

11. NOT A PRETTY PICTURE

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, or so it's been said. Maybe. Experienced photographers know that one or two of their worst photos have a hidden flaw that gives them a special beauty of their own. Today we are going to view an image so disturbing you will want to look away. Yet, from this hideous figure a masterpiece emerges. Only this masterpiece didn't happen by chance; it came about by God's **grace**. Read *Genesis 3:1-19*.

Dishonesty. Lack of **integrity**. Lies. Satan's tools for practicing the art of **deception** are powerful. They demolish truth and trash the trust at the foundation of every healthy relationship. Satan concocted a scheme to separate God's people from his love. The devil's plan was to tell a few little lies that would seem harmless. His lies were not harmless; they were deadly. His plot succeeded. Satan was able to break the sacred trust between humans and their Creator.

The Bible says that Satan is the *Father of Lies* (*John 8:44*). Neither Adam, nor his partner, had experience with lies. When Satan slithered into the picture, he was no friend of Eve's; but he sounded friendly. Eve should have known better than to listen to his slick appeal.

Honest individuals don't go out of their way to hide their intentions. Satan did. He came in disguise, as a snake. People of integrity don't fabricate little untruths to chip away at a flawless reputation. Satan did. He murdered God's holy reputation with a thousand tiny cuts.

Satan's lies to deceive Eve were effective. But the lie she told herself was deadly. It whispered, "A little disobedience will be harmless." It wasn't. For a moment, Eve stopped believing her Creator was good, honest, faithful, or loving. She decided she knew better. Unbelief is never harmless. Its damage is likely to spread. When nothing happened, Eve invited Adam to join her.

Adam understood what he had done. His failure to warn Eve and eat of the fruit was Adam's own moment of unbelief and disobedience. Their disobedience took away everything that mattered to Adam and Eve. Their disobedience meant that Adam and Eve would infect the hearts of every following generation of human beings with sin. When they realized their behavior meant they now knew evil, Adam and his wife trembled in fear. **Ashamed** of what they had done, they

instinctively covered that part of their bodies that would produce generation after generation of sinful human beings. And then they tried to hide from God's holy sight.

When God called, "Where are you?" Adam's answer was evasive. When God confronted him directly, Adam blamed Eve, adding that maybe God should also shoulder some of the blame. When the Lord confronted Eve, she blamed the serpent. Innocent people don't have to defend their behavior. Both of Adam and Eve were guilty; their behavior convicted them. GUILTY!

The Creator's **justice** is as perfect as his goodness. He cursed the serpent and declared war on Satan. Death became a sad part of life on a planet that was now immersed in sin. Bearing children, raising a family, and putting food on the table became joyless burdens. Then, in the middle of what is undoubtedly the most disturbing chapter in Scripture, God spoke a promise of hope. An offspring from the seed of Adam and his wife would crush Satan's head. The devil's evil campaign to destroy human souls would end in his defeat. The battle would have a single casualty. It would cost the life of God's own dear Son. But his victory over Satan would be complete. God's promise changed everything (*2 Timothy 4:18*).

END VIDEO. BEGIN CONVERSATIONS.

REMEMBER WHEN ...

Can you remember a moment when you realized you had committed a terrible sin? How did you feel in that moment? Why do you think you felt that way?

WORD POWER: grace; integrity; deception; ashamed; justice

FROM THE TOUR

What do you think God wanted Adam to do when Eve was listening to the snake?

List of some of the worst ways that sin damaged wonderful parts of God's creation.

Reread *Genesis 3:15*. Who is God referring to when he uses the pronoun *he*? What does God mean when he says to Satan: "He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel"?

LEARN MORE

Read *Ephesians 6:12-18*. How would you prepare yourself for a battle with the devil?

Read *Proverbs 28:13*. What is the God-pleasing way to deal with sin? Explain.

TAKE-AWAYS

Thank God for keeping his promise to send a Savior to rescue you from sin.

Talk with someone about the difference between laws that are just and laws that are unjust. Explain why you think that all laws should be just?



My comfort in my suffering is
this:
Your promise preserves my life.

Psalms 119:50