you?”

The first question was a call to practice anarchy, to live independent of God’s presence, relevance and authority

The second question was a call to relationship, seeking restoration of what had become a broken personal connection

The norm for God and man is not meant to be an unconnected autonomy but a vital, up close relationship

This is why in reference to the new heavens and earth John writes in Revelation 21:3: “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God’.”

Notice how he uses the word “with,” not once but three times to emphasize how there will be divine-human relationship that’s unhindered, unending and unseparated by anything for all of eternity

So God asks a question and he directs this toward Adam

Why is this distinction important?

He was created first and was given the initial command regarding not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

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God’s question was for him since he had primary responsibility

This is a fundamental beginning point for me in regard to believing what the Bible teaches about male headship, e.g. marriage, family, and church which are primary relational environments

The Bible, with regard to gender, teaches equality of essence and value but not equality of role and obligations

We will look more into this further into this chapter

Now, back to God’s questioning of Adam

If God asks a question, it’s always rhetorical

In His omniscience, He knows the answer to everything

The purpose behind a rhetorical question is to move the one who is being asked toward personal accountability

“Did I ask to clean your room?”

“Why is this milk all over the floor?”

“How come there’s hardly any gas left in the car?”

So God begins questioning Adam and Eve with this intent as they attempt to hide from Him

Adam immediately answers God’s question and it reveals why they were hiding from God

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There was one primary reason – fearful insecurity

To feel insecure isn’t natural because God made us to feel and know continual, total security

It is vitally important to realize most sin has its root in insecurity

This is especially true in when we consider the sin of pride

People manifest pride when they feel insecure because they feel inadequate or unaccepted and therefore feel compelled to do something which will bolster their image and make them look superior to others

Insecurity is also very much connected to worry since we cannot control absolutely every possible present and future outcome

It’s readily apparent Adam and Eve are completely overcome with insecurity

It is almost humorous if it were not so tragic that they’re attempting to hide from God behind trees

God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent

Hiding from Him is virtually impossible

King David knew this when he wrote these words in Psalm 139:7-12: “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend in heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings

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of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘surely the darkness shall fall on me,’ even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.”

Notice how David connects God’s omnipresence to personal relationship

Not only can we not escape God’s presence but God seeks to have a close, personal connection with us

What an amazing, comforting truth!

So Adam answers God’s initial question

Is God satisfied with his answer?

No, He is not, so He asks two more rhetorical questions, moving Adam further toward accountability

How does Adam answer these questions?

Does he come clean with God by instantly admitting his willful disobedience?

No, he does something else entirely than openly confess and repent

He blame-shifts, i.e. offloads personal responsibility

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He doesn’t own his sin, he deflects it

We have already highlighted how insecurity was an immediate consequence arising from Adam and Eve’s original sin

Another significant result of their disobedience was to experience guilt and its accompanying shame

Now let’s acknowledge and clearly recognize this: the natural outflow from shame is blame

Who says the Bible is not relevant to our present time?

The blame game is practiced by literally millions of people every single day throughout the entire world

We come up with excuses for our sinful behavior, e.g. it’s my environment, my personality, they made me do it

So on who does Adam pin the blame?

First, on God and second, on Eve

“I was doing okay until you made this woman from my rib”

“I didn’t ask You to create her”

“That was Your idea, not mine”

“If You had not created her, she obviously wouldn’t have been around to give me the fruit”

“So, let me reemphasize I didn’t initiate taking the fruit from the tree, she did and then gave it to me”

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“Therefore, God You’re ultimately responsible for this, not me”

It is fascinating to note how people today, who do not even believe in God’s existence, still insist on vehemently blaming Him for all that is wrong with humanity

The next alternative is for the same people to put the blame on other humans rather than take an honest, introspective look at their own shortcomings

So now that Adam has shifted the blame to God and Eve, how will she respond to this?

God proceeds by asking her His next rhetorical question

She answers God in the very same way through transferring blame to the serpent and his sinister, deceptive powers

Does God buy into any of this blame-shifting?

Not for one millisecond

Whenever God’s commandments are intentionally disobeyed, there are inescapable, inevitable consequences

This is what we observe throughout the next six verses

God begins to pronounce words of judgment upon the snake and Lucifer who was embodying it, upon Eve and finally upon Adam

These judgments still have present relevance and effects right now

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What are our take-a-ways from Genesis three today?

Jesus is the one and only answer to all our insecurities

Jesus is the one and only answer to our guilt and its shame

Jesus is the one and only answer to our blame-shifting tendencies

Come to Him now to receive forgiveness of your sins, peace, joy and an eternal home in heaven