

“What the Fall Did to Us”
(Genesis 3:1-19)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

This morning, we saw

We are a special creation of God –

One of two creatures He made in His image –

The angels being the other –

He gave us the power of thought –

That we might think about Him,

And His thoughts after Him –

His Spirit that we might love Him

And the things He loves –

He gave us purpose –

The ability to make plans

And carry out those plans for His glory.

And He made us immortal –

We will never die.

He made us this way

That He might have a relationship with us:

Not as His pets,

But as His children –

He loves us

And wants us to love Him.

He didn't make us

Because He needed this relationship –

He doesn't need anything –

He has perfect fellowship within Himself –

But because He is good and gracious –

He wanted to show us His love,

And share His love with us –

That we might rule under Him –

Govern the earth and its creatures

In a way that pleases Him –

And that we might subdue the earth –

Make it yield up its potential for His glory.

We also saw

That since we're created –

And not part of God (pantheism) –

We're accountable to Him –

We're not His equals;

We're His servants;

Sometimes we hear Jesus brought down to our level –

He's my brother,

He's my buddy,

I take Jesus wherever I go.

He is our brother –

But our elder brother -

And He is our friend –

But friendship doesn't mean equality,

It means someone who really cares about us.

We need to remember He is our Lord:

It's our duty to obey Him.

B. Preview.

What we want to see this evening,

Is that we didn't obey Him.

God gave us a test –

It was given to Adam,

But he stood for all of us,

We were tested in him –

When he failed –

When he fell –

We all fell,

And became liable to God's judgment.

We need to understand

The Fall is also foundational to the Gospel:

Gospel means good news –

It's the good news

About what God has done to save us:

But to save us from what?

If there's no Fall –

No guilt,

No curse,

No corruption,

No judgment –

No Gospel would be needed.

Tonight, let's consider two things:

First, our probation and fall;

And second, what the Fall did to us.

II. Sermon.

A. First, let's look at our probation and fall.

Probation means test –

In this case, a test of obedience.

After God created us,

He put us in a beautiful garden

To cultivate it (Gen. 2:15) –

To work it –

Work isn't the result of the Fall –

We were made to work:

The Fall just made the work harder.

This was perhaps the beginning stage of subduing the earth:

Making the Garden produce for our needs,

And for God's glory.

But the Garden was also God's Temple/Sanctuary –

Heaven and earth were originally one –

Speaking of Lucifer, the Lord says through Ezekiel:

*“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire”* (Ez. 28:13-14).

Lucifer was in Eden before he fell,

On the mountain of God –

So called because this is where God dwelt –

We'll come back to Lucifer's involvement in a moment.

Because it was God's sanctuary,

We were also given a very special task:

To be guardians or curators of the Garden –

We read in Genesis 2:15, “Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.”

The word “keep” means to “keep watch, guard.”

We were to be like those

Who kept watch over the Temple of God –

Who were given the task

Of protecting His holiness –

We weren't to allow anyone unclean or unauthorized

To come into His presence –

Our job was to keep them out.

But there was more:

God also gave us a test –

A test of pure obedience –

He said we could eat from any of the trees –

Out of His kindness and grace –

But not from one particular tree:

Why?

For no other reason than God said –

To see if we would obey Him.

God wants us to obey Him

Even when we don't understand

Why it's good that we do:

We know there's always a good reason.

We know what happened:

God allowed an intruder to enter –

Lucifer –

Actually, he was already in the garden:

On the holy mountain of God –

As we saw earlier –

By this time, he had become Satan/the devil,

And had been thrown out of God's presence:

The Lord says in Ezekiel 28:15-16, regarding Lucifer, "You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; *therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God.* And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire."

Once he was cast out,
 His first inclination was to destroy those
 He was created to serve: us.

Being a spirit,
 He disguised himself by possessing a serpent,
 Went to the forbidden tree
 And tempted us to break God's commandment.

Being the guardians of the Garden,
 It was our job to repel him,
 But we listened to him instead,
 And fell away from God.

B. Second, what did this Fall do to us?

1. First, it didn't destroy God's image:

We are still the image of God,
 But we lost a very important part of it –
 The part that made us love Him
 And everything good.

God's attributes can be divided into two categories –
 Natural and moral –

His natural attributes/characteristics
 Have to do with His power –
 His limitless presence,
 His timelessness,

His almighty power,

His comprehensive knowledge –

His moral attributes

Have to do with His holiness –

His love, grace, mercy, justice, goodness, truth.

His moral qualities are important –

Perhaps more than we realize:

Think of what it would be like

To live with a Being who is

Everywhere present,

All the time,

With the power to do whatever He wants,

Who knows our every thought

And everything we might do;

But who was evil and unmerciful –

It would be the greatest conceivable nightmare –

There would be no hiding from Him,

And no escape what He might do to us:

We should be thankful He is holy.

Like God,

We also have two kinds of attributes:

We share His natural and moral image.

Even though we've fallen,

We still have the natural attributes:

We can still think,

We can still plan and carry out our plans,

We will still live forever.

That's why we're still said to be in His image:

That we are is the basis of capital punishment:

God says in Genesis 9:6, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."

James points to this fact as well

When he warns against the misuse of the tongue,

"For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; *it is* a restless evil *and* full of deadly poison. With it we bless *our* Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, *who have been made in the likeness of God*" (James 3:7-9).

We didn't lose those attributes,

But we did lose something precious –

What it is that made us good:

Our love for Him,

For what's good,

What has been called our original righteousness,

The source of all our good works –

We lost the moral image of God –

His Holy Spirit –

We're still moral creatures,

But we're morally corrupt –

Now we hate God and His Law –

Paul writes in Romans 8:7-8, “Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

We no longer want to do what’s good:

He writes in Romans 3:10-12, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

Not only do we hate God,

We wouldn’t want His help

Even if He offered it to us –

Which He does in the Gospel:

Jesus tells us, “The flesh profits nothing” (John 6:63).

2. We also became guilty:

When Adam sinned, we sinned –

We’re not guilty of all his sins,

Just the first.

Because he was our representative,

God charged his crime to us –

God looks at us as though we committed it,

Because we did –

We committed it in Adam.

Paul writes in Romans 5:12, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, *because all sinned*.”

And in verses 18-19, “So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man’s

disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”

If we object to this principle of *imputation*,

We need to realize we can't be saved without it:

We're saved by the *imputation* of our sins to Jesus,

And the *imputation* of His righteousness to us.

The imputation/crediting of Adam's guilt to us

Is why when we're conceived in our mother's womb –

And become part of the human race –

We're already guilty:

David writes, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me” (Ps. 51:5).

But we're guilty for another reason:

Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount,

The commandments aren't broken only in our actions,

But also in our hearts:

Just having the desire to break them makes us guilty:

He says in Matthew 5:21-22, “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ *But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court . . .*”

If being angry with our brother or sister

Makes us guilty before the court,

What does hating God deserve?

That's the disposition of our soul

As soon as we're conceived.

3. Being guilty, we were also under judgment.

God told Adam, “In the day that you eat from it you will surely die” (Gen. 2:17).

Paul writes, “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

They weren’t speaking merely of physical death, but eternal.

This was our danger:

That we were guilty before a holy and righteous God

Who would hold us accountable –

Not just for Adam’s one sin –

But for every sin we’ve ever committed –

Who knows all we’ve done,

Knows every mitigating or aggravating circumstance,

Who will weigh all our deeds in the balance

And then punish us accordingly in hell.

Paul writes, “Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.” (Rom 2:4-8).

Our punishment would have gone on forever –

John writes, “And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever” (Rev. 14:11) –

Because the sins we committed

Were against an infinitely worthy God –

And forever is a very long time.

Thomas Watson writes, “The torments of hell abide forever. . . . If all the earth and sea were sand, and every thousandth year a bird should come, and take

away one grain of this sand, it would be a long time ere that vast heap of sand were emptied; yet, if after all that time the damned may come out of hell, there were some hope; but this word EVER breaks the heart.”

And, “Thus it is in hell; they would die, but they cannot. The wicked shall be always dying but never dead; the smoke of the furnace ascends forever and ever. Oh! who can endure thus to be ever upon the rack? This word ‘ever’ breaks the heart. Wicked men now think the Sabbaths long, and think a prayer long, but oh! how long will it be to lie in hell forever and ever?”

This is what the Bible says

We were looking forward to

When we came into this world,

And every sin we’ve committed since

Would only have made this judgment worse

If not for the Father’s grace in giving us His Son.

The Fall and its consequences

Are why we need the Gospel.

Next week,

We’ll look at the fourth foundational principle in our series:

What the Father did to save us through His Son. Amen.

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