

THE GARDEN, US & JESUS: SALVATION

14-19 *The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." To the woman He said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, but he shall rule over you." And to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain 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 plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

God created everything and it was good. He created man and it was very good. And the angels celebrated (*"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"* **Job 38:4-7**) You see the fruit of His hands. I wonder if Satan rejoiced with them? Something happened. "Take a bite" is the fruit of Satan. The Tempter succeeded. Sin entered into the world. Who's rejoicing now? If angels rejoice over the news of one sinner repenting . . . what did heaven sound like that day? But, this crafty serpent wasn't as slick as he thought. Seemed like a victory, but indeed he brought upon his own death sentence.

We know what it meant for Eve (this is why every woman may want to take one final swing on Eve in heaven) and what it meant for Adam. But, we focus on **Genesis 3:15**, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*

The new testament never directly confirms the fulfillment of **Genesis 3:15**, but it's crystal clear:

- There's enmity (animosity, hostility, hatred) between the beast and woman.
- There's enmity (animosity, hostility, hatred) between his offspring and her offspring.
 - **Romans 16:20** *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*
 - **1 John 3:5-10** Which brings us to the main seed.
 - **John 8:34-47** I point this out because you have children of God or Satan (such a brood of vipers) in this passage, but Abraham plays a major role in God's plan.
- He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. Now it's one on one.
 - **Genesis 22:18** *"and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*
 - **Galatians 3:16** *Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.*

- **Galatians 4:4-5** *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*
- You know the rest. You know the woman. Mary, this virgin woman, would give birth to Jesus who would save His people from their sins.
- The crushing of the head is a death blow. Yes, Jesus died, but was not destroyed. It was part of the plan. Jesus destroyed Satan's efforts.
- Then, the message which we've preached for 2,000 years, the message men and women have given their lives for, went into action. The battle, which was first introduced in the Garden, would start in the Garden of Gethsemane. So, as all spiritual battles need to begin, Jesus said His prayers. He didn't call His angels to deliver Him, but God sent them to strengthen Him. It looked like Jesus was losing. He took His licking. What shame as He carried the very wood they would pin Him to. The light of the world walked a dark road up the hill. What a dark day. "It is finished." I wonder if Satan was boasting to his evil fan base. If angels rejoice at repentance I assume his would have been rejoicing, but it would only last a few days, wouldn't it?

There are a couple of principles we need to understand about Jesus' death.

- It's true that Jesus turned the wrath of God away - He was the propitiation.
 - John 3:36 *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*
 - Romans 5:6-11 *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person - though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die - but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*
- It is true that Jesus was punished for our sin and His blood cleanses those who have faith in Him.
 - 1 Peter 1:17-21; 1 Peter 2:22-25; Romans 3:21-26
 - What you have here is the grace of God. His graceful nature has always been present even during the worse of times.

20-24 *The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever - " therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

- Grace may not come to mind in chapter 3, but if you slow down, you see it.
- God didn't kill Adam and Eve one the spot. He would punish the pair, but Satan is who He's after.
- God clothed Adam and Eve (perhaps the first killing of animals) and sent them out. It seems from the text that God didn't want them to live in a state that had fallen short of the original glory

forever. This is what we call grace. Not only did He save their lives, but gave them another opportunity.

What grace does:

- It drives us.
- I think it's good to appreciate what God did for us all: He provided for mankind, but even before the foundation of the world, He had a plan to save him through Jesus' sacrifice. We weren't an afterthought. You can see the love of God through His actions towards us. If that's true of God, shouldn't we be moved by the grace of God? It's been considered the heart of the new testament, but consider Paul's words in **1 Corinthians 15:1-11** *"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. **On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.**"*
- I'd said before in a sermon that the gospel message isn't "do better, try harder, but repent and rely." I still say I very much appreciate that principle, but we also need to remember that everything has a context. If we're talking about working in the sense of earning, then that's not the gospel message. But, if we're talking about grace, then it should result in a faith that cannot be separated from works of righteousness and love. This is a natural result of what's happened to those who believe. I'll remind you of **Ephesians 2:1-10** *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. **And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**"*

I leave you with a scene of grace: **Luke 19:1-10**

- I'm not sure if Zacchaeus was guilty of what the crowd accused him of. Verse 8 could be read as something he's already done or what he plans to do from that point forward (although, it would be hard to restore fourfold to every person he defrauded if he'd made all his riches unfairly).

- I do know that we're all bankrupt before Jesus. I know that this wealthy tax collector with authority didn't mind looking silly before Jesus.
- I know that Jesus saw His faith, not his riches. Jesus didn't have a problem being seen with him. Out of the whole crowd, he didn't go unnoticed.
- I know that we need to be ready to invite Jesus into our home.
- I know that Jesus' goodness needs to motivate us to do good. What does this do to you?
- I hope that, like Zacchaeus, you will receive Him with joy and that He'll change your life.

Colossians 2:13-15 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.