

Famous Chapter 3's in the Bible

Genesis 3: The fall of humankind

What's up with this chapter?

This is a great chapter. I had a professor that stated about Genesis “we just don't have much data.” I was reading in a history of Israel textbook that this is just surface knowledge. There is no depth to the story. We just get the outline. Why? Some say Genesis is very old. It could be pegged at 6000 years ago. Many have argued for a later or earlier date. Either way, take or give a thousand years, it is old.

In a classroom, all of us have done the secret test. It's where we pass on a secret and the last person tells it to the class. Usually it comes out very different that it began. So many people say that the story of Genesis is not real because it has passed through too many hands over the centuries. There is also the elephant in the room. Other cultures appear to have similar creation accounts. What is the right data about how humans began?

Either way this story is very old. By tradition Moses wrote this story. I find that interesting because there were many characters that passed before him. We have Adam, Abraham, Abraham's son's, Joseph, and a few more. Who wrote this story? Is it real? Is it accurate. The accurate part is unfair because we are not given much to work with. What I found interesting is archeology. I always thought we could decipher anything in the past. We just had to dig it up like the dinosaurs. The trouble with time is decay, weather, floods, and wars. Many clues to the past are gone. It's not that they never existed; rather, it's that we have lost the data.

There is very little information on the life and times of many cultures of the past. Much of what we know is based on the eye test. We see pottery and give it a timeline. We see bones

and give it a date. Much of the archeological books I have read speculate far more than they really know. It's an educated guess based on similar patterns and markers from many digs. It's stunning to me that we have so little information on the Romans, Egyptians, and others. We know some stuff, but really only half of the real story. With Genesis 3 we only have what the Bible gives us. Archeology has nothing to offer. It does not refute or prove what really happened.

The dating of the Pyramids is arguable. The beginning of time is arguable. In one science book, it says we began with the big bang theory because there is no evidence of what is before that time. That time? They still argue over the timeline of the big bang theory. To argue over the Genesis account is like arguing who came first the chicken or the egg. There are good points on both sides. In the Middle East I was stunned by the modern cities built right on top of ruins. There has been an effort to recover some of those ruins. People did not save artifacts like baseball cards. Preserving the past was not a national past time like baseball is to America.

Finally, we have an account of the introduction of evil into our world. Some say we are born with it while others believe it is inherited from Adam and Eve. In Genesis, we have five instances where it says this is the account or genealogy of someone. I believe that these were somehow recorded accounts passed down. I feel if Moses wrote Genesis, then he gathered these accounts together into the book of Genesis. Either way we have this book just as we have the big bang theory. It has no origin just like the big bang theory. Both of them say "in the beginning." The difference is one says it's an account while the other is a theory or speculation. Next week let's take a look at this famous chapter 3 of the Bible.

The story of Genesis 3. What makes it famous?

We discount the 3rd chapter in Genesis for many reasons. Is it because it's old? Last week I said that many things in history are hard to factualize. Even the Big Bang theory is just what it claims to be: a theory. Atheists claim it to be their Gospel. They claim it's true and this is where we began. Believers in the Jewish God say the Genesis account is real. They believe that God created Adam and then Eve. They believe that a serpent deceived them and God threw them out of Eden. What do you believe?

Verses 1-7 in Genesis 3 are famous. This is where the serpent talks to Eve about the instructions of God. For the most part this is simple stuff. God said they could most likely do anything in the garden. This was to be their home. I get the impression that people think it was a prison. I bet most people think Eden was small like a back yard. We have no idea the size of Eden or what Adam and Eve could do in it. This was their life.

Why put a tree in the middle of the Garden? I suppose it would look nice there. Why put a tree in your garden if you cannot eat of it? There are so many questions. Free will is a crazy thing. We have the freedom to kill and the freedom to love. What will we choose? I believe that God had a good reason for putting it in the middle. Maybe it was a reminder of God. Throughout history the Israelites worked from the inside out. The tent of meeting was in the middle. The temple of God was in the middle of the city. In many small communities, the church is in the middle of town. Symbolic or not, life has always emanated from the center of God's world.

Let's talk about the serpent. Ok, is this Satan? That depends on who you talk to. No other animal in Genesis talks. The Devil is also called the deceiver or accuser. I have read many accounts on the names of the Devil. In the Bible, we have several names from Beelzebub to

serpent. I have always wondered why Satan was in the garden. We don't have any other angel in the garden. In Luke 10 Jesus says he saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. When did that happen. I know that many people have trouble with Genesis 1 and 2. There is a gap theory. That genesis 1 and 2 are separate accounts of two creations. Where does Satan fit in with this?

In reality, Adam and Eve are deceived by a serpent that most scholars call the Devil. This crafty creature could walk but is reduced to his belly after God gets mad. Genesis 3 is the introduction of sin and the Devil. It is the placement of Eden somewhere near Turkey and Syria. It is the beginning of child bearing, knowing good from evil, and weeds and thorns. There seems to be a relationship between our sin and the health of the land. For a chapter with so little depth, we have a wide range of topics from land to evil.

This famous chapter is called the beginning of the fall. The fall is the separation from God. The fall is also our choice to go our own way apart from God. For the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian religions, we begin here in Genesis 3. I find it interesting that in these 3 religions there is no fighting over creation. One God did it. People on the other hand have been scraping for centuries over how, how, when, and why we exist. Next week let's talk about a few lessons from this famous chapter.

What we can learn?

Many of us have read this chapter several times. My Bible is well worn at the beginning of Genesis. There are thousands of books with an opinion on Genesis. They ask questions like who wrote it. When was, it written. Is it a real account? I think this account is real because of its honesty. Other creation accounts tend to find human history beginning within a God story. Gods battle and the earth is formed. This account is centered on creation. We have humans evolving

right near the beginning of human history. There is no war, big bang, evolution from monkeys. It's just the beginning of a relationship between one particular God and humans.

If nothing else, we can learn something from this famous story of Genesis 3. Humans have treated authority the same way for thousands of years. If God is the owner of this planet, then can't it be his rules and his way? There are laws protecting property owners. Is God not allowed to have property laws? In a way, there was one simple rule. Did it ever occur to you that the Ten Commandments were not issued at this point in time? Right after chapter 3 we have the first murder of Able by his brother Cain. One simple rule to not eat of the main tree turned into breaking ten simple rules.

Have you ever thought how we came to be? Our position in the universe is nuts. We are in a rather lonely spot on the outer edge of the galaxy. Our odds at life are either rare or likely. We are here somehow. In reality we have very little information of how humans began. In many ways, we just don't know. The Big Bang Theory is a theory not fact. Darwinism is a theory not fact. Possibly Genesis 3 is a theory. Yet, we rate these explanations as impossible to plausible without a shred of concrete evidence. To me a big bang makes sense, yet A God creating this complex creation makes sense too. There is a ton of uniformity in creation for a random explosion. It's like it was designed a certain way.

Then there is evil. Most people polled believe we are generally good. There are some bad people but most of us are good. Yet, it is not safe to walk in most cities at night. There are many bad countries. We have had genocides, murders, and many other atrocities all over the world. All of these atrocities have no gender, race, or cultural boundaries. We have all seen or read about evil in this world. To say that God and the Devil do not exist seems pretty foolish considering the evidence of a battle between good and evil.

Is man dominant over woman? Physically it seems man has the upper hand. Mentally that may not be true. Woman is pretty smart. Throughout history when you take out society, women seem to lose this battle. Men know how to abuse, rape, and control women. I wish equality was built into us. These days we are trying to create equality. Why? I suspect it's the absence of equality is why. That seems to mean that when God said man would dominate, man did just that. Did you notice God never said domination of woman was a good thing? He just said it would happen. Even blind people can tell that man has tried to dominate woman since the beginning of time.

Finally, Genesis 3 is an old story. We have so little data of where we began. Why are we evil some times. Why are we not near a God? Does heaven have to be in the sky? Religion has always been separate from this world. Have you ever noticed that? There are holy places we are not allowed to enter. Priests, clerics, monks are considered holy. Muslims, Jews, and Christians have holy places. The Pope and the Vatican are sacred. The Dome on the Mount is sacred. We have sacred temples. We seem to have separation from God. Does the eye test really discount the story of Genesis 3? This chapter is famous for a reason.