

BETWEEN FALL & JUDGMENT: A COSMIC INTERLUDE

Genesis 3:8-13

INTRODUCTION

A brief amount of time – never before, never after, never again.

An **Interlude** – is a period of time between events or activities;
in theater – it is any representation between parts of a larger stage production.

This is a true “gap” in Genesis – one we don’t have to suck out of our thumb and insert into the white spaces. The Fall has taken place, but the Judgment of God has not yet been dispensed.

- in between the fall of man and the judgment of God
 - sin has entered the world, but the judgment of God is not yet
 - there is no death yet
 - there is no disease yet
 - there is no decay yet
 - there is no Second Law of Thermodynamics yet

... But there is **disorder**. There is disorder of the mind. There is disorder of the heart.

Sin has entered the world, but it is confined to the heart during this short period.

➔ Pre-judgment glimpse of the heart of fallen man

Genesis Chapter 3:

➔ first temptation

➔ first sin

➔ first act of human religion

➔ first glimpse of the heart of fallen man

MacArthur – *“Like Lucifer, Adam and Eve fell so far there is nothing good in them. They fell so far that they are absolutely embarrassed and full of shame. They fell and an avalanche of sin is loosed that will never stop. They pulled a stone from the mountain and are horrified to discover the fatal rock slide will bury all humanity and its environment in the dirt and rubble of sin.”*

“**Repentance**” – making an about face

Gen 3:8-13 is the original reversal; a 180 degree turn about.

- The bad one.
- Everything has changed.

Adam and Eve went from:

Innocent to ➔ guilty

No shame to ➔ ashamed

Pure to ➔ polluted

Communion to ➔ conflict

Peace to ➔ war

They went from the voice of God being soothing and welcoming to the voice of God being frightening and they run away.

Ever since this time, the massive herd of humanity is heading in the wrong direction, south towards Hell.

Repentance ever since has been making an about face and marching back in the right direction, the direction of Adam and Eve in the Garden prior to the Fall.

READ Gen 3:8-13

Proposition: 4 Cycles of Examination - one unspoken and three spoken

So That: We understand the heart of the corrupt sinner/criminal and we understand the heart of the compassionate Shepherd/Judge.

- mind of fallen man ... manner of fallen man
- mind of God ... manner of God

Many people associate **Genesis 3** with the Fall alone, but we must understand that it contains the essence of the Gospel message.

Besides the first temptation, the first sin, the first act of human religion, and the first glimpse of the heart of fallen man, we also have:

- the first Messianic prophecy
- the first picture of the Gospel
- the first glimpse of the heart of the tender, compassionate, long-suffering, shepherding Creator God of the universe toward the sinner

... and God is seeking that which is lost

... and it begins here → in the interlude between man's fall and God's judgment

1st Cycle of Examination ...

I. The Presence of the Seeker

Gen 3:8

Point – by their actions (unspoken)

Proof – **Gen 3:8** – “**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.**”

As do all sinners, Adam and Eve run from God and try to hide.

This is something we see in other Scriptures:

Illustration: Jon 1:1-3 – “**The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up**

before Me.” But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.”
... Really??? You are going to flee from the presence of the Lord???

What was going on that Jonah thought he could flee from God?

What is going on with Adam and Eve that they thought they could flee from God?

Point – sin affects the desires (affections); sin affects the intellect (mind)

- it is a liar, it is twisted, corrupt and perverted; it is damaging

vv. 7-8 are tied together:

- man tries to **cover** his sin, in futility (**v. 7**)
- man tries to **hide** from God, in futility (**v. 8**)

Application – sin, once conceived, blinds the mind and desensitizes us to the presence of God.

1st Observation – It is utterly impossible to hide from God.

- God is omnipresent.
- God is omniscient.

Heb 4:13 – “**there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.**”

Turn to: Psalm 139:7-12

- David wrote this ca. 975 B.C.
- Jonah lived about 200 years later - ca. 775 B.C. so he knew full well what David had written in **Psalm 139**.

Application – The only thing we know that we will ever find running from God is misery.

2nd Observation – God is tender

“**the sound of the LORD God walking**” –

Hebrew grammar here for “**walking**” is repetitive (hithpael) → habitual

- there had been some amount of time in the garden when God would come and walk with them; that is part of the relationship they had with God

Theophany/Cristophany – a preincarnate appearance of God.

God is here with us today, right? He inhabits the praises of His people.

But we don’t hear him ... unless you have been smoking some “Strange Fire” that is ☺

- God comes in the Garden; doesn’t thunder down from heaven
- God walks; He doesn’t run at them in anger
- comes in the “**cool of the day**”; not in the heat of the day or the dark of night
- comes gradually; not suddenly

Adam and Eve are not immediately condemned to death.
There is not the lightning and peals of thunder like at Mt. Sinai.

- longsuffering
- Fatherly concern

Point – God loves us and cares for us even when we run away.

Application – If you are running, stop running and hear His still small voice as He calls to you in the garden.

The **Presence** of the **Seeker** to ...

2nd Cycle of Examination ...

II. The **Voice** of the **Shepherd** - spoken

Gen 3:9-10

Point – His voice is not an angry voice. It is a gentle, loving, patient voice. His voice (today His voice is the Bible - Sola Scriptura) offers salvation through Christ.

Proof – **Gen 3:9-10** – “Then 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; so I hid myself.”“

This is not at all like the picture one widely listened to and widely read evangelical (Lucado) painted twenty years ago of poor little god, wanting fellowship, wandering lonely in the garden calling out to Adam, “Adam? Adam? Where are you Adam?”

God knows exactly where Adam is. God is not wandering around in lonely frustration.

God is leading them. God is shepherding.

He is drawing out at this point. He is not driving out at this point.

Point – The Voice of God is gentle and filled with love

- we see tenderness rather than toughness

Proof – God could have gone right for the jugular but He asked, “Why are you hiding?”

The voice is not the problem. Perhaps you have heard “the most beautiful instrument is the human voice” If this is true of the human voice, how much truer should it be of the voice of God? God’s voice is the most wonderful of all instruments, of all sounds.

The problem is not the voice. The problem is the heart of a fallen man.

Gen 3:10 – “And he said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”“

Point – Before the Fall, before sin, Adam and Eve were drawn to the voice of God. Now they

are terrified and hide themselves.

Shame, guilt, fear ...

Prov 28:1 – “**The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, But the righteous are bold as a lion.**”

Mohler – “*A two year old is a very incompetent liar.*”

- Any parent understands this. You ask your child a question and they tell you more information than you asked. They tell you incriminating information.

“**because I was naked**” – what about the fig leaves??

- nakedness - **Rev 3** - Laodicean church is a picture of an unsaved church - they are naked in their sin
- this is the issue Adam and Eve have here

Application – You may be running away from God, trying to hide from Him. But the day is coming when God will call your name, and His call will make you come before Him.

God called Moses from the burning bush and Moses responded.
God called Lazarus from the grave and Lazarus came forth.

There is also the call of judgment:

Jer 16:16-17 – “**Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen,” declares the LORD, “and they will fish for them; and afterwards I shall send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and from the clefts of the rocks.**”**For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes.**”

Phil 2:10 – “**at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,**”

There is no escape from the judgment call of God. There is no hiding from Him.
Prepare for the judgment while there is still time.

3rd Cycle of Examination ...

III. God Speaks to Adam - second spoken

Gen 3:11-12

Proof –

Gen 3:11-12 – “**And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” And the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”**”

Point – The compassionate Shepherd leading Adam and Eve towards confession rather than condemnation

Point – God asks “**Have you eaten?**” rather than “Why did you eat?” - He is leading.
→ What is the source of your guilt and shame?

Literally – “Did you, from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat, eat?”

- there is a prominence of the “**tree**” here - three times in passage
- because the “**tree**” is the launch point of sin.

Goal: To bring Adam to the point of personal confession.

Gen 3:12 – “**And the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”**”

Point – we see the depth of sin.

- here is now apprehension, evasion, and deception
- this is what sin produces today

One dimension of this cosmic interlude shows that sin cannot ... ever ... be blamed on God’s judgment. You cannot blame the depth, the depravity, the disorder, the deviousness etc ... on circumstance .. or even any other siren song lie ...

This is similar to a courtroom scene. There is character assassination – provided by Adam and Even themselves.

- A simple yes would have sufficed.
- Adam becomes devious and defensive.

Sinners lie, squirm, and shift the blame.

Blame-Shifting – the criminal becomes the victim.

- Adam attempts to minimize his sin.

Man tries to **cover** his sin, in futility (**v.7**)

Man tries to **hide** from God, in futility (**v.8**)

Man tries to **blame someone else**, in futility (**v.12-13**)

Luther – in his commentary, pointed out that sin is progressive. Sin constantly extends and compounds.

“Unless God immediately provides a cure and calls the sinner back, he flees endlessly from God and, by excusing his sin with lies, heaps sin upon sin until he arrives at blasphemy and despair.”

Blasphemy?? → that’s where Adam is now

- Proof: “**The woman whom You gave to be with me**”

Calvin – “*Every one of us is, even from his mother’s womb, a master craftsman of idols.*”

Application – all of us should desire to get **convicted** rather than **caught**

- 1) Teach your children, counsel/disciple others
- 2) You!

4th Cycle of Examination ...

IV. God Speaks to Eve - third spoken

Gen 3: 13

Point – God turns to the woman

Proof – **Gen 3:13** – “**Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”**”

God’s question to Eve is more direct than His question to Adam.
Eve’s answer is also more direct than Adam’s answer.

“**What is this you have done?**” – Can you imagine the weight of this question??
It is a question everyone of us will have to answer when we stand before God.

Application – consider the seeker-friendly church. With marketing, contextualization, wanting to be viewed as cool, supposedly speaking to the culture – wanting to make the pagan comfortable in church → this is absolutely backwards from what we see in the Word of God.

- we want them to feel welcome and loved but not comfortable in their sin

Who is seeking whom here? **Rom 3:11. John 4.**

Is the tender, compassionate Judge here wanting to make the sinner comfortable? No.

Eve – the Devil made me do it
Adam – God made me do it

Illustration – Adam’s sin of eating the fruit was more obvious, more grievous.
Eve was deceived. Adam outright rebelled

In the same way ...Eve’s sin here is less obvious than Adam’s.

- She does not directly say, “the serpent whom You made”
- Nor does she say, “the man to whom you gave me”
- however, her sin is still sin

Indirectly though – God, you let this creature come across my path; You made this creature.

- every attempt to excuse ourselves is an attempt to blame God

The **Verdict** is in. **Guilty.**

The courtroom scene is over. The cosmic interlude between the Fall and the judgment is over.

A Commentator – “[Sin] numbs our awareness and short-circuits our self-control. We know what we are doing and yet can’t believe that we are doing it. In the fog of weakness, we want to stop but haven’t the will to do so. We want to turn around, but our feet won’t move. We want to

run and, pitifully, we want to stay.

It's the alcoholic buying "just one." It's the boss touching his secretary's hand. The husband walking into the porn shop. It's the teenager in the backseat. The mother losing her temper. The father beating his child. The gambler losing his money. The Christian losing control. And it's Satan gaining a foothold."

CONCLUSION

Adam's answer to God's question, "Where are you?"

- the most concise and best answer would have been – "**In sin**"

There is a bifurcation of humanity, either:

- 1) In sin;
- or
- 2) In Christ

What must sinners do?

For what can sinners hope?

There is a way of escape – only satisfactory clothing must come from God

The Verdict is in. It is "guilty". But God does not carry out His verdict immediately and to the fullest extent. He postpones it, as courts sometimes do. When God carries it out later, He doesn't do so on Adam and Even. He carries it out on Jesus Christ.

There are two categories:

- Either:
- 1) hide from God (in vain) or
 - 2) be hidden in Christ

Col 3:3 "For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

1 Samuel 25:29 "Should anyone rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, then the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; but the lives of your enemies He will sling out as from the hollow of a sling."

Are you hiding from God or are you hidden in Christ?