

3. Why is the world so broken?

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Date: 31 October 2018

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[0 : 00] Well, good afternoon, everyone. It's great to see you all, and welcome to the Tron Lunchtime Bible Talk. We are finishing off our current three-week series in Genesis, so please do turn to Genesis chapter 3 in your Bibles.

Here we go, Genesis chapter 3, and we begin reading at verse 1. Hear the word of the Lord. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, 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. But the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

[1 : 14] And she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate. And the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked.

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

And the man said to, 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. And the Lord God said to the woman, what is this that you have done?

[2 : 13] And the woman said, the serpent deceived me and I ate. The Lord 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 and 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.

[3 : 18] 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.

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 skin 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.

Let's begin with a little game. It's called Complete the Lyric. What comes next? I see trees of green, clouds of white, the bright blessed day, the dark say goodnight.

[4 : 25] And I think to myself, what a wonderful world. Well done, sang Louis Armstrong. When we look at the world we see all sorts of things that fill us with wonderful joy and such beauty.

And yet at the same time when we look at the world we also see things of great horror and misery and suffering. When we look into our own hearts we will no doubt see things that we are very proud of.

Things we've done in our lives that we want to proclaim to other people. Great achievements. And yet at the same time we will also see things that we are deeply ashamed of. Things that if they were revealed to the public we would never show our face again and we'd flee the country.

Or think of our relationships. Even the best relationships we have with people. Even they are tainted with moments of frustration and pain. We could see that both humanity and the world as they currently are are like beautiful ruins.

Beautiful ruins. Why are we like this? Why is the world like this? We seem to have come so far away from what we saw in Genesis 2. Why is the world so broken?

[5 : 36] The answer is found in Genesis 3. Let me just recap quickly. Last week in Genesis 2 we saw the Lord God made man for great dignity and purpose. He placed a man in the temple garden of paradise to enjoy a special covenant relationship with the Lord.

A man was given the privileged task of working this garden in order to spread it over the earth. To turn the whole earth into one big temple garden paradise. We saw also that the Lord made man a suitable helper for him to fulfill this great work.

Which is woman. And the Lord brought man and woman together in marriage so that they then could be fruitful and multiply. To have lots of children. To have lots of more little images of God who would join in with the work of spreading the garden.

We saw also though that the Lord puts mankind on some sort of a probationary period. A time of testing. In order for humanity to flourish. They are to choose to obey the Lord and his grace and his life-giving word.

Or they could spurn that grace. Reject the Lord's word. And go the way of death instead. And as we finish chapter 2 we are left asking the question.

[6 : 50] What will they choose? How long will this very good picture at the end of Genesis 2? How long will it last? Will they obey the Lord or not? Well let's look at what happens next.

And I like to look at Genesis 3 in three scenes. Scene 1. Sin enters. Please look at verse 1. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

Now it's clear from the rest of the Bible that this serpent is Satan. And notice please that this is not an invasion of evil from outside of the creation. Yes. As though evil had its own rival existence to God in the very beginning.

The Bible does not teach dualism. The idea that Satan and God are equal powers to one another. That's not biblical at all. No. The origin of evil here is down to one of God's creatures who was already in the created order rebelling against God.

Now we mustn't think of God and Satan as being on equal footing. Satan is obviously powerful. But he's still a creature nonetheless. And it seems at this point Satan has already rebelled against the Lord.

[8 : 00] And he wants to tempt the man and woman to do the same. And notice please that the name that Satan uses for God. Just look down. The name.

It says God. But in the Hebrew it's the word Elohim. It's the name used throughout Genesis 1 to emphasize God's majesty and transcendency. Satan avoids using the other name for God of Genesis 2 which is the Lord.

The personal intimate name that the Lord gives his covenant people. See what Satan's doing? He doesn't use that name. The close name of God. He uses the far off name of God.

Because he wants to depersonalize God. And make him out into a cold hearted distant deity. And just look what he says to the woman. Then it's verse 2.

End of verse 1. Did God actually say you shall not eat from any tree in the garden? This is Satan's tactic. He questions and twists God's word.

[9 : 00] And to do that of course is to question and to twist God's character. Really Satan has taken a false faith and tried to plant it in the mind of the woman.

A false belief. Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden? And another thing in his subtle tactic. Notice how he latches on to the only command that was given in the negative.

Yes? Throughout chapter 1 and 2 God gave all sorts of commandments in the positive. Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. Rule over all this stuff. Enjoy all of that great food. All of the trees. Any tree in the garden.

But just not that one tree. Because that's my tree. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. I say don't eat of that tree please Adam. Because the day you eat of that. You will come under the sentence of death.

And because I love you. And I don't want that to happen to you. I'm telling you. Please do not eat from that tree. It's the only command in the negative. And that is the one Satan goes for.

[10:00] He's trying to make God out to be some kind of a cosmic killjoy. A divine stingy spoil sport. Who's keeping the very best from you. Now of course if the woman had remembered what God had actually said.

Then she would have known that this is simply not true. But listen to her response. Look at what she says. And the woman said to the serpent. We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But God said. You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that's in the midst of the garden.

Neither shall you touch it. Lest you die. What has she done? She herself has twisted the word of God by adding to it. God said nothing at all about not touching the tree.

You see that she's added to the word of God. Which is just a series. A subtracting from the word of God. You see she's already starting to turn. And believe the truth.

Believe the lie that the serpent is offering to her. And so what does he do? Well he fires more lies at her. Verse 4. The serpent said to the woman. You will not surely die.

[11:04] For God knows that when you eat of it. Your eyes will be opened. And you'll be like God. Knowing good and evil. So what Satan is tempting the women to do here. Is to try and dethrone God.

From his rightful place of honor. Glory and praise. To put herself there instead. Just imagine. I don't know if you've ever stood up on a medal podium. Has anyone ever stood up on a medal podium? I've never. Because I've never won anything in my life. Certainly not sporting. But imagine in your heart. There's a medal podium. First, second and third. Where should God be? Well at all times. Every moment of your life. God should be at number one. In your heart. What Satan wants Eve to do. Is this. Knock God off there. And place herself there.

At the root of all sin. Is the worship of self. So. Verse 6. The woman exchanges the truth about God for a lie.

[12:00] And she worships the creature. The creature rather than the creator. She also noticed walks by sight. And not by faith in God's word. Just look at verse 6. So when the women saw.

That the fruit of the tree was good for food. And that was a delight to the eyes. And that the tree was to be desired to make one wise. She took of its fruit and ate. And where was Adam.

Whilst all this was going on. And the answer is Adam was right there next to her. What should Adam have done. Back in verse 1. She should have done this. He should have crushed the head. Of the serpent. Immediately. And protected his wife. And protected the garden. To fulfill his calling. As the leader and the head of the family. But he doesn't. He's a weak man.

And he too falls for the lies of Satan. Worshipping self. He eats and sins against the Lord. Let me just say. It's worth taking a step back here. And noticing. How sin.

[12:58] Undoes the created order. That God has stitched into his creation. It should be up on the screen here. There is the created order. That God has put in place in Genesis 1 and 2. God and his word.

Over the husband. Over the wife. Over creation. What do you see in Genesis 3? That is all flipped on its head. The creation. The serpent comes. Rules over the woman. Who leads the man.

Who both reject God and his word. Do you see that? That's not an accident. Moses is deliberately showing you. That sin. Is not just the bad stuff that you do. Sin is also to mess.

And meddle with. God's created order. It's just as serious. In the eyes of God. As our personal rebellion. And so verse 7.

Having believed the lies of the serpent. Rebelled against the Lord. And rejected and meddled with his created order. Man and woman become thoroughly messed up.

[13:54] And corrupted. They were promised to be like God. But if you look at verse 7. Do they look like God? The Lord of the universe? No. They look like they're full of shame.

And guilt. Desperately trying to cover themselves. So pitiful isn't it? Trying to cover themselves up with leaves. The beautiful relationship that they had. That was marked by intimacy. Honesty. And openness.

Symbolized by their nakedness. Well that's been trashed. That's no longer the case. And so they're now trying to hide from each other. They're in serious trouble.

And it's all because they believed the lie of the evil one. Let me just stop there. And say what's the lesson for our lives today? Well it's this. Moses wants you to know the enemy.

Wants you to know the enemy. Do not be deceived. Satan is real. And he wants to devour you. And to devour the image of God that's in you. He wants you to believe his big lies.

[14 : 50] And they're just the same today as they were back then. Did God really say that? Does the Bible really say that? No. Just ignore that. Reject that. In fact you can live your life as though you're number one.

You should be true to yourself. You're the center of the universe. You're the captain of your fate. The master of your soul. That thing that you want to do. Even though God says it's wrong.

You just go ahead and do it. Because you know what? You deserve to be happy. Still Satan's big lies today. Later in the Bible the Apostle Paul says this to the church.

He says this in 2 Corinthians 11. I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning. Your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

He's still the enemy today. Know your enemy says Moses. And know his tactics. So that if you're a Christian. By the power of the spirit of Christ. You may learn to resist him.

[15 : 50] Well what does God. How does God respond to man's rebellion? That brings me to my second scene. Scene one. Sin enters. And secondly.

God places his creation. Under judgment. Now in response to mankind's rebellion. What does the Lord do? Well he dishes out fair judgment. Curses.

Upon the serpent. The woman. The man. And it has massive implications for the rest of the creation. Let me just run through these. Because there's a lot here. We're just going to skim the surface.

There's not time to touch down. You can listen to what I say and read it when you go home. But let's just run through these. Verse 14. The serpent is given. Notice. A permanent stature of humiliation. He is made from this point on. To crawl through the dirt. To crawl through the dust. For the rest of his existence. But I think this is also a figurative way of saying.

[16 : 46] What will happen to everyone. Who sets themselves against the Lord and his kingdom in the future. Rebels will be brought down. Just like the serpent.

And verse 15. They will all be defeated and destroyed in the end. We'll think a bit more about that in just a moment. Verse 16.

Curses are brought upon the women. Just look at verse 16. We'll read that together. I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing. In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband.

And he shall rule over you. Now I take it that before this. The process of bringing a child. Bringing an image of God into the world. Was a joyful thing.

Marked without any pain. But not so anymore. I take it also in verse 16. It's not just talking about childbearing. Childbearing. But also childrearing.

[17 : 40] Bringing up children. In other words. This is the start of the dysfunctional family. Just put your hand up. If you find it hard to get on with the members of your family. Everyone's hand should be going up here.

Yes. If you're honest. All of your hands should be going up here. This is why. This is why. The relationship between parents and their children. Will be marked by pain and strife.

And notice at the end of verse 16 please. The battle of the sexes. Has begun. That's what's being described here. Instead of the husband. Leading his wife lovingly.

And the wife. Willingly submitting to his headship. And them enjoying their equalness. But their complementarian positions. They will reject that.

And what man and woman will start to do. Is try and dominate one another. Dominate one another. The little phrase there. Your desire shall be for your husband. It's actually the same phrase used in chapter 4 verse 7.

[18:37] You can read that later on. Where the Lord warns Cain. One of Adam and Eve's sons. Of the power of sin. He says to Cain. It. That sin's desire is to have you.

In other words. Sin's desire is to dominate over you. The same phrase is used here. In 3.16. Where he says that man and woman will try. And have and dominate each other. Let me just say.

This is the reason why marriage is so hard. In fact. If you're married. And you find marriage so hard. And difficult. And a chore. Sometimes. Put up your hands. And again. Everybody should be putting up their hands.

But it's true. If by the way. You bear scars. From marriage breakdown. And from divorce. This is why. This is why.

Well in verse 17 and 18. Curses are then brought upon Adam. And instead of working in the beautiful temple garden of paradise. He must work outside of that.

[19:39] To fight off thorns and thistles. In other words. This is why we sometimes find our work. So hard. And a bit of a toil. And frustrating. Work was meant to be a good thing.

A joy. Now it's going to be marred. By struggle. And verse 19. All men and women. Will now physically die. At some point in their lives.

For dust you are. And to dust you shall return. The Lord remained true to his word. That he said. Back in Genesis 2. And I think this is also a poetic way of saying.

That the creation. Will now start to fight back. Over mankind's attempts. To subdue it. The creation. Is going to start to fight back. Over man's rule.

That's why we have such things. That we refer to as. Natural disasters. Such things as hurricanes. Earthquakes. And tsunamis. I think we should probably better call them.

[20:33] Unnatural disasters. Shouldn't we? Because they were never a part of God's wonderful. Very good creation. In the first place. They are a consequence. Of our rebellion against God.

You see. The state of the creation. Is always closely tied. To the state of our hearts. Just think about this. We are rebels. And so.

We are now living in a world. That has been conditioned. To house rebels. We are not what we should be. And as a result.

The world isn't what it should be. If you were to trace. All the pain and sorrow. In the world. Back to its root. You would always end up in Genesis 3. In the heart of man. The worst curse.

In this chapter. Happens at the end. At the scene. Where God. Leads Adam and Eve. Out of the garden. Excluding them. From his special presence. Cutting them off. From a special covenant relationship.

[21:31] And communion. With the giver of life. They are cut off. From his blessing. Now what is the application. For us today. It should be obvious. Know how serious.

Your sin is. It is deadly serious. God hates sin. And since he is just. And true. And righteous. He must punish it.

You can see that plainly. From Genesis 3. And you know. The rest of the Bible teaches. That every human being. From this point onwards. Has been born. In Adam. That is. We are born.

Sharing in Adam's original sin. And inheriting his nature. His sinful nature. If you have time later on. Go home and read. Romans chapter 1.

Verse 18 to 32. Because that's the apostle Paul's commentary. On Genesis 3. And I'll just tell you. If you haven't read it. It doesn't make for very comfortable reading.

[22:26] In fact. It's very. Very humiliating for us. And humbling for us. Paul says that by nature. Every single person in this room. Has been born into sin. We are enslaved to sin.

Left to ourselves. We are all spiritually dead. Wrath magnets. We're excluded rightfully. From the paradise. And the presence of God. And we're strangers and aliens to him.

Moses wants you to know. Just how deadly sin is. And it is a disaster. When we reject the loving rule of the Lord. This is why the world is so broken.

Well you're going to be sitting thinking. Is there any hope? And the answer is yes. Even in this chapter. Which is one of the bleakest. And darkest chapters of scripture. There are beautiful rays of hope. There's many.

I've only got time to give you three. And even at that. We're going to scoot through them. First ray of hope. Is actually seen in verse 7. And it's the fact that Adam and Eve felt shame.

[23:28] After they rebelled. You might think. Well how is that a sign of hope? Well. It teaches us that God has not left mankind. To walk around in sin. Thinking that everything's hunky dory.

Everything's fine. The shame that they feel. Is a gift of God's grace. Because it tells Adam and Eve. That they're desperately in need of rescue. And they're not right.

Just imagine. If they had sinned. And they didn't feel that sense of shame. Would they ever turn to the Lord. And ask for mercy. No. Is the answer. Shame.

This type of shame. Is actually a gift of God's grace. Because it says you're not right. You need to turn to the Lord. In repentance. Second ray of hope. Is the fact that physical death is not immediate. The Lord doesn't wipe out humanity like that. Or creation in an instant. He could have done. And he would have been just. But the fact that he lets things carry on. Even in their broken state.

[24 : 26] That's a gift of grace. Adam and Eve will live on outside the garden. And by grace. They're still called to keep the creation mandate. The cultural mandate of Genesis 1.28. To be fruitful and multiply.

To fill the earth and subdue it. It isn't over yet. For humanity. There's still more to come. Third. And the biggest ray of hope. Is the offspring of the woman.

The Lord will raise up. A serpent crusher. Please look again at verse 15. Where the Lord of course. Is pronouncing judgment on the serpent. Says this. I will put enmity.

Between you and the woman. And between your offspring. And her offspring. He shall bruise. Or crush your head. And you shall bruise his heel. So the Lord by his grace.

He isn't going to abandon the human race. Completely to the power of Satan. The Lord by his grace. Has actually. Brought Eve to faith. In his word again.

[25 : 24] So that she will now be hostile. To Satan and to his lies. Just let me know. Just notice this. This is the very first definition. Of a believer in the Bible. Do you know that? The very first definition.

Of a believer in the Bible. Is someone whom the Lord has brought to faith. To go into conflict with Satan. Sometimes you meet Christians. And they're so concerned.

They think. I can't be a Christian. I struggle with sin. I struggle with Satan. Yep. That's what it means to be a believer. Christians have not been saved. From the fight.

They've been saved. For the fight. So the Lord promises. That this fight. Between the women. And the serpent. It will continue on. Throughout human history.

As the human race grows and develops. Throughout history. There will be two kingdoms. At war with each other. Half of humanity. Will be like. Or a portion of humanity. Will be like the women.

[26 : 20] Trusting in the Lord. Believing in his promises. And in conflict. With Satan. Satan. And the other rest of humanity. Will believe Satan's lies. Reject the Lord. And be part of his kingdom.

And as you read through the rest of the Bible. You see this happening. Let me just say something about the word. Offspring here. Offspring can be used. To speak about.

Or refer to an individual. Or a collective singular. It's rather like our word for sheep. Right. If I say sheep. I could be referring to. Just one individual sheep.

Or a group of sheep. The word offspring here. Is used in the same sense. It's referring to. One particular individual. And also a collective group. Of other people as well.

Let me just unpack. What I mean here. Is that. As you go through. The Old Testament. You're going to see. Descendants of the women. Waging war against Satan. And his kingdom. This will carry on. And on and on.

[27 : 14] Through the Bible. Until you reach Matthew 1. And then you read about. One specific individual. Of the women. One of the offspring. And he will be tempted. By Satan. But not in a beautiful garden.

Of paradise. Like Adam was. With loads of food. And a full stomach. No. He'll be tempted. In a wilderness. Of deadness. With an empty stomach. Starving.

And shattered. And yet. This one. That we read about. In Matthew 1. He will resist. The devil. And of course. We're talking about. The Lord Jesus Christ. He is the.

Serpent crusher. He will strike. Satan with the death blow. Through his death. And resurrection. And friends. The application for us today. Is this. Make sure.

You are on. The winning side. Make sure. You're on the side. Of the serpent crusher. The New Testament. Tells us. That all those. Who put their faith. In Jesus Christ. They will share.

[28 : 09] In his great victory. Over Satan. When Jesus comes again. To judge the world. Satan will be done away. With forever. And all those. Who have built their lives. Upon Christ. Will share. In that moment.

With him. And just listen. To what Paul says. At the end of Romans 16. He says this. The God of peace. Will soon crush. Satan. Under. Christ's feet.

No. Under. Your feet. The church. So. Who is the serpent crusher. Of Genesis 3.

15. Who is this. Victorious. Offspring. Well the answer is. Jesus Christ. And his church. It's both. If you're a Christian. Then in a way.

You are the serpent crusher. By grace. In the serpent crusher. And if you're here today. And if you're not a Christian. Then I must ask with you.

[29 : 04] Are you on the winning side? Moses pleads with you. Give your life to Jesus. And you will be. Just like Genesis 2.

Genesis 3. Genesis 3. Lays out a clear choice for us. Two ways to live. You can either. Believe the lies of Satan. Reject the Lord's rule. And face death and destruction. Or you can choose life.

Which is to believe. In the Lord's serpent crusher. And to share in his ultimate victory. And again.

What will you choose? Well let's be quiet for a moment.

And then I'll pray for us. Almighty God. We come before you now. With humble hearts.

Because we know. That we've all. Personally. Rebelled against you. And we have not treated you.

The way you deserve to be treated. And so we come before you now.

[30 : 02] Asking for you to have mercy. Upon us sinners. We praise you. That even when we didn't deserve it. You sent your precious son. The serpent crusher.

Into the world. To save us from our plight. Come to die. And rise again. In order to redeem us. Out of the kingdom of darkness. And into your kingdom of light.

We praise you. That all those who are in Christ. Will share in his victory. And can look forward. Into the future. With great joy. And great certainty. Knowing that they will live forever.

In your glorious presence. In the new heavens. And the new earth. And so Father. We ask that in the present. As your people. As we wait for that great future.

Would you help us. And give us the strength we need. To resist the devil's schemes. Help us as individuals. And as a church. To be protected. And to protect one another.

[31 : 01] With your word of truth. So that none. Will be seduced away. We pray all this. In Jesus precious name. Amen.