

## **PP** The Two Towers: Battle of the Sexes, 7

10/25/2009

Text Genesis 3:14-16

What we saw last week was Adam and Eve on trial

There was an arraignment as God called them to court with *'Where are you?'*

Then there was an examination with three questions

Though they tried to minimize their guilt and shift the blame, Adam and Eve pronounced the verdict themselves with the words, *'I ate'*, entering a plea of guilt

**PP** And now comes their sentencing

**PP** God began the sentencing with the serpent and told it: *"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."* **Genesis 3:14**

While all the animal creation would be banished from the harmony and beauty of the garden, the serpent would be cursed *'above all'* for its role in the fall

The serpent will eat dust, a common phrase meaning it will suffer total humiliation

**PP** So cursed is the serpent that it will continue to eat dust even through the millennial reign of Christ when the curse will be lifted with the other animals **Isaiah 65:25**

**PP** Then God spoke to the one who possessed the snake...Satan

*"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."* **Genesis 3:15**

Can you imagine the relief Adam and Eve felt as they heard that they would live  
God Himself will put *'enmity'*, conflict and hatred between Satan and the woman,  
between the offspring of each

The offspring of the serpent are natural humanity who have rejected God

The woman's offspring are Israel, the church and most importantly, as the personal male pronoun *'he'* suggests, Jesus Christ the Messiah

Since the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the church has called this verse the *protoevangelium*, the *first gospel*

Here, we can see the first hint that there will come a Deliverer to rescue men and women from the sentence that came as a result of sin

*"he [Christ] shall bruise your [Satan's] head, and you shall bruise his heel."*

This is a prophecy of the cross of the Christ where Satan was defeated

Yes he is still powerful and dangerous, but he has lost and the victory is Christ's

In the sentencing of punishment, God begins to restore His fallen creation through grace  
This was the purpose of Christ's work on the cross, to set all creation free from the curse of sin, especially humanity

What was Satan's goal in leading Adam and Eve into sin?

It seems clear that he was God's highest angel, that he was the brilliant one, called the Morningstar, and that he was the chief worship director in the heavens

His highest function was to direct all worship to the rightful recipient, God

But he filled with pride and tried to elevate himself to replace God as the chief being in

the universe and he tried to direct the worship of all the angels to himself  
His purpose in the garden was to attempt the same with Adam and Eve  
He wanted to first of all seduce them away from their allegiance to God, and secondly  
secure that allegiance, and through them, all humanity, to himself  
He succeeded in the first, but God Himself, in verse 15 will work to prevent the second  
God put hatred and hostility between His people and Satan  
Friends, this is God's grace for us!  
He put in our hearts, to the degree that he has set us free from sin by His grace, hatred  
toward evil

**PP** ***"Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good."*** **Romans 12:9**

This grace works in our marriages to move us to hate it when Satan gets the victory  
To despise it when we do evil to our spouses and to hate divorce the way God does  
To be incredibly motivated to not have mediocre marriages but to work hard to love  
If you despise it when Satan gets victory in your marriage, it is because the grace of God  
through Christ has put enmity between you and Satan  
Can you imagine what our lives would be like if God did not do this?  
Satan would have succeeded in drawing us away from God and he would have won our  
allegiance to himself

It is with this grace of God in mind that God then turns to Eve  
They had just heard the promise of God to guarantee of victory over Satan and evil  
God graciously shared them the good news of the gospel before He sentenced them  
And as we begin to look at their sentence, we'll see that it uniquely fits their sin  
Eve was created and purposed to be Adam's helper, to gladly submit to his gracious  
leadership and provide a counterpart to what he lacked  
Adam was to lovingly lead her with grace and courage and make her his greatest priority  
Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, together they were to rule creation  
and both were equally blessed by God with His favor and love  
Yet their fall into sin corrupted and fractured the very roles God had given them  
Eve was deceived and ate the fruit and then she led her husband into the same sin  
Adam was right there with her during her deception and he did not gracefully rescue her  
from the serpent, and instead followed his wife's leadership into full rebellion and defiance  
Now we'll see that the sentence God gives them fits their crime and it will push men and  
women to the only solution to sin-stained selfishness in marriage, Jesus Christ

### **PP 1-The Sentence to Eve (Women)**

***"To the woman He said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."***

**3:16**

God puts this difficulty in her life and it affects her womanhood in two ways:

#### **PP a) As a mother**

***"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children."***

Does this refer only to physical pain in giving birth?

Undoubtedly, it does refer to the pain and dangers of childbirth which women alone can experience

But more than that, it refers more of the totality of motherhood

The word **'pain'** means more than physical pain, being basically the word for *sorrow*

It comes from a root which means 'to toil'

Giving perhaps an explanation for describing birth pains as 'labor'

Where having a family should have been a joy as a mother, sin will make it a heart-breaking sorrow

The difficulty of tending sick children, staying up late at night waiting for them to get home after a date, watching them make foolish decision, worrying for their safety

The sorrow and difficulty of letting your children go when they leave for college

The sense of a mother's success or failure that is inextricably linked with her children

All of these are the pains of childbearing and are experienced by both parents, but most deeply by mothers

This sentence is not meant to bring women to ruin, but to repentance and dependence on Christ as they must rely on Him for their children's sake

**PP** This also helps us begin to make sense of a difficult passage in 1 Timothy 2:12-15

***"I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup>and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup>Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control."***

Notice that Paul's links this section back into the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden

And when he writes that women **'will be saved'**, he does not mean regeneration, or being born again, which can only occur through Christ, not childbearing

Paul means that women will find their lives fulfilled through childbearing

If **'they'**, *not mothers, but their children*, continue in faith, love and holiness with self-control

Mothers, do you have children who are not walking with the Lord?

This is a piercing sorrow and pain and you are helpless to change it but by praying all the more

**PP** ***"A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother."***

**Proverbs 10:1**

God has made it part of His sentence that a mother's heart will be wrapped up with the life of her children in an increased measure

They succeed, she succeeds

They fail, she fails

Mothers are often filled with faith in Christ because they must lean on Him

**PP b) As a wife**

Friends, we have here the main and most serious affect of sin in marriage

Remember that God bound all men and women into this sentence for a redemptive reason

***"Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."***

This has, of recent years, been a hotly debated verse of Scripture, differing on what it means that ***‘Your desire shall be for your husband’***

Typically, there have been three interpretations:

First, a woman’s desire for intimacy with her husband will be so strong that she will be willing to suffer the consequences, childbirth

Second, a woman has such an immense psychological dependence on man that she is willing to submit to an often harsh, insensitive rule of her husband

Third, Her desire, whatever it may be, will not be her own, unable to do what she wants, her husband ruling over her cannot do what she wishes, for her husband rules over her like a tyrant.

In each of these, what is brought about is a willing submission of the woman to her

husband, but sin never produces this in the heart of anyone

All sin produces a rebellion against the perfect will and desire of God

To understand what it means that ***“Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”***, it helps to know that almost the same exact Hebrew structure is used in the Genesis 4:7, except for necessary pronoun changes

There it says, ***“...sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”***      **Genesis 4:7**

It can be paraphrased *‘Sin has a desire, Cain. It wants to control you. But you must not allow sin to have its way with you. You must conquer it.’*

**PP** The word ***‘desire’*** here does not mean loving affection, or intimate desire, it means the desire to control and rule

Eve, God says, because you led your husband into sin and did not stay within the role I intended for you, then to the degree that sin reigns in your heart, you will desire to conquer your husband

This is a sentence for all women at all times, to varying degrees, just as we’ll see that the sentence to Adam is to all men at all times

When sin has the upper hand in women, they will desire to overpower or subdue or exploit the man in their lives

But sin has fractured and corrupted even further than this and we see it in the last part of that verse: ***“and he shall rule over you.”***

**PP** The word ***‘rule’*** is a strong term usually used of monarchical governments, not generally of authority within a family

A good way to translate it is ungodly domination

Eve, and women in every generation, to the degree that sin has its hold in you, you will want to conquer and subdue and lead your husbands, and to the degree that sin reigns in their men’s hearts, they will dominate in a harsh and ungodly way

This is the beginning of the battle of the sexes

Maleness and femaleness as God had created it has been depraved by sin

Now, corrupted maleness is the self-exalting effort to subdue and control and exploit women for its own private desires

And corrupted femaleness is the self-exalting effort to subdue and control and exploit men for its own private desires

Men do this often through brute strength and intimidation, treating women as objects to  
be used for their own pleasure and advantage  
Women may not have as much brute strength as men but they utilize other means  
She can usually run circles around him with her words and when those fail, she knows  
the weakness of his lust  
To see this corruption in men, just simply examine the overwhelming gender statistics of  
abusers and murderers  
To see this corruption in women, just look at the pictures that are used to market the  
world's products  
A woman's body can sell anything because she knows the universal weakness of man and  
how to control him with it

And all the while there is only one antidote to this sin that reigns in our hearts  
Only One who can loosen the hold of sin in our lives and He will be the offspring alluded  
to in verse 15  
Only Christ can redeem a marriage from this universal bent toward ungodly male  
domination of his wife and female effort to control her husband  
And this is precisely what we will see when we shortly move into the third and final  
section of the series, *'The Return of the King'*  
Christ will redeem our marriages and make them powerful tools and reflective beacons of  
glory for kingdom work  
As we walk with Him and humbly move toward each other in His grace and strength

#### **PP Next-The Sentence to Adam (Men)**

#### **PP Application**

This is to be a fun and enjoyable experience. In the next two weeks, go out on two dates. The first one is to be organized and led by the husband and the second is to be by the wife. Each person, without input from the other, is to create, plan and implement the 'perfect date' that is ideally suited for your spouse.

The goal of this assignment is to have fun.