

April 7, 2020  
What People in Scripture did when they were Isolated - Adam and Eve  
By Dave Conrad

God wants us to be excited about being spiritually close to Him! Have you ever thought about how close God wants to personally be close to you. When God created Adam, He did so in His own image. No other part of God's creation was created like that. No other part of God's creation can call out to Him "Abba, Father." No other part of God's creation has been redeemed. Why? It's so we can fellowship with Him on a one to one basis. God wants us to be the Body of Christ, his eternal bride. There is a reason for this.

Think about how fortunate Adam was when he and God would walk and talk together in the Garden. Think of the multitude of things they must have talked about. When God eventually saw that Adam needed someone like himself, a helper to love and be with, He formed Eve from Adam. Can you imagine the joy of that moment for both God and Adam. And because God gave Adam dominion over the earth, He told Adam about the one tree from which he must not eat. It was the tree of the "knowledge of good and evil".

And so Adam and Eve enjoyed perfect fellowship with God, until they disobeyed Him. Suddenly, everything changed. They no longer welcomed His presence. In fact, they tried to hide from Him. It can be natural for us to have that same kind of reaction. Perhaps we have disobeyed God or done something we should not have done. Perhaps we have felt some form of conviction or guilt. Perhaps we wanted to avoid Him, worried that He will say things that we don't want to hear, or worse yet, He wants to interfere with our own plans and desires.

By trying to hide, somehow we think we don't need to change, and that we can go our own, merry way. We think that somehow by avoiding God, that will make things better. We have convinced ourselves that we don't need His correction. Like Jonah, we think that we don't have to do His will (Jonah 1:1-3). And like Adam and Eve, we think that we don't have to face His presence and deal with our actions. So we hide from Him.

There are many ways to hide from God. We can stop reading His Word and praying. We can avoid going to church or spending time with other believers. We can fill our minds with other thoughts and our schedules with other activities. No matter how hard we try, we will eventually realize that it is impossible to hide from the God who created us and loves us. Soon, we realize like David, that we cannot flee from His presence (Psalm 139:7). We come to realize that He wants, what is best for us, and that hiding only perpetuates our problems.

The answer to this isolation (and our problems) is to seek God. To spend quality time in His presence. To read His Word. To be sensitive to the direction, conviction, teaching, and warnings of His Holy Spirit. The solution comes as we change, as He leads us. We need to lay everything else aside and serve Him, and then to follow Jesus.

So let's take a closer look at what happened in Genesis 3:6-12.

*6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

*8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

*10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

*11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*

*12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."*

Did you notice what Adam did. He did what most of us do. He blamed other people for his own actions. But when we do sin, God never leaves us alone. Lets read some more.

*21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. 22 And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.*

Did you notice what God did for Adam and Eve. He killed an animal and made garments for them from the dead animal's skin. Sin always produces death. Something is lost in the transaction of sin. It may be immediate, or it may come further down the road, but make sure of this, it will come. And still, in the midst of their sinful actions, God provided for them. Their own garment of fig leaves weren't going to cut it, so God intervened for them. That is Point #1 of this devotion. Even when we have sinned, God is still there, and will provide for you. He wants you to carry on with Him. Not in the same way as before. But now by becoming dependent upon Him.

Sin has consequences. And consequently, just as condemnation for all people came through one transgression, so too through one righteous act, the opportunity came for life to be offered to all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one man, many will be made righteous. And that one is Jesus, who is called the Second Adam in scripture. (Romans 5:18-19).

In the same way as Adam, we don't understand the full weight of our choices either. We can't see the big picture, the ripple effect of our choices. We don't know how our choices really affect other people. The personal consequences are more obvious. Sin separates us from God, as much today as it did with Adam and Eve in the garden. And when we don't allow the Holy Spirit to convict us, we shamefully try to hide our sins from God and it separates us even further. That was the consequence of their personal sin. They were ashamed.

The good news is that our relationship with God, broken by sin, can be reconciled through Jesus Christ. Our sinful nature may have been born in the garden of Eden, but it is put to death on the cross. We do not have to be separated from God. The indwelling of his Spirit means that we can once again talk with him, walk with him, and experience his majesty every hour of the day. This is a difficult topic because Adam and Eve's isolation from God was their own doing. When they realized what they did, shame was introduced into the equation. That seems to be one of Satan's primary weapons to separate us from God. But read the very first prophecy given in scripture. It happened in the garden, and it was given because of Satan's desire to kill Adam and Eve, to rob Jesus Christ of His Bride.

*14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel."*

Do you know what "enmity" means. It means "the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something." That's who Jesus is. He is actively opposed to Satan's plan to separate you from God. And that's why He was born as a human (the Incarnation). He was going to get us back from the clutches of Satan's grip and power. He was going to die so that we might have life. Jesus was to crush Satan (the resurrection) and all Satan could do was to strike his heel (the crucifixion). And so Jesus lived a sinless life for us. And along the way, Jesus was tempted as we were.

Here's an important distinction I want to make. There is a difference between 1) the essence of sin and 2) sinful actions. The essence of sin is not what we do do. It's what the heart does. By the heart, I mean the inner faculty of willing and desiring that gives rise to actions. For example, if some very strong person took hold of your arm against your will and, by force, caused you to stab somebody while you resisted with all your might, you would plead that you did not commit wrong. But if your heart moved your arm to stab somebody, you would have done wrong and you know it. The essence of sin is not the movement of your body, but the desires and purposes of the heart. External muscular movements are morally evil only insofar as they are expressions of an evil heart.

When Adam and Eve reached for the forbidden fruit and then ate from it, those outward acts were evil precisely because they were an expressions of their own heart that had lost its taste for the superior satisfaction of God. They had become dominated by desires for something more than God. That sinful condition of the heart preceded their actions. That's the difference between the essence of sin and the actions of sin. Jesus was tempted like we are, but He did not act upon the temptation. He remained sinless in a sinful world. We know from [Luke 4:2](#) and [Matthew 4:1](#) that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by the devil. We know from [Hebrews 4:15](#) that though he was tempted, he did not sin.

Satan's temptations are very often external offers of pleasure, which, if we embrace them, would be sin. But hearing and seeing the offer is not sin. In Adam and Eve's case, there were things about the tree and the fruit that offered pleasure. It's an objective offer, and Satan was boasting about it, and then offered it to them.

Perceiving that external objective offer is not sin. Jesus saw it. He heard it. Adam and Eve saw it. They heard it. But if you perceive the offer of pleasure, and then embraced it, then that would be a sin. Jesus did not embrace anything offered to Him by Satan. He thrust it away by the word of God. But Adam and Eve tasted and embraced it. They savored it. They preferred it over God, and acted on it. At that point, the essence of sin had happened in their heart, and they reached out and took and ate the fruit of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

That desire that you feel in any moment isn't sinful, even though it corresponds to the evil pleasure being offered you, because you draw a line. You draw a line between good and evil, between light and darkness. When your desire starts to cross over to a preference more than trusting God, and you want to remain in fellowship with God, then you cut off that sinful desire. You cut it off with the word of God. You put it to death with the word of God.

That's exactly what Jesus did. The Bible says he was hungry. He hadn't eaten for forty days. He was hungry, and Satan offered him bread. No doubt Jesus felt a huge desire for bread. In other words, his desire corresponded to the pleasure that was being offered in the temptation. But Jesus never allowed the desire to eat physical bread to become a preference over the will of God. Jesus was obedient to His Father first and foremost, no matter what.

Here is the part of the story of Adam and Eve that we hear very little about. There was a 2nd tree there in the garden. It was the tree of "eternal life". If Adam and Eve had eaten of that tree, then they would live eternally with a sinful, decaying body. They would possess a dark mind, never seeing the light of God that would rescue them. So in God's compassion and mercy, He expelled them from the garden before they could do eternal damage to the human race. And now, we have the offer of eternal life through the obedient life of Christ here and now on the earth.

Here is the 2nd Point of the devotion. When you are in isolation, when you are alone, you can be your worst enemy. And because of that, you may think that God is against you. You will continually find yourself in the state of confusion. But God is not the author of confusion. He is the God of order (1 Cor 14:33 ). What you need now more than ever is the mind of Christ, and that comes from scripture. And when you read again and again how many times people have sinned and separated themselves from God, it is God that finally has the

last say and comes after His people. There is no better illustration of this than Jesus' words on the cross, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they do."

May you be forgiven and know  
that morning by morning new mercies appear.

This can happen when you place your faith in Jesus Christ,  
The Bishop of your soul,  
and the Author and Finisher of your faith.

Amen.  
Pastor Dave