

## Genesis: The Fall of Adam and Eve

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Our reading for today is Genesis 3. Before we begin let us as always ask the Holy Spirit for the grace of understanding and wisdom.

### Prayer before (or after) reading the Holy Bible

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Come, O Holy Spirit,  
and fill us with the gifts of knowledge and wisdom.  
Strengthen us, we pray, with heavenly grace,  
so that we may grasp with our minds,  
treasure in our hearts,  
and carry out in our deeds,  
all the teachings of your Holy Book  
which lead to salvation.  
Amen.



In our last reflection Adam and Eve were living in a state of original holiness. There was harmony in their relationship with God their Creator and all was well with the world. However, the serpent more commonly known to us as the devil, enters the picture and begins to distort the truth. When Eve responds to the serpents sly question about the commandment of not eating from a particular tree the devil replies:

***‘God knows in fact on the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.’ (Gn 3:5)***

Humanity is tempted to turn away from God, ignore the many gifts and blessings the Creator has lovingly bestowed upon them and arrogantly make themselves mini deities. Like the petulant child who steals the paper crown and declares himself to be *‘King of the Castle’*, so Adam and Eve do the same thing. Their promised deification by the devil comes to nothing as they find themselves outside paradise and a little less human. Their deliberate and conscious turning away from God and tasting the forbidden fruit breaks the harmonious relationship with the Creator. Sin enters the world as well as suffering and death. The good news is that these barriers and obstacles put up by man will be healed by the coming of Jesus Christ in the future but there is much preparation to be done before this great act of God’s saving mercy will take place.



Not only has Adam and Eve's sin broken down their relationship with God but it has sown the seeds of distrust between themselves as a couple.

*'...I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.'* (Gn 3:10) Adam recognises that he cannot hide his failings before God though he may attempt to. His shame at being naked is really the shame of his sin being exposed before the Creator. In his weakness he turns against his wife and tries to blame everything on her.

*'The man replied, 'It was the woman you put with me; she gave me the fruit and I ate it.'* (Gn 3:12). Eve in turn tries to avoid responsibility and blames the devil.

*'The woman replied, 'The serpent tempted me and I ate.'* (Gn 3:13) Nobody wants to own up and say *'Sorry God, I did wrong.'* This continues today when people are all eager to line up for Holy Communion, all eager to receive the Lord's blessings but will make up feeble excuses about not attending the Sacrament of Confession. The very Sacrament instituted by Jesus, not a man, to bring mercy and forgiveness yet still like Adam and Eve there is a reluctance to say *'I'm sorry God, I take responsibility for my actions.'*

This episode in Genesis is often called **The Fall** and we move from the state of original holiness where all was perfect to original sin where pain suffering and death enters into the world. From the moment we are born the consequences of Adam and Eve's sinfulness infects us all. However, there is hope and good news. Do read Gen 3:14–15. This passage is known as the protoevangelium – the first Gospel – it is a revelation of God's mercy in Scripture. Let's unpack it.

Firstly God crushes the devil. He will continue to tempt and distract us but he has no power over us unless we freely choose to submit to his wiles rather than God's love and mercy. Secondly the line, *'I will make you enemies of each other: you and the woman, your offspring and her offspring.'* (Gn 3:15). The imagery so obviously draws us to our Blessed Mother and the blessed fruit of her womb – Jesus Christ. Already at the start of our faith history Mary and our Lord are with us. The Catholic Biblical scholar Brant Pitre writes:

*'...the new Eve, Mary is the supreme example of what God's grace can do in a mere creature.*

*She helps us see clearly that the 'good news' of salvation is about undoing the effects of the fall of Adam and Eve and becoming a 'new creation' in Christ.'*

(Brant Pitre, Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary).

The protoevangelium foreshadows the new Adam and the new Eve – Jesus and Mary. The old Adam and the Old Eve were disobedient and therefore freely chose to walk away from God thinking they knew better. Our Lord and Blessed Mother did the opposite and freely, lovingly obeyed God and did His will which brought life back into the world.

*'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.'*  
(Lk 1:38)

*'Father,' he [Jesus] said 'if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, let your will be done, not mine.'* (Lk 22:42)



Our next stop on the tour of Genesis will be to visit the story of Cain and Abel.

God Bless, keep safe and keep praying.

Do continue to visit the parish website for further information and future updates

Fr. O'Brien