



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

JANUARY 14 2023

Scripture Story: Genesis 3.
Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 3 and 4.

law meets love



Photo by Bill Wolf

flashlight

“He [Christ] bade the angelic host to be in accord with the plan that His Father had accepted, and rejoice that, through His death, fallen man could be reconciled to God. Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. The glory and blessedness of a world redeemed outmeasured even the anguish and sacrifice of the Prince of life” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 65).

keytext

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’”

(Genesis 3:8, 9, NIV)

what do you think?

Agree or Disagree (A/D)

- ___ The real sin in the garden was not so much listening to the serpent's lie as it was distrusting what God had already said.
- ___ The plan of salvation enables us to be closer to God than Adam and Eve were before the Fall.
- ___ The fact that Christ died to pay the debt of sin is evidence that God's law of love is unbending.

did you know?

The Barna Research Group reported the following results from one of their polls:

1. If a person is generally good or does enough good things for others, they will earn a place in heaven.
 - 31% strongly agree
 - 20% agree somewhat
 - 11% disagree somewhat
 - 31% strongly disagree
 - 7% don't know

2. The whole idea of sin is outdated.
 - 7% strongly agree
 - 6% agree somewhat
 - 15% disagree somewhat
 - 68% strongly disagree
 - 5% don't know

What do these statistics say about people's understanding of sin and salvation?

INTO THE STORY

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

“The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

“‘You will not certainly die,’ the serpent said to the woman. ‘For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband,

who was with her, and he ate it.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’ He answered, ‘I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.’ And he said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?’ The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.’ Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

“The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the Lord God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.’ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”

(Genesis 3:1-13, 21-24, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Who are the main characters in this story?

Underline all the questions that are asked in this story. What is significant about each question?

What key words, phrases, and emotions are central to the message of this story? *Circle* the words and indicate why you think they are important.

Break this story up into at least four scenes and create an appropriate title for each part of the narrative.

As you read this story, is there: a warning to heed, an example to follow, a prayer to pray, a promise to claim, a sin to confess, or a truth to believe?

If you were to pick three verses from this reading that were key to understanding God's plan to redeem us, which three would you choose?

punch lines

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" **(Romans 6:23, NIV).**

"The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself" **(John 12:31, 32, NLT).**

"The sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ" **(Romans 5:17, NLT).**

"Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous" **(Romans 5:18, 19, NLT).**

further insight

"It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen."—Ellen G. White, *The*

Desire of Ages, p. 25.

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Romans 5:18, 19.

The *What Do You Think?* exercise offers a few questions that you are to agree or disagree with and asks you to state why. Consider the passage from today's Scripture: "Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:18, 19, NLT). What is the most meaningful part of the verse to you? Why?

Sunday

Read Romans 6:23.

The story of the temptation and the Fall is in the *Into the Story* section. Which phrases or verses are the most critical to the meaning of the story? Why do you think God asked Adam and Eve, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:8, NIV). What if Adam and Eve had never come out of hiding when God called to them? What kind of emotions do you think Adam and Eve were experiencing as they hid in the bushes from God?

Whom do you know who might be staying away from God's grace because they feel ashamed or alone in their sin? What can you do to help restore them? A letter? A phone call? A prayer?

Monday

Read Genesis 3:8, 9.

Read the *Key Text* in a couple of different translations if possible. Rewrite the verse in your own words, including the different emotions you think Adam and Eve were feeling.

Read Romans 5:8 and make a connection to what Paul says about redemption and what occurred in the Garden of Eden. When has God touched your heart "while" you were far away from Him?

Tuesday

Read Romans 5:17.

Take a look in the *Flashlight* section at the powerful statement Ellen White makes about the glory of a redeemed world. Especially consider the phrase "The glory and blessedness of a world redeemed outmeasured even the anguish and sacrifice of the Prince of life" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 65). Apparently the big picture of the plan of salvation enabled the angels to rejoice even though it meant the death of the Son of God. Do you know someone who, like the angels of heaven, has the ability to see the big picture in life? How has this person helped you see the big picture?

Wednesday

Read the verses and find the texts in the *Punch Lines* section and identify the phrase or sentence that comforts you the most. Which phrase or verse causes you to think about your relationship with God right now? Do you know someone who needs to experience the matchless love of Christ this week? Say a prayer for them. Write out two to three encouraging verses from this section and find a way to share them.

Thursday

Read John 12:31, 32.

Read chapters 3 and 4 of *Patriarchs and Prophets* and make a list of all the words that convey the emotions of God in these two chapters. What are some comments Ellen White makes that are timeless and relate to your life today? Whom do you know who has truly accepted God's free gift of salvation? Ask them to share how they have learned to rest in God's grace and what specific ways they remind themselves of God's redeeming love.

Friday

Read Isaiah 9:6.

What are some aspects of God's character that you are absolutely certain about—no doubt, whatsoever? What are some aspects you wonder about?

Think of a time in your life when you unknowingly believed a lie about someone else. How did you feel after you found out that it was not true? Reflect on Adam and Eve's experience after disobeying God in the garden and make a list of what emotions you think overpowered them.

If you were to answer the question "Where are you?" that God asked Adam and Eve, what would be your answer today? Write out a prayer of response to God's offering you the same salvation He offered Adam and Eve in the garden.

this week's reading*

Patriarchs and Prophets (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 3 and 4.

Beginning of the End is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rB09s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.