

Genesis 3:1-7 “Did God say?”

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When I read the Genesis story as a child, I used to imagine it all happening in my backyard. There was our mandarin tree, lemon tree, vegetable garden, roses – and the tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – that was our clothesline.

- **Clothesline.**

Now, I don't know why I pictured it like that, but I think it helped me to make it real. But every time I mowed the lawn, or weeded the vegetable garden, I'd be thinking: “If it wasn't for Adam and Eve, I wouldn't have to do this!!” Adam and Eve is to blame for these weeds!

- **Blank**

Today – think of your backyard. Or if you don't have a backyard, then imagine the local park. Imagine it as the Garden of Eden. Imagine some big tree in the middle as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Imagine Adam and Eve walking around and God coming to visit them in the afternoon and have a chat.

The reason I'd like us to do this is to help us connect **personally** with the Garden of Eden. This is OUR garden. WE are humanity. This was OUR place that God created for US. And as we come to Genesis 3, we also need to recognise that this choice, to eat from the tree, to sin, was also OUR choice. There is no **blaming** Adam and Eve. There is no **distancing** ourselves from them. They represent humanity. They represent our choice. They represent our relationship with God.

So let's put **ourselves** there in the garden. And let's look at what happened to Adam and Eve. What happened to humanity. What happened to us...

Adam and Eve are in the garden. The serpent approaches. To Adam and Eve this is just some animal. A crafty animal. To Eve, and Adam, this is just a creature – a subordinate. Part of creation that is UNDER them. And the serpent makes 3 suggestions:

1. **Did God really say** ‘you must not eat from any tree in the garden?’

And Eve replies correctly. No, he didn't. He said we CAN eat of any tree. Just not that one! And she adds in – we can't even touch it! In other words, she knows not to go near it. But the serpent's **suggestion** is clear:

- Question God's Word. Did he really say?

2. Second, the serpent says: “**You will NOT surely die.**” God’s not really being honest with you. Again, the suggestion is clear:
 - Question God’s truth. Maybe he’s lying to you!
3. Third: the serpent says: “God knows if you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and **you will be like him**, knowing good and evil!” The suggestion is:
 - Question God’s motive. Maybe God doesn’t want what’s best for you. You can have more! Don’t just be his image – be LIKE HIM!

And this is the pattern of sin we see again and again in our own lives today – the pattern established in the garden. Sin is when we question God’s word, we question his truth, and we question his motives. Does he really love us? Does he want what’s best for us? Maybe I know better than him? Maybe I can be **like** Him and have more?!

Look at how Eve dives into sin – the same as us today:

- **(Need, Want, Desire)**

She sees that it’s good for food – “**I NEED it!**”

She sees that it’s pleasing to the eye – “**I WANT it!**”

She sees that it’s desirable for wisdom – “**I DESIRE it!**” I MUST HAVE it

And she took some and ate it and gave it to her husband. Just like that. I need it. I want it. I desire it. **I TAKE IT!**

- **Verse 6: “...she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.”**

She gave some to her husband “**who was with her**”! He was WITH her! There’s no separation of responsibility here! There’s no suggestion that she “tricked” her husband into this. He was with her – He heard it all. He knew the word of God. He heard the crafty arguments. And he took some too!

So what is the significance in the order of the woman being deceived, **then** the man?

This is poetic. In this chapter we move from the theme of CREATION to the theme of UNCREATION. The order **was**:

- **God (rules over)**
- **Man and woman (who rule over the)**
- **Creatures**

The deception turns that order upside down.

The woman is no more to blame. This reverse order simply highlights the disorder that sin creates.

But what it really highlights for us is the **pattern** of sin. Everything is upside down: Question God’s word. Question God’s truth. Question God’s motives.

We question God and say:

“Can I eat from that tree?” he says Yes.

“Can I eat from that tree?” Yes.

“Can I eat from that one?” Yes.

“Can I eat from that one?” Yes.

And that one and that one and that one? Yes. Yes. Yes.

What about that one? And God says “No”.

But instead of saying “OK”, we say: “Why not?”

He’s given us EVERYTHING. But with that limit – “not that tree” - he offers us choice. You see, without that limit, without that restriction, there **was** no choice. **Everything** was free to eat. But then gives us a limit.

He’s **not** saying: “Now, I’m going to trip you up!” He’s saying: “I’m going to give you a **choice**. I’m going to give you **free will**. You are made in my image. You can choose. And I’m going to help you make good choices because I love you. **But you are free to choose.**”

That tree was not a stumbling block. That tree was God’s way of giving us the freedom to choose. The tree represents the introduction of free will.

But we chose to question God’s goodness.

So we eat.

- **Verse 7: “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”**

Their eyes were opened completely. They saw good and evil as God saw good and evil.

- Porn

The best modern day example I can think of for this is the idea that you cannot “un-see” something. Think about pornography. Parents can tell their children again and again – you can go to any of these websites – that’s fine. Just don’t go to **these** types of sites. Don’t look up pornography. And if the child trusts their parents, they won’t go there. But the mind thinks: “Did they really say “**none** of these sites?” “Will it really be **THAT** bad for me?” “Maybe if I go there, I will be like my parents, knowing all about these things.” And they click on those sites.

And it’s all over. They have entered the world of pornography. They can never “un-see” it. Their minds have been corrupted and they’ve seen it all.

It goes the same for all the ungodliness in the world. Going after money. Going after power. Going after fame and popularity. Once it's tasted, it's very hard to "un-taste" it. But all the warnings in the world can't keep us away. Why? Because sin is when we trust ourselves more than we trust God. We doubt his word.

So what do we do? What do we do now that we are destined to sin?

Well, we need to look forward. Think about this:

- *In the Garden of Eden, God stood with man and woman and said: "**Any tree, except that one.**" And we chose not to listen. We chose the one we were told **not** to.*
- *Now let's go to the New Testament – to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus was about to be arrested and crucified. And Jesus is looking towards the cross and says to the Father: "**Any tree except that one.** Please. Any tree but the cross. **"YET"**, he says, **"YET"**, your will be done.*

Garden of Eden – God says to us: "Not that tree". And we disobey.

Garden of Gethsemane – God says to Jesus: "Yes, that tree". And Jesus is obedient.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus shows that **he had a choice**. He **had** free will. And he **chose obedience** to the Father. He **chose** the tree of Calvary. The tree of sacrifice. The tree of humility. The tree of the cross.

So Jesus is our saviour, but he's also our example of obedience.

We can make the choice to walk away from sin.

We can make the choice to be obedient.

Every time we are faced with temptation, we can make the choice to be obedient to God. But we will not ALWAYS make that choice. Because of our sinful nature, there will be many times we make the wrong choice.

So we **can** make the choice of obedience. And Jesus is our example of obedience – of how to say YES to God.

However... there **will** be times we fail. But because of God's great GRACE towards us, Jesus is our saviour for those times.

He's our example of obedience. But he's also our saviour when we are disobedient.

But obedience is **our** choice. Each and every time.