

# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 8



## THE FALL OF MAN

*Scripture Text: Genesis 3:8-24*

Adam and Eve were a glory to God for a time. They communed with God. Their souls lived. Then the serpent, as the agent of Satan, tempted them by a lie, a half-truth. They believed him, sinned, ate the fruit God had forbidden. Immediately they knew they had sinned. Also, immediately their souls died. They tried to hide from God. He found them and pronounced punishment upon each. He drove them from the garden. He had a plan for giving them life again.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Romans 6:23*

### The Sinner Hides from God

**Genesis 3:8-13 Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God.** According to our text, God is pictured walking in the garden here on earth, enjoying His handiwork, and communing with man, the crown of His creation. But on this occasion, the man was nowhere to be found, for he knew he had sinned, and so, he hid himself from God in shame and fear. Sin always makes us cowards. When we do something wrong, we are afraid to face up to it and confess it. Guilt caused Adam and Eve to try to hide from God. They did not want to see or to be seen by God. They found, as many have since, that **the eyes of the Lord are in every place**, and that **he that covereth his sins shall not prosper (Proverbs 15:3; Proverbs 28:13)**.

**Where art thou?** God seeks out the sinner. He cries, “Where art thou?” – a question which every single one of us must answer in relation to his Lord. One of the most unique things man knows about God is His great love. He takes the first step in seeking out the sinner. All through the Old Testament He tried to woo Israel back to Himself, and in the New Testament, we learn that He sent His Son into the world to save sinners.

Adam tried to evade a direct answer to the question by using the excuse that he **was naked**, and so **I hid myself**, but God got to the root of the trouble immediately by asking him how he knew he was naked. Adam had never known this before. Not willing to accept all the blame, Adam said, **The woman thou gavest ... me, she gave me ... and I did eat**. Adam blamed God and Eve for his sin. God asked Eve about her part in the sin, and she laid the blame on the serpent. Both Adam and Eve put the blame for their acts upon another. God was not blind as to where the guilt lay. Nor is He ever. **The soul that sinneth, it shall die. And the Lord knoweth them that are his**. How true to human nature this lesson is! How we blame everyone except ourselves for the condition we are in, for the sin we have committed. The game of “passing the buck” is as old as man himself.

### God’s Hatred for Sin

**Genesis 3:14 And the Lord God said...Because thou hast done this.** No matter how much God may love the sinner, He cannot let the sin go unpunished. God hates sin, and He is not satisfied until all sin is atoned for. In **verses 14-19** God pronounces curses upon the serpent, the woman, and the man, because they all had a part in the sin against God. The punishments were: (1) to the serpent, a two-fold curse – it would be the lowest of the animals, to go on its belly, to eat dust, to be at enmity with mankind and with Christ (seed of the woman), to bruise his heel and be bruised on its head (a prophecy of Christ’s victory over Satan on the Cross); (2) to the woman – pain and sorrow in childbearing, subjection to a husband; (3) to the man – a curse upon the ground so it should grow weeds, thorns, and thistles. In the sweat of his face, he would work for a living. We see all of these things today.

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We can never picture too darkly the terribleness of sin, both in the heart of man and as it must look to the eyes of a holy God. Sin is that evil nature in man which causes him to rebel against God, and which only the transforming power of God in Christ can change.

### Hope in the Midst of Despair

**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.** Here God becomes the first Prophet. He brings the good news that through His Son, Jesus – the seed of the woman, no earthly father – He had a perfect plan for bringing mankind, who was dead in sin, life again. The enmity between the seed of the devil and seed of the woman became more intense with each age. Do we see it today? Here is a prophecy of the victory of Christ.

Thus at the very beginning of history, we find this promise and hope, not only in the victory to be gained by Christ over sin, but also the real assurance that mankind through Christ may continually win over temptation. Victory over sin is assured for the saint by Christ's victory on the Cross. By His strength, we are more than conquerors. When temptations come with overwhelming power, we can by Christ's help defeat them.

### Man Separated From the Tree of Life

**Genesis 3:22-24 Lest he...take also of the tree of life ... Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden.** God in His love protected man from the fate of living forever in this sinful state. The Tree of Life had not been forbidden before sin came, but now its eating would be tragic. **So He drove out the man...placed...Cherubim's, and a flaming sword which turned every way.** This might be named "Paradise Lost" in the first Adam. But thank God for the last Adam, Jesus Christ! Through Him was Paradise regained.

Through Christ and His victory over sin and death, the way of the Tree of Life is once more opened to man. The curse has been lifted, and we who believe on Christ become heirs of His eternal salvation. Read **Revelation 2:7** and **Revelation 22:2**.

### JUST A THOUGHT

**To neglect doctrine and rely upon spirituality to keep the church strong is soon to lose spirituality also.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.  
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