

December 24th 2023
God With Us Christmas Eve Service

Genesis 3:12-15

12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” **13** Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14 The Lord God 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. **15** 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.”

When God had looked at His creation (Before Adam and Eve) and all the living creatures, He said that they were “good” and He was pleased. And God could have stopped right there.

I want you to think about this, If **God did NOT create Adam and Eve**, then the Lord would just look at His creation and be at peace. He wouldn't have to deal with all the headaches mankind. **He wouldn't not have to deal with the sin, the rebellion and disobedience** that comes from man kind. God could have simply just stopped it right there with the plants and animals.

But God decided to create man in His own image and in His own likeness. The question is why? **Why would God create man knowing that man would disobey Him?**

God is an **Omniscient** (all knowing) God. God is also an **Omnipresent** (Present everywhere simultaneously) God. So from the very beginning, then why would God create man, knowing that man would disobey Him?

Let's set the context:

God creates earth and He created Adam and Eve. He plants two important trees. One called the “**tree of life**” and the other “**tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**” And, God gives a divine command, “***Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.***”

Satan then comes down in the form of a serpent and tempts (gives temptation) Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So Adam and Eve both fall into temptation and end's **up disobeying God's divine order.** Now here, in their disobedience, God could have simply ended them.

But instead of killing Adam and Eve, God decides to bring **mercy to the sinners.** And on top of that, God **decides to give a promise** about a **future prophecy** of man who will come in flesh to save all mankind.

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14 The Lord God said to the serpent (**Satan**), “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.**15** I will put **enmity** between you and the woman, and between **your offspring** and her offspring; **he shall bruise your head**, and you (**Satan**) shall bruise his heel.”

Now let me put verse 15 into a verse that we can understand:

15 I will put enmity (hatred: **intense hostility, a deep rooted hatred**) between you (Satan) and the woman (Eve), and between your offspring (Satan's seed: Devil's spirit, obey the Devil), and her offspring (Woman's seed); he (Jesus) shall **bruise** (Hebrew: šûp pronounced shoof: meaning to **crush and destroy the works of Satan**), and you (Satan) shall (only) bruise (hurt, injure, break) his (Jesus') heel."

"enmity":

James 4:4

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity (**hatred**) with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Remember, Satan's goal and purpose is to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10).

"you (Satan) shall bruise his heel" Satan only bruised, hurt, break Jesus at the cross on **"Good Friday"** but he did not destroy Jesus because He rose from the grave to give us **victory over our sin**. That is **Jesus crushing the head of the serpent**. [This promise in the future will come and God will give victory to all who receive Him.]

So here is Adam and Eve, they sinned against God. They disobeyed God's divine command. **From this point on a major war breaks out between these two seeds or offsprings**. The descendants of Satan battling with the descendants of Eve, the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman. And we the "believers" are in the battle.

So when the **Israelites, who are the seeds of the Woman**, were enslaved in Egypt for over 400 years, and they cried out to the Lord for help. God comes and rescues them.

And after saving the Israelites God called them to build a tabernacle, a **place where God can dwell with His people**. Tabernacle means "place of meeting" or "tent of meeting,"

God wants to meet with His people. So God has the Israelites create inside the tabernacle a place called the **Holy of Holies**, where there is the **ark of the covenant**. (Inside is the Ten Commandment)

[Show ark of the covenant]

On top of the ark of the covenant, you find the lid of the covenant called the "**mercy seat**." It's called a "mercy seat": where the High Priest takes all the confessions and the sins of the people and he takes the blood of the animal sacrifice and sprinkles it on the lid.

Because of the confessions, brings upon God's forgiveness, And, His mercy comes upon all those confess before God and His judgement will not be upon us. God is a merciful **God who dwells with His people**.

This is a beautiful picture the tabernacle (**That an almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, would come down to mankind and dwell with His people**). So from the **very beginning**, we have a picture that **God is with us**.

What is very interesting is that in Genesis, we see **God was dwelling with Adam and Eve** and we see the **same picture of God in the tabernacle**. You have the Israelites living next to God. **God with us**.

How do we know that we are the descendants of the woman and not the descendants of Satan? How will the people know that they are the seed or the offspring of the woman and not the seed or the offspring of the Satan?

[Show the poster board]

God gives us detailed instructions in the book of Leviticus that tells us to “**Be holy as I am Holy**” because I want to dwell with you. Your sin will separate us from a Holy God.

In Leviticus He gives us clear instructions on what what is considered Holy and what is sinful. God teaches us on how we can go from being sinful to life and how can we not profane the things of God.

Matthew 23:33

You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?

Jesus is telling them that you are the seed of Satan. You are the offspring of the devil.

[Leviticus] Thus, ***when we follow the instructions of God and obey His voice, you are the descendants of Eve*** and when you disobey God, you become the descendants of the devil. You have the spirit of Satan. Jesus said, “**you serpents, you brood of vipers.**”

So it is very clear in Leviticus that God wants to be with His people. That is why He tells people to be Holy as He is Holy.

So God reminds them in **Deuteronomy** that you are His chosen people and that God is with you. One of the ways you do that is by having a tassel on your garment.

Tassels: God commanded Israel to wear tassels (**Deut. 22:12**) and that they include a **blue cord as part of the garment (Num. 15:37-41)**. The “Tassels” was to remind the Israelites of ***who they were and of the commandments that they were to obey***, and that is how you know that God is with you.

The First Prayer after putting on the “Prayer Shawl” Now there are **three prayers each day**, but we’ll just repeat half of one for today.

The ***Shema Israel Prayer***

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6** And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. **7** You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Again these are a reminder that God wants to dwell with His people.

And again, just like the Adam and Eve, the people disobey and rebel against God. So God reminds the people with another promise and with another prophecy in **Daniel 7:13-14**.

Daniel 7:13-14 New Living Translation

13 As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. **14** He was given authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

Daniel has a vision, and not just any kind of vision, but a vision that the Father in heaven has a throne but not just any kind of throne but a fiery throne of judgment.

Daniel 7:9 New Living Translation

I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient One sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like purest wool. He sat on a **fiery throne with wheels of blazing fire**,

Once again in the future, there is going to be judgment upon mankind for our disobedience. ***But then again, God still wants to dwell with His people.*** So in the future, God is going to bring forth a "**son of man coming down from the clouds of heaven**" who is given immense power and authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world.

The prophet Daniel is saying that there will be a **long-awaited Savior** that will come, that was promised all the way back in Genesis 3:15.

And again, just like Adam and Eve the people rebel and sin against God. But then again, ***God's mercy comes.*** And then Isaiah the prophet who was born 700 years before the birth of Jesus says these amazing words:

Isaiah 7:13-14 New Living Translation

13 Then Isaiah said, "Listen well, you royal family of David! Isn't it enough to exhaust human patience? Must you exhaust the patience of my God as well? **14** All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and **will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us')**."

Here the prophet is talking to King Ahaz. Remember Ahaz was an evil king of Judah who only lasted for about 4 years. King Ahaz's destructive practices, such as idol worship and sacrilege against the temple of the Lord.

In **Isaiah 7:12**, King Ahaz who wants to see a miraculous sign from God because of the invading armies that are to come. **So Isaiah gives King Ahaz a supernatural sign:** (now it was going to be way into the future) He foretells that the promised Messiah (Savior), that a man will be born from the seed of a woman, **who will conceive child, without an earthy man. There will be no man but from a virgin birth.**

This was going to be a supernatural birth and the child's name will be called **Immanuel** (God with us).

Matthew 1:23

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, **God with us**).

So the question is asked, why? **Why does God want to be with us?** **“God, you could have stopped with the animals and not deal with any headaches of man.”** We have disobeyed you from the very beginning, but yet from the very beginning, God wants to be with His people. Why?

We have to go back to the very beginning of His creation to get the answer. Remember, Adam and Eve disobeyed a divine command which deserves death. So Adam and Eve go into hiding hoping that God doesn't find out about their sin.

Genesis 3:8-9

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. **9** But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, **“Where are you?”**

“Sound of Lord God walking in the Garden”: Wait a minute, God created the heavens and the earth, so He doesn’t need to walk on the garden, right. Meaning, **God does not have to dwell with Adam and Eve.** He could have simply just observed the beauty of His creation from the distance. From the distance, ***God could have talked to Adam and Eve.***

But from the very beginning we see that God is dwelling with Adam and Eve. **That is the original design of God:** That an almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth would be among His people.

God wants to be with Adam and Eve knowing that they would sin. God’s desire is to be with His people. **God wants to “walk in the garden” with you.** This is the ***heart of God.***

What is interesting is that when Adam and Eve sinned against God and it was Adam and Eve who took themselves away from the presence God. So our sin takes us out of the presence of God.

We do not want to dwell with God. “Our sin, takes us out of the presence of God.” We take ourselves away from the presence of God.

So, how can we as sinners, get back into the presence of God?

We cannot on our own. Our sin has divided us from a Holy God. And that is why an ***almighty God had to come in the form of man,*** He comes as a mediator between us (mankind) and between a Holy God.

And that is why Jesus as God wants to dwell with His people and rescue as many to heaven because it is not about earth but ***heaven, where God can dwell with His people.***

John 18:36

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is **not of this world.** If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been

fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But **my kingdom is not from the world.**”

This is how we know that God wants to be with His people.

9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “**Where are you?**”

Does God not know where Adam and Eve is? God is an Omniscient God, He is an all knowing God.

I remember, I was playing “hide and seek” with all my children. And two out of the three went hiding all over the house. But one of them hid right in front of the living room (in a wide open space) and just bent down, put her face to ground and covered her eyes. To her that was hiding, but I could see where she is. That was exactly like what God is saying, when He said, “Where are you Adam and Eve?”

So when God is saying, “**Where are you, even when you have sinned?**” God is saying, “I want to dwell with you. I want to walk with you even when you have sinned.” All you have to do is make your heart right before God and God’s mercy and His wonderful forgiveness will be there. God is with you.

That is God’s original design. So why did God create mankind knowing that we were going to sin? Why did God bring Jesus on earth, knowing that we He would be rejected by the people?

God wants to dwell with His people and take us to His kingdom.

This is the reason why Jesus came and why we celebrate Christmas.

So, let’s celebrate this joyous occasion.