

97-11-02b

We're back now from our break, and we find ourselves at the crux of the structure of this section of Genesis. In Genesis chapter 3, verses 6 through 8, as I mentioned in the first session, there is a seven-section structure. It may not be immediately obvious.

I gave you the boundaries for that toward the end of the first lesson. And what is the basis for that? It is primarily observation. Let me first of all quickly cover the last part of this chapter by reading it.

Once Eve partakes of the fruit because she sees that it's good for food, that it is pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise. She took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband, and he ate with her.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened. You might notice that when Eve bit into the fruit, her eyes were not immediately opened, were they? At what point are their eyes opened? It's when Adam partakes. There is apparently some interval of time between her deception and partaking of the fruit.

She goes and finds Adam and hands him some and he partakes. Then it is at that point that their eyes are opened. It isn't that her eyes are opened and then she runs over and finds Adam.

It's after he partakes. He is the responsible one. And it also reminds us that the consequences may not appear to be immediate.

Even her recognition of her nakedness doesn't take place as soon as her teeth touch the skin of whatever fruit this was. There is some delay involved. That's an important thing to observe.

We notice time and again in Scripture that when God pronounces a judgment, it may not appear to be immediate. People find this to be true in daily life. They are warned in no uncertain terms that a certain kind of action or a certain lifestyle or a certain set of choices will be detrimental, maybe devastating.

Somebody goes that way and initially they say, Look, I've done this and nothing bad happened to me. I had unprotected sex and I didn't get AIDS or I shared a needle and I didn't get infected and so on. And there is sort of an interval where people can find vindication and justification even after they've done something wrong.

The problem is it does not last. But obviously if everything were literally and immediately true, the moment that Eve made contact with that fruit, with her lips or her teeth, she would have dropped down instantly, physically and eternally dead. But there is an interval.

Satan was condemned in eternity past, but his sentence, although it is certain, has not yet been carried out. And God uses that interval of delay and incorporates it into his purpose. So Eve ate, then Adam ate, then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked.

They knew that they were Arun. The serpent had said, This tree will give you the wisdom of God. Eve looked at the tree and said, This is desirable to make one wise.

Now they have partaken and they are wise and they know that they are Arun. And there is such an irony there in the play on words. They wanted to be wise and instead they are naked.

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden. Notice who it is that is walking in the garden in verse 8. It is the Lord God, the covenant God, the intimate God, the God who seeks and saves that which is lost.

Do you think God knows what they have done at this point? Pretty safe assumption being omniscient. He knows already. But He doesn't immediately appear in a flash of cloud and smoke.

There is not a cloud and thunder and lightning like descended on Mount Sinai at the moment that they eat and they don't cower in abject fear. God initially acts as though nothing is wrong. He takes His usual afternoon walk in the garden and they hear Him.

There is an interval and God uses that interval for the man and the woman to learn something about their new state. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

They hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh Elohim among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, where are you? Does God know where Adam is? Anybody that has raised children knows exactly what is going on here. Where are you? So He said, now does Adam really think that he is hidden from the Lord? Does Adam realize that God knows exactly where he is? If you have a good hiding place and you think that you can't be found, you are not going to speak up and answer a question.

But Adam speaks up and answers because he knows that God knows and that God is not fooled. He has figured out with his great mental capacity that the foliage of the garden is not going to hide him from the eyes of Yahweh Elohim. So when the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, where are you? Adam answers up.

I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself. What is the first question that God asks him? Where are you? God doesn't call out and

say, you ate of that fruit, didn't you? We are going to walk back out of this situation in the reverse order that we got into it. What is the very last and most recent consequence of the fall and eating of the fruit? They have hidden themselves.

So the very first thing, God is going to work His way all the way back to the beginning and all the way back to the origin. So He starts out saying, where are you? Normally when God came walking in the garden, Adam and Eve were there and they were not disconcerted. They walked with God and enjoyed fellowship with Him, had conversations with Him.

It must have been an amazing thing. And so God appears and for some reason Adam and Eve aren't there. And so God plays innocent, if you will, and He says, where are you? Something is different today.

Where are you? And Adam doesn't say, well, you know, we ate the fruit. He says, I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. I was fearful.

I was disconcerted. I was abashed because I've got this nakedness problem. So I hid myself.

So God says, who told you that you were naked? Now has anybody told Adam that he's naked? Did the serpent tell him he's naked? Did Eve say, Adam, put your clothes on. You're naked. He knows this because he has the knowledge that came with partaking of the fruit.

Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat? Then the man said, and the famous dodge of responsibility, the woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I ate. So God addresses Adam. And Adam speaks up and says, well, the woman gave me.

So God has basically called Adam to account. And Adam says, well, you know, the woman, she gave me and I ate. So now God turns his attention to the woman.

The Lord God said to the woman, what is this you have done? He's essentially said this to Adam, hasn't he? Have you eaten of the tree that I told you you should not eat? Now he's asking the woman, what is this you have done? And of course she in turn, the serpent deceived me and I ate. So now in turn, when God turns his attention to the serpent, what would you expect? He called Adam to account and he said, have you partaken? And he says, well, you know, the woman. So God turns to the woman, what is this you have done? She says, well, you know, the serpent.

So now you would expect God to go and say, hey there, serpent, what have you done? But what happens? He doesn't even ask the serpent a question, does he? Why do you suppose that is? Because God and the serpent have already had this conversation. This is Satan. And God doesn't have to ask Satan a question, what have you done? They've

already had their conversation when Satan fell in eternity past and said, I will be like the most high, I will raise my throne above the stars of heaven.

I will, I will, I will, five times. And at that point, God asks Satan, what is this you have done? And this is another manifestation of what has already happened to Satan. So God doesn't ask him that question and say, hey there, serpent, what is this you have done? Did you deceive the woman? It's not even an issue.

He turns to the serpent and immediately pronounces a curse. So the Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this, there is no learning opportunity involved with the serpent. God has a conversation with Adam and has a conversation with Eve to draw them out and to teach them something in this interval between fall and judgment.

In the same way that when you have children and they have malfunctioned in some way and it's time for discipline, it is a good thing to not just immediately jerk them up and discipline them. You stop and make sure they understand what it is they have done and that they are receiving discipline not because you are angry, but because they have disobeyed. Not because you are upset, but because they have brought a consequence on their own head.

It's exceedingly important in child training that the child understand what discipline is. It is a consequence of their actions, not an expression of your anger. It's a tricky thing and it's something we have to watch out for.

So we engage children in conversation. We say, do you remember me telling you thus and so? Often times that conversation can keep you from making a mistake in discipline also as human beings. It doesn't apply to God's actions here, but my mother is going to be smiling when I give you this example because I have brought it up to her many times.

When I was a very small boy and my younger brother Matthew was just learning to toddle, and I would get into trouble from time to time for persecuting him because that's my job as the older brother. But this one time he was toddling, just had learned to walk and he went into the bedroom. You know how little kids are, he leaned against the door and shut it.

He couldn't get back out and he was crying. So unlike my normal self, I thought, well, I'll go let him out. So I was reaching out and I grabbed the doorknob to turn it and let him in.

Well, my mom came in the hall about that time and thought that I had shut him in there to persecute him. So she snatched me up and spanked me. Oh, I had such righteous indignation that here I was trying to be good.

I had earned that spanking probably a hundred times over. But it really stuck in my mind because you really feel put upon if you get what you think is unjust discipline. And it's a

reminder that if you stop and converse, you may find out that all is not as it appears.

And so God does this with Adam and with Eve. And they, in a sense, implicate themselves and draw out the change in their nature as they shift blame and try to avoid responsibility. And there's wonderful teaching points in that that have been made by all observers of this passage.

But it's remarkable that there is no such interaction between God and the serpent. Why is that? There is no teaching point to be made. There's no productive point to be gained by conversing.

The serpent never says a word in the presence of God, does he? The last thing he said was, knowing good and evil. And he's been mute from that time till this. Because when God comes down, God doesn't engage him in conversation.

God says, because you have done this, they are acquainted from before. You are cursed more than all cattle. And as I pointed out earlier, this doesn't mean that all cattle are cursed and the serpents more cursed.

This is cursed in a way that separates you from all cattle and from all the beasts of the field. On your belly you shall go and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. This would suggest to us that the serpent initially was more of a perhaps a lizard-like creature or even a dinosaur-type creature with legs for a means of locomotion and that the loss of those is a part of this curse.

It seems reasonable to me. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

To the woman, he said, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception. In pain you shall bring forth children. And as I remarked during the break, bring forth is not the best translation of this word.

This is the word used for child raising, not child birthing. This would be better translated in pain or in distress you will raise your children. Your desire will be for your husband and he shall rule over you.

Then to Adam, he said, and you notice that we're again working our way back out. It's first the serpent, then the woman, and then the man. And the man's discipline winds up being in the place of emphasis.

To Adam, he said, because you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree. Of course, men have come back to this passage. Because I heeded the voice of my wife and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying you shall not eat of it.

Cursed are you, O Adam. It doesn't say that, does it? Cursed is the ground for your sake. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

In this whole pronouncement of cursing, who is it that gets directly cursed by God? The serpent. You are cursed above all cattle. You are cursed above every beast of the field.

Does God say, cursed are you, O Eve? He doesn't. Does he say, cursed are you, O Adam? He doesn't. The ground is cursed.

The cycle of life is going to be fraught with pain. Because of the fall, death has been introduced. Paul goes into this in detail in Romans.

Whereas by one man's sin entered the world, and death through sin. So the death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Now there is going to be a life cycle.

Now there is going to be the need to raise up and transfer custodianship and authority in the world to succeeding generations. Life is not going to be static for human beings. You come up under authority and you eventually assume authority and you ultimately pass that authority on to a succeeding generation.

And yet there is sorrow and there is pain involved in that. It's painful to be intimate with your children and have to train them to be independent and turn them loose and be separated from them. There is pain involved in death.

There is sorrow involved in the separation when the union between the man and the woman is interrupted by death or by anything for that matter, even by physical separation. And so because of the nature of life, because life is now going to be cyclic instead of static, pain and sorrow are introduced. Separation, the separation of a woman from her children is one of the most painful things there is.

You have the picture of Rachel weeping for her children later on in the prophets. And that's the idea here. Cursed is the ground for your sake.

In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you. And you shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken, for dust you are, and to dust you shall return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living.

Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil. In some sense the words of the serpent have come true, haven't they? The serpent told Eve, God knows that in the day you eat you will be like him, knowing good and evil.

And God basically makes that statement here. The man has become like one of us, to

know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever, therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

So he drove out the man and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden and a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. So this deception of the serpent, his words to Eve are interwoven with truth and it is that truth that washes down the lie. And Eve is taken in by it.

And in verse 6, she sees that the tree is good for food. There's a whole garden full of trees that are good for food. But now she looks at that tree and sees that it is good for food.

That it is pleasant to the eyes. What did it say about God planting the garden of Eden back in chapter 2? Verse 9, Out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden.

God specifically planted all of the other trees in the garden to be good for food and pleasant to the sight. But Eve is looking at the one forbidden tree and what does she think? This one is good for food. This one is pleasant to the sight.

And what is she doing? She is usurping the prerogative of God. God designated the trees that were good for food and pleasant to the sight. But now Eve is making her own designation in those categories.

And it is a tree desirable to make one wise. Now, it says that she saw that it was a tree desirable to make one wise. And this is the basis for my suggestion that the serpent is probably up in that tree.

And the fact that he is able to engage in conversation somehow suggests to Eve that this tree has special power to make one wise. Look at what it has done for the serpent would be the idea. And that this is an element of the deception because obviously his ability to speak and carry on this conversation has nothing to do with that tree.

Although it does have to do with the presence of Satan who has made a similar decision himself. And I think, and I will just offer this as a suggestion to you, I think that Satan in some ways believes what he is telling Eve. That he is presenting his viewpoint of life in the universe in relationship with God.

It is possible that there was a similar understanding among the angels. And when Satan fell, he is still around. He did not immediately die.

And the lake of fire has been prepared beforehand for the devil and his angels. But he is not in it and they are not in it even now. These many thousands of years later.

And Satan knows that there is the delay. There is the interval that God uses for teaching and for exhibiting aspects of his character. And so there is a sense in which Satan believes the lie that he is telling the woman.

You will not surely die. He has not surely died, even till yet. And her eyes will be opened.

And she will be like God in a sense, knowing good and evil. And part of this is deceit and part of it is seduction. But part of it is also Satan's alternative world view.

And he practices it and he sells it. And so she sees that. It is a tree desirable to make one wise.

She took of its fruit and ate. She gave also to her husband. He ate.

Then the eyes of them both were opened. And that is what the serpent said would happen in verse 5. The eyes of them both are opened. And this idea of knowing good and evil.

Paul brought up an interesting point during the break. Why is this called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Why isn't it just called the tree of the knowledge of evil? Do you have to partake of this tree to truly know the good in the same way that they partook of the tree in order to truly know evil? Why is it the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Well, do you think Adam and Eve knew the good prior to partaking of that tree? They did. It's the contrast between the two that they are going to discover.

It is the knowledge of what evil is in contrast to the good that comes with partaking of that tree. To say that the knowledge is equal, that you get an equal knowledge of good and an equal knowledge of evil by partaking of the tree would be to say that Adam and Eve really had no concept of the good prior to the fall. But even here you have some ambiguity because it is true that in the presence of evil we find out how good God really is.

We find it out by way of contrast. How much would we understand of God's forgiveness and God's compassion in an environment where there is no requirement for those? There is no area of expression of compassion and forgiveness because there has been no evil. The presence of evil highlights and brings into sharp relief the goodness of God, the love of God, the long-suffering of God.

Here in their fallen state it is the Lord God who comes and walks in the garden. If you look at this, this is really a pretty gentle interrogation in the garden, isn't it? God doesn't come down in thunder and lightning. You can imagine if Hollywood was going to do this, one tact they could take is that after they eat the fruit, the sky clouds over in thunder and lightning and the presence of God comes down in a big, dark, forbidding, black presence and the voice of God comes thundering out, What is this you have done? Cursed are you! You get the whole wrath of God scenario.

God is very gentle. He is still the God of compassion. He is the God of grace.

He doesn't curse them directly, even though it is they who have disobeyed. You see the goodness of God in the face of evil, in the face of disobedience, in the face of rebellion. They do not immediately drop dead at the point that they partake.

Instead, it is an occasion to learn about the goodness of God. So there is a sense in which not only do they come to the knowledge of evil, but they are going to come to a unique knowledge of good. It is in examining the line between the two, the distinction between light and darkness, between grace and judgment.

It is that line and it is coming to that understanding that every human being faces in life. We come to the point of having to choose. Do we want to persist in Satan's viewpoint that there is a life independent of God? Why is God hassling us? Why can't we just live the way we want to? Why does he have to put this heavy judgment thing on us? Why can't he just leave us be? Why can't we just go our own way? God is demonstrating that point, along with many others in human history, that it is impossible to live independent of God, separate from God, and sustain life.

It is impossible to be independent of God and not degenerate, not corrupt, not self-destruct, because there is no power for life apart from God. There may be a short interval where people think that there is, in the same way that Eve may have thought, well look, I've eaten and everything is fine, but it doesn't last, it's deceptive and it's short term. So that is at the center here.

But let's look at verses 9-13. We have labeled this as C-prime. We've said that verses 9-13 correspond with chapter 3, verses 1-5.

Well, what did we have in chapter 3, verses 1-5? We had the serpent engaging in conversation with Eve. You have a dialogue between Eve and the serpent. In verses 9-13, you have a dialogue between God and Adam and Eve.

So you have Satan and his conversation, his method of communication, his goals, his objectives in 1-5. And in 9-13, you have God and his conversation, his dialogue, his interaction with the human race. One leads to the fall.

The other is going to ultimately lead to salvation. One leads into deception, leads into the lie. The other brings out the truth.

The first is going to result in the woman partaking, and Adam and Eve partaking of the fruit. The other is going to bring out their admission of guilt in so doing. So these two sections correspond.

And they bracket the central section, verses 6-8. Then in verse 14, when the Lord God says to the serpent, because you have done this, you are cursed. And God is now

pronouncing judgment.

We've labeled this section, verses 14-21, B-prime, in that it corresponds to chapter 2, verse 18, through verse 25 of chapter 2. Well, look at the comparison of those two sections. In chapter 2, verses 18-25, the Lord God also speaks. And He says, it is not good that man should be alone.

I will make him a helper. And He makes Eve out of the rib. He addresses a need of the man.

And when He speaks, it results in blessing. Here in verses 14 and following of chapter 3, God speaks. He addresses a need of man.

But you have cursing in the interval before blessing will come. You have in the section of chapter 2 that we've labeled B, you have Adam giving names to the animals. And you have Adam ultimately giving a name to Eve in verse 23.

She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. And in the B-prime section, you're going to have, in verse 20, Adam naming his wife again. Where in the first section, you had Adam exercising beneficial authority over the animals, giving them names and becoming acquainted with them and learning how to care for them and so forth.

Now they are going to be cursed for his sake. And where God gives him the gift of the woman, and he is responsible for her, and it's a beneficial and up-building and completing thing, now the relationship between the man and the woman is going to be characterized by strife, by suffering. It's going to take effort now.

It was effortless. It was a perfect provision of God in the first case. Now her obedience is mandated.

Her sorrow and child-rearing is foretold. And you had a wonderful, completing, and beneficial union of the man and the woman in our section B. And you have sorrow and pain arising out of that union in B-prime. And you have Adam naming Eve in each section.

And then finally, in the outermost brackets here, you have the Lord God indicating that man has become like one of us to know good and evil, and God sending him out of the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. And this corresponds to the section that we started in chapter 2, verse 7, where God forms man of the dust of the ground. God plants a garden in Eden, and there he puts the man whom he has formed.

And out of the ground, God makes the trees grow. Man doesn't have to work the soil to make the trees grow. He simply has a light duty of tending and organizing the plants.

It's light duty. It isn't necessary to subsist. It isn't necessary to survive.

It isn't labor. It doesn't bring about sweat on the brow. It's an activity that is uplifting.

You know how it is when you have vacation time. Very seldom when you get a break from work and so forth, do you just sit and do nothing. You just stare at the wall and say, boy, this absence of activity is great.

On a vacation, you do things that you enjoy. Activity, we enjoy activity. It isn't that we don't want to be active.

We just want to do things that don't require heavy labor and toil. And for some of us, even things that somebody might look at and say, well, that's hard work. It's actually enjoyable.

It's therapeutic. It's something we enjoy, and it isn't toil. It isn't a labor for us at all.

It may be strenuous, but it's a lot of fun. And you have Adam in the garden, tending the garden, and it's not work. It's not sweat, and it isn't necessary for his subsistence or survival.

It's a beneficial and healthy activity. Now he's outside the garden, and he has to work the soil. He has to struggle against the curse to get subsistence out of it, and it doesn't come easily.

And what he reaps, a lot of times he can't partake of right away. He's got to do something. He's got to make bread.

Bread requires, we've been reading the Little House series, where people used to live off the land, and old Paul Ingalls out there, and all the work they go through to sow the seed and to go out and plow to keep the weeds down, and then to cut it, and to gather it, and bind it, and make sure that it doesn't get ruined by the weather, and then bring it in and thresh it, and separate the seed from the stalks, and bring the seed in and grind it or get it ground, and then use the flour. It's so much work to get to the point of being able to partake. And there are so many things that can happen in between to ruin a crop or to prevent it from coming in.

That's the difference between our Section A in Chapter 2 and our Section A' in the end of Chapter 3. And if you look closely, you will see that there are a lot of similar vocabulary words that tie these together. You have the idea of the garden. You have the word east.

We talked about the direction of the east and what it means. You have the idea of things growing, and you have the mention of the tree of life. In the initial section, the tree of life is there, and it's beneficial.

In the ending section, now you're cut off from the tree of life. You're separated, and the

garden is guarded against re-entry. When we get to the end of Chapter 3, we'll talk specifically about why God has to keep man from partaking of the tree of life.

But if you return now to Chapter 3, verse 14, when the Lord God says to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle and more than every beast of the field. On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. Is this a literal thing? Do snakes eat soil to live? What does it mean when God says you shall eat dust all the days of your life? We'll turn, for example, to Psalm 72, verse 9, talking about the enemies of God.

Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before him, and his enemies will lick the dust. This is a metaphor. This is symbolic language for being conquered, being defeated, doing unwilling obeisance.

The enemies who have to lick the dust are not happy about it, but they are forced to because they have been conquered. It's a result of conquest. You see the same idea in Isaiah 49, verse 23.

Isaiah 49. Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. This reminds us of our scripture reading in Psalm 49, where the rich in this life, the promise of God is that the faithful will have dominion over them in the morning.

Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed who wait for me.

A very great passage on this is in Micah, chapter 7, verse 17. Micah is not one of the easier books to find. You've got Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah.

Micah, chapter 7, verse 17. It's talking about the nations in distinction to Israel. As in the days, in verse 15 of Micah 7. As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.

The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might. They shall put their hand over their mouth. Their ears shall be deaf.

They shall lick the dust like a serpent. They shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the Lord our God and shall fear because of you.

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He does not retain his anger forever because he delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which you have sworn to our fathers

from days of old. What is the difference? What is the issue that determines whether human beings lick the dust like a serpent, crawling from their holes like snakes of the earth and being afraid of the Lord and those who have their sins cast into the depths of the sea and who receive truth and mercy that is sworn to them by covenant? What is the issue? How does that get decided? It is the issue of the tree. It's the issue of the choice.

It's the issue of obedience versus disobedience of choosing God or choosing the lie. And another passage you can put with this, and I think actually Scofield has a note on this, is Isaiah 65, 25. Isaiah 65, 25.

Talking about the millennial kingdom, beginning in verse 24 of Isaiah 65. It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer. And while they are still speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox. But dust shall be the serpent's food.

Even in the millennial kingdom, the serpent doesn't have his curse lifted. He's still going to be eating dust. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

You remember that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. And when does that take place? Not until the end of the millennial kingdom. Not until the end of the Gog Magog rebellion.

Not until after the great white throne judgment. There will still be death in the millennium. Look here right in Isaiah 65, verse 18.

Be glad and rejoice forever in what I create. For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people.

The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days. For the child shall die 100 years old.

But the sinner, being 100 years old, shall be accursed. Notice that there will still be someone who dies. If you die when you're 100 years old, you will be considered to still have been a child.

Longevity will be restored like they had before the days of the flood. People will live for hundreds of years. But there will still be death.

There will still be sinners. And if they live to be 100, they will be accursed. It's going to make a difference.

There are going to be unbelievers. And there's going to be death in the millennium. The last enemy to be destroyed, the last result of the fall that we're covering here, will not go away until the great white throne judgment.

Who is it that's going to pass away in the millennial kingdom? Certainly not those who have been resurrected. The saints of the Old Testament and the saints of the church age, the tribulational saints who have been raised. They live to die no more.

So who is it that's dying? Well, we've covered that in some other studies, but we know that there are going to be an ever-growing number of people who grow up like tares in the wheat field of Christ's kingdom. And they will be allowed to grow together until the time of harvest, at the end of that age. And the angels will be sent out, the reapers.

Jesus, in interpreting that parable, says it is the angels who will be sent. And they will gather out the tares and bind them in bundles to be burned. And we can see from that that it's not a picture of the rapture, it's not a picture of this age, although the principle may apply.

But the angels are not going to come and reap the sinners out from among us when Christ returns. Christ is going to return, and we're going to meet him in the air. We're going to leave the tares behind in this age.

That's a picture of the kingdom age. And these who grow up in mortal bodies that are susceptible to death in the millennial kingdom will be an ever-growing number. And those who are unbelievers will ultimately join Satan in the Gog Magog rebellion that we looked at over in Revelation 20.

And after he has deceived them and has led them in rebellion, they will be destroyed. Satan himself will be cast into the lake of fire. So the consequences of what we see here in chapter 3 persist even through the millennial kingdom and will not be ultimately resolved until we have the new heavens and the new earth.

What does this mean for us? First of all, in looking at the fall, we recognize that evil uses the strategy of an indirect approach. We have to stop and think. We need to meditate on our choices.

We need to consider carefully whether we are taking steps that put us in a situation to fall. Standing contemplating the tree didn't seem to be a bad thing for Eve, but that's what led to her fall. She rationalized.

And we often rationalize something and we say, Well, this is innocuous. There's nothing inherently wrong with this. But it is a step in the direction.

It brings us closer to a point of no return. So evil is not going to put on an ugly Halloween mask and come and try to entice us. It's going to masquerade as light.

It's going to masquerade as something that's healthy, something that's good, beneficial. Wouldn't it be great to know as much as God? Wouldn't it be great to be like God? Ignoring the fact that they are already like God. They are already made in the image and

after the likeness of God.

Rationalization is the most common approach to entice us into evil. And this happens throughout the Christian church today. Believers are being enticed and seduced into spirituality by works.

Righteousness by ministry. Righteousness by impact. Ministry and impact are wonderful things when they are the result of God's activity in our soul.

They are not the means to that. And disobeying God's call is not the means to becoming like God and serving Him. And that's the mistake that was made here.

And so it's food for thought.