

Genesis Chapter 3 Summary - John Karmelich

Let me give my title first: "And now for the bad news!" Realize Genesis 3 has the Gospel Message in it. (I know my Jewish readers disagree, but let's leave it at that for now!) I call it the "bad news" as sin is introduced here. Chapter 3 brings up lots of questions: For example, why did Satan choosing Eve to turn against God to eat the fruit? (The type of fruit isn't stated in the story and an apple is just a guess!) Why did God curse all snakes versus just that one? What did that snake look like before it was cursed? Why did Adam choose to eat the fruit and blame Eve when God questioned him? By the way, I'm sure Adam and Eve were the first people as Luke's Gospel traced Jesus' ancestry to Adam in that Gospel. If you believe the Gospel is God's Word, it means you believe Adam and Eve are the sole ancestors of all people. OK enough questions for now.

Let's be honest, most of us have known the story of Adam and Eve since childhood. We were taught it was an apple that Eve ate after the devil tempted her, and that sin got both Adam and Eve kicked out of the Garden of Eden. Now that we're older (yes that hurts!) and we care about our relationship with God it is good to study the details of the story. It teaches us a lot about such topics of how Satan does tempt us, how God works to overcome the problem of evil, the work God does to "undo" the damage done by that sin is told. Also, how people and even snakes will suffer through history because of that sin. I call the chapter "the bad news" because we are seeing sin being introduced into God's perfect world that He did make for the purpose of having an ideal environment for His relationship with us. Didn't God know that sin would occur? Of course! It's why "the cross" was always part of God's plan for our world. He in effect thought all of this out before He created everything. To understand why "the cross" is needed one must understand and accept what the problem is, why God allowed it to occur and what that means for our life on earth let alone our eternal future. As you can tell, I'm full of "stuff" I want to get off my chest in this lesson, so let's get started on the story.

The last part of Chapter 2 talks about the first woman made and states God's desire that men shall leave their mothers and fathers and become one with their wives. (Not to hate their parents but just make the spouse the main focus of their lives.) In Chapter 3, we'll see how that desire gets misplaced as Adam is going to put his wife's interest over God's. Before I go there, it's time to talk about "the bad snake"!

Chapter 3 opens by stating the serpent (this particular one) was more crafty than any other creature that was in the garden of Eden. Obviously, God allowed that snake to be there. We have no idea what that snake looked like before the curse. The word used here is the same word used for a dragon or serpent! I suspect it had legs but who knows! The snake started talking to Eve. Eve didn't say, "Hey look there is a talking snake!" Maybe she was in wonder of the garden and just thought it was, what it was! Keep in mind Satan "entered" the snake with the desire to trap Eve. That also means Satan's fall occurred in Chapter 2 because near the end of the book of Job, God said all the angels praised Him when creation's going on! (That is, Chapter 1 of Genesis!) My simple point is "Satan became Satan" in Chapter 2!

In effect Satan's strategy hasn't changed over the millennia. His first act was to ask in effect, "Did God say you can't eat of that tree?" Eve's answer exaggerated what God actually said! Eve said that they're not allowed to touch it! (Maybe Adam said that to her to keep her away from it!) Satan then said what was his first lie, "You shall not die!" It was a lie as they did die spiritually and eventually physically as caused by that sin! Bottom line, Eve saw the fruit was attractive, and decided that this would make her wise! It was a deliberate act of disobedience to God! The text says she gave some of the fruit to Adam to eat. Was he there the whole time, or just show up after she ate it? Don't know! All we know is they

realized they were naked after eating the fruit. There were no other people there! After they ate it, they probably quickly made clothes from fig leaves. That's why some bible scholars think they ate a fig and not an apple, but who knows!

Ok time for God to enter the scene: Obviously, God was aware of it. They both deliberately disobeyed God and the first recorded guilt trip kicked in. They played the "blame game": Adam said it was Eve's fault. She said it was the snake's fault but since God knows all things, all of that was a waste of time!

First God cursed the snake. I pondered why punish all snakes? After all Satan entered that creature. It didn't know any better! In effect the cursing of the snake is an eternal message. Just like a rainbow is a sign of no worldwide flood, so a snake crawling on the ground is symbolic of total defeat! I don't think Satan is permanently a snake because he can move quickly over the entire face of the world. Then that curse has a strange statement: That his (Satan's) offspring will bruise the heel of Eve's offspring and an offspring of Eve will hurt his head! Adam and Eve didn't have children yet! It shows that even though they sinned God will let them live long enough to have children. Chapter 5 says Adam lives till he was 930 years old! I don't think Satan had offspring since he's not human. It refers to nonbelievers in God, and specifically it's a hint of "the" antichrist for a lack of a better term. In other words the damage done to Jesus on the cross is "minimal" (as He was raised from the dead) versus the pain inflicted on who we call the antichrist, will suffer in hell for all eternity. Just saying this story has eternal consequences!

Meanwhile God is still dishing out punishment. Eve's punishment is that she'll have pain bearing kids, as all women who've given birth know well! A Jewish Rabbinical view is that a woman's greatest time in life is when she's pregnant protecting her child! When the baby is born, it is now exposed to all sorts of things including the danger of death! (My grandmother lost triplets at birth. She talked about it until her dying day!) The point is Eve will start a pattern of bringing new life in the world, but it'll be painful to go through! The text also says, "her desire will be contrary to her husband (ESV Version) but he will rule over her"! (Verse 16). It's been a male dominate world throughout history! Women have a built-in desire to protect their children while a male's desire is to work and provide for his family!

Time for God to chew out Adam: God states the fact he put his wife before his relationship with Him! Of course, I believe men should listen to their wives, but if it means before what God commands us to do, that's a sin! Then He describes how the world will change for Adam. No more "eat whatever food is grown in the garden", as now Adam will have to work hard for his food. Farming has been the basic way of life for most people through most of history. It is also for Adam to think about the fact he came from dirt and when we die, we eventually become dust again! Realize that the Hebrew word for dirt is, "Adama" which is spelled differently in Hebrew of course!

By verse 20 we get some good news: It's when Adam actually names his wife, "Eve". It's the first time Eve is mentioned by name in the bible. The word refers to mother of all living! It was before their first child was born but Adam caught on about the curse that she'll have children! In Verse 21 God makes a bunch of better clothing for both of them replacing the fig leaves with animal skins. That means this is the first time an animal was killed as a necessary covering for sin! Yes, it's a word picture.

Anyway, the punishment isn't over yet. Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden, meaning Adam's now a farmer and has to work the land! If you study angels in the bible, a "top class" of angels are what we call cherubim! I don't know what they look like, but others did as above the ark of the covenant that came a few thousand years later, there were two cherubim statues on top! Wouldn't top angels working as guards in the garden of Eden be overkill given their power? I suspect it is to keep Satan out of there

plus people aren't allowed access to eternal life UNTIL God Himself pays the complete price for sin in a once and for all matter!

I know I'm running long. I just wanted to end this lesson by saying even though Chapter 3 is mostly a lesson in bad news, it also speaks of what God will do in Good News for our eternal future. Hope you enjoyed this journey back to the beginning with me. Thanks for reading!

On the same page as this study is a more detailed study I wrote many years back. You are welcome to email me if you want or join my list to the get the latest lesson. Thanks for reading. John