

Genesis Ch3v1-7 - Broken Beauty

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[0 : 00] It 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 of 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 and she ate.

She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked.

[1 : 11] So they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. And let's go to the New Testament, to Luke chapter 4.

Luke chapter 4. Starting in verse 1.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.

He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.

Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone. The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

[2 : 25] And he said to him, I will give you all their authority and splendour. It has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.

Jesus answered, It is written, Worship the Lord your God and serve him only. The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

If you are the Son of God, he said, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully.

They will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. Jesus answered, It is said, Do not put the Lord your God to the test.

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Well, let's go back to Genesis chapter 3.

[3 : 33] Let's pray.

Father, as we read your words, as we have been doing in Genesis, we are reminded of the glory that we are your image bearers.

But yet we are also confronted with our shame because we have failed to represent you as we should.

So we pray that today there would be a restoration taking place in all of our lives, that we would know the glory afresh of being made in your image, in your likeness, loving the things that you love, desiring the things that you desire, and trusting you with everything.

Help us then this morning. Do good in us, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen. So, Genesis, we've been seeing that God in his love has provided everything that man needs.

[5 : 08] Have a look with me, chapter 2, verse 8. Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden, and there he put the man he had formed, and the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground, trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.

Eden is a beautiful, pleasing, and plentiful garden. No wonder it means delight. Everything is there for man to enjoy.

Nothing going wrong, no sadness or hurt, no pain or struggles. And most of all, God is present. He's dwelling in the garden.

Man is enjoying his relationship with God. But there's something else, isn't there? Look at the rest of chapter 2, verse 9. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

You go, well, what's different about these trees? Well, for one of them, there's a test. God's beautiful design is maintained by one simple command.

[6 : 23] We get that command in verse 16. The Lord God commanded the man, you are free to eat from any tree in the garden.

So they can even eat from the tree of life. No one's stopping them from doing that. But, verse 17, you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

For when you eat it, you will certainly die. You see, our love for God is to be free and spontaneous. And the way to demonstrate our love to God ultimately is to obey him, is to hear his word and to do what his word says. Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

So, don't eat. God's command is like a test of their loyalty. It's not temptation. He isn't putting the tree there going, have you seen that tree?

[7 : 25] Go on, go and have a look at it. No, he's not tempting them because God has given them everything that they need. It's simply a way to demonstrate their love to their creator, God.

So, how did the test go? Well, first of all, we're introduced to crafty Satan.

Chapter 3 and verse 1. Now, the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, now, I'm sure right now you've got this picture in your mind of this really colourful snake wrapped around the tree talking to Eve with a juicy apple in its coil.

The kind of picture that you might see in a kid's Bible. Now, I don't think that's really a very helpful picture at all because we're not told what the serpent looks like.

In fact, at this point in this story we're not even told where he came from only that he's a created being. Look again at verse 1. The serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

[8 : 51] So, he's a created being. He's not the same as God. He's dependent on God and under God's rule.

However, as we read through the Bible account we do learn a little more. In Ezekiel we're given a description of an evil wicked king the king of Tyre.

And this king is compared or likened to a figure right the way back in Eden. Listen to how this figure is described.

You can follow along on screen. This is how God describes the king. He says, you were in Eden the garden of God. You were anointed as a guardian cherub that's an angel with a special role for so I ordained you.

You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you so I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God. So this figure in Eden was an angel who was created blameless but became wicked.

[10 : 10] Now as we continue reading on and when we get to the New Testament the identity of this fallen angel becomes even clearer. Have a look with me in Revelation chapter 12.

So keep your finger in Genesis 3 and go all the way to Genesis chapter 12 or Revelation 12. verse 12. Here in this vision Revelation 12 we're taken right the way back to the beginning of time the beginning of creation.

Genesis Revelation 12 verse 7. So here's the vision this is what took place. Then war broke out in heaven.

Michael that's one of the chief angels and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough and they lost their place in heaven.

The great dragon was hurled down. Who's the great dragon? that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan who leads the whole world astray.

[11 : 38] He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him. Let's go back to Genesis 3. So this figure who was an angel created blameless became wicked is an angel who had led a failed rebellion against God.

He is none other than Satan who was cast out of God's presence along with the other angels that had followed with him. But remember our concern is not what Satan looks like or what this serpent

looks like but how he works.

He is Genesis 3 verse 1 the craftiest of all the animals. Jesus spoke of him like this when he lies he speaks his native language for he is a liar and the father of lies.

The apostle Paul says Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. Peter describes him as your enemy the devil who prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour or as we have just read in Revelation that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan who leads the whole world astray.

You see when we read accounts like this we are not to get caught up in arguments about a talking snake. The point is Satan is real.

[13 : 25] He was present in the garden and he's present and active in the world today. So crafty Satan.

Second twisted word he's not stupid he mustn't think he's a fool. He cleverly uses his wit to twist what is clear.

In fact Satan's main means of attack is always to question God's word. It's subtle and cunning. He undermines what God says.

Look at verse one again with me. 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?

It creates this doubt doesn't it? It makes us skeptical of God. If God is truly loving would he not want you to have everything in the garden?

[14 : 35] I mean why would he not let you have everything? It's just so subtle. It's designed in such a way that we begin to question God in his goodness.

We allow ourselves to believe that God is well he says he's good but maybe he's not really that good after all that he's well he's actually a bit mean because he withholds things from us.

In fact the deception of Satan becomes self deception. Verse 2 the woman said to the serpent oh 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.

Well the woman is playing with the truth isn't she? You see there's a couple of things here God never said anything about not eating the fruit from the tree of life that was also in the middle of the garden they could have access to that and God never said look closely at verse 2 that you're not to touch the fruit he said you're not to eat it so she's putting words in God's mouth so that God becomes something that he's not you know what it's like we do the same don't we we read God's word it's crystal clear and then we begin to replay God's word in our minds and we add bits to it our kind of interpretation and we take things from it and without realising we've just joined in the act of deception believing the lie that God is not good and that he can't be trusted now we mustn't blame it all on

Satan because the devil's deception is matched by the woman's willful desire look at verse four scoffing she will not certainly die the snake said to the woman do you see what's happening from a subtle suggestion to a downright lie verse five for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil you see that's what the man and the woman want they want to be like God remember what the tree was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil now the knowledge of good and evil is not just knowing the difference between good and evil it's like not like an exam saying tell us what's good and what's evil that's great no it's deciding for themselves what is good and what is evil you see when God made the world he pronounced it all as good because

[17 : 48] God alone declares what is good and what is evil not us he knows what is best for his creation because he made us but that's not what man wants we want to be like God the center of the universe so that I can decide what is good or evil we want to declare what is right and wrong in other words well now we have no use for God at all because we can take his place verse 6 when the woman saw the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom she took and she ate fruit now the fruit isn't magical it's not like she eats the fruit and all of a sudden acquires this kind of

God-like power and kind of disappears and then reappears somewhere else and has super strength or something like that now remember the tree was a test a test to show their love and their loyalty to their creator God but rather than love God she loves herself instead of being loyal to her creator the woman is loyal to her own heart's desires she longs to be God you see the desire was there all

along Satan just capitalized on it and it's no different for you or I but what about Adam where's Adam well we're going to come back to him in a minute so crafty

Satan twisted words and our story this account we perhaps know as the fall you have it there on the heading of your Bible just above chapter three the fall how mankind fell into sin breaking the beauty of God's good design but this is much more than just history this is my story this is your story this is an account of your life because Genesis three is a paradigm of every fallen act that takes place it's a picture of how you and I fall every single day do we notice the pattern we question God's word we doubt God's goodness and we desire God's place come come with me please to James the letter of James in the New Testament comes after Hebrews I'll give you time to find it you might need to look up in the index where it is James chapter one because probably like me you read the Genesis account and you go no look if I was there I wouldn't have done that I know the simple command don't eat I'm not going to eat I wouldn't do that well look at the way James puts it James chapter one verse thirteen when tempted not if but when and we all are tempted no one should say God is tempting me we can't go around and say

God put me in this situation if I wasn't in this situation it wouldn't happen or God made me like this it's just my personality and character it's not really me no one should say God is tempting me for God cannot be tempted by evil God is not enticed by sin it doesn't have that same luring effect nor does he tempt anyone you see it's easy to blame others isn't it we can even blame God no God doesn't tempt but verse 14 each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed did you see it the desire is already there we are dragged away by our own evil desire and enticed when

[23 : 09] I sin it's not anybody else's fault but my own it's not my genes it's not my education it's not my family background it's not because my mother denied me chocolate biscuits I'm tempted by my own desire yes Satan can tempt too but he's only tempting he's only exposing what is already there the desire to sin is not put in us it's already in us it doesn't come from the outside as if we're some kind of perfect being and we're just corrupted from without no we are corrupted from within all of us so we can't blame our circumstances we can't point our fingers at other people and say well if you hadn't said that if you hadn't done that if you your sin my sin comes from my evil desire look what it says verse 15 then after desire has conceived it gives birth to sin and sin when it is full grown gives birth to death it's an unbreakable cycle you desire you sin and you die that's why

God lovingly warned Adam eat it and you will die desire it and you will die back to Genesis chapter 3 you see this is my story what happened in the garden happens multiple times a day in my life I desire God's place I doubt his goodness I question his word it happens when I shirk my responsibility at home it happens when I don't get what I want and things don't go my way I start declaring what is right and wrong I decide what is good and bad for me not God and not anybody else the consequences are devastating look at how

Genesis 2 ends Genesis chapter 2 verse 25 this is where everything is good verse 25 Adam and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame their physical nakedness reflects a deeper inner nakedness here are two people where there is complete openness between one another and with God nothing to hide nothing to fear complete transparency without guilt without shame man and woman with their loving creator in this perfect relationship it is pure delight now look what's happened chapter 3 verse 7 then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized that they were naked so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves their innocent conscience has been seared they've been blinded by their own self-deception and their willful desire and now it's all hit home guilt and shame flood their hearts instead of walking in openness they're now hiding and cowering once delight now there's fear what was beauty is now broken their own sinful desire has corrupted their hearts for good ring any bells in your life as we desire what we want and then look at the chaos that we leave behind us what was beautiful so often becomes broken where do we go from here what are we going to do well we have hope don't we so far it's been all about the failure of the woman maybe

Adam good old Adam can turn things around perhaps he can sort out the mess I mean after all it's the woman isn't it right who's making the mess but where is Adam well the problem is Adam is absent or worse still we say he is present but he's abdicated all responsibility remember before the woman was made God gave Adam the command it was Adam and God in the garden have a look back at chapter 2 verse 15 let's be clear about this chapter 2 verse 15 the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it and the Lord commanded who the

man you are free to eat from any tree in the garden but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for when you eat of it you will certainly die

Adam's role is clear he's unique Adam you're in charge here this is your role I want you to take responsibility this is man's primary duty to ensure that God's word is honoured and obeyed and it's going to be passed on to your family to protect your family from anyone and anything that would undermine or question God's word his role was to make sure that God's word God's truth would be the foundation of his life and the foundation of his family to teach them and instruct them and remind them of what God said in other words Adam I want you to guard your wife from anything that goes against what

[30 : 15] God says so when crafty Satan came where is Adam what what is he doing is he off somewhere else in the garden no look at chapter 3 verse 6 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 he's been there all along can you believe it he's he's watching what's taking place he's listening to what's being said and he hasn't even uttered a word he just joins in here's what he should have done in my imagination anyway we can picture the scene the serpent arrives

Adam and Eve there in the garden Adam speaks up I don't know who you are but you have no business being here Eve turn away don't listen to him don't even look at him Eve get behind me this could get very ugly listen to me you snake if you are going to get at my family it's going to be over my dead body no not even a whimper not even a squeak as a man and as a husband I'm embarrassed not because I could do so much better because what

I see in Adam I see in me as much as I try I have failed in my responsibility and the story has been repeated from that very first day in creation throughout history and throughout our lives men I'm talking to us we are M I A's missing in action feeding our own comforts lost in our trivial hobbies letting our wives take the spiritual lead I'm not knocking us just to break us and kick us even further down the road I know what it's like we feel that guilt but

I want us to see the great privilege we have been given the great and awesome responsibility that God would entrust to us to guard and protect our families to nurture our wives with his word to look out whether we're married or not but for all men to look out for the young women and the older women in the church I want us to see this we have a responsibility men to this remember Paul's words to a young Timothy listen to what he said treat older women as mothers and younger women as sisters with absolute purity give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need what a lovely picture how do you treat the opposite sex how do you look at them how do you view them we have a role and a responsibility

I don't know about you but there's confessing to be done we need a better Adam a better Johnny step forward into another garden come with me to Luke chapter four in Luke chapter four we're we're brought into another garden well it well it used to be a garden it's now it's now called a wilderness a place where we see the full effects of the fall where we see a broken beauty but here in this wilderness we see a better Adam we see the perfect man the true image bearer the [35 : 51] God man Jesus Christ must because Jesus comes to this world into a world where every human being men and women alike have fallen and failed we have followed our own evil desires and we are left with a broken beauty and into this world comes a God full of compassion desperate to restore and renew he is the promised savior the one who gives new life and new desires and a fresh start to all who will trust him once more crafty Satan appears he knows the threat he knows who this man is the son of God and he steps forward once again just as he had all those hundreds of years before in the garden to Adam he steps up again to the new

Adam verse one Jesus full of the Holy Spirit left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness this is no mistake this is God ordained this is planned and purposed where for forty days he was tempted by the devil he ate nothing during those days and at the end of them he was hungry at the weakest and most vulnerable time the devil said to him if you are the son of God tell these stones to become bread and Jesus answered it is written man shall not live on bread alone do you see as Satan began to twist and undermine God's word so as we go through Jesus responded didn't he as Adam ought to have done with the truth of God's word where everyone else had failed

Jesus has passed the test he has demonstrated his love and loyalty perfectly by obeying his father but he's doing it on behalf of all of us he stands in for us the perfect Adam it's as if he steps in front

of all humanity and says this is going to get ugly over my dead body will you get at my children and isn't that what Jesus did over my dead body dying in our place for our failures and our faults and protecting us from the judgment we deserve and yet three days later

Jesus rose from the grave declaring victory over Satan himself Jesus has done for us what we have failed to do so that by faith we can live a new life forgiven of all of our past given a fresh start this very moment as we come to him filled with his desires and his wants and empowered by his holy spirit to live the life he calls us to Satan knows his time is up he's a roaring lion looking to devour telling lies masquerading as an angel of light same old story twisting the word as we close please turn to

Hebrews chapter four familiar words for us all men and women as we trust in the true and better Adam who has stepped in for us and passed the test for us who has obeyed perfectly for us he now continues to be the perfect saviour that we all need in Jesus we have everything we need to stand up and stay strong in the face of every temptation chapter four verse fourteen let's read these words therefore since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven Jesus the son of God let us hold firmly to the faith we profess for we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses he knows our weakness and our struggles he knows our battle with sins and addictions and things we shouldn't do and say he knows but we have one who has been tempted in but we let me sorry

[41 : 26] I'll start at verse fifteen again for we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are yet he did not sin he let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence knowing that we will never be turned away or shut out no matter what our sin is but that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need what good news for men and women today as we seek to follow him grace and mercy for our every need let's pray father we can only stand back in amazement and awe and say thank you for

Jesus we look at the picture of man and woman in the garden and we see ourselves we see our shame and our guilt our hiding and our cowering but yet we look afresh to the true and better Adam living the perfect life for us dying our death for us being our perfect savior interceding on our behalf coming alongside us in the midst of the battle and the heat of temptation itself giving us grace and mercy in abundance for our every moment and every need help us that we would avail of that today and that we would stand strong as your people in your world help us we ask in Jesus name amen we're going to sing as we look and think about the story of the God man

Jesus Christ who came to us as the true and better Adam let's stand together as we sing come behold the wondrous name