



Walnut Street Church of Christ
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HAPPILY EVER AFTER – Lesson One
Enter The Villain
God Used Sin To Introduce Salvation
(Genesis 3)

Happily Ever After -- Theme: Enter the villain -- God used sin to introduce salvation. (Genesis 3) The Memory Verse for this lesson is Genesis 3:15. “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15)

The first villain in the Bible was the serpent of Genesis 3. The term “serpent” is found in 36 verses in our King James Bible. The plural “serpents” is found in 13 additional King James verses. Read again the story of how Satan used a serpent to beguile Eve. “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” (Genesis 3:1-7) A few of the villains in the Bible were the serpent in the Garden of

Eden, Goliath, Pharaoh of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, Ahab, Jezebel and Judas. Each of these helps us come to understand better the idea of sin. Genesis 2 closed with the idea of perfection. Genesis 3 opened with the idea of transgression or sin. The motivator for all the villains in the Bible is none other than the Devil himself.

Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world. The peace and perfection of that world was destroyed when Eve was deceived by the serpent. Sin entered the world by one man. (Romans 5:12) The serpent spoke to Eve, telling her that God had deceived her. He told her that if she would only eat the fruit of the forbidden tree that she would be wise like God. The characteristics of the snake and of Eve are both interesting. The serpent or snake was sneakier than any of the other wild animals that the LORD God had made. Eve was very naive as she had no experience in dealing with deceit. All of the words that she had ever heard had been truth. She believed the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit. Somehow, she took the fruit to Adam and convinced him that he should also eat. (Genesis 3:6) Quickly the peace, happiness and joy of the garden were gone. Man now had a better understanding of sin. Those who live in the world would now have to work for their food; they would experience pain and sadness. The beauty and the joy of the garden were lost because of the villain, the serpent. Peace with God was also lost. Now, man finds himself as a sinner. (Proverbs 13:6)

Was this a real snake? Yes, this was a real serpent. The Bible tells us that the serpent was crafty, more than any beast that God had made. In some way the serpent was evil because God pronounced punishment upon him. The serpent began his evil work with Eve by trying to cause her to doubt God's word. "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1) The serpent was very bold in directly contradicting what God had said. "The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." (Genesis 3:4) The Devil was so cunning that he told the woman that instead of dying she would gain knowledge by eating from the tree. "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:5) She did gain knowledge, but she would have been better off never to have know about sin. Satan used the serpent to accomplish his deceptive will. His desire was to replace God's sovereignty and rule with his own lies. Satan appealed to Eve concerning having personal power and great glory.

Was Satan using the serpent? It is obvious when God began to punish these villains that both the serpent and the Devil had played a part in what went on. When

God pronounced punishment regarding the sin, He started with the serpent. The Lord asked the woman, “What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” (Genesis 3:13-14) God also pronounced punishment upon Satan himself. He said, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15) Looking back on this verse we know that God promised to send Jesus to defeat the Devil. God used sin to introduce salvation. However, we must never forget the cunning, ruthless and destructive nature of Satan. The Devil will use anything and any teaching that he can to get people to disobey God and face eternal destruction. Paul wrote, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:11) Satan hates you and Satan hates the church of Christ and actively persecutes it and seeks to destroy it. (2 Timothy 3:12) One of Satan’s cunning devices, that he is using so widely today, is compromise and change. The Devil knows he will win if he can get us to sin by turning away from the truth of God.

Jesus spoke of the Devil. He said the Devil was a murderer and a liar and that he was the father of it. ‘Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.’ (John 8:44) In the parable of the tares Jesus also spoke of the Devil as being real. “The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.” (Matthew 13:38-39)

People are lost because they follow Satan into sin! To become a Christian and to be forgiven of sins you must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24), repent of all sins (Acts 17:30), confess Christ as Lord (Matthew 10:32) and be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:16) After baptism remain faithful to God. (Revelation 2:10) The Devil resist all that is good and perverts all that is true. Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God. Because He lives we can have victory over Satan. God’s people must do everything within their power to resist the Devil and to live for God.

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IF I WERE THE DEVIL

I would gain control of the most powerful nation in the world. I would delude their minds into thinking that they had come from man's effort, instead of God's blessings. I would promote an attitude of loving things and using people, instead of the other way around.

I would dupe entire states into relying on gambling for their state revenue. I would convince people that character is not an issue when it comes to leadership. I would make it legal to take the life of unborn babies. I would make it socially acceptable to take one's own life, and invent machines to make it convenient.

I would cheapen human life as much as possible so that the life of animals are valued more than human beings. I would take God out of the schools, and make even the mention of His name grounds for a law suit.

I would come up with drugs that sedate the mind and target the young, and I would get sports heroes to advertise them. I would get control of the media, so that every night I could pollute the mind of every family member for my agenda.

I would attack the family, the backbone of any nation. I would make divorce acceptable and easy, even fashionable. If the family crumbles, so does the nation.

I would compel people to express their most depraved fantasies on canvas and movie screens; and I would call it art. I would convince the world that people are born homosexuals, and that their lifestyles should be accepted and promoted.

I would convince the people that right and wrong are determined by a few who call themselves authorities and refer to their agenda as politically correct.

I would persuade people that the church is irrelevant and out of date, and the Bible is for the naive. I would dull the minds of Christians, and make them believe that prayer is not important, and that faithfulness and obedience are optional.

I guess I would leave things pretty much the way they are.

- - - - PAUL HARVEY

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34)