

## Genesis 3:15-24 and 4:1-5

As Paul waited in Athens for Timothy and Silas to arrive, **"his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."**

He had been preaching in the synagogue and in the marketplace, and had caught the attention, not of the Jews, but of the philosophers and stoics of that city.

You see, **"all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing."**

And even though that seems like a vain pursuit in itself, some new things do have value.

In fact, God's Word is full of *new things*.

For instance, those who have accepted God's Son as their Saviour, have become *new creations* in Christ Jesus, **"old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."**

And they have access to God by a *new and living way*.

Also, the book of Revelation speaks of a **"new name,"** a **"new song,"** a **"new Jerusalem,"** **"a new heaven and a new earth."**

And the last book of the Bible certainly hasn't outdone the first book of the Bible when it comes to new things.

For instance, just last week in Genesis Chapter 3, we discovered that God is love.

In spite of the fact that Adam and Eve had rebelled against Him, He sought them

out, and reasoned with them in order to lead them to repentance.

However, they refused to face their sin.

Adam blamed Eve, and even blamed God, but he definitely didn't blame himself.

**"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."**

Eve was much the same---"**The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.**"

Oh, it could have been so different if they had only confessed their sins and sought God's forgiveness, for God is love.

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However, the case of the serpent was very different.

For him, there was no room for repentance, only righteous judgment.

Genesis 3:14-15    **"And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:**

**15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."**

Although Satan was the major player in this conspiracy, he was greatly assisted by the serpent.

And it is quite instructive to note that those who aligned themselves with the great deceiver will share in his condemnation.

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Originally, the serpent must have had legs,  
just like any other animal.

After all, if he had always crawled along  
the ground, God's words "**upon thy belly  
shalt thou go,**" would have had no  
significance.

So what did he look like in the beginning?  
The only indication we have of his original  
condition is the fact that he "**--was  
more subtle than any beast of the field  
--,**" which only describes his mental  
capacity, not his physical appearance.

However, the very fact that Satan chose him  
in the first place would seem to  
indicate that he was quite appealing to  
look at.

So was he like a graceful deer? or maybe a  
brightly colored tiger? or was he

simply a lizard, which is kind of like  
a serpent on legs?

We don't really know.

But he certainly would have been much  
superior to the fallen creature we have  
with us today.

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However, there is much more involved here  
than the judgment of an animal.

Yes, there's no doubt in my mind that God  
was also judging Satan.

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I'm sure the Devil had big plans for the  
human race when he first approached  
Eve.

Handled properly, they could become valuable  
allies in his war against God.

And indeed, down through the ages, millions  
have marched to the beat of his drum.

However, his campaign to solicit man's help has been much hindered by the natural aversion that mankind has for Satan.

Yes, the words **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed--"** goes much further than the repulsion we feel for slithering serpents.

In fact, if we could see Satan as he really is, we would flee from him.

Consequently, he hides his true identity in order to accomplish his purposes, even appearing as **"an angel of light."**

Nevertheless, he is a defeated foe, and his ultimate doom was foretold, way back in Eden.

V 15 **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her**

**seed; it shall bruise thy head, and  
thou shalt bruise his heel."**

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And did you notice that it wasn't the seed of the man that was mentioned in this verse, but rather it was "**her seed**" that would bruise his head.

Actually, this is the first mention of the virgin birth of Christ, way back in the book of Genesis.

Satan would bruise "**his heel**" at Calvary, but praise God, Christ would bruise his head.

In the very place where he thought he would gain his greatest victory, he experienced his greatest defeat.

As Christ's blood was shed, a vast multitude of Satan's subjects were delivered from the power of darkness.



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And did you notice the reference that was made to Satan's "**seed**"?

There has always been an "**enmity**" between those who follow Satan and God's people.

Yes, the church will be persecuted as long as there's a godly man on this side of heaven and a wicked man on this side of hell.

The apostle Paul was quite clear on this point when he said, "**Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.**" 1 John 3:13.

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But there's another aspect to the serpent's punishment that is quite instructive.

Abraham once said, "**Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**" And certainly the answer is yes.

So in God's judgment of the serpent, we have a landmark decision concerning relative guilt.

You see, the serpent didn't actually disobey God's commandment.

He didn't eat the forbidden fruit, and, for that matter, he had never been prohibited from doing so, but he was punished quite severely.

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Today we have a distorted philosophy concerning the matter of guilt.

I call it the "label" theory.

**MAY BE INJURIOUS TO YOUR HEALTH**--on a package of cigarettes--is supposed to

render the supplier of this known harmful drug completely guiltless.

**VIEWER DISCRETION ADVISED**--gives you the right to show evil things on TV, because now it's the viewer's responsibility.

According to this theory, it would be quite all right to dig a big hole in the middle of a well travelled path, as long as you put up a sign (in small letters) "Watch your step." *If you fall into sin, or any other kind of pit, it's not our fault.*

However, when God is the judge, and ultimately He always is, the tempter will not go unpunished.

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I suppose we can expect that kind of attitude in this present evil world, but what about the body of Christ?

What should a Christian's attitude be?

Actually, the apostle Paul was very circumspect concerning this subject.

He said **"---if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."**

Yes, we are our brother's keeper, and we must be careful lest we put a stumbling block in his way.

For instance, if a Christian lady is not modest in her apparel, she can stumble a Christian brother.

If we present a bad testimony before our unsaved neighbours and turn them away

from Christ, God will hold us responsible.

Yes, we must--"**Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.**"

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And then in Genesis 3:16, God turned to unrepentant Eve. "---- **I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.**"

We all know what this multiplication of sorrow involved.

And if the men are not clear on that point, just ask your wives.

But what did God mean when He said, -- "**I will greatly multiply**"---"**thy conception**"?

Back in Genesis 1:28, God had said, "**Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.**"

Things were much different when He said that.

Yes, when God gave them that commandment, their bodies were incorruptible.

They could multiply and replenish the earth without the problem of death subtracting from their multiplication.

But under these new circumstances, the birth rate would need to be much higher in order to accomplish the same purpose.

Not only would they need to "**replenish the earth,**" but they must satisfy the *grim reaper* as well.

Therefore God said, "**I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception**".

It was a necessary evil.

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However, that wasn't the only answer to the mortality problem.

Although mankind had ceased to be incorruptible, God allowed him to enjoy a long life span.

For instance, even though Adam was under the curse, he lived to be 930 years old.

And he wasn't the exception.

Just scan over Chapter 5, and you will discover that longevity was the norm.

Nevertheless, even with this longer period for child bearing, man was still corruptible, and one of Eve's necessary judgments would need to be, "**I will**

**greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy  
conception."**

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Also, because of Eve's faulty leadership,  
she would now be under the authority of  
her husband--"**and thy desire shall be  
to thy husband, and he shall rule over  
thee."**

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But Adam was also guilty, and just as  
unrepentant.

He had followed Eve rather than God, and he  
must reap the harvest of his sin.

V 17-19 "**And unto Adam he said, Because thou  
hast hearkened unto the voice of thy  
wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of  
which I commanded thee, saying, Thou  
shalt not eat of it: cursed is the  
ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt**



thou eat of it all the days of thy  
life;

**18: Thorns also and thistles shall it  
bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat  
the herb of the field;**

**19: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou  
eat bread, till thou return unto the  
ground; for out of it wast thou taken:  
for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt  
thou return."**

--- **"cursed is the ground for thy sake."**

This curse was to play out in two ways, the  
most immediate being the change in the  
vegetation---"**Thorns also and thistles  
shall it bring forth to thee--."**

Yes, it would yield its abundance  
grudgingly.

Mixed with its increase would be thorns and  
thistles to sting the hands that looked  
for good.

Pain mixed with blessing. It's the pattern  
of a fallen world.

V 18 ---"**and thou shalt eat the herb of the  
field.**"

Yes, man was still a vegetarian, and as  
such, he must gain his only sustenance  
---"**in the sweat of**" his face.

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However, the second part of the curse was  
even more devastating.

Someday Adam's body would return to the  
dust.

Corruption, and finally death, had entered  
his world, and it would envelope both  
himself and his dominion.

Yes, he had been given dominion "**over every living thing that moveth upon the earth,**" and for his sake they would be "**subject to vanity.**"

Death would come slowly, but it would come surely, and it would envelope them all.

V 19 "**In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**"

God had warned them, "**--in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,**" but they had eaten *anyhow*.

So now Adam's wonderful body would "**return unto the ground.**"

The time-clock of aging had started to tick, and someday it would run down.

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On that fateful day when Adam and Eve had  
disobeyed God, they died in two ways.  
First of all, they died spiritually, being  
separated from God.

But also, they had begun their long journey  
to the grave.

It seemed like such a hopeless situation.

But God is love, and even in the curse, hope  
was to be found.

One glorious day in the future, the very  
thorns of Adam's curse would be worn as  
a crown.

And even though **"The sting of death is sin,"**  
Christ would rise victorious over sin  
and death.

**"For since by man came death, by man came  
also the resurrection of the dead." --**

I Corinthians 15:21

Yes, Christ has redeemed our spirits and our bodies from Adam's curse.

Because of Christ, we have fellowship with the Father, and even if our bodies go back to the dust, they will be "**raised incorruptible**" someday.

Or maybe they won't go back to the dust at all!

We might meet the *Upper Taker* before we meet the undertaker.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57    "**Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**  
**52: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**  
**53: For this corruptible must put on**

incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54: So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56: The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Oh yes, for those in Christ, Adam's curse has been removed.

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V 20 **"And Adam called his wife's name Eve;  
because she was the mother of all  
living."**

This doesn't sound like the same man that  
had blamed everyone else but himself.  
No, it appears that God's judgment had  
sobered his thinking.

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At one time, it seemed so long ago, he had  
named all the animals in God's  
creation.

Now he was being allowed to name his wife.  
And he made a good choice.

He called her Eve, **"the mother of all  
living,"** rather than the mother of all  
dying.

It showed his faith in God.

And by the way, that name also precludes the false idea that humans originated in several parts of the earth.

She was **"the mother of all living."**

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Yes, Adam and Eve had changed.

As their fig leaves began to wilt, so did their defensive attitude, and now they were open to God's provision.

V 21 **"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them."**

They were open to God's provision all right, but it didn't come without cost.

Remember Genesis 2:17--**"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."**

That was according to God's Word, and it could not be changed---**"For the wages of sin is death."**



Under normal circumstances, they would have  
been separated from God for eternity.

But there was *another* way.

They could die by substitution.

Yes, God the Creator, the giver of life,  
could become the taker of life.

So in that wonderful vegetarian world where  
death had always been a stranger, a cry  
of pain was heard, and one of God's  
creatures lay kicking in the dust.

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Were Adam and Eve present when that  
sacrifice was made?

From our knowledge of the Levitical  
sacrifices, it seems quite possible  
that they were.

In our day, sin is viewed so lightly, but  
the fact of the matter is, "**the wages  
of sin is death.**"

And for Adam and Eve, the death of their substitute would drive home the seriousness of their sin, and the tremendous cost of their reconciliation.

Oh, they would still grow old, but now their sins would be covered, and their fellowship with God would be restored.

And God, Who cannot look on sin, would be able to look upon His children, and find that they were not naked.

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So right on the heels of the doctrine of substitution, we see the doctrine of atonement.

Atonement is the English word that we use to express the Hebrew thought, "to cover."

Yes, their substitute had provided a *covering*.

From that point on, God wouldn't see the man and woman who had betrayed His trust. He would see their substitute.

And all through Old Testament times, the sacrifices provided that necessary atonement, or covering.

But sin couldn't be covered forever.

The debt must be paid, and the books must be balanced some day.

God's righteousness requires it.

And even in the day when God covered Adam and Eve with skins, He knew that some day, atonement must give way to redemption, for "**--it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**" Hebrews 10:4.

However, because they foreshadowed the ultimate Sacrifice that would come at Calvary, they would suffice for now.

Yes, they would forestall God's righteous judgment until"--**the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" would come.

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However, in Adam's case, there was another problem.

V 22-24 **"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:**

**23: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.**

**24: So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword**

**which turned every way, to keep the way  
of the tree of life."**

Adam had disobeyed the Lord once, so he  
certainly couldn't be trusted in the  
matter of "**the tree of life.**"

No, he must be removed from the garden.

But this removal wasn't another judgment.

In fact, it was a mercy.

You see, Adam and Eve had a fallen nature,  
and would perpetuate their sins.

However, after their death, they would live  
on in heaven, free from sin, and in a  
state that would even surpass Eden.

But what if they took of the "**tree of life**"  
and lived on forever in their fallen  
condition?

This could not be permitted.

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Of course, the prospects of working for his bread by the sweat of his face, rather than freely eating of the fruit of the garden, would not be too appealing.

No, Adam wouldn't be inclined to leave voluntarily.

So God "--- **drove out the man**" against his will.

Sometimes we don't understand God's ways, but even His tough love is always best.

No, it wasn't an act of judgment, but rather an act of mercy, and a time of sorrow both for God and man.

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And so we begin Chapter 4 *outside* of Eden.

V 1 **"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD."**

Adam had been created from the dust of the earth, and certainly that was a wonderful work of God.

And then Eve, in an equally wonderful way, had been created from Adam's body.

Now for the very first time, a man had been created from Eve's body.

And by the way, she still had all her ribs intact!

Yes, it was a miracle to equal their own creation, and Eve was filled with wonder! --"**I have gotten a man from the LORD.**"

And yet this very first birth was no more of a miracle, no more of a creation of God, than any birth today!

How callous we have become.

We plan our families as if it was all up to us.

And with our prevailing belief in evolution,  
we don't even consider the possibility  
that life is a gift of God.

And if God is not taken into account in the  
birth of our children, then pro-choice  
is normal, and abortion is acceptable.

But Eve had it right: --- **"I have gotten a  
man from the LORD."**

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V 2 **"And she again bare his brother Abel.**

**And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but  
Cain was a tiller of the ground."**

Cain, a tiller of the ground, is a picture  
of the earthly man.

Abel, as we will soon see, was a man of  
faith.

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In Genesis 3:21, God had covered Adam and  
Eve's nakedness with coats of skins.



Blood had been shed, and life had been  
taken, so God was now able to forebear  
His condemnation.

But what about their sons?

There's no record in scripture of them being  
covered with skins.

And it is a mistake to assume that the  
children of godly parents are  
automatically covered by the blood.

No, salvation is not inherited. It is a  
personal choice.

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As we have already seen, Cain was a tiller  
of the ground.

Along with his father, he provided food for  
their vegetarian family.

It was a valuable contribution, but what  
about Abel?

What was the good of keeping sheep when the family didn't eat meat?

Of course they would provide milk, but would milk be acceptable in their diet of herbs and fruit specified in the Genesis 1:29?

So the only answer I can think of is Abel's sheep must have provided wool for clothing.

Like their parents, Cain and Abel would feel the need of clothing, even if the climate was temperate.

So I'm guessing--and it's only a thought--that the wool would have been used for clothing.

However, that type of clothing did not require the shedding of blood.

No substitute had been provided for an atonement.

Yes, as far as an atonement was concerned,  
their clothing was no better than fig  
leaves.

But did they really need an atonement?

After all, neither one of them had eaten of  
the forbidden fruit.

Well, actually, they did need an atonement.

Romans 5:19 says, "**For as by one man's  
disobedience many were made sinners,**"  
and they were the sons of their father;  
part of a fallen race.

Also, because of their sin nature, by this  
time they would have been sinners by  
choice.

Yes, they needed a substitute, and as yet  
they didn't have one.

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V 3 begins with the phrase, "**And in process  
of time---**"

Over the years, God would have stirred up their hearts concerning their lost condition.

I remember the time when I was a young man of about 17.

I attended the United Church, the church I had been brought up in.

I sang in the choir, held an office in the young people's group, and thought I was a Christian.

But then God stirred up my heart, and I realized there was something wrong.

And, apparently, God had been stirring up Cain and Abel's heart concerning their lost condition.

V 3-5 **"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4: And Abel, he also brought of the**

**firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**

**5: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."**

Their offerings were quite different because their hearts were quite different.

And as it turned out, God's response was quite different.

I hope you can be with us for next week's lesson when we find out just exactly what that difference was.