

Chapter 5

Genesis 3:1-6

The Story so Far

Human beings were made to rule this world and be in relationship with God, and with each other. In the beginning God established a Kingdom - God's people, living in God's place, under God's rule and blessing.

Objectives

- To explain who Satan is and what he does
- To teach how humans choose to be rulers of their own lives and thus the concept of sin
- To show how God's Kingdom is ruined through rebellion

Connections

- God's Kingship as seen by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Summary

Satan causes human beings to act as rulers of their own lives, and so rebel against God, deciding for themselves what is right and wrong.

Rebellion Against the King

Angels

Angels are spirits created by God. We cannot see them because spirits are invisible. But they are not like God's Spirit, because they are created. The word 'angel' means messenger or servant. Angels are messengers or servants of God.



Lucifer's rebellion (Isaiah 14:12-14)

These verses describe how an angel called "Lucifer", chief of all the angels, rebels against God and tries to take His place in heaven. God's punishment for this rebellion is to throw Lucifer out of heaven along with some other angels who rebel with him. Lucifer becomes known as "Satan", which means "God's enemy". Jesus says that He witnessed Satan's rebellion and His fall from heaven:

"And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven'" (Luke 10:18).

The devil – the great deceiver (John 8:44)

Listen to what God thinks of Satan,

"... the devil ... is a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and father of lies" (John 8:44).

We are going to find these words to be very accurate as we read the Bible. The word "devil" means "deceiver".

Satan is an angel from heaven who rebels against God. He tries to take God's place as King and is thrown out of heaven to the earth. He twists God's words and cannot be trusted.

From the outside (Genesis 3:1)

In the beginning when God creates the world everything is good. There is no evil or death. Adam and his wife live in a loving relationship with God and with each other. It is a perfect world. But Satan, the fallen angel from heaven, enters the garden as a snake (3:1). It is an influence from the outside that makes the world go bad.

Created to live under God's rule

God created human beings to live under His rule. God alone is King and His words have authority. They are not to be questioned, but obeyed. We can see from creation that God is a loving King. Therefore His rules are good and are given for the benefit of human beings.

Questioning God's authority

The devil enters the garden as a serpent (snake) and his first words question God's authority: *"Did God really say...?"*. The devil tries to persuade the woman that God's words can be questioned. Satan then twists God's words by misquoting them. Satan is a liar and a twister of God's words.

SATAN *"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1).*

GOD *"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:16-17).*

Satan's success (Genesis 3:3)

This first response to the devil should have been, *"Why are you questioning God's words? He's the King!"* But the woman allows God's words to be questioned and she even adds to His words. Let's compare God's words again with the woman's words.

WOMAN *“We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, **and you must not touch it, or you will die**” (Genesis 3:3).*

GOD *“You are free to eat from any tree in the garden but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil ...” (Genesis 2:16-17).*



Removing the threat of judgement (Genesis 3:4)

The first time Satan spoke he twisted God's words slightly. This time he clearly contradicts God's words: *“You will not surely die.”* He is trying to remove the threat of God's judgement.

Becoming like God (Genesis 3:5)

Satan is saying that if she eats the fruit she will become her own god, deciding for herself what is right and wrong. This is why the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not to be eaten from. To eat from it is to say that God is not God, and that they are now “God”. To eat from the tree is to play at being “God”, deciding for themselves what is right and wrong. So Satan is right. God knows that if Adam and his wife eat from the tree they will become like Him in this way. They will be taking the position of final authority in deciding what is right and wrong. But this position belongs only to God. **It is the King who decides what is good and evil, right and wrong. This is the rule for living in His Kingdom.**

Sin

To disobey God's rule and choose to decide for yourself what is right and wrong is sin. To sin is to say that you don't want God as the King of your life, but rather yourself. Sin is more than breaking God's rules. It also involves trying to become your own god. Sin is a revolution.

To eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is to become like God and decide for yourself what is good and evil, right and wrong.

The fall of human beings (Genesis 3:6)

The devil has told the woman that she can become her own god, deciding what is right and wrong. Without questioning any further, the woman takes some of the fruit and eats it. She also gives some of the fruit to her husband Adam and he eats it as well.

The first human beings disobey God's rule. They behave as if they are God and decide that eating from the tree is not wrong. They do not believe that God's way of life is best and good. They choose their own way of life deciding to disobey instead of to obey.



Think it through & discuss

1. If God created a perfect world, how did it all go wrong?
2. When the man and woman ate from the forbidden tree, what were they saying to God?
3. What evidences are there in today's world that people want to live as rulers of their own lives?
4. What do you think the consequences will be for rebelling against the King?