

"What Happened?"

Part 3

Genesis 3

Introduction: Last week in our study of Genesis we stepped into chapter 3 but not too far. We considered several points last week:

1. The time between chapters 2 and 3.

Most likely this happened within the first week following Creation. The first baby had not yet been conceived and there had been given a command to be fruitful and multiply. There was no sin and so Adam and Eve would have been obedient to the command and the first time they came together Eve would have conceived. But the first conception does not happen until we arrive at Genesis 4.

I. The Ways of Satan

1. The target of Satan.

Satan desired to lead the human race in rebellion against God and to do so he needed to get Adam to disobey the direct command which God had given to him and then everyone from him would be born into sin. So to get to Adam Satan went through Eve because she was the weaker of the two.

a. He attacks those who are weak.

Eve was the weaker of the two in the sense that she did not know that the animals could not speak. Adam had part of a day naming them so he knew but she did not have that knowledge so the crafty serpent came, possessed by Satan, and she entered into a conversation with him.

Application: Satan's ways are the very same today. When God is doing a work within a church or when a believer is stepping out in faith for the Lord Satan will do his best to stop the advancement of God's kingdom and he will target those who are weak in an attempt to get them to do two things:

- ✓ Divide
- ✓ Discourage

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His focus upon the weak in order to hinder the strong is seen in the attack on Israel in the wilderness by Amalek.

Exodus 17:8

⁸ Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Then in Deuteronomy we get more of the details of the attack.

Deuteronomy 25:17-18

¹⁷ Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

¹⁸ How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

We also looked at another way in which our enemy works.

b. He casts doubt in the mind.

Notice Genesis 3:1

I want to recap what we looked at and then I want to take the thought deeper and bring it right down into our lives.

The last time we were together we used this to look at the importance of knowing the Word of God because Satan knows the Word. When he asked the question it was really designed to do 2 things:

1. He casts doubt upon the Word of God.

We must be grounded in the Word for if not then Satan will cause you to question the Word and He will put his own twist on it so as to lead you and me down a path of destruction.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

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The word "sober" means not to be intoxicated with anything. Some people get intoxicated with material possessions, some get intoxicated with relationships, some get intoxicated with shopping, some with sports and the list goes on and on.

The point is we are being hunted by the enemy and if we are "consumed" by whatever it is that has an intoxicating effect upon us we will walk right into the traps of the enemy. It would be the same as someone under the influence of alcohol walking into the flow of traffic. The results would be tragic and so it is with the believer who is "consumed" and controlled by the "stuff" of this world.

I say all of this to help you to see the need to be consumed with the Word of God. Read the Word and place yourself under the teaching of the Word.

2. He casts doubt to divide the family.

Let me remind you that Adam was given the direct command from God and then he passed it on to Eve. Therefore to question the command was an attempt to cause her to question if her husband had been truthful with her.

Application:

Let me just use this for a moment to help you to see that it is Satan's desire to divide and to disrupt the family: not only our immediate families but also the family of God or the church.

Mark 3:24-25

²⁴ And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

²⁵ And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

Satan knows if he can cause a division within the church or the family then neither will move ahead for God.

The Apostle Paul was very concerned about divisions within the church.

1 Corinthians 1:10

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¹⁰ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Let me read to you a story about a Pastor who went to watch a mule pulling contest. I will pick it up in the middle of the story:

Another large team was one of the most beautiful pairs of mules on the field. Well-muscled, pretty-headed for mules, they were ideally matched in appearance. And at least they didn't waste their efforts before the timer started. When their driver did tell them to pull, however, they wouldn't work together. Both were straining, but only one stayed on track. The other pulled out to the side, off the course. The cart barely moved. The mules were defeating themselves. They finally finished the pull, but at what expense! Several times the wayward mule pulled the other one off course, stopping the timer until both were guided back onto the right path.

What was it Jesus said about a little leaven leavening the whole lump, or Paul, about being unequally yoked together? Here was a perfect example of both. The mule who was serious and committed to his task was being deterred, defeated, by the wayward mule who wanted to go his own direction, do his own thing. They didn't share a common goal or purpose, or at least, only one mule recognized the purpose they did have. But it wasn't enough. Because just as it's easier to pull someone down from a high place, due to gravity, than to pull someone up, so the one mule, bent on going the wrong way, invariably pulled the other off course.

The cart didn't move much this way, but the burden and responsibility of the traces and harness were lessened when the mules weren't on track and directly in front of the weight. So they chose the easy path. And it was a shame. Had they shared a common goal and mind, these two mules were so matched in size and strength they could have had an incredible pull.

As the weight on the cart increased, and more teams were eliminated, it was interesting to see who remained. One team, not overly large or overly handsome, was inspiring.

They weren't color matched, and, in fact, were even a bit mismatched in size. Driven by a young boy they obviously liked, they worked as one, a true team. The minute the signal was given, the mules dove against their breast straps, straining and pulling with every fiber of their beings. The cart was now ponderous and heavy. It barely budged, despite the combined strength of the mules.

Then the boy began shouting encouragement, calling them by name. As if infused by some unseen power, the mules redoubled their efforts. Their muscles bulged with the exertion. They both almost fell to their knees as they strove to dig in and do what their master desired. One of them stumbled in the effort, but the other seemed to come to his aid, backing off for a split second until his partner was back on his feet, and then, they strained again.

No sacrifice was too great on their part. They loved their driver, and they seemed to know he loved them. They were friends. He cared for them, fed them, provided for them and was even in the

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traces with them. They'd give it all they had for him. Almost miraculously, the cart began to move. The little mules took heart as they felt the movement behind them and pulled even harder, straight down the course. The boy was with them all the way. As the cart passed over the finish line, the mules were clearly tired. Their heads drooped, and their breathing was hard. The boy dropped the reins and traces and came up in front of them to praise them. As he did, they noticeably picked up their heads and ears and straightened up in the harness. They knew they'd done well, and I believe they were as pleased as he was.

Watching them, I was struck by the picture they presented of the Christian life as it should be -- Christian and Lord working side-by-side. The mules knew their master and were ready for whatever he called upon them to do. They didn't get ahead of him or try to work without him or before he'd given them the task. They didn't try to veer off in different directions or refuse to work together because they didn't look alike. They had a common purpose, and they shared it perfectly with their owner. The mules complemented each other, making up for any weaknesses they might have had individually as they took up the slack for each other in the harness.

Both mules clearly desired to please their master. His encouragement and words were heard and heeded. Those words gave the mules the extra strength or power they needed for the mighty effort they made. They didn't question why they were being asked to move this cart, and they didn't complain or quit, even when they'd discovered the difficulty of the task, and their legs were buckling.

And the boy was with them every step of the way, He never asked them for more than he knew they could give. He guided them down the course, and he stood in the traces with them. When it was over, he was at their heads, praising them for a job well done. It was a lovely representation of Christ as He walks the way with us.

Whether it's in the home or in the church, division weakens the team.

In the family there are going to be times when you will feel as though you are dragging a heavy load as you lead your family in the way of God that is why it is so important that a husband and wife pull together.

In the church the weight can be very heavy as you serve God at times but if we walk in unity the goals will be reached.

If there is a division between you and someone else I suggest you make it right.

Matthew 5:23-24

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

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²⁴ *Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

We cannot be right with God until we are right with our fellow man.

So, back to our text; Satan's attempt was to cast doubt so as to divide the family because he knew that the family which was divided would not stand.

3. He casts doubt on God's love.

Notice Genesis 3:5

I want you to notice very closely the wording and the underlying innuendo within this verse.

Satan was wrapping one of his lies up in a very attractive package here. He was telling Eve that God had said to her and her husband they could not eat of the fruit because God was did not want them to enjoy the benefits of the fruit. You see Satan made it appear as though God was keeping something from Adam and Eve with the restriction He placed upon the forbidden fruit. Satan convinced Eve that there was no danger in disobedience and she would be much happier if she had that which God had withheld from them.

Application:

As I have said all along, Satan's ways have not changed. He does the very same thing to people today. He will place something before us which God has said we are to abstain from and he will wrap it up in a way that it is appealing to the flesh in an attempt to get us to reach for it.

Please know this that if God says, "NO!" it is for our good and His glory.

There are 2 points here that we need to pay close attention to:

1. The lie of Satan.

Satan will impress upon our minds that if we could just get that which God has withheld then we will be much more content.

2. The appeal of sin.

Notice Genesis 3:6a

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Here we can see that Eve entertained the appeal of the sin. I want you to notice that sin appeals the very same way today.

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

¹⁶ *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

¹⁷ *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Here in verse 16 we see that there are 3 appeals which we need to watch for.

1. Lust of the flesh.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food

2. Lust of the eyes.

and that it was pleasant to the eyes,

3. The pride of life.

and a tree to be desired to make one wise,

Conclusion:

How do we deal with temptation?

1. Resist

James 4:7

⁷ *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

2. Flee

1 Corinthians 10:13

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¹³ There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.