

### **WHAT HAPPENED?**

In the beginning God... This opening has so many great implications. In our study of God back in August 2020, we discovered that God is good. This is not understood as God being evaluated by an external good standard. Rather God defines good, He is good, everything that is good is either provided by God or established by God.

In the beginning God created everything in our creation: light and darkness, stars and planets, plants and animals, and finally man. Everything that God made was very good. In Genesis 2, we see the particulars of the creation of man and that God gave him provisions, variety, aesthetics, purpose, and authority.

God made a good, pleasant, peaceful, beautiful world and put man in charge of everything. So, what happened?

### **THE FALL**

The account of the fall is well known to nearly every person. What most people think of as a myth or fable is recorded as history in the Bible. Man was in the perfect environment, free from sin and death. The text does not indicate the state of his nature (innocent, perfection), so to speculate is just that.

God's instruction implies that Adam had the capability of making the proper choice, but to speculate as to what would have happened if Adam did not eat the fruit in any scenario is improper. This is worth mentioning since many theologians do speculate and even argue over what is merely an opinion.

In Genesis, God gave one rule to preserve this perfect creation and fulfill the mission given; they had to keep from one thing. Genesis 2:15-17 – Do not eat from the knowledge of the tree of good and evil.

The test itself has also had much debate. Was there some sort of power in the food or is it just a test of following the rule? This is unknowable. The tree of life seemed to contain an ability to prolong life (Genesis 3:22), so it is possible that the tree of knowledge of good and evil did impart that knowledge. But the sin is attributed to Adam's act of rebellion (Romans 5:14). The fruit did not make Adam a sinner; the act is seen as a transgression against God's set standard.

The activity of the fall is very straightforward. We know from Revelation that the snake of old is Satan (either embodying a serpent or entering into a serpent). The snake deceives Eve and Adam also ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Immediately, innocence was lost, and their nakedness was a shame to them. The warning that God gave was if they ate of the fruit, they would know good from evil. Without the ability to always choose good, man would have a propensity toward evil. Also, they would die (literally – “in dying you will die”). This death can be seen in three ways in scripture.

1. Spiritual death – Though physically alive, man is now physically born spiritually dead. There is a need for spiritual birth after the physical birth.
2. Physical death – Man is subject to (with only two exceptions) physical death where the soul/spirit will leave the body until a new body will be provided.
3. Eternal death – The one who is not born spiritually will be cast into hell and the lake of fire being condemned with the enemy because they were never spiritually alive.

## Who is Man? – Sin Nature

The penalties for this rebellion are spelled out in Genesis 3:7-24 –

1. Guilt – they attempted to make a covering for their nakedness
2. Fear – they hid themselves from God
3. Pain – Both for the woman in childbearing and for man in laboring
4. Death – the ever-present expectation of physical death
5. Ground – the ground is no longer easily cultivated. The ground now produces thorns and weeds.
6. Expulsion – They were removed from the garden and not permitted to return (an act of God's grace)

These penalties are passed down to every descendant of Adam and Eve. They are a constant reminder of man's predicament. Sin entered all of creation through mankind who had dominion over this world.

### **SIN**

Many words in both Greek and Hebrew describe sin from a different perspective. The most basic concept of sin is rebellion. It is not enough that we are born into trespass, having a dead soul/spirit, but we also have our own personal sin which exacerbates the inherited sin problem.

We are truly an interesting creature. When we contrast what we emphasize as sin in our cultures versus what the Bible calls sin, we miss the mark.

The idea of sin first begins with the identification of it through the Law. It is our tutor and demonstrates that we are unrighteous when we view ourselves against the Law (Romans 7; Galatians 3).

The two most basic ideas are found in Matthew 22:36-40. We can view many of our actions, words, and attitudes in light of these two laws and discover that we are very sinful. But there are also specific laws, imperatives, and statements about God's desire for us that we must also keep in mind. It is a study for a different time, but we can categorize sins into at least 6 different categories: commission, omission, rebellion, intent, motivation, and whatever is not of faith.

### **IMPUTED SINFUL NATURE**

After the fall of Adam, he being the progenerate of all human life, every person that is born from the seed of man, inherits a nature that is prone to rebellion and a soul/spirit that is dead (Romans 5:12-14, 17-19; Ephesians 2:1-3). Left to ourselves, man is unholy, wretched, rebellious, sinful, evil, and depraved (Romans 3:9-18).

But God...