

25-1228a Transcript

25-1228a - Beginnings - Genesis 3, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Tom Freed and John Nousek

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Beginnings: Temptation & Fall - Genesis 3:1-7

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 2:04): Tom Freed

Romans 5:12-19 (0:04) *Morning. I'll be reading Romans 5, 12-19. (0:11) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, (0:18) and so spread to all men because all sinned. For until the law, sin was in the world. (0:25) But sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until (0:33) Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, (0:39) who was a type of him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the transgression. (0:47) For by the transgression of the one, the many died. Much more did the grace of God and the gift (0:55) by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ abound to many. The gift is not like that which came (1:03) through the one who sinned. For on the one hand, the judgment arose from one transgression, (1:10) resulting in condemnation. But on the other hand, the free gift (1:14) arose from many transgressions, resulting in justification. (1:19) For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, (1:25) much more those who received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness (1:31) will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. (1:37) So then as through one transgression, there resulted condemnation to all men, even so (1:47) through one act of righteousness, there resulted justification of life to all men. (1:53) For as through the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, even*

continued

so the obedience (2:01) of the one, the many will be made righteous. (2:04)

2nd Reading (2:09 - 3:58): John Nousek

Psalms 8:1-9: (2:09) *Well, good morning. So this morning, I have (2:12) the pleasure of reading God's word. And the second scripture reading comes from Psalm 8, (2:21) verses 1 through 9, which happens to be the entire psalm. So God's word says, (2:29) O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth, (2:38) who have displayed your splendor above the heavens. From the mouth of infants and nursing babes, (2:45) you have established strength because of your adversities to make the enemy (2:54) and the revengeful cease. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, (3:02) moon and the stars that you have ordained, what is man that you take thought of him, (3:11) and the son of man that you care for him. Yet you have made him a little lower than God, (3:22) and you crown him with glory and majesty. You make him to rule over the works of your hands. (3:32) You've put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, (3:42) the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the seas. (3:50) O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. Amen. (3:58)*

Transcript (0:04 - 35:07), Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(4:03) Good Morning, Beginnings, the introduction, the evil.

In our study of Genesis chapters 1 through 11, (4:14) we come now to chapter 3. It is a pivotal moment in the historical count of creation. (4:22) Chapters 1 and 2 present a perfect creation and introduce us to the answers to the big questions (4:30) of life. Where do I come from? Why am I here? Do I have a purpose? And what's life all about? (4:38) So contrasting this with the competing worldview is the atheist, naturalist, or evolutionist, right? (4:47) As Carl Sagan said, the cosmos is all that there is, ever was, or ever will be.

Is that true? (4:56) Does only nature exist? Are we nothing more than the product of mindless,

purposeless (5:03) chaos and chance? Where are the answers to the big questions of life in that view? (5:12) They don't have the answers. The Bible does. In chapters 1 and 2, we get an introduction to the (5:20) answers to those big questions.

We are created beings by an all-powerful being called God. (5:29) We are to manage his creation, to watch over it, tend it, and protect it. We are to be fruitful (5:37) and multiply.

And to paraphrase Dr. Del Tackett and his engagement project, being fruitful isn't (5:44) limited to just reproducing ourselves, but it applies to all aspects of our life, our jobs, (5:51) our relationships, our church, our neighborhood, and all things that we do. We are to be productive. (5:59) These chapters show us a perfect beginning, a utopia rated very good by God himself.

(6:07) But we look around today and we don't see perfection. We see pain and suffering, (6:13) conflict, disease, and decay. What happened? Where did it go wrong? Chapter 3. Chapter 3 (6:24) introduces us to change and new concepts, lying and deceit, manipulation, mind games, and evil.

(6:35) Genesis chapter 3, along with the account of the flood in chapter 6 through 9, depicts the world (6:42) as it is today better than any other explanation. The Bible has answers. So as we prepare for our (6:54) study, let's recap chapters 1 and 2 for context.

In chapter 1, God created the heavens and the earth. (7:03) Chapter 1 gives the panoramic overall view of the creation week. (7:10) We saw that the heavens in verse 1 includes the heaven of heavens, the place where God resides.

(7:19) Nehemiah 9.6, the prophet says, you alone are the Lord. You have made the heavens, the heaven (7:27) of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is in it, the seas and all that is in them. (7:35) You give life to all of them and the heavenly host, that's the angels, mouths down before you.

(7:43) The heaven of heavens was created first with its host and the angels witness the creation of (7:50) and continue to witness the history of the natural realm. Job 38.4-7, God questions Job, (8:02) where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. (8:09) Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases (8:17) sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God, (8:26) that's the angels again, shouted for joy.

They witnessed the creation of the physical realm. (8:35) In chapter 1, we saw the six days of creation. And if you try to match the Bible with today's (8:43) modern cosmology, you're going to have far more trouble than just trying to stretch a day, (8:51) or the Hebrew word for day, into long periods of time.

A plain reading of the passage does not (8:59) allow for long ages. The sequence of the six day creation does not match modern cosmology either. (9:08) In the biblical account, on day 1, the earth exists and is covered with water (9:16) before light even appears.

The light created on day 1 is not the sun, moon, or stars. (9:24) They don't come until day 4. We don't even know what the light on day 1 was. On day 2, (9:32) the atmosphere is created under the mysterious light of day 1, but before the natural lights of (9:38) day 4. On day 3, dry land appears and vegetation begins.

That's when life begins, with vegetation, (9:50) not a single cell organism, all before the natural lights. Day 4 brings, finally, the sun, (9:59) moon, and stars. Day 5, marine life and birds.

(10:07) Day 6, land creatures, and finally, man and women. On day 7, God rested. None of this matches (10:19) the modern cosmology except that man comes last.

There really is no biblical, (10:28) there really is no good biblical argument for theistic evolution. All forms of macroevolution, (10:36) one living thing transforming into another different living thing, are contrary to the (10:43) plain text of the historical biblical account. In chapter 2, we notice that critics try to nullify (10:51) this chapter by calling it a new contradictory creation account.

However, a plain reading (10:58) shows it is a focused, detailed account of day 6. It's like watching a movie where you get the (11:06) broad perspective in chapter 1, then a caption is displayed before chapter 2 that says, (11:13) 48 hours earlier, and you get details not shown before. A common technique today, (11:21) though perhaps novel, in a 3500 year old work like Genesis. In chapter 2, we learn about (11:30) pre-flood geography.

The Garden of Eden and its rivers, we get details about the creation of man, (11:40) he is alone, cognizant, and functioning. Adam has a job, the oldest profession, (11:47) contrary to cultural jokes, he is a gardener. God teaches him aloneness.

Among all the creatures, (11:55) none is like him. Then God surgically removes a rib to create woman. We see marriage instituted (12:04) in the first wedding ever.

Chapters 1 and 2 contain many firsts. They show a pristine creation, (12:15) an actual utopia, where both the spiritual and natural realms are perfect, and God rates it (12:24) very good. So what happened? We look around, and that's not what we see today.

Not now, (12:33) not 1,000 years ago, or 2,000 years ago, 3,000, 4,000, or even 5,000 years ago. (12:44) The oldest known writings from ancient Mesopotamia, modern day Iraq, (12:51) are about 5,500 years old, and in all of those, we just don't see that utopia. (12:59) So what happened? Evil entered the scene, so please turn with me to Genesis chapter 3, (13:08) beginning in verse 1. Now, the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord (13:17) God had made, and he said to the woman, indeed, has God said you shall not eat from any tree in (13:24) the garden? The woman said to the serpent, from the fruit of the trees of the garden we made, (13:31) from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said you shall not eat (13:37) from it or touch it, or you will die.

The serpent said to the woman, you surely will not die, (13:50) for God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like (13:57) God, knowing good and evil. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was (14:04) a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit (14:11) and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them (14:19) were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, (14:26) and made themselves loin coverings.

Enter the serpent. In our text, immediately after the (14:37) creation of man and woman and the institution of marriage, at the end of chapter 2, we are (14:43) introduced to the serpent, and we're going to begin our study by looking at the serpent. (14:51) This encounter would not have occurred at the earliest until after the end of day 7. (14:59) We are not told how much time elapsed between

the close of day 7 and the appearance of the serpent (15:05) and the origin of evil.

The following study of this familiar passage is influenced by the teaching (15:14) of 19th century Restoration Movement author Robert Milligan in his 1869 work, (15:23) *The Scheme of Redemption from the Early Churches of Christ*. Not the latter book by Ed Wharton, (15:30) we study on Sunday mornings, and if you haven't been here for those classes, you're missing a lot. (15:36) Milligan discusses in his work the origin of evil and the fall of man.

(15:42) About the origin of evil, he writes, this to the philosopher has always been a question of (15:49) great difficulty. Most of the ancient heathen philosophers either denied the existence of evil (15:56) altogether, or else resolved it into a principle of eternal necessity, over which they suppose (16:05) that neither men nor gods have any agency or control. Nor is it to be expected that a subject (16:13) like the origin of evil should be free from all philosophical difficulties.

It is too broad and (16:20) too comprehensive for finite minds, and hence with us it is not a question of philosophy, (16:27) but of fact. Our first business, at least, is to fully ascertain the facts of the case, (16:36) and after we have done this, we may then proceed to explain and apply them (16:42) so far as the Holy Scriptures properly interpreted will enable us to do so. (16:49) And by the way, the Bible has the answer, where did evil come from? Why does evil exist? (16:59) You won't get that from the competing worldview.

They don't know why evil exists. (17:07) And here are the facts applied by Moses as highlighted by Milligan. Number one, (17:15) Adam and Eve are both created happy and holy, furnished with all things pertaining to life (17:22) and godliness.

That's Genesis chapters 1 and 2. They fell by disobedience. How soon after creation, (17:30) we are not told. They were led to disobey by the seducing power and influence of the serpent.

(17:38) Nothing is said about its form or habits. And number four, at the time of the temptation, (17:46) this creature had the gift of speech. So let's look at what is implied (17:54) by this gift of speech as we try to figure out what the serpent is.

(18:00) Was speech a natural endowment of the serpent? Milligan asked, actually. Or was the serpent (18:06) merely an instrument through which a far more cunning and diabolical agent spoke? (18:14) Scripture records another animal speaking articulate words, Balaam's donkey, empowered (18:24) by God for a time in Numbers 22 verse 28 and 2 Peter chapter 2 verse 16. However, in our case, (18:35) if the serpent spoke of its own volition under its own power, it would be Eve superior, (18:44) which contradicts the dominion given to man in Genesis 128.

You shall rule over all creation. (18:52) Another possibility that scripture records is demon possession, like the demon legion, (18:59) so named, he says, for we are many entering swine that then drown themselves in the sea. (19:08) Mark 5 verses 1 through 16.

The principal agent here, though, (19:17) that possesses the serpent is Satan for the following reasons. Genesis 3, 4 records the (19:25) first lie. You shall not surely die.

And by successfully tempting Eve and Adam, (19:32) Satan caused their spiritual death immediately and their physical death eventually. (19:40) Jesus identifies Satan as a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies in John 8 verse (19:48) 44 and Revelation chapter 12 verse 9 and chapter 20 verse 2 referred to Satan as that ancient (19:58) serpent who is the devil and Satan. We will

therefore view this exchange here in Genesis (20:07) chapter 3 as between Satan and Eve.

Chapter 3 records the first appearance of evil, (20:17) but not its first occurrence. Sometime after the seventh day and before this encounter, (20:26) Satan sinned and fell. Revelation chapter 12 verses 8 through 9 speak of a war in heaven (20:34) where Satan was defeated and cast out.

And Jesus said, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (20:42) in Luke chapter 10 verses 18. The angels have observed creation unfold from the beginning (20:52) and this encounter along with Satan's earlier fall were likely watched intently by all spiritual (21:03) beings. So on to Eve's encounter with Satan beginning in verse 1 of chapter 3. (21:12) Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.

(21:18) And he said to the woman, indeed has God said you shall not eat from any tree of the garden? (21:26) And notice the opening statement as a deliberate misquote of God's command. (21:34) Eve will correct it, but Satan controls the conversation with misinformation. (21:42) Verses 2 and 3. The woman said to the serpent, from the fruit of the trees of the garden, (21:49) we may eat, but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God had said, (21:55) you shall not eat from it or touch it or you will die.

(22:00) Eve responds by correcting the misquote and restating God's command, adding, or touch it. (22:09) God's original command in Genesis 2.17 said only, you shall not eat for in the day that you eat (22:16) from it, you will surely die. By adding, or touch it, Eve reveals she views the fruit as dangerous (22:25) even to handle.

That is, the fruit itself is hazardous or poisonous. Verses 4 and 5. (22:36) The serpent said to the woman, you surely will not die for God knows that in the day you eat (22:43) from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. (22:49) Satan's claims are number one, you surely will not die, a direct contradiction.

Number two, (22:58) an implied accusation, God's lying to you. And number three, why? Because Satan projects motive, (23:08) God fears you becoming like him if you eat. So his entire argument rests on the assertion (23:18) that eating brings no death.

Satan evidently provided visual evidence to support his claims (23:26) because we see in verse six, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was (23:37) a delight to the eyes and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its (23:43) fruit and ate. And she gave also to her husband with her and he ate. The text tells us Eve saw (23:54) three things that convinced her to disregard God's command.

The first and third directly support (24:04) Satan's claims. Number one, (24:12) she saw that the tree was good for food. If Eve believed the fruit was poisonous, (24:20) how could she now see it was good for food? The most straightforward explanation from the text (24:28) is that she observed something, visual proof that contradicted her fear and supported Satan's claim.

(24:37) You will not die. We're explicitly told she saw something. She saw that it was good for food.

(24:49) Number two, it was a delight to the eyes. It's appealing. Reinforcing the idea that Eve was (24:58) presented with visual evidence.

How could she know the fruit was good looking unless she was shown (25:06) the fruit? So she's,

I'm convinced that that's the reason this point is even mentioned because (25:13) it neither adds to or takes away from Satan's argument. But the only reason that I see that (25:22) we're told that it's good looking fruit is to show us that she was presented with visual evidence. (25:32) And number three, she saw that it was desirable to make one wise.

What visible evidence could (25:41) convince her of this? Likely a demonstration of imparting new intelligence somehow. But before (25:51) we answer what Eve saw, let's ask, how do we know that the fruit was able to make them wise? (26:01) Verse seven, when then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked (26:11) and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They both gained (26:19) knowledge afterwards that they did not possess before they ate the fruit.

They knew they were (26:28) naked. And even though they are the only humans in existence at the time, and they are married to each (26:35) other, they sewed fig leaves together and covered themselves. They felt shame, a feeling (26:47) they never experienced until they ate the fruit.

So that's how we saw that the fruit was able to (26:57) make them wise. The knowledge that gained was not what they expected or wanted, I'm sure. (27:04) So our question is, now, what did Eve see that would show her the fruit could open her eyes? (27:15) How about this? She's out in the garden helping Adam, tending, and she sees a dumb serpent, (27:24) that is, a serpent not normally given to speech, in the middle of the garden (27:32) eating the forbidden fruit.

What's she going to do? What would you do? She's going to go over and see (27:42) if it will die. And to her surprise, it's not dying. And suddenly, the serpent takes notice of (27:55) and turns to her and says, did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden? (28:07) You think Eve is startled? Would you be? That question, did God really say you must not eat from (28:18) any tree in the garden, actually makes sense now as Satan's opening sentence to Eve.

(28:29) What do you think? This interpretation arises from careful attention to the repeated emphasis (28:37) in the text on what Eve saw. It fits the facts without adding speculation beyond (28:46) what the text presents. Verse 7 confirms the fruit did exactly what Satan promised and what (28:56) Eve observed.

Their eyes were opened. They gained new knowledge of nakedness and shame, (29:04) and they acted on it by covering themselves. So Satan's strategy is masterful, subtle, (29:12) and multi-layered.

So here's an analysis of Satan's attack on Eve. He begins with doubt, (29:23) a misquote, phrased as a question. Indeed, has God said plants uncertainty about God's word (29:32) without directly attacking God? Number two, he exploits a misunderstanding.

(29:45) Eve had added to God's command, viewing the fruit as inherently lethal or poisonous, (29:54) and Satan provides apparent empirical evidence, visual evidence, that contradicts her fear. (30:02) Something eats it and lives, making God's warning seem flawed or exaggerated. (30:10) Number three, he denies there are consequences with a flat contradiction of you will surely die, (30:19) replacing fear of death with promise of benefit, knowing good and evil.

He slanders God's character, (30:28) accuses God of withholding good out of jealousy and lying to protect his uniqueness. (30:33) This turns God from benevolent provider into selfish competitor. (30:39) Number five, he appeals to pride and autonomy.

You will be like God, promises self-elevation, (30:47) independence, and hidden knowledge, exactly the desire that led to Satan's own fall (30:53) in Isaiah 14, 12-14, and Ezekiel 28, verses 12-17. Number six, he uses visual, (31:04) experiential proof by possibly eating first himself through the serpent. Satan stages a (31:12) demonstration that appears to validate every claim, bypassing abstract reasoning and appealing (31:20) directly to sight and experience.

The attack is not a frontal attack, but gradual erosion (31:30) from doubt to contradiction, to slander, to desire, to disobedience. So our application. (31:40) Number one, be aware of the wiles or schemes of the devil, Ephesians 6-11. Satan still uses deceit (31:50) misinformation and half-truths.

He misquoted God's command. Today, world views often (31:58) misrepresent scripture or deny the spiritual realm altogether. The cosmos is all there is.

(32:05) Peter warns the scoffers willfully forget God's supernatural creation, 2 Peter 3-5. Compare (32:14) every claim against the full truth of the scriptures. Number two, Eve misunderstood (32:22) God's command, thinking the fruit itself would physically kill on contact.

Satan countered with (32:29) visible proof it was safe and beneficial, pausing her to question God's reliability. (32:37) Today, when Genesis 1 and 2 clashes with modern naturalistic cosmology, (32:46) we must not treat the mismatch as a flaw in scripture. Modern cosmology assumes (32:54) a natural-only universe and therefore reaches false conclusions.

The biblical account includes (33:03) both natural and spiritual realms. Ignore one and you'll get distorted everything. (33:13) Number three, Satan slanders God and assigns false motives.

We counteract this only by (33:21) knowing scripture deeply so we recognize truth from accusation. Number four, guard against prideful (33:28) desire to be like God, to define good and evil for ourselves. Every temptation still whispers, (33:37) you will naturally die.

You will be enriched. Number five, trust God's word over apparent (33:45) evidence or experience. What we see can be staged or misrepresented.

God's warning was true. (33:56) They died spiritually the moment they ate and physical death entered the world. (34:03) And number six, finally remember Adam was with her, yet silent.

Husbands, lead spiritually. (34:12) Do not passively allow temptation to overtake your family. Genesis 3, 1 through 7, shows us (34:23) the origin of evil and the pattern of every subsequent temptation.

But it also points forward (34:32) to the seed who will crush the serpent's head, Genesis 3, 15, as we will see in future lessons. (34:41) That seed is Jesus, who perfectly resisted the same tempter using the same weapon it is written. (34:52) May we do likewise.

And that's the lesson. We're going to extend the invitation now for (35:01) all those who are subject to it. If you need, come while we stand and sing.