

Lesson 19

Corruption: Sin Enters the World

God's plan of redemption was in place before time.

Overview

Lesson Focus

Sin and death entered the world through Adam. The first death occurred in the garden of Eden when God killed an animal to clothe Adam and Eve after they disobeyed him. This first blood sacrifice pointed to the coming perfect, complete, one-time sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Key Passage

Genesis 3:1–7, 3:15, 3:21; Hebrews 9:22; 1 Peter 3:18

Objectives

Students will be able to:

Identify the purpose of the first animal death recorded in Scripture.
Explain God's provision for salvation from sin through the Savior.

Memory Verse

Psalm 8:5–6 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet.

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

God created a perfect universe—one that he himself called very good (Genesis 1:31). So when and how did sin enter the world? Because the creation was perfect, we know there was no sin at that time. We can thus conclude that Satan sinned against God and was cast out of heaven sometime after the seventh day of creation and before he tempted Eve. Satan's temptation of Eve and the disobedience of the first couple marked the point that changed God's perfect creation to a world filled with death, disease, and decay—all a result of sin.

In the account of the temptation and fall into sin from Genesis 3, Satan challenged the authority of God and deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:4–5). Adam, who was with her, also ate of the fruit (Genesis 3:6). This first sin was not just the eating of some fruit; it was disobedience toward a holy God. God now had to punish the sin and disobedience of Adam, Eve, and Satan (Genesis 3:14–19).

As they ate, their eyes were opened, and they knew they were naked (Genesis 3:7). They felt shame for their nakedness and tried to fashion clothing from leaves to cover their shame. These coverings were not adequate to conceal their sin from God. Nor were they able to hide from him when he came to the garden (Genesis 3:9). This is when they quickly and easily fell into the “blame game.” Eve quickly blamed the serpent (Genesis 3:13). Adam, in turn, blamed Eve then ultimately cast the responsibility of his sin onto God (Genesis 3:12).

God’s justice requires that he punish any disobedience of his commands, but his mercy allows many to avoid that punishment. The sin that plagues every human entered the world through Adam and was consequently passed to all of his descendants. The doctrine of original sin (demanding God’s justice) and redemption (displaying his mercy) is present throughout the Bible and is presented concisely in Romans 5:17–21. It seems unfair that all of us would pay the consequence of one man’s sin—but the Bible tells us that our hearts are deceitful and desperately sick (Jeremiah 17:9). If we honestly examine our hearts, we know this to be true. We would have sinned just as Adam and Eve did had we been faced with that same temptation. And that is why we praise God for his immeasurable grace through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:7). For it is only by his grace that we can be freed from the wages of our sin—death and eternal punishment (Romans 6:22–23).

There is hope in this account of the very first sin. Adam and Eve’s rebellion did not take God by surprise. God is omniscient—he knows all things. And he did not leave Adam and Eve in despair but offered them the promise of a Savior who would bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). Some Bible translations use the word “Seed” or “offspring” to refer to the coming Savior, Jesus, who would bear the sins of the world on the cross. This preordained plan for redemption was in place before the foundation of the world and would perfectly exhibit God’s mercy to sinners who, through Jesus Christ, would believe in God (1 Peter 1:20–21).

Historical/Apologetics Background

Sin entered the world shortly after the creation of Adam and Eve. Although Scripture does not specifically tell us how long Adam and Eve lived in the perfect creation before sinning, we can determine that very little time passed before the fall. Scripture tells us that God commanded Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28), and, because of their perfect bodies, conception would have occurred quickly. We also know that Cain, their firstborn was not conceived until after they had sinned and were sent out from the garden (Genesis 4:1).

How sad that they would sin so soon and that they would disobey the God who had created them and everything good around them. God had given them freedom to enjoy every good gift (Genesis 1:28–29). However, God did prohibit them from eating the fruit of one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eating from this tree would bring death (Genesis 2:16–17).

The very thing God told them they couldn’t have was what they wanted. Their sin led to the first death—the death of an animal that provided skins to cover their shame. This very first death was a foreshadowing of the sacrificial system

revealed to Moses for the atonement of sin and further pointed to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for the complete forgiveness of sins. Scripture tells us that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission” of sin (Hebrews 9:22). The first blood had been shed—it pointed toward the perfect, redeeming blood of the coming Savior.

This glorious account of God’s intervention in covering the sins of Adam and Eve gives us solid scriptural grounds to refute evolutionary thinking. Since we understand from Scripture that there was no animal death before sin entered the world, any fossilized remains of dead animals cannot be dated before Adam and Eve. Evolutionary thinking cannot be partnered with a biblical worldview. Anyone who says the rock layers and fossils are billions of years old are accepting death, disease, and suffering before sin when, in fact, they are a consequence of the first sin in the garden (Romans 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:21–22). Animals could not have been dying millions of years before sin entered the world since, according to God’s Word, they started dying after Adam’s sin about 6,000 years ago. When we maintain our biblical worldview by the plain reading of Scripture, we can confidently answer the questions the world presents.

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