

Lighthouse Baptist Church

Pastor/Teacher: Jerry W. Arnold

### The Garden of Eden – Study Four – Part B

As we closed our study in our last paper, I said, that the study of the Garden of Eden becomes a study in tragedy. And now, we will see that tragedy unfold before our eyes. Genesis 3 is familiar to all Bible students – especially as it relates to the temptation in the garden.

During their life in the garden, God tested Adam and Eve regarding their obedience. They were free to eat of the fruit from any tree except one tree. God is very clear on eating of this tree:

“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17).

The test was simple: it was to determine whether or not they would believe God and obey Him. Disobedience, however, came with a high cost – it meant death, both physical and spiritual death.

One theologian said, “God’s purpose in the test was to give Adam and Eve a knowledge of sin through obedience by not eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. They came to a knowledge of good and evil, but they attained the knowledge in the wrong manner.”

The temptation to disobey God came to the man and woman through the serpent (Genesis 3:1). However, it must be understood that behind the serpent was Satan. Therefore, the temptation must be seen as coming through Satan. It was Satan that inspired Cain to kill his brother Abel.

Jesus in His discourse of John 8, said to those in opposition to Him: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” Now follow closely the words of our Lord: “He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (v. 44).

Genesis 3:1 tells us that “the serpent [Satan] was more subtil [clever or crafty] than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.” And we see that in three ways in Genesis 3:

(1) Satan raised doubt concerning God’s Word (v. 1).

Satan created suspicion about the goodness of God; and this suspicion raised a question whether God was dealing wisely and fairly with Adam and Eve. In fact, Eve gave into this suspicion when she exaggerated God’s Word and added in verse 3 “... neither shall ye touch it [the tree] lest ye die.” God had said nothing about touching the tree or the fruit.

(2) Satan lied by saying they would not die (v. 4).

Satan categorically lied in verse 4 because he already had suspicion working for him. Satan made a categorical denial of God's earlier statement "... in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). But Satan said to Eve, "... Ye shall not surely die (v. 4).

(3) Satan told a partial truth (v.5).

Still working with suspicion on his side, Satan said to them, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

It was true they would know good and evil, but Satan did not tell them the rest of the story. He did not tell them about the pain of disobedience, the suffering of disobedience, and the death that would occur through their sin.

The war for truth began in Genesis 3 for mankind, and that war is still ongoing as we write. Historically, Christians have always been in full agreement that whatsoever is true of God and His Word, is true whether any given individual understands it, likes it, or receives it as truth.

In the study of theology, truth is defined as "That which is consistent with the mind, will, character, glory, and being of God. Even more to the point: truth is the self-expression of God."

And Jesus said of Satan, that he "... abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him ..." (John 8:44).

Jerry W. Arnold