

RESPONSIVE READING

Genesis 3:8-13 NLT

Pastor:

⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees.

Congregation:

⁹ Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

Pastor:

¹¹ "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

Congregation:

¹² The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it."

Pastor:

¹³ Then the Lord God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED?

Hiding from God: Genesis 3:8-13

Open:

- * Hide and seek ... remember the game? 1, 2, 3 ready or not here I come. In our passage today, Adam and Eve are hiding from God ... God is the seeker.
 - Genesis 3 opens with the tragic story of the fall of man ... Lucifer disguised as a serpent shows up in the Garden ... a smooth talker and one who knew how to spin the truth.
 - This chapter marks the sad ending to the creation story but as well the glorious beginning of the redemption story.

- √ The rest of Scripture that follows tells how God came to rescue man from the curse of sin.
 - √ God was under no obligation to redeem Adam or any of his offspring.
 - √ There were no provisions made for Lucifer/Satan and the angels that rebelled. They were immediately condemned to eternal punishment.
 - √ Could God not have done that with mankind? He does not owe us mercy and grace ... quite the contrary ... His justice demands that sin be punished.
- Yet, the Bible portrays God as kind, looking out for the one “He created after His image.”
- √ Nehemiah prays on behalf of a rebellious people.

Nehemiah 9:17 NLT They refused to obey and did not remember the miracles you had done for them. Instead, they became stubborn and appointed a leader to take them back to their slavery in Egypt! But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and rich in unfailing love. You did not abandon them.

- We can be thankful that God did not give up on man ... and He hasn't given up on you.
- God knew what this sin meant ... He looked down through the years, decades and centuries to come, and saw lying, stealing, cheating, killing, immorality and all sorts of evil.
- √ He knew the price that would have to be paid by His Son ...
- √ Arthur Pink in his book Gleanings in Genesis writes:

“This was not the voice of a policeman but the call of a loving Father. Though the backdrop is dark, it serves a purpose for it reveals the riches of God's grace. Our first parents were highly favored, blest with everything the heart could desire with only a single restriction placed on their liberty in order to test their love and loyalty to the Master. How fearful their fall, how terrible their sin! Who could blame God had He confined them to everlasting chains of darkness? It would not have been too severe to consume them; they would have gotten what they deserve. Instead ... with compassion and mercy, God chose to be the seeker, and He came down to Eden and cried ... ‘Where are you?’”

(1) **Hiding – Genesis 3:8-9 NKJV** ⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”

- It was God’s practice to come daily to the Garden and converse with man.
- As for how He revealed Himself – Theophany = when God makes visible His appearance in the Old Testament.

√ Ex.: God speaks to Moses from a burning bush, He reveals Himself to the Israelites as “the pillar of cloud/fire.”

- But as well, we see Him take on the form of a man ... sometimes God would dispatch an angel to accomplish His mission (**Genesis 18** – 2 angels announcing Sarah would give birth to Isaac) one was none other than God Himself.
- In **Genesis 32** Jacob would wrestle with what appeared to be a man but was actually God.
- God appearing as a man is called a christophany, referred to as “the angel of the Lord” not to be confused with just an ordinary angel.
- Note the difference: If the angel was God, you could/should bow/worship ...

Ex.: **Joshua 5:13-15 NLT** ¹³ When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, “Are you friend or foe?” ¹⁴ “Neither one,” he replied. “I am the commander of the Lord’s army.” At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. “I am at your command,” Joshua said. “What do you want your servant to do?” ¹⁵ The commander of the Lord’s army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did as he was told.

√ If it was “just” a created angel, you were not to worship him.

Ex.: Apostle John before an angel in heaven:

Revelation 19:10 NLT Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God.

- √ Point made: This wasn’t some voice behind the curtain (Wizard of Oz).
 - We have God walking, looking, talking ... human character traits.
- Sensing their sin and shame, Adam and Eve are hiding.
 - √ Until this day, they welcomed God’s arrival in the Garden ... they looked forward to it.
 - √ The daily quiet time with Him was the best time of the day.
 - √ Likely, they ran to meet Him, greet Him ... tell Him about their day, what they had done and what their plans were –
 - √ Now they are avoiding Him. Once innocent, now guilty ... they dread His arrival and cower behind a tree.
- Feeling guilty over sin is not bad especially when it leads to repentance.
 - Those who sin and feel no conviction are in danger of destruction. Illust.: It’s like the engine light on your dashboard ... ignore it and your engine may blow. Refusing to admit our wrong invites God’s judgment.

1 Corinthians 11:31-32 NLT ³¹ But if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged by God in this way. ³² Yet when we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

- The child of God needs to be sensitive toward those things that break the Father’s heart.

2 Corinthians 7:10 NLT For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation (deliverance) ... But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

→ Sin that causes sorrow because you have disobeyed and offended God can lead to a changed and better life ... but sorrow over “getting caught” which leads to “be more careful next time” gives way to more trouble.

➤ God has given us His Word to guide and direct, which means we will often be convicted ...

2 Timothy 3:16 NLT All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

→ Haven't we like Adam and Eve tried to hide our sin ... we may even think we are getting by with it when in fact we are not moving forward in our walk with God.

– We see God pursuing man ... He loves us enough to come after us ... He does this sometimes through a parent, pastor, friend ... circumstance ...

➤ Notice His question: **Vs. 9 Where are you?**

– It wasn't asked for information but inspiration, encouragement ... come clean, confess.

– We note God's demeanor: He is not panicking, ticked, stomping ... He came to the Garden as He had always come.

√ Not with burning fury but gently, with kindness, walking in the cool of the evening ... eager to share.

→ God is not out to “get you” ... He loves you and is willing to confront you.

– Yet ... where do we find Adam and Eve? Hiding from God.

– The words: “Where are you?” ring out today ... sobering, searching words!

√ Where are you with God? There is nothing we can hide from Him.

Psalms 44:21 Paraphrase God knows the secrets of every heart.

Hebrews 4:13 NLT Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.

➤ Adam comes out of hiding: exposed, ashamed, afraid ... he had all kinds of emotions bouncing around in his heart.

– Sin had disturbed his relationship with God ... the fellowship he once enjoyed broken.

→ We've all been there ... one day we are enjoying God's presence ... we sense His smile on our life ... accepted, loved but then we fall ... we feel distant, distracted and we are headed toward destruction.

(1) Hiding

(2) Hearing – Vs. 10 I heard your voice in the Garden ...

➤ Thank God! He heard and responded ...

– There is the danger of becoming “spiritually deaf.”

Romans 11:8 NLT As the Scriptures say, “God has put them into a deep sleep. To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see, and closed their ears so they do not hear.”

→ Don't fight the voice of God in your life ... listen and make the necessary changes along the way.

➤ Like us, Adam goes on the defensive ... quite a contrast as to where he was before the disobedient act ...

– Like a rebellious kid, the truth had to be drug out ...

– Just a few hours earlier this bright, honest, straight-forward man walked in the Garden with his head high.

√ Now he seems shifty, reluctant, dancing around the truth.

– He should have said: **I have sinned before heaven and in your sight and no more worthy to be called your son ...**

√ Instead, he becomes defensive and comes up with excuses.

√ God tries to help him come clean:

Vs. 11 Who told you you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree?

– Side note: Some have taken this passage out of context and said ... the body is a beautiful thing, and it is fine to be naked ...

√ Remember, they were covered in light ... now they are not.

√ Adam and Eve, husband and wife, were the only 2 people on earth. Being naked before your spouse is fine and has God's approval.

√ Being naked before others is shameful ...

- Ex.: **Genesis 9:23 Paraphrase** Shem and Japheth cover their father, Noah's, nakedness ... Ham makes light of it and faces judgment.

- Ex.: Moses returns from Mt. Sinai and Aaron allows the people to build a golden calf around which they are dancing wildly.

Exodus 32:25 NLT Moses sees that Aaron has let the people get completely out of control (unrestrained) much to the amusement of their enemies.

- John writes to the church of Laodicea and says:

Revelation 3:18 NKJV ... that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed ...

→ As a child of God, you will want to dress appropriately.

* Because men are affected by what they see ... here is some advice to women who desire to honor God.

1 Peter 3:3-4 NLT ³ Don't be (overly) concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. ⁴ You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God.

1 Timothy 2:9-10 NLT ⁹ And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. ¹⁰ For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do.

→ This is not to suggest you have to be a “plain Jane” or dress in the 60s ... but don't dress to “turn men on” ... don't be a stumbling block by dressing seductively.

* Adam plays the “blame game” ... instead of accepting responsibility for what he had done ...

- He implies that God was to blame: **Vs. 12** The woman you gave me ...
- He blames Eve – **Vs. 12** She gave me and I ate ...

- ✓ Talk about throwing someone under the bus ...
- ✓ Instead of confessing what he had done, he shifts the blame.

→ We do this today by pointing out everyone else's faults ... we get the light off us and on others ... (Illust.: flashlight)

→ The first step to getting right is to admit where we are wrong.

- As long as we make excuses, we don't have to change.

* Eve is called to the stand – **Vs. 13 NKJV** And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me and I ate.”

- She tells the truth but nevertheless she is guilty.
- She willingly and selfishly disobeyed a clear command of God.
- It's been said: Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent, and the serpent didn't have a leg to stand on.

Close: Is there any hope?

- Don't hide your sin ... the question isn't what can you get by with but what actions will you take to glorify God?
 - √ If what you're doing doesn't please and honor God, then don't do it!
 - √ When you're wrong, admit it; don't cover it up or argue about it.
 - √ We are all susceptible to sin ...
- What to do? Agree with God, that it was wrong.

1 John 1:9 NLT But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

Proverbs 28:13 NLT People who conceal (cover, hide) their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

- * Time to take out the trash ... Paul told me he loaded the trash in his trunk and intended to stop off at the dump but became distracted, busy ... and forgot ... after spending a day at work, he gets back in his car that has been cooking under the sun and thinks ... it sure does stink in here.
 - God doesn't intend for you to carry your trash/sin around ... don't splash perfume or cologne on it ... admit where you are wrong and remove the sin.
 - Come out of hiding and hear what "thus saith the Lord."

Next Week: Genesis 3:14-24 Heaven's Answer to Sin's Problem.

Message Notes
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