

Genesis 3

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[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. Those who are listening in on the telephone and those who are watching online. Again, it's good for us to come together and to worship God. Intimations, first of all, a word of thanks to those who took the services over the last two weeks when I was on holiday. Secondly, can I just remind you that the service this evening will be online just before six o'clock and the YF will meet on Zoom at half past seven as usual. The prayer meeting on Zoom on Wednesday at half past seven as usual. Also just to say that the service is next Sunday. I hope to be preaching in South Harris Church next Sunday morning and evening. The service there is at 12 o'clock and then six o'clock and the plan is that although you come to the North Harris Facebook page or the YouTube page, there'll be a link that sends you on to the live stream or the recording from Leverborough. So just come to your usual place but you'll then be directed on to Leverborough for the recordings and the morning service will be online not at 11 but at 12 and there'll be details of that probably on the Facebook page in advance of this. So these I think are all the intimations. We'll begin this time of worship by singing to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 40 and we'll sing verses 1 to verse 5. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way. He put a new song in my mouth. Our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear and on the Lord rely. Down to the end of verse 5 we sing to God's praise.

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He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way. He put a new song in my mouth. O God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear and on the Lord rely.

O Lord my God. O God to magnify.

[4 : 16] Many are the wonders thou hast done. Thy gracious thoughts to us were far above all thoughts are gone.

Let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father we thank you for this day. We thank you for the privilege of being able to come together.

In the name of Jesus your Son our Saviour. And we thank you that as we sing the psalm that's before us we see Christ in that psalm. We see Christ in that psalm. He is the one who is pointed to.

He is the one who is able to save us from our sin. Our sin causes us to sink into the mud and the mire, the slimy pit.

But we thank you that Jesus is the one who is the one who is the one who is the one who did it. To lift us from that pit of sin and place us on the rock of our salvation which is Christ.

[5 : 33] We thank you that He is the one who is the one who is work of our sin and this is who is the one yang of sin. And the work of salvation is something which is complete that's finished.

and the calling that we have in the gospel is a calling simply to see and to believe, to take hold of the grace that is offered to us in Christ.

So open our eyes, Lord, we pray, as we come into your presence this morning. Open our eyes that we would see the cross, that we would see Jesus as Saviour.

Help us, Lord, we pray, to have an awareness of the reality of our sin and the reality of our need. And give us that faith, we pray, that we may take hold of Jesus.

He is the one who calls us to come to him. And we thank you for the full and free salvation there is. We thank you for the rest, for the security, for the joy, for the peace that there is in Christ.
[6 : 33] So may we know that, each one of us, as we bow in your presence this morning. We thank you that you see us, whatever we are. Lord, you see each person who is listening, each person who is watching.

And we ask, Lord, that you would be at work in each of our lives. We pray for those who are your people, those who are in Christ. And we ask, Lord, that you would encourage us, that you would instruct us, that you would build us up in the Lord, that you would sanctify us and make us more like Jesus.

And we pray for some who may not yet be in Christ. We pray for some who may be watching or listening in, but would rather be somewhere else.
And yet, in your providence, Lord, you have determined that they will be here at this time just now. And we ask, Lord, that you would speak into each life, that you would speak into each heart. Lord, that you would enable each one to hear the voice of Jesus. Jesus said, my sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life.

[7 : 37] No one can snatch them from my hand, and no one can snatch them from the Father's hand. So we ask, Lord, that you would seek and save the lost, and that you would sanctify us as your people, Lord, that we would live for your glory in this place.

We ask, Lord, that you would be close to those who are in particular need this morning. We pray for those who are sick. We can think of those close by us.

We can think of those who are far from us. And we ask that they would know the healing touch of Christ. We pray for those who may be coming towards the end of life.

And we pray that they would know the Lord Jesus as their shepherd with them. And we thank you that he is the one who is with us, even in death's dark veil.

And when we know his presence with us, we have no reason to fear evil. And for such, Lord, we pray that they would know your presence even today. We pray for those who are grieving.

[8 : 39] We are always conscious of the reality of death. Ever since Adam fell, death came in. And yet, Lord, we thank you that you are the God who comforts us in our grief.

And you are the God who has made it possible for us to know the reality of resurrection. Jesus, the Savior, died but rose again, triumphant over the grave.

And we thank you that all who are trusting in him share in that gospel triumph. We pray for our nation. We ask, Lord, as we see the reality of this virus continuing to hit and to cause the stress, we pray that you would give us protection, your protection, Lord, as a nation.

We pray that you would give to us repentance, that we would find the cure, not just to the dangers of COVID, but, Lord, we pray that there would be huge swathes of people in our nation who would come to Christ, the one who is the cure for our sin.

We pray for our leaders, those who you have allowed to be over us in positions of authority. And we ask, Lord, that you would give them wisdom. We pray that you would work in their lives, that they would turn to the Lord.

[9 : 59] It seems so far from where we are as a nation, but you are able in a moment, Lord, to bring change, to bring awakening, to bring revival. And so we ask, Lord, that you would be at work in our nation, across all nations, and in our hearts.

Hear our prayers, take away our sin, help us to fix our eyes upon Christ, for we pray these things in his name and for his sake. Amen. Boys and girls, I hope you're well today and you're having a good time.

I hope you had a good holiday in the two weeks that you were off school. I was on holiday as well and we went away on our holidays to a very exotic place called Graver over in Lewis.

Never been to Graver before. It was actually a very nice place. And we did a bit of exploring. We went for walks. We found a secret beach. We walked up hills.

We did a bit of kind of climbing. And we went one day to a deserted village, miles away from anywhere, a village that once was very busy and it was completely deserted.

[11 : 13] And it was interesting to see all these old houses. And wherever we went over there, there was lots of ruined houses, houses that once were full of people and must have been busy places but had long since been left.

And one thing I noticed outside these houses, these ruined houses especially, was almost all of them had a tree planted beside them.

And I wondered about that and so I was speaking to Mary about that. She's a teacher, so teachers know everything. And I was saying to Mary, why is it that these houses all have a tree planted next to them?

And it was all a special kind of a tree. It was a round tree. You know these trees with the red berries. I think maybe we'll try and get them on the screen. But do you know, boys and girls, why they planted these trees outside their house?

Well, going back lots and lots of years, they believed that the round tree kept evil away. They thought that the round tree gave them protection and kept them safe.

[12:30] So when they built their houses, they would plant this tree and they thought that any evil stuff, any bad, dangerous stuff would be kept away from them by this tree.

Now is that true? Well, it's not true. It's just superstition. It's the word that we use for these kind of beliefs. It's just superstition. It's not magic.

There was no power in the round tree. But boys and girls, you and I both know that evil is something that's real.

And we know that there's a devil and he is real. And sometimes, especially on weeks like this week, Halloween week, we can even be a bit spooked out by evil things.

So what do we do when we feel a bit scared? What do we do when we're struggling to sleep at night and we want to feel safe? Do we plant a tree outside our house?

[13:34] Do we go and buy some rowan cuttings or however you get a rowan tree to build to grow? Do we go and try and plant a tree outside our door?

Well, we don't do that. It would never grow in Harris anyway, would it? So what do we do if we want to be safe? What do we do if we want to fear no evil?

Well, we trust in Jesus. That's what we're to do. He is the light of the world. He said that. He is the one who shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

That's what it says in John 1.5. John is speaking about Jesus. He's pointing us to Jesus and he says, the light, Jesus, shines in the darkness that's in this world and the darkness has not overcome it.

The devil was always wanting to overcome Jesus but he couldn't. Jesus came into this world to destroy the works of the devil.

[14:41] He came to overcome the darkness and he did it on the cross. He defeated the devil. He washed away our sin.

He crushed death and he saved us from hell. So boys and girls, if you and I want to know that we are safe forever, if we want to be those who don't have to fear evil or anything spooky, we don't need a round tree.

we need to be those who are believing, who are trusting in Jesus. So let's pray about that. Lord God, we thank you for this day and we thank you for Jesus.

We thank you that he is the light of the world. We thank you that he came into this world to overcome and destroy the works of the devil. And we thank you that he has done it.

that on the cross he won the victory. And when he rose from the dead, that was so clear that he had won the victory. And we thank you that when we're trusting in Jesus, we don't need to fear anyone.

[16:06] We don't need to fear anything. So we ask, Lord, that all the boys and girls, that all of us, that we would be trusting in Jesus and that we would know his protection.

We would know that safety for time and forever that comes only from him. And we ask all these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Let's turn now to God's word and we'll read from Genesis chapter 3.

Genesis chapter 3. We'll read the whole of this chapter. Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden? The woman said to the serpent, We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden and you must not touch it or you will die.

[17:12] You will not surely die, the serpent said to the woman, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.

She also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man, Where are you? He answered, I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.

[18 : 15] And he said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman you put here with me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me and I ate. So the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals.

You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers.

He will crush your head and you will strike his heel. To the woman, he said, I will greatly increase your pains and childbearing. With pain, you will give birth to children, your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you.

To Adam, he said, Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, you must not eat of it, cursed as the ground because of you. Through painful toil, you will eat of it all the days of your life.

[19 : 31] It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you were taken for dust you are and to dust you will return.

Adam named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the Lord God said, The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.

He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever. So the Lord God banished him from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Amen. And may God bless that day of his word to us. Let's pray just for a moment as we come back to God's word.

[20 : 48] Lord God, we thank you for the privilege that we have to have your word before us in a language that we can understand. We are conscious that there are many in this world who don't yet have the Bible in their own tongue and so we pray that you would help us not to take this for granted.

We thank you also for the freedom that we have to be able to meet even online. We are conscious of countries like China where there are restrictions on even that and where your people are being persecuted and where worship is being prohibited.

We thank you that the more that the authorities in this world try to stop your people from worshipping you, we have seen through church history that the more the church grows.

So we pray, Lord, for those who are persecuted that you would encourage them this day and we pray, Lord, as we open your word in the freedom of this place, we ask that you would meet with us, that you would bless us, that you would lead us and guide us, enable us to hear your voice and what we pray for ourselves here, we pray for the churches, the denominations around us.

Lord, be at work, we pray for your glory and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. A week or so back when we were on holiday, I took a wander with the girls around Stornoway.

[22 : 21] I went to Kennedy Terrace, the place where I used to live for the first ten years or so of my life and I went round the back of the street to where I used to spend a lot of time with my pals and there used to be a bit of grass and there were all these weaving sheds around the grass and you would hear the clatter of looms all hours of day and night but now when I went back to that place of my childhood I quickly saw that there were no sheds.

Grass was still there, still wasn't cut. There were no sheds and there was no noise of the looms. Then I headed from the grassy area behind Kennedy Terrace down across towards Torquil Terrace.

That's where Donnie's shop used to be. That's where I'd get my 10p mix. Seemed to have about 3,000 sweets in the 10p mix. That's where I used to get a Mars bar that seemed to be the size of a small suitcase.

I bought a lot of calories from Donnie's shop but I was dismayed when I looked in the direction of Donnie's shop to see that it was no longer there. It's flats.

And there was a bakery beside Donnie's shop where you could get fresh morning rolls and that too was gone. So much had changed I thought as I walked around that place that once was so familiar. [23 : 54] And as we move from Genesis 2 into Genesis 3 we see change. We see the most tragic, awful change.

In Genesis 2 as the chapter comes to an end we see Adam and Eve. We see them in the perfect environment Eden.

We see them in the perfect relationship with God and with each other. Everything was good. And Genesis 2 it finishes on a note of innocence.

It says the man and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame. But if we fast forward just a few verses into Genesis 3 Adam and Eve feel very much ashamed.

They're hiding from each other. They're trying to cover themselves up in a way that they never did in Genesis 2. They're hiding from God. They're now distant from God.

[24 : 59] They're afraid of God. Everything has changed. And so today in the time that we have I want to look at this sad story.

The story of the fall. And ask the question what happened? And the answer to that question the story of the fall it begins with a serpent.

That's our first point. The serpent's action. The serpent's action. Now verse 1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

Was the serpent bad? Well it doesn't say in verse 1 the serpent was bad. It says the serpent was crafty. And we see that even today.

Snakes don't tend to lounge around in places you can see them. They find crafty hiding places.

They strike their victims before their victims have even seen them.

[26 : 05] But in the garden if we rewind back to the beginning the serpent was one of the wild animals the Lord God had made. And we know that everything that the Lord God had made in that work of creation it was good.

So originally the serpent the snake was good. But this particular serpent that we meet in this chapter was taken over by Satan.

We know that from the New Testament. In Revelation 12.9 John the Apostle he's given this vision and he sees the ancient serpent called the devil or Satan.

And we see that ancient serpent first of all in the garden. Now how did he get into the garden? We don't know the answer to that question. And how did Satan get possession of this serpent?

We don't know the answer to that question either. We're not told these things. You know we're not told everything. We have many questions about what we read in these passages.

[27 : 09] God doesn't tell us everything. He just tells us what he has determined that we need to know. And we know that Satan is there because we hear him speak to Eve.

Verse 1 still. This is the serpent speaking. He says to Eve, did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?

That's how the conversation begins. And to be honest the conversation should never have gone beyond this point. Why not? Well, I mean first of all let's state the obvious.

A talking snake is not normal. That should have been the first alarm bell. Eve isn't having conversations with hippos and zebras and birds.

So when this serpent suddenly starts to speak, she should have realized something's not right here. And remember the place of the snake. God had made Adam and Eve rulers over the wild animals.

[28 : 17] And yet this particular wild animal seems to be seeking to reverse that order. this serpent is seeking to influence Eve into doing something that the serpent wants Eve to do.

This serpent which was made by God is seeking to call the word of God and the character of God into question. Did God really say?

And notice the title that the serpent uses for God. It's not the title that we've become familiar with in Genesis 2.

We read about the Lord God. That's the personal name for God. But when the serpent begins to cast questions over the goodness and grace and mercy of God, the name the serpent uses is God, not the Lord God.

He's seeking to depersonalize God. He's seeking to create a distance again between Adam and Eve and the God that had called them into this personal relationship with him.

[29 : 31] And then the serpent having begun on this note, he begins to twist and contort God's word. He says, did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?

And God hadn't said that at all. God had said that's the opposite of that, God had said in Genesis 2 verses 16 and 17, you are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it, you will surely die.

So it's very subtle. The devil is twisting, he is contorting, he's bringing confusion into God's word.

And Eve already is beginning to doubt God as she comes under this attack.

The woman said to the serpent, verse 2, we may eat from the trees in the garden, but God did say you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden.

Again, it's subtle, but just note that emphasis there. Eve talks about the tree that is in the middle of the garden. The serpent has pointed Eve to that one forbidden tree, and now it's all she can see.

[30 : 52] The tree that's in the middle of the garden. She's fixated on this one forbidden tree, and yet we know that there are two trees in the middle of the garden.

There's the tree of life, which wasn't forbidden, and there's the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but Eve doesn't seem to notice this tree of life now. All she can see is the tree that she's not allowed to eat the fruit of.

And we hear frustration from Eve as she says to the serpent, well, God did say you must not eat fruit from the tree that's in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it.

Now, let's stop there for a second. When did God ever say to Adam and Eve, you must not touch it? Well, the answer to that is Eve didn't ever say that.

Eve is now adding to God's word. She's making the restriction that God had imposed upon them more severe than it actually was. And then having added to God's word, she begins to subtract from God's word.

[32 : 07] And she says in verse 3, well, first of all, let's listen to what God says in verse 3. God said you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it, you will surely die.

But notice Eve has this conversation with the serpent. She takes away the word surely in her retelling of what God said. And that comes out even more clearly actually in the AV and the ESV. Verses 2 and 3, it says, and the woman said to the serpent, we may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.

Seems to be doubt there, lest you die. John MacArthur says, you shall surely die, leaves no doubt whatsoever of the outcome, eat the fruit and die.

Eve's wording, on the other hand, leaves some elements of doubt, eat the fruit and you might die.

And we can see by this point, Satan has hooked her, he's planted doubt in her mind with all his confusing questions, and now he begins, having planted that doubt in her mind, Satan begins to attack God's word and character more brazenly.

[33 : 41] Verse 4, Satan says, you will not surely die, said the serpent to the woman, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

God knows, says the devil. God knows things, Eve, that you don't know. in fact, says Satan to Eve, God is withholding information that really you should have, but he is determined he doesn't want you to have.

And with that, Eve's thoughts of God darken. He's withholding so much from her. Her thoughts of God darken, and her trust of God's word begins to break down.

A.W. Tozer says, what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. The most important fact about any man is not what he at the given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.

And Eve conceived deep in her heart that God was not good, that he was withholding the fruit of this tree from her, that he was withholding knowledge from her that she should have.

[35 : 27] And as she mulled these things over that the serpent had fed to her, her heart was drained of thankfulness, her heart began to fill with envy and pride.

See, the serpent's action had been effective and now Eve was ready to go from worship of God to war with God.

She was ready to fall. And there are lessons for us here in application as we think about the serpent's action.

The first lesson in application is we're to know our enemy. We're to know our enemy. This week that's just passed us by is a week where many people celebrated Halloween and when Halloween events are put on, very often the devil is portrayed as so playful and so alluring, so harmless. I noticed this year that one shop, Poundland, as part of their Halloween range for children, were selling what they were calling spirit boards, Ouija boards, as a children's toy.

[36 : 54] It's harmless, people say. And the devil loves to hear people saying things like that. But the reality is we should never underestimate the power of Satan.

We should never think that we can enter into dialogue with him, as Eve did, and not put ourselves at risk. John MacArthur said Eve makes our first mistake by debating with the devil.

the devil is not interested in learning the truth, as his goal is only to confuse and mislead. So we are to know our enemy.

It's the first thing to note in application here. And the second thing to note in application is we're to know his methods. We're to know, we're to recognise the methods that he did use, because the methods that he did use are the message that he continues to use.

He causes us to doubt God's word. When we begin to doubt God's word, the devil is at work. He adds to it. He tells us that God's restrictions over us are unkind and unreasonable.

[38 : 12] And when he does that, he causes us to question God's goodness and God's love of us. He loves to cause us to doubt God's word.

He loves to add bits and pieces to it. And he loves to take away from it as well, especially in the area of judgment. Hell? Says the devil, you don't believe in hell, do you?

And even if it did exist, surely a loving God wouldn't send anyone to hell. Surely not. God. When we hear that, the devil is at work.

He is the one who causes us to doubt the certainty of God's judgment over sin. These are his methods. He attacks God's word.

And he causes us to fixate on what we do not have and never be thankful for what we do have. You know, we think of a heart that isn't filled with thankfulness is not a huge problem.

[39 : 20] We don't sort of classify that as one of the terrible sins. You know, after all we say, you know, why should I be massively thankful when other people have so much more than me?

And why should I be so thankful when other people seem to have a much easier time in life than me? It's an unthankful heart. And an unthankful heart is a huge problem.

A bitter heart, a glass half empty mentality is not the way for a Christian to be. It makes us such an easy target for Satan.

So these are a few of the methods. We see them in the garden. We see them today because we recognise these tactics in our own lives. This is the methods, this is the tactics that Satan uses.

So let's be alert to our enemy. Let's be alert to his methods. William Stoll, the minister that I sat under for years in Aberdeen, he used to regularly say, I always have one eye on the brute.

[40 : 34] So that's our first point. We see the serpent's action. reaction. The second point we come to hear is we see Eve's reaction.

And I want us to note that up until this point, Eve hadn't yet sinned. She was undergoing temptation, yes.

She was under attack. She was beginning to wrestle with doubts, but up until this point she had not yet sinned. And that's important for us to see.

To be tempted is not to sin. To wrestle with doubts is not to sin. Remember the man in Mark chapter 9, his son is being attacked by an evil spirit.

He's being destroyed from the inside out. And he comes to Jesus for healing. And this father believes that Jesus can help, or he kind of believes that Jesus can help.

[41 : 37] But he has some doubts. So what does he do with his doubts? Well, he takes them to Jesus. And he says openly to Jesus, Lord, I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief.

Help me to crush these doubts. And Jesus did exactly that. And Eve at this point could have said to the serpent, get behind me.

she could have looked to the Lord God for help. She could have looked around her in the garden and seen that she had 10,000 reasons to be thankful to God and trusting of God.

But she didn't do that. Because all she can see is the one thing that she could not have. The tree. The forbidden fruit.

So what came next? Verse 6. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.

[42 : 53] And do you see the process there? She saw she desired and she took. And that's a pattern that we see over and over again with sin.

We see, we desire, we take. Temptations, the reality is we can't avoid them. Just as Satan had an interest in Eve, he has a destructive interest in every person.

He will show us things as we flick through the channels of our television. He will cause us to notice the things that other people have that we don't have and we want.

But the question is what do we do next when we face these temptations? Eve, as she saw the forbidden tree, perhaps first at a distance and then closer as she fixates on it, as she sees it.

She doesn't step back, she doesn't look away, she focuses on it. And the more she focuses on it, the more this desire for its fruit goes strong until eventually that desire boils over into action and she takes the fruit and she eats.

[44 : 22] Think about David as well, the plot line when he fell with Bathsheba. It's the same kind of plot line. 2 Samuel 11, you can read of it.

David sees Bathsheba bathing. Now, at that point, he could have looked away, but no, he doesn't look away. She's pleasing to his eye.

She is desirable. And as king, he is able to reach her and so he does exactly that. He reaches out, he takes her.

And as he takes her, the devil takes hold of him. So we see Eve's reaction here. It's a sad one, it's a bad one.

Now, why are we given the details of so many of the falls and failures of God's people? Why are we given a warts and all account of so many of the tragedies of God's people?

[45 : 31] I think it's so that we'll learn from their mistakes. It's so that we'll become familiar with how Satan operates, so that we'll be able to resist him.

today we battle with the same enemy. We face the same temptations, so we need to learn from this.

And when our eye is caught by the person or the thing that we do not have but we want, what must we do?

well immediately we must look away from whatever it is that Satan is using to lure us in and look to the Lord.

That's what we should do. And when we hear the whisper of the enemy as Eve heard the whisper of the serpent sowing his subtle seeds of doubt, where do we go?

[46 : 32] Where will we find strength and truth? What will cause our enemy to flee? Well it's not our own thoughts and words, it's not our own debating skills that are going to drive Satan away.

We need to go back to God's word every time. We need to look away from what Satan is tempting us to move towards and look to Jesus the Son.

It's God's word and it's the word made flesh, Jesus, that drives Satan away. So we're to look to him, we're to listen to him. So we see Satan's action or the serpent's action.

We see secondly, Eve's reaction. And thirdly here, we see Adam's inaction. Adam's inaction.

I think it's the question that we must have been asking all the way through as this tragedy unfolds.

The question that's in my mind is, where is Adam?

[47 : 48] Where is Adam as all this tragedy seems to unravel? Adam has experienced nothing but the goodness and the love and the faithfulness of God?

Adam knew that he was to rule over and not be ruled by the wild animals. Adam knew that this word from the serpent was wrong, it was untrue.

He knew that God could be trusted. So as Adam's wife, who was to become known as Eve, is attacked by Satan, where is Adam?

And the staggering answer to that question is that he was with her. Verse 6 says that she also gave some, that's some of the forbidden fruit, to her husband, who was with her.

That's what Adam was. He was right beside her. So what did Adam have to say when the serpent spoke? Well, he had nothing to say, it seems.

[49 : 00] And what did he have to say to Eve by way of encouragement as he saw doubts grow in her mind and danger rise for her? Well, it seems that he has nothing to say.

And what does Adam do when Eve moves closer to the tree that was forbidden and reaches forward to take this fruit? Well, he does nothing.

He stands back as a spectator. And what does he do when she actually starts to eat the fruit that he knew would surely bring in death?

Surely at this point Adam would intervene, except at this point he doesn't intervene, he does nothing. And then when Eve takes of this forbidden fruit and offers some to Adam, what does he do?

He takes it. She gave some to her husband who was with her, verse 6, and he ate it.

[50 : 12] Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised they were naked. and in that split second everything changed.

They went from feeling no shame to shame, deep shame. They went from that state of innocence to that sinful condition of guilt.

And the shame that they felt caused them to hide their nakedness from each other. They sewed fig leaves together, verse 7, and made coverings for themselves.

And the shame that they felt because sin had come in caused them to hide from God. Verse 8, Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Everything had changed. And we see that change effected in part because of Adam's inaction. And it's hard to understand why Adam didn't act.

[51 : 32] It's hard to fathom why he remained so silent and why he froze. The commentators are fairly silent on it. And yet as we think about this and as we look at this sad scene and this sad character, we see Adam and us, don't we?

We are his children. And so often we see people around us and they're in danger. We see non-Christians who are in danger of dying and going to a lost eternity.

And what do we say to them? Often nothing. And we see Christians who once were so bright and alive for the Lord and who start to cool and who start to drift and who start to fall back into sinful patterns.

And what do we say to them? What do we do? Very often nothing. And then when we look at ourselves, so often like Adam, we know in different situations what is right and what is wrong. We know what God would have us do in certain situations. And yet when we are offered an alternative, where we are offered another way, a way that will cause us to sin, what do we do?

[53 : 09] We take it. We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners. We follow the path that Adam set out on.

And that doesn't excuse us, doesn't excuse us any more than it did Adam. But we see something here of our own tragic spiritual DNA.

And I think as we look in the mirror of God's word and we see something of ourselves in Adam, it should humble us. It should cause us to remember how frail we are.

And it should cause us to cry out, God be merciful to me, a sinner. Now, the serpent's action, Eve's reaction, Adam's inaction.

And finally here, we see God's action. Now, if we didn't have the rest of this book, if we didn't know how this story ended and had to guess what happened next, I mean, what would we expect to happen?

[54 : 33] We have the all-powerful God. And we have these two people of his creation who have shaken their fist at him.

I think at this point, we might expect, if we were writing this, we might expect God to bring an end to everything. We might expect to see this all-powerful God crush these rebels.

He had done nothing but show them love, and yet at the first opportunity they are given, they despise that love. We might expect this to be the end of Adam and Eve and the end of the world, but that's not what happens.

God now begins to seek those who were lost. God goes looking for Adam. Verse 8, Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden, but the Lord God called to the man, where are you?

John MacArthur says this is the first time in Scripture God asks a question. It is not because God didn't know where Adam was, but rather it was God's way of drawing out a confession.

[56 : 03] And Adam answered in verse 10, I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid. And he said, Who told you that you were naked?

Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from? more questions from God. Why? Why these questions?

Is it because God didn't know the answers? No, that's not the reason. God had all the answers. He knew everything. He's the all-knowing God. So why is he asking questions?

It's because he was seeking reconciliation with Adam. he's giving Adam another chance to confess his sin. Verse 12, the man said, The woman you put here with me, she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.

And first here we hear excuses from Adam. He points to Eve. In fact, he points to God.

[57 : 14] The one who put Eve in the garden with him. And he begins to make excuses almost to try to justify what he done. But then we have something of a confession first from Adam and then in verse 13 from Eve.

As they both say to God in respect of this forbidden fruit, they say, I ate it. I ate it. Again, MacArthur describes this as a limp, half-hearted, almost confession of sin.

Yet, it was enough, and God in his grace accepted it as a confession of guilt. God. And as we reflect on that, we must surely think how compassionate and how gracious and how slow to anger and how abounding in love this, our God, is.

God does this mean that the reset button was hit? Does this mean that the world and Adam and Eve are now taken back to the way things were?

Well, no, it doesn't mean that. Sin had come in, and sin has consequences. consequences. It has consequences for the snake.

[58 : 52] Every snake from here on in would crawl on its belly in the dust. It has consequences for the ground. No longer would the ground be rich and fertile.

No longer would working on the ground be joyful and productive. There would be thorns and thistles and weeds and sweat and toil. There would be consequences in child bearing and child rearing. Now it would be painful. Sin had come in. It would be painful as every parent knows. There would be consequences for the marriage relationship.

Before it was perfect and it was loving and now there would be tension. Eve's desire would be to master her husband Adam and those who follow would often rule over their wives with that harsh rule.

Sin had brought that in. There would be consequences in the relationship with God. Now they would have to leave the garden. Sin had put a barrier between man and God.

[60 : 05] There would be consequences for the animals. To provide a covering for the naked Adam and Eve there needed to be the shedding of blood. Which was a pattern of the things to come.

So everything had changed. Sin had brought a curse. The wages of sin were now being realized. And we know from Romans 6 having been there recently that the wages of sin is death. It's a verse that echoes all the way from the garden.

And yes death has now come in as God promised it would. But note that this chapter here concludes with a promise of life to come.

Adam overheard this as he as God cursed Satan. Verse 15 God in his cursing of the serpent says and I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers.

[61 : 18] He will crush your head and you will strike his heel. How could God a God who never lies a God whose justice is perfect how could a God like that promise life to Adam when Adam deserved death?

Well the answer to that question is found in that prophecy. It's an answer that is encapsulated in the one word Jesus.

He would die in Adam's place. He would feel Satan strike his heel on the cross as he died to pay the wages of Adam's sin and ours.

But he would rise to crush the head of Satan once and for all. And so here as we see Adam fall into the muck and the mire of sin we see the first glimpse of the Saviour.

Here in the darkness of the fall we see light beams. We see even the light beams of Jesus who would overcome the darkness. Adam sought and Adam believed what God promised.

[62 : 53] That's why he called his wife the woman Eve. Notice that she's not given the name until the end of the chapter. He calls her. After God's promise Adam calls his wife Eve which means life or life giver.

He named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living. Adam believed God's promise.

My time is gone the question I want to finish with is simply this do you believe this? We fell into sin and death with Adam that's the tragedy of this but we are offered salvation and eternal life when we believe in Jesus the life giver.

Do you believe? we pray. Lord God we pray that you would give us eyes to see Jesus that you would give us ears to hear Jesus and we pray that you would give us faith that we may believe and take hold of Christ and the salvation that he offers and we ask this in Jesus name Amen my heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me life again who crushed my curse of sinful death and clothed me with his light and wrote his law of righteousness with power upon my heart my heart is filled with thankfulness to him who walks beside who floods my weaknesses with strength and causes face to fly whose every promise is enough for every step

I take sustaining me with arms of love and crowning me with grace my heart my heart is filled with thankfulness to him who reigns above whose wisdom is my perfect peace whose every thought is love for every day I have on earth is given by the king so I will give my life my all to love and follow him and

[67 : 04] I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forever more Amen