

North Summit Church
Genesis 3:8–24
October 4, 2026
Judgment and the First Gospel

- **Life Chain Prayer Vigil - Today at the court house parking lot. Information on Prop 1 and the detrimental effects it would have in Idaho if passed.**

INTRODUCTION

We're continuing our journey through In the Beginning: the "Prologue" of the Bible that gives us the deep grammar of who God is, who we are, why we exist, and what went wrong. Genesis 1–11.

- Last week ended with Adam and Eve sewing clothes to cover the shame of their nakedness. They had just rebelled against their Maker and their response was to try and fix the problem themselves.
- Today we find out what God does next. And for someone who has never heard this story before, God's response is actually quite surprising.
- What we see is not a God who responds in anger, but a God who is grieved by what has happened, and while judgement is necessary, it comes with both grace and promise. The judgement is restorative not just punitive.
- **Here is the big idea for today:**

God's judgment on sin is real, and it is measured. And from the first moment judgment is spoken, grace is already inside it. God seeks, God sentences, God promises, and God covers, all as an overflow of His love.

READ: Genesis 3:8–24.

1. God Seeks Before He Sentences (vv. 8–13)

Genesis 3:8–13

"And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD

God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'"

God Comes

- Same verb as Week 3: God *walking* in the garden, the language of his dwelling with his people.
- Notice who moves. Nobody goes looking for God. God walks toward them, and they run and hide.
- His first words aren't judgement. They're a question: **"Where are you?"**

Three Questions, Three Answers

- God asks three questions before he passes any sentence (vv. 9, 11, 13). Verse 11 shows he already knew. These are not questions for his benefit. They are the chance to say what is true out loud.
- Now the answers. "I was afraid." "The woman you gave me." "The serpent deceived me." Fear. Blame. Blame.
- If you can't blame the person, blame the One who gave you the person.

Application: Answer the Call

- God still comes looking. He didn't need to discover where Adam was "hiding". He wanted Adam's honesty.
- **Fear and blame are our first language. Which one do you reach for?**
- We tend to be self-preserving, instead of self-sacrificing.

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

- Confession isn't talking God into something, or explaining why you did something. It's stepping out from behind the trees and agreeing with him about what he already knows.
- What are you hiding right now?

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2. The Sentence on the Deceiver, and the Promise (vv. 14–15)

Genesis 3:14–15

"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.'"

Who Is Cursed

- Count the curses in this chapter. The Hebrew word is *arar*. It falls on the serpent (v. 14). It falls on the ground (v. 17). That's all. The man and woman receive painful consequences, but the word *cursed* is not aimed at them.

Who Was Speaking

- Who is this creature "of the field" (3:1). It never says "Satan." The rest of Scripture does:

Revelation 12:9

"And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."

- "Belly" and "dust" are defeat language. Elsewhere in Scripture a beaten enemy "licks the dust" (Psalm 72:9; Micah 7:17), and Isaiah 65:25 has dust as the serpent's food. It says he will be low.

The Promise

- Verse 15 begins, "I will put enmity," which means God is the one who does this. Think about where Adam and Eve stood. In verse 6 they sided with the serpent against God's word. Now God breaks that alliance and sets the woman's line against the serpent's. The text doesn't use the word *grace* here, but I believe that is what lies underneath this consequence.
- "Offspring" is a collective noun, but the pronoun is singular: "*he* shall bruise your head." So we have one descendant coming out of a line. Hebrew normally traces offspring through the father, yet here it is "her offspring,"
- Galatians 4:4 says Christ was "born of woman," echoing back to this promise, Jesus is the promised offspring of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent.
- Christians have long called this verse the *protoevangelium*, the "first gospel.”:

Romans 16:20

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ be with you."

- Notice the "you" is plural: the church shares in the victory. Hebrews 2:14 and 1 John 3:8 tell us how the heel gets wounded, through death.
- Before Abraham, before Sinai, before David, God has already promised his own answer.

Application:

- We live on the far side of verse 15. The Offspring of the woman has come. The heel was bruised at the cross. The serpent has received a fatal blow through Christ's Resurrection, and his defeat is certain.
- So we don't fight for the victory. We live from the victory, and resist all the accusations of the accuser from it.

James 4:7

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

- Submit first, then resist. Not the other way around.

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3. The Cost: Where the Mandate Hurts (vv. 16–19)

Genesis 3:16–19

"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, and 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.'"

It Lands on the Calling

- Hold this against Week 3. The mandate was "be fruitful and multiply" and "work it and keep it." Now see what the judgment touches: the woman's fruitfulness (v. 16) and the man's work (vv. 17–19). It lands exactly where the calling was.
- The same Hebrew word for "pain" or "painful toil," appears in both sentences. The English hides it. Bringing forth children and bringing forth bread both now come through pain, hardship and toil.
- In Week 3 I promised we would get to why work is frustrating. This is why. And notice what it is not. Work is not the curse. Work was there in 2:15. The *ground* is cursed, and work is now done against it. And the bread still comes: "you shall eat bread." The

potential is still there and the calling and vocation survives. But it costs more.

The Two Sentences

- Verse 16 has a famous difficulty. The Hebrew word for "desire" appears only three times in the Old Testament; the other Genesis use is in 4:7 referring to Cain's desire for Abel. Some hear a longing for the husband that is met with domination and control. Others, comparing 4:7, hear a desire to control. And I think it means both. Both readings agree: what was harmony is now friction. It describes what sin does. It breaks and perverts God's rightly ordered Creation. The point isn't which ditch sin takes you into...It's that it is away from God's design.
- To Adam, God gives the reason: "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife." That isn't a charge against listening to your wife. The contrast is whose voice. God had spoken, and Adam acted on another.
- "You shall surely die" (2:17) was the warning, and the serpent said, "You will not." They don't drop dead that day. But they hide, the ground is cursed, they hear "to dust you shall return," and by verse 24 they are shut out from the tree of life. Death arrives first as a sentence and a separation, and only later as a funeral.

Application:

- **The thorns are real, and so is the sweat. They are not proof that you are doing it wrong. They are the reality of cursed ground.**
- **So don't expect Eden from your job, your marriage, your body, or your church. And don't read struggle as something to be avoided, embrace it because God uses it from us into the Image of Christ.**
- **The calling still stands, and it is being carried out in a world that is waiting to be set free.**
- **Anything worth doing is going to be hard, whether it is marriage or work. Trials and conflict are always an opportunity for growth and for living out our mandate, so lean into them!**

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4. God Covers and Guards (vv. 20–24)

Genesis 3:20–24

"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."

Eve Named After the Judgement

- Adam names his wife after he hears the sentence of death. *Chavvah*, Eve, sounds like the Hebrew for "life." That through the woman the giver of life, the one who would hang on a tree, for us, would himself become the tree of life.

God's Provision

- Verse 7: "they sewed." Verse 21: **God made**. And "clothed them." He does the clothing.
- Their covering never solved the problem. Even with the leaves on, Adam says in verse 10 that he hid because he was naked. God's covering is the one they take out of the garden.
- The text says "garments of skins." Skins come from animals, so it's a reasonable inference that an animal died. God provided what they needed, with his own hands, for people who had just disobeyed him.
- A connection worth considering: "Clothed" is the word used when Moses dresses Aaron's sons as priests (Leviticus 8:13). That fits the priestly thread from Week 3

Hebrews 10:4

"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

- Whatever those skins were, they could not take away sin. They are provision and a signpost. They cover the couple on the way out. They don't open the door back.
- Scripture picks the image up. In Zechariah 3:1–5, Joshua the high priest stands in filthy clothes, Satan accusing him, and God has him re-clothed.
- And Paul says it of every believer:

Galatians 3:27

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

- This was a covering we could never make for ourselves, God in his grace provided what was needed until that day when Christ would open the way and we would be clothed by His righteousness.

The Way Is Shut, Not Destroyed

- The text gives the reason for the exile: so fallen people would not eat of the tree of life and live forever. That punishment is actually God's mercy to us. Eternal life in a broken/fallen state would fix the brokenness in place.

- Notice the way is *guarded*, not destroyed. The tree isn't uprooted. It's closed, and the rest of the Bible is how it gets opened.

Revelation 22:14

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates."

- The tree of life, and robes, in the same verse at the end of the Bible.

Hebrews 10:19–22

"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

- The tabernacle curtain had cherubim woven into it (Exodus 26:31), the same guards. Hebrews says the way goes through the curtain, and the curtain is his body. The Bible doesn't leave Genesis 3:24 shut. It tells us who opened it and what it cost him.

Application:

- Fig leaves look different in every age: performance, reputation, the right image online, being busy enough that nobody asks the real question. None of them cover what hiding was meant to cover.
- If you are in Christ, you have been clothed. You don't have to keep stitching. You dress in what you already are: chosen, holy, beloved (Colossians 3:12).
- And the way is open. "Let us draw near."
- **STORY**

CONCLUSION: Four Things to Carry Out of Here

- **Answer the question.** God came looking, and he's still asking. Step out from the trees.
- **Stand in the victory.** Verse 15 is behind us. Submit, and resist from the win.
- **Work honestly with hope knowing the Curse isn't forever.** Thorns are the cost of the calling in a cursed world, and the world is waiting in hope.
- **Stop sewing. Put on. Draw near.** God made the garment. Christ opened the way.
 - Judgment is real, and it is measured, and grace has been inside it since the first sentence.

[Prayer]

Numbers 6:24–26

"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. God Seeks Before He Sentences

In Genesis 3:9–13, God asks three questions before he passes any judgment, and the man and woman answer with fear and blame, not confession.

When God comes close, which response do you reach for first: hiding, blaming, or explaining? What would it look like to answer "Where are you?" honestly this week?

2. The Promise Inside the Sentence

Genesis 3:15 promises that the woman's offspring will crush the serpent's head, and that he will be wounded in the process. Genesis gives us a promise without a name; the rest of Scripture fills in who and how (Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8).

Why do you think God spoke this promise inside the sentence on the serpent, and not later? How does knowing the end of the story change the way you face spiritual opposition today?

3. Work and Pain East of Eden

The sentence in verses 16–19 falls on the two things God had assigned: bringing forth life, and working the ground. Work is not the curse; the ground is.

Where do you feel the "thorns and thistles" most in your own work, family, or calling? How does it change that frustration to know it is the cost of living east of Eden, and not evidence that you are in the wrong place?

4. Garments God Provides

The fig leaves were something Adam and Eve made; the skins were something God made. We can't prove the skins were a sacrifice, but Scripture picks up the image of God clothing his people (Zechariah 3; Galatians 3:27).

What "fig leaves" do you tend to stitch together to cover your shame or fear of being known? What does it mean to you that, in Christ, you are already clothed?