

# Where did it all go wrong?

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] different times when we're faced with hard situations, negative circumstances. I was asking that question just recently after I'd had a Hebrew test. One of the first things you get taught in Hebrew is that it's read from right to left rather than left to right. And so if I'd remembered that things might not have gone so wrongly. But we also ask that question in relation to much bigger events, much bigger things. We look at the mess of the world, the things that we see around us, the violence, the brokenness, illness, suffering, death, and the reality of the mess that surrounds us, whether we're a Christian or whether we're not a Christian, that surely brings that question to the front of our minds. Where did that all go so wrong? We all know deep down that things just aren't right. They aren't good. And in Genesis chapter 3, God tells us exactly where things went so wrong. Everything that is wrong in the world today, everything that isn't good is traced back to this chapter. We spent the last few weeks thinking about God's creation of the world. The fact that everything that he made was good. And that once he made mankind, he reflected and said that it was very good. We've noticed the good design for humans, especially the way that we've been designed to be in relationship with the living God. And then last week, we saw God's good design for marriage.

Everything so far has just been so good. And wouldn't it have been amazing if all that goodness had continued? But sadly, it doesn't. That's not the world that we live in today. In this chapter, we've read those verses. It's not just explaining what was happening at the start of the book of Genesis, but it's explaining the very world that we live in today. Explaining where it all went wrong.

And in these verses, we see a rejection of the living God and his word. And we come to see that the consequences are disastrous. In this chapter, we're first introduced to God's great enemy, Satan or the devil. In this chapter, he appears in the form of a serpent. And I know that maybe seems a little bit weird. And so if you're thinking it's strange, then it's totally fine to think that a talking snake is weird. But this is what happened. He did take the form of a serpent. He did try to deceive Adam and Eve. And it's worth just saying at the start here, I think, that Satan is very much real. There's a constant spiritual battle being waged even now as we meet together.

He is God's enemy. He's the enemy of God's people. He's completely evil. And the fact that we see so much evil in the world around us, I think it makes sense that there would be someone in the world who is known as the evil one.

So as we think about these verses before us, Genesis 3, 1 through 13, be good to have your Bible open as you work through. We're going to look at them under three main headings. And so firstly, we're going to see that God's word is questioned. That's chapter 3, verse 1 through to verse 5. God's word is questioned. You remember from a couple of weeks ago that God gave Adam complete freedom in the Garden of Eden. He was to work in it and he was to enjoy life in it.

[ 4 : 1 9 ] He was told that he could eat from every tree that was in the garden except one, the tree that was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Otherwise, he would die. And God gave this command because it then meant that Adam had the choice to make of whether he was going to trust God and demonstrate that trust through his obedience or if he was going to reject God's word and live as he saw fit.

Had there been no command given to Adam, then he would have had no choice but to obey. And so God, in his kindness here, he allowed the man he created to choose whether he would obey God or reject God.

And it's this very command that Satan comes disguised as a serpent trying to bring into question. And so he approaches the woman who'll later be named Eve and he begins his task of tempting her into disobedience. And his method of tempting comes in three stages. And as you work through them, you might find them familiar, you might have experienced them in your own life, the way he comes and tries to tempt us to sin, to disobey God. But at the heart of these different methods, what he's doing is he's bringing what God said into question. And so at the end of verse one, he says, did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And you can almost hear the tone in which he says that word, actually. Did God actually say? Straight away, he's trying to cause Eve to doubt what God said. And he then doesn't go on to just tell a completely blatant, outright lie. He's far more tactful than that. Of course, this isn't what God said. But he makes it as close to the truth as he can.

That's very nearly what God said. Now Satan knows, make no mistake, he knows exactly what God said. But he's trying to cause Eve to doubt God's word and to tempt her to reject it. And so Eve, on kind of first read, she seems to deal quite well with Satan's first attempt. You'll see in verse two that she replies, we may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.

And now Eve's response is closer to what God said than what Satan suggested. But when we look closely at Eve's response, we'll see that she's already begun to question whether this is a good command that God has given or not. If you've got a Bible, then look closely at verse two with me.

[ 7 : 33 ] We see there that Eve has taken away the word every. God said that they can eat of every tree in the garden.

But Eve said they may eat of the trees. And taking away the word every instantly makes God's command seem less kind, less abundant. We also see that she just calls God, God.

In this dialogue, we move from God being called the Lord God to just God. And the word Lord is a translation of God's personal name that he reveals to his people.

And Eve chooses to not use that name here. And by doing that, she's weakening that relational emphasis that these early chapters have been speaking about. She's creating a distance between herself and God.

Eve also adds to God's word. She adds to what God said. She says that God told them if they touch the tree, they will die. But God never said that. And Eve's response, we can see that she is making God out to be far more restrictive than he ever was. God gave so lavishly to Adam and Eve.

[ 9 : 09 ] And yet, one question from the tempter. And Eve is already making God out to be restrictive instead of generous and kind. Satan now steps it up a bit in verse 4. He then calls the living God a liar. He says, you will not surely die, which is exactly the opposite of what God actually said.

And within this lie, Satan is attempting to remove the reality of any punishment or negative consequence. He's saying that you can do whatever you please and there will be no punishment.

And suddenly, disobedience is starting to look all the more likely. If certain actions had no consequences, how much more tempting would they be?

Satan doesn't stop here though. He goes on, not just removing the consequence of disobedience. He now tells Eve in verse 5 that if she disobeys God's word, if she rejects his command, she'll be rewarded. Her eyes will be opened. She'll be like God, knowing good and evil.

Now, Satan now has Eve questioning God's word. She's thinking to herself, can God really be trusted? Does he really know what's best? And to question God's word is also to question his character. Is he really a loving God? Is he really a God of kindness?

[ 11 : 11 ] We can imagine the thoughts that were going around in her head. And for us reading this today, we know that she would be so wrong to act on these questions and on these doubts.

But how often do we begin to question God's goodness? To question if God really knows best? So often, those thoughts cross our minds as we think that we know better than God.

God tells us in his word how important it is for us as his people to meet together. And yet, how often do we wake up on a Sunday and think, you know, I really can't be bothered going to church. It won't really matter if I go or not.

I'll just go next week. And yet, God has told us in his word that we are not to neglect meeting together for a reason. And yet, if we're honest, some of us question that at times.

I question that at times. We question if he truly knows best. We try and convince ourselves that what we're doing is not that big a deal. But it's in God's word. It is a big deal.

[ 12 : 34 ] Or maybe you tell just a little lie. Because if you told the truth, it would hurt someone. Or the lie will make your life that little bit easier. And so you convince yourself that actually telling this lie is good. You decide that it's good, even though God's word says that it's sinful.

You make out that you're protecting someone. That you're doing the right thing. You justify it. But when we reject what God's word says and call something good that he calls sin, then we're rejecting God and his rule. We're thinking that we know better than the living God who created this universe. Perhaps you also say, well, God said this so many years ago.

If it was being written down now, then God would have said something more up to date, more relevant. We can say whatever you want to try and justify sin. But it's always us thinking that we know better than God. God's word never changes because God himself never changes. And God is a loving God.

And all his commands are given because they teach us how to get the best out of this life. When we find ourselves questioning God's word, when we find ourselves under attack from Satan, from the evil one, we need to trust that the living God, he knows best. He knows far better than we know.

And that he and his word are completely trustworthy. So in the beginning here, we see that God's word is questioned.

[ 14 : 15 ] And then secondly, we see that God's word is rejected. Verse six, God's word is rejected. Now Eve came under this temptation to reject God and his word.

And temptation in itself isn't sinful. It's giving into temptation that is sinful. Eve could have fled from the serpent.

But instead, you read in verse six, that she fled from the living God. She rejected God. And verse six is one of the most devastating verses in the whole of scripture.

We read there in verse six. Here we see sin entering the world.

God's created order was that man was to submit to God and to his rule. But in verse six, rather than God being the one on the throne, through their actions, Adam and Eve have removed God from the throne and they've sought to rule their own lives.

[ 15 : 46 ] They've rejected God and his word and decided that actually they know better. God told them not to do it.

And that should have been enough for them. If they truly trusted his character, that he is completely kind and loving, then they wouldn't have rejected his word.

But they doubted his character. They doubted who he was, his goodness. And they followed their own sinful desires. And we can see from what we read in verse six, that they felt like they did no better.

Verse six explains how good a thing eating this fruit was from their point of view. No mention of the consequence of death that God promised.

It's just all positive here in verse six. The woman saw that it was good for food. Looking at it was a delight to the eyes. The tree was to be desired, to make one wise.

[ 16 : 53 ] Forget what God said. This looks great. Why is God being such a spoil sport? And she gets Adam on board and they both willingly reject the living God.

Now why was Adam just standing beside Eve and not intervening, not protecting her from the devil's lies? Well, clearly because he too was deceived and wanted to eat the fruit.

Now this desire for wisdom, on the face of it, it seems fairly reasonable. Of course we want to be wise.

Of course you want to act wisely. But is there any genuine wisdom and a positive sense to be gained through rejecting God's word?

This wisdom that she desires is a wisdom that is independent from God. Whereas true wisdom comes from God.

[ 17 : 58 ] True wisdom depends upon the living God. And this verse is intentionally reminiscent of Genesis chapter one when God repeatedly said, as he looked at his creation, that it was good.

It was good. It was good. He decided what was good. Eve now in her rejection of God, she plays the role of God.

She decides what is good and what isn't. And she looks at the fruit that God said wasn't good, that she wasn't to have, and she declares that it was good.

She decides it was good for food and that it should be eaten instead of submitting to God. And as she works through all the positive reasons for eating the fruit, it's almost as though she's justifying what she's about to do, convincing herself that this is the best thing to do, making it seem good, which is something that we all do when it comes to sin.

But as soon as we look at what God's word says and we don't obey it, we've rejected him, his rule, and his word.

[ 19 : 22 ] We've removed him from the throne of our lives and we've become our own king, which is exactly what we see Adam and Eve doing here.

They reject God and his word and they do as they see fit. They call the shots. And that's a huge part of the answer to the question of where did it all go so wrong?

As you look around at our world, a massive problem is that everyone is just doing as they see fit.

God and his word has been mostly forgotten about in our world. And we decide for ourselves what is good. The problem is if we don't have this one standard that everyone adheres to, the standard set by the one who created all things, then everything ends up in a complete and utter mess.

It's partly because I might think something is good, but you might think the same thing isn't good. We just have this desire inside us to go around acting in a manner that we as individuals see fit.

[ 20 : 43 ] But that problem, it gets much worse when we see individuals convincing more people that what they are doing is good and they then get them on board with their way of thinking.

There's some big examples of that we can see. We see something similar at the heart of the Nazi Germany movement. An individual or group of individuals deciding what they think is the right thing to do and then making that happen.

Child trafficking, a massive issue in our world. I'm sure deep down many involved know that it's wrong, but they do it because they see personal gain from it.

They do as they see fit. Though it's bad for others, it's good for them, so they do it anyway. Terrorist groups that brainwash people into thinking that what they're doing is for the greater good, they act often convinced that what they're doing is actually good.

One of the biggest problems in our world is people acting like Adam and Eve in these verses, deciding for themselves what is right, doing what they deem to be good.

[ 21 : 59 ] They deem what God says isn't good good for themselves. They refuse to live as he instructs and decide that they're going to do as they see fit.

And in doing so, they reject God's word, live as they please, and they bring devastation everywhere they go. And it all stemmed from Genesis chapter 3.

It all stemmed from humans deciding for themselves what is good rather than trusting in the living God. God's word questioned, God's word rejected, and then thirdly here, from verse 7 through to verse 13.

We see good relationships ruined. Good relationships ruined. As soon as they sin against God, we read in verse 7, then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked.

And now the serpent did tell them that their eyes would be opened. But they did not expect it to be like this. Their sin has brought an awareness of nakedness.

[ 23 : 25 ] The implication being that sin has brought the feeling of shame. Last week, at the end of chapter 2 in verse 25, we saw that they were naked and unashamed.

Now, they are still naked, but they are no longer unashamed. And so they try to make a cover out of fig leaves for their nakedness to try and hide it, to cover up their shame.

And then they hear God walking in the garden and they are clearly not satisfied with their attempt to hide their nakedness. And so they run and they try to hide.

They are trying not to face up to reality, refusing to take responsibility for what they have done. And God comes and he asks Adam where he is in verse 9 and he replies verse 10.

I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself. The relationship between man and God previously had been good.

[ 24 : 35 ] God walked in the garden with him. they enjoyed life together. They spoke together. They no doubt laughed together. They were in a close personal relationship.

But now after sin entered the world that relationship has been completely ruined. They no longer enjoy life in a close relationship.

Instead man is hiding his sin has broken that once close relationship. It's put a barrier between him and God.

And he's died spiritually through this separation caused by his sin. And he'll now one day die physically which was never how it was supposed to be.

And rather than taking responsibility for this we see that he refuses to take the blame. He tries to shift it onto someone else. God asks in verse 11 who told you that you were naked?

[ 25 : 49 ] Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? To which the answer was simply yes. But instead what he does is he tries to blame God and he tries to blame Eve.

He says the woman who you gave me. It was her fault. It was your fault. Eve then blames the serpent.

That's like children when they blame their sibling. That's just a natural thing to do. They don't learn that. They're not taught that. They just know to do it.

And the relationships that we see all around us, they aren't how they're supposed to be. We're all selfish. We fall out. We don't take responsibility.

We see that they tried here to cover their sin. They tried to deal with it themselves, but it didn't work. And it's the same with us. Sin separates us from the living God and sin spoils our relationships with each other.

[ 26 : 59 ] And we try to do whatever we can to restore things, especially that relationship with God. We try and do good things. We try and say the right things. But no matter what we do, we cannot mend that broken relationship, that ruined relationship.

There's nothing we can do to fix it, no matter how hard we try. And so this amazing picture of what had been such good relationships is ruined.

And this section, it leaves us asking the question of how will it be fixed? How is it going to be fixed? The Bible tells us in Romans chapter five that through Adam, death entered the world and spread to all men because all have sinned.

And so if we keep that in our mind, then what we need is we need a second Adam. We need someone else to come. But unlike Adam, we need them to faithfully and obediently keep God's word.

We need them to submit to the truth that God does no best. We need someone to come and to succeed on our behalf where Adam failed.

[ 28 : 31 ] And the Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus himself, he came as the second Adam, as the last Adam, as the one that we need to restore these ruined relationships.

You see the tempter, he came to Adam and Eve and he twisted God's word and they were deceived. But we read in Luke chapter four in the New Testament where Luke at that point is really presenting Jesus as the second Adam.

We read that when the devil himself came to Jesus, when he tried to twist God's word in order to convince Jesus to sin, to disobey the living God, Jesus responded each time by quoting scripture and by submitting to it, standing firmly on it.

And throughout his life, he perfectly kept God's word. And he then faced death, the death that we deserve because of our sin. He faced that for us at the cross.

and that's where he dealt with our sin and our punishment that came with it, that separation between us and God. He came to restore that. And so all of us who trust in Christ as our great saviour, we now are no longer in Adam, but instead we're in Christ.

[ 30 : 06 ] Adam brought death into the world, God. But Christ, he brings life. Instead of being sinners who cannot come into a relationship with the living God, we're forgiven through faith in the Lord Jesus.

He deals with our sin and he gives us his own righteousness so that that ruined relationship with God is restored and that we now live by faith in a real and in a good relationship with God.

That relationship is for us here and now. We place our trust in Christ as our saviour, but it's also a relationship that goes on forever into eternity.

We will never again be separated from the living God if we trust in Christ. For the Christian, death no longer reigns, but life does.

And we place our trust in Christ. We each become sons and daughters of the living God. We're brought together in that sense with all other believers. We'll be together strive to put off the old self, to not be like Adam who was disobedient, but instead to respond to God's kindness in the gospel by striving to be like Christ who set a perfect example of what obedience to God looks like, what obedience to his word looks like.

[ 31 : 39 ] Christ was obedient even to death on a cross. And once we know that, our response ought to be to seek to be like him, to seek to live in obedience to God and submission to his word.

God's word questioned, God's word rejected, and then good relationships ruined through Adam. But as you've just seen, those good relationships that were spoiled, ruined because of Adam, are completely restored because of Christ, because of what he has done.

Romans 5, verse 19, and we'll finish with this verse. We read there, For as by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, the many were made righteous.

Let's pray together. Let's pray.