



In the Beginning

A study of Genesis Chapters 1 - 11

Christian Life Assembly

Jim Hoffman

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In the Beginning

- **The Judgments**

- **The serpent is cursed symbolically.**
- **Satan is judged, but not yet in time.**
- **The woman is judged with pain in childbirth and in her relationships to her husband and children.**
- **The man is judged with a cursed ground from which he must extract a living and all are cursed with death.**



In the Beginning

- Here is the good news – through Christ, all of the judgments rendered upon mankind can be *mitigated in this life, and eradicated in eternity.*
- Family relationships can be hard, but in Christ they can be greatly improved and perfected.
- Work may be hard, but it is given new meaning in Christ as we work for Him.



In the Beginning

- Genesis 3:20 Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live. 21 And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife. 22 Then the Lord God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” 23 So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. 24 After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.



In the Beginning

- Genesis 3:20 Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live.
- Adam had the responsibility of naming every living thing that God had made and he exercises that right once more.
- He names the woman “Eve” based on his confidence in God’s commandment from Genesis 1:28.



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- Genesis 1:28 “Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”
- So even though Eve had not so much as conceived her first child, Adam is going to believe God and call his wife “the mother of all living” even though it’s still just the two of them.
- Hebrews 11:1 Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; *it is the evidence of things we cannot see.*



In the Beginning

- Genesis 3:21 “And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.”
- This is one of those places in the Bible where we must view the text through the lens of all of scripture.
- Without the rest of the Bible, we could think that God was simply against nakedness and move on without seeing the richness of the text.



In the Beginning

- Of course, God did want to correct their “nakedness”, but that was not the main thrust behind the making of clothing from the skins of animals.
- Our God has certain principles that just do not change, not ever – and one of them is His disposition towards sin.
- God hates sin and He is not at all without a remedy for it – He will not be deterred by it, He will deal with it.



In the Beginning

- Sin always brings about death – James 1:15 “These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.”
- In the case of Adam and Eve sin brought about their own death. (spiritual and physical)
- If you want to argue that “you shall surely die” was a promise not made good on by God, you would be wrong.



In the Beginning

- Do not judge God by standards other than His own. God always operates on what looks like His own timetable, and that may be because with Him time does not matter. 😊
- Exodus 2:23 Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. 24 God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 25 He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act. (430 years had passed!)



In the Beginning

- Adam and Eve were on a march towards their own deaths from the moment they sinned – God declared it and God would see to it that they died.
- However, God is not obligated to behave in ways that suit our ideas of timeliness – only His ideas matter!
- There was going to be a process whereby the first couple would be judged just as God stated, but on His timetable.



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- So one of God's principles is that sin always brings about death – and that would happen.
- Another principle is from Hebrews 9:22 “In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. ***For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.***”
- In order for sin to be forgiven, something, or someone innocent must die and their blood must be shed.



In the Beginning

- Immediately after stating in Genesis 3:15 that He would send a Savior, now God begins to point to how forgiveness is possible.
- The appropriation of forgiveness will be bloody and it will be deadly because “sin is exceedingly sinful”.
- When God makes the coats of skins for Adam and Eve, an animal, or animals had to be slain, bled out, and skinned because of the sin of the first couple.



In the Beginning

- This clearly points to one the great doctrines of the Bible – substitutionary atonement.
- First “atonement” – just what does it mean in a Biblical sense?
- It is to satisfy the justice of God; it is to make amends or reparations for sin, it is to reconcile two parties that have been separated by sin. (God and mankind)



In the Beginning

- Two words closely associated with atonement are “propitiation” and “expiation” – the first is towards God and the second is towards man.
- When Jesus died of the cross God’s righteous anger was appeased, it was satisfied, and for the sinner, our guilt was extinguished.
- Some might ask you, “Why was God so angry?” and the answer is because *sin is exceedingly sinful!*



In the Beginning

- When we consider all the death, disease, crime, injustice, pain and suffering wrought by sin, who would not be angry with the introduction of sin?
- The question should not be why was God so angry with sin, but why are we not just as angry?
- Sin so marred the likeness of God in Adam that it took the Son of God becoming so marred that He didn't even resemble the likeness of man. (Isaiah 52)



In the Beginning

- Now let's look at “substitutionary” – what is the importance of that?
- The term “substitutionary atonement” does not appear in scripture, but the idea most definitely does.
- In our Genesis 3 text, way back when sin was first introduced to the universe, God begins to signal that while only a bloody sacrificial atonement will do, He will accept an innocent substitute for the sinner.



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- In fact, all of the O.T. Levitical sacrifices served a key purpose – to show the world that God will accept a substitute, a “stand in”, for the sinner.
- And while it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, the sacrifices of such animals held the “shock” value of blood for payment of sin.
- God signaled it in Genesis, refined it with the law, and then unveiled it on Calvary.



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- Heb 10:4 For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God, “You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. But you have given me a body to offer. 6 You were not pleased with burnt offerings or other offerings for sin. 7 Then I said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will, O God—as is written about me in the Scriptures.’” 8 First, Christ said, “You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings or burnt offerings or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them” (though they are required by the law of Moses). 9 Then he said, “Look, I have come to do your will.” He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect. 10 For God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.



In the Beginning

A Testimony About
Substitutionary Atonement



In the Beginning

- This is a fictional account of one whose life came to an end – do not hold me to every jot and tittle of what you might consider to be sound doctrine because part of the story is the recounting of the thoughts and feelings of a fictional man who died. I will read it as “first person” account and it begins like this
- I was told my disease would take me quickly, but I had no idea all that that meant – years ago I had committed my life to Jesus and took my faith seriously. I served in the church, I witnessed when I could, and I tithed from the early days of my walk with Christ.
- What I was not prepared for was the events on the day of my death – while I had received good solid bible teaching, somehow on this day it seemed like I knew so little that I was suddenly far less confident of my eternal state than I had ever been before. It was almost as though knowing all that I had been taught about sin, righteousness, and judgment were not helping me, but were in fact causing me great concern.



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- And the things I did to serve my Lord seemed like so little that to see them recorded would be like indicting me for slothfulness – what I did for Him, compared to what I did for me, when viewed through the importance of eternity would soon cause me shame and uncertainty as I reached the point of bifurcation between Heaven and Hell.
- I recall slipping out of this life and unlike so many that had had near death experiences with bright lights and tunnels and music, my experience was not like that at all – what happened to me can only be described as moving towards someone or something of great and eternal importance. And, the further I moved towards this thing or event, the more my mind churned.
- My mind was occupied with something so weighty that nothing else mattered – not the family and friends I left behind, not the accomplishments in my history, and certainly not any of the possessions I would no longer enjoy. No, my mind was void of any such “hangings on” – my mind was clear of all distractions with one exception; what will God do with me?



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- It would be easy at this point to point at me and say, “where is your faith?” – you trusted Jesus right up to and through your last breath and you did not doubt that He died to save you – why would you not be moving to this important moment with great confidence? Why would there be any doubt at all?
- There is only one answer to that question and the answer to it is not so much about faith as it is about justice – as I moved along in whatever area of eternity I was in I could not help but remember what the bible tells us about the justice of God. He is holy, He hates sin, and the soul that sins will surely die.
- That sort of profound truth resonated in my soul the same way it resonated in my mind before my death, but suddenly I was not in an academic exercise of what the bible teaches – no, for the first time ever in eternity for me I was about to enter the courtroom of God.



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- My guilt was unquestionable and my performance after receiving Christ was imperfect at best – at stake in the next moments was Heaven or Hell. My mind raced – what is my defense? I reasoned, I rationalized, and concluded that my only defense was that I had none other than to say something that seemed so unbelievable that even though it came from God Himself, I wondered so forcefully that I blurted out, “how can it be?”!
- For my defense was that though I was guilty of breaking God’s law repeatedly, and guilty of unfaithfulness to Him, and guilty of everything from plotting to do evil to just everyday garden variety indifference – my defense was that I was to be treated as though none of that was true and be admitted to Heaven!
- My defense when presented before the Living God seemed like something absolutely outrageous because I was about to invoke the “substitutionary atonement” defense! I was actually going to claim that my eternal destiny should not be determined by my merit, but should hinge on the merit of another One.



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- I would assert that an innocent man named Jesus of Nazareth voluntarily died and bore the weight of my sins for me so that I could enjoy the weight of His righteousness. And on this day as I stood before God - that exchange, my sins for His righteousness, seemed like something that not only could not be, but seemed to me like something that ought not be.
- So as my mind raced on this day, in this place in the courtroom of God, I pondered more seriously than ever before this question - How is it possible that I could be admitted to Heaven with my record of sin? Job once cried out, “How then can man be justified with God?”.
- God’s anger must be appeased and rightfully so – yet His own Son’s will for us is that we look to Him and appropriate His righteousness for ourselves. And as scandalous as that may seem, God accepted it, not as a defense for sins, but as a payment for my sins! It is unfair, but it is also true and on this day I realized in a real way the love and grace behind the cross.



In the Beginning

- I once saw the truth of the gospel through a dark glass, but now I see as Paul had in mind when he wrote, “ When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.”
- Today, after years of being in the presence of God it seems no less wondrous to me that Jesus would die in my place – that He would become my innocent substitute. I will never get over it!



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- Genesis 3:22 Then the Lord God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” 23 So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. 24 After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.



In the Beginning

- When Adam and Eve fell, God moved swiftly to atone for their sin and restore them to fellowship with Himself.
- What sin had cut off, God restored via the sacrifice of an innocent.
- Now He will do something for the first couple of perhaps equal importance – He will protect them from living forever as sinners.



In the Beginning

- Prior to the fall it is quite possible, even likely that Adam and Eve ate from the “Tree of Life”.
- Gen 2:16 **“You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— 17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”**
- The “Tree of Life” may well be what sustained human life indefinitely – it reappears in the new earth, and in fact there are 2 trees of life in Rev 22.



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- So if God restored them to fellowship with Himself, why wouldn't He give them access to the "Tree of Life" in order to keep them alive?
- Because He promised that death would be the result of their sin, AND because of the pain, suffering, and heartache that comes with living as sinful people in a sin cursed world.



In the Beginning

- In many ways we can point to the introduction of physical death as a merciful act on the part of God.
- Even for the unbeliever God is merciful in not allowing sinners to live forever in a sinful world.
- Sinners will live forever in a tormented state, but can we not see the mercy of God in not allowing them to live forever on the earth thus compounding the devastation of their sin.



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- After the fall and up to the flood it was necessary that people, both saved and lost, live long periods of time, many of them as sinners.
- After the flood, which was brought about by the proliferation of sin, the life spans of mankind were drastically shortened.
- This is the mercy of God – evidently, if you will not come to Him for salvation in a short life you will not come in a long life either and statistics bear that out.



In the Beginning

- Whatever became of the Garden in Eden?
- We are not told – one theory is that it was destroyed in the flood.
- Another theory is that God removed the “Tree of Life” and then let nature take its natural course.



In the Beginning

- At the end of Genesis 3, we have a completely different kind of universe than we had at the end of chapter 2.
- Adam and Eve are also completely different – they who were once holy and immortal are now sinful in their nature and destined for death.
- From this point on, history will be about the work of God to redeem mankind and restore the earth – and what a story it will be!



Questions

