

Summer travel. The very phrase will invoke a wide range of memories. Some good, some bad. Some refreshing, some frustrating. So more specifically, what comes to mind when I say, beauty of creation? Just saying this and thinking of summer travel reminds me of sights from past travels, such as seeing a vast wilderness framed by distant mountain peaks rising two to three miles into the air as viewed from the rural highway near Glennallen, Alaska. Or the rugged green hills and bright blue ocean water as seen from the Cape Breton Highlands of Nova Scotia. Or the brilliant yellow and orange hues of the rock hoodoos of Bryce Canyon, Utah. Perhaps you have also been to places such as these, or with the mention of these are now reminded of similar sights while travelling, sights that have caused you to reflect on the magnificence of God's wonderful creation.

Now try to picture something that I think was more magnificent than anything I've mentioned yet. In your mind's eye, go with me back in time to a world just completed and declared 'good' by its creator, completely untouched by sin. This is the world into which the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve, were placed. God set Adam over all the creation as its caretaker, and gave him the authority to name every living creature. God also set before them a choice of life or death, making it clear that the punishment for disobedience would be death. But if they obeyed fully, which they were given the ability to do, the benefit would be eternal life, and continued, unbroken fellowship with God.

But this paradise did not last forever. Satan, speaking through a serpent, deceived Eve into doubting what God had previously said. In Genesis 3:1, it is recorded that the serpent said, *"Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"* The woman said to the serpent, *"From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"* The serpent said to the woman, *"You surely will not die! "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate."* So not only did the woman fall into sin this quickly, but her husband Adam, ordained by God to be the caretaker of all creation, including his wife Eve, stood by, failing to intervene in a moment in which she was very much vulnerable and under attack. Elsewhere in Scripture we find that Adam was not deceived, but he said and did nothing, instead permitting his wife to be deceived and to violate the words of their Creator. And then Adam, knowing the right thing to do, instead willfully ate of the fruit as well.

And so, at that moment, the human race was plunged into sin.

Fellowship with God was broken. Shortly thereafter, when God called to them, they hid. When God directly asked if they had eaten of the fruit of the tree from which they were commanded to not eat, rather than admit their guilt, both shifted the blame. "*The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."* Then the LORD God said to the woman, "*What is this you have done?"* And the woman said, "*The serpent deceived me, and I ate.*" Once again, Adam deferred to Eve rather than accepting the guilt. Eve, then, blamed the serpent in the first "the devil made me do it" excuse in history. They knew they were guilty, but rather than pleading guilty they just confessed the obvious fact – they had eaten the fruit – and then tried to blame external circumstances. God certainly could have brought the charges immediately, declared them guilty, sentenced them, and fully obliterated them for their disobedience. But He chose not to. With this in mind, what God did say must have surely taken them by surprise.

"The LORD God said to the serpent, "because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, And dust you will eat all the days of your life; and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel."

God addresses the serpent first. Because the serpent was used by Satan as the tool of deception, the serpent is made to be the lowest of living creatures. Satan had persuaded Eve to believe that God's order of creation was irrelevant. So now, the order is changed. The serpent, which a number of scholars believe was originally created as a beautiful creature, becomes humbled more than any other creature by being forced to crawl on its belly in the dust and eat dust. Now, it's been pointed out that snakes do not actually eat dust. But the phrase "eat dust" seems to be one passed down to this day, referring to a humbling defeat. Once great, both the serpent and Satan represented by the serpent, have been cursed to the lowest position in the order.

Next, there will be enmity between the serpent and the woman. But there's something really important about this. Notice where the enmity comes from. Anyone see this? (--right!) God puts enmity between the serpent and the woman. Enmity, a term that will come up a few more times this morning, is defined in the dictionary as "ill will on one side or on both; hatred; especially mutual antagonism." Whereas just moments before Eve had been much too trusting of, and friendly with, the serpent, God will intervene and divinely cause the woman to be the enemy of the serpent. Now just what does this involve? The popular answer is that this officially explains why women hate snakes. And while this is basically true, to leave it at that would cause us to actually miss the point of what is really being communicated here!

You see, the entrance of sin into the world has affected the entire created order, once declared good by its creator. Speaking of this, theologian O. Palmer Robertson notes that "God's glory as the great Creator has been assaulted. His handiwork has been disharmonized. Not simply for the sake of man, but for the glory of God redemption is undertaken." (pause) So, rather than swiftly destroying the transgressors for blatant disobedience, God instead displays His gracious character.

He himself will intervene by making the serpent and the woman to be enemies.

By obeying the serpent instead of her creator, Eve had essentially given herself over to be part of Satan's rebellion. But God instead promises to divinely cause Satan, represented by the serpent, and Eve to be enemies, not friends. And if this were not amazing enough, there's more! God will also put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent! What does this mean? To Eve, hearing this, I would imagine one of the first things in her mind is that it means that she will bear children. This isn't the end. There will be descendants. And to Satan, who is actually the one being addressed here, this represents a major blow to his intent to bring creation over to his side. God is taking his creation back – and will place it on his side once more!

But there is at least one key question that arises from this particular phrase, which begs consideration. Specifically, who is the seed of the woman and who is the seed of the serpent? Like the previous phrase, this phrase has been interpreted as referring to womankind in general, and thus the seed of the serpent would be snakes in general, and so it reinforces the perception that this is why women typically hate snakes. But while there could be truth to that, settling for that alone would be like settling for a crumb when you could have an entire pie! Or seeing a couple grains of sand and calling it an ocean beach!

So if, then, the real context of the enmity between the woman's seed and the serpent's seed is not just that women and snakes don't like each other, what is it? Let's look for some clues. First, keep in mind that in the New Testament Jesus indicates that angels do not marry, which should also be taken to mean that angels do not reproduce. Satan is a fallen angel, so it would stand to reason that Satan does not have any physical offspring. Next, consider the next human being to enter the world, Adam and Eve's first son Cain. At first glance, surely if anyone can truly be considered as the seed of the woman, it's Cain... *right*? After all, he's the firstborn son of his mother Eve. But 1 John 3:12 speaks of Cain being "of the evil one." And Cain sure wasn't in enmity with Satan. If we are thinking purely along physical lines, we're then faced with the obvious but clearly impossible question of whether God's promise of enmity held true. Or should the proper method of understanding this be not in physical reproduction but rather in spiritual terms? Specifically, should we regard Cain not as the seed of the woman, but rather of the seed of the serpent... the seed of Satan? 1 John 3:12 would seem to favor *this* interpretation, that Cain, being of the evil one, is of the seed of Satan. So I believe from this we can see that God has designated two ongoing spiritual lineages; both physically are descended of Adam and Eve, but they are spiritually distinct. In one, God intervenes and mercifully places enmity against Satan, but the other is given over to their own fallen desires, influenced by Satan. Both lineages deserve judgment because of their sin. But by intervening, in setting apart a people for himself, God demonstrates mercy.

Now, if *that* promise of hope doesn't leave us awestruck at God's amazing grace being demonstrated right after such blatant disobedience, the next component of the curse upon the serpent *surely* must. While the previous two elements of the curse upon Satan certainly give hope, this last part shouts victory! Speaking of the seed of the woman, God says to the serpent that "He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." All of a sudden the words have narrowed from general, plural terms to a specific singular, masculine pronoun. He. The seed of the woman is now being referred to as He. One individual. Descended from Eve. Who will enter into conflict with and will defeat Satan. Yes, friends, this early in history, this soon after man has fallen into sin, God has promised to send a Deliverer, born of woman, to deal the destructive blow to Satan. This is none other than Christ being foretold here in the third chapter of the Old Testament! This is pure grace, a promise of deliverance found right here in the midst of the curse. Immediately after the transgression, God begins to reveal how He will bring restoration. Before the verdict is even given to Adam and Eve, God has already promised that there will be deliverance.

But so far God's judgment has only been declared on the serpent and Satan. Now what about Adam and Eve?

What would God say to them? They stood guilty as covenant breakers, worthy of condemnation, and justly deserving death. They awaited the sentencing and verdict.

Genesis 3:16: *To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."*

The first statement made by God to Eve, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children", bears both good news and bad news for Eve. As was pronounced in the curse upon the serpent, the human race will continue, as Eve will bear children. This in itself is not new, as after creation God had commanded them to "be fruitful and multiply." But this reaffirms that despite their disobedience, God still intends for them to be fruitful and multiply. In fact, this is the means by which deliverance will one day come. However, as a result of sin, the means by which this will take place will not be easy. The curse of sin will have childbirth in its grip. The very way by which, eventually, God would bring His only Son into the world, bringing eternal life, will also be something accompanied by much pain, hardship and possibly even physical death.

So with every child born, there is certainly a reminder of the curse as is evident by the pain of bearing children. Now, I have no first-hand experience in this area. But it's true, isn't it, moms? But every child that is born is also a reminder of the grace of God, in that it was by the bearing of children that the human race continued, and through the bearing of a child that God entered the world in human form, just as he had promised, bringing deliverance.

The second statement made to Eve shows another case where sin has affected the created order. As Adam's silence and Eve's disobedience violated the God-ordained order, so the relationship between the woman and her husband will be affected. At first glance the passage seems to be saying that she will desire, or long for, her husband and he will in turn rule, such as by being the head of the household. But how is this different from the created order? It isn't. So what is the real impact? A key to understanding this seems to be in a similarly-constructed phrase in the next chapter, where in Genesis 4:7 God tells Cain that "*sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it*". This suggests another possible explanation for this statement made to Eve; an explanation that a number of scholars agree is more likely the correct interpretation. Just as the desire of sin was mastery over Cain, the desire of Eve, as well as women after her, will be mastery over her husband. Just as she took advantage of his silence once, so shall she and her descendants seek to repeat. She will desire to possess him. As a result, her husband will also react *outside of the created order*, as instead of being a caretaker, feelings of sinful tyranny will be stirred up in him as he seeks to subdue her and squelch this desire to rule over him. The created order of willing submission and loving headship gave way to a struggle for the upper hand. This imbalance remains as yet another painful reminder of the created order having been affected by sin.

God then speaks to Adam. Starting at Genesis 3:17: "*Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'you shall not eat from it'; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*"

Now contrary to some unkind popular humor, Adam's sin was not that he listened to his wife and thus men shouldn't do that. That would be missing the point altogether. It's that he rebelled by choosing to follow Eve into sin, rather than by obeying the true words of God.

So because of Adam's rebellion, the nature of his custodianship of creation will be changed. Prior to the fall, Adam was given dominion over all living things on the earth, and a specific task of cultivating the ground.

This has not changed, but now as a result of the curse upon the ground because of sin, it will be many times more difficult. Though Satan promised full God-like-ness, instead the reality will be sorrow, sweat, and dust. Furthermore, after a life of struggle with even the ground itself, he will eventually succumb to the ground and be buried in the dust.

Thorns and thistles will grow in the ground right alongside the crop, threatening to destroy it. Those who have farmed, or even gardened, know just how quickly it seems that weeds sprout up, and how quickly they can choke out the crop. Being a caretaker of the land has given way to battling the land for survival.

But even in the difficult labor there remains a glimmer of hope as well. As long as he is diligent to work, the man will have bread to eat, providing sustenance for himself and his family. Though every moment of work bears a painful reminder of the curse, every moment of work is also a reminder of God's providence. Despite the pain and hardship, the means by which man will live and survive during his lifetime *has been provided*.

Yes, we can clearly see the mercy of God amidst the curse in these verses. Adam and Eve sinned by rebellion and disobedience. They hid from God. They cast blame. They were clearly guilty, and clearly deserving condemnation and death. Yet there was no verdict spoken upon Adam and Eve, as only the serpent and the ground were cursed. James Montgomery Boice notes that "Had [God] declared our two parents to be guilty at that point, judgment in its fullest form must inevitably have followed. The man and woman would have suffered immediate banishment from God to hell, and their torment would have been endless." Adam and Eve were certainly not off the hook; there were definitely consequences. Just because the guilty verdict was delayed does not mean that Adam and Eve were not guilty. Just because God demonstrated His gracious character does not mean that He is indifferent toward sin.

But considering the crime – disobedience and rebellion against God – and considering other instances recorded in Scripture, such as the earth opening up to swallow Korah, Dathan, and Abiram after they rebelled in the wilderness – it becomes clear that while the effects of sin such as pain and hardship and death are consequences for the sin, the full measure of wrath is not present in this passage.

So now we must ask the question. Where *is* the guilty verdict? Where in Scripture is the full measure of wrath and the punishment that is due administered for sin? There are two instances. One is in Revelation, when the books are opened and all the dead are judged according to what they have done. This is when the guilty verdict comes down, and all who are guilty are cast into the lake of fire, along with Satan and death itself. The guilty verdict may have been delayed, but it will certainly come. As God told Adam and Eve, if they disobeyed they would surely die. And as Paul wrote in the epistle to the Romans, the "wages of sin is death." The serpent was *dead wrong* in his statement, saying, "you will not surely die."

Every human being since Adam has been born in sin, and at the end of his or her time on this earth, dies. Paul wrote to the Romans concerning this, saying "*Just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, so death spread to all men, because all sinned.*" Adam, as the first man, represented every individual that would ever descend from him. As descendants of Adam, we are heirs of Adam, receiving all he left to us... his sinful nature, his corruption, his debts, his guilt, his fallen condition, and his certainty of death. As our representative, Adam's sin means that we are also sinners with him. So, just like Adam and Eve, every single other human being descended from Adam would surely be found guilty in the judgment too. Just as Adam was entirely unable after his sin to do anything to make things right with God, as he was sentenced to death as a result of his sin, and the only reason he lived a moment past his sin was by the grace of God, so it is with us. We, too, are in a condition of being unable in our own power to do anything to make things right with God. We are born dead in our sin and fully corrupted by it. Our lives are marked by pain, hardship, and eventual death as a result of our sin. We deserve a guilty verdict. As Paul wrote, "*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" Pretty grim picture, isn't it?

But I did say that there are two instances in Scripture when the full measure of wrath and punishment was administered for sin. Where is the other? It is foretold all the way back in Genesis 3:15. . . All of the Old Testament points forward to it. . . It is at the Cross. Theologian O. Palmer Robertson notes “the respective seeds” – Christ and Satan – “assault one another with the purpose of ‘bruising’ or ‘crushing’... A fatal wound seems to be the intent.” It was at the Cross that human wickedness was poured out onto the holy Seed, the Son of God, 100% God and 100% man, the only man to have never sinned, the only begotten of the Father, who had never disobeyed... the wickedness of all whom the Father had chosen to redeem was poured on him, and ascribed to him as if he had committed it! He receives the guilty verdict, takes the punishment for sin, bearing the full wrath of God, crying out “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?” James Montgomery Boice notes that this was “bruising with a vengeance. It included the hatred of the religious leaders, the mocking of the crowds, the beatings, eventually the crucifixion with its great agony. And yet, it was only a bruising, not a defeat, for on the third day after the crucifixion Jesus rose from the tomb triumphantly!” An apparent victory for Satan became precisely the means by which his power would be undone.

How amazing is this?! That man’s rebellion and Satan’s schemes actually ended up being used by God as part of his perfect plan to carry out the promise of bruising the head of the serpent, and in doing so, delivering His people. That even in what looks like absolute failure and the very end of things, nonetheless it all remains fully under the sovereign control of Almighty God.

At that dreadful moment in the Garden of Eden, though it seemed as though the creation had been lost forever, due to willful rebellion in the face of a holy God, and Satan had won God’s creation over to his side, it was not so. Instead, God immediately began to unveil His plan to redeem a people for Himself. Who could have guessed He would take the punishment Himself to redeem His people whom He had chosen, setting them free from the bondage that they had subjected themselves to. There is no greater love ever displayed than this. According to Romans 5:7 and 8, “*For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”

While we were *yet sinners*.

It was not to preserve some existing good in us that Christ died. He died for us spiritually dead sinners, to give us life. And our position was not just neutrality toward Christ, but rather hostility and rebellion.

Yet, fully knowing this, He endured the pain, and went to the Cross so that the Father’s plan of redemption, first announced in the Garden of Eden, would be fully accomplished. *How deep the Father’s love for us! How vast beyond all measure! That He should give His only Son, to make a wretch His treasure!*

What great news for us. Now how does this truth affect our day-to-day lives?

First, let us never forget that God remains sovereign over all situations. Even the ones that look most hopeless. Even the ones where we know we've caused the problem, and it seems as though our foolishness has ruined God's plan. May we remember God is holy and pure and regards sin seriously. But God is merciful, and He is *sovereign*. The consequences may hurt, but no sin of ours can ever take God off the throne. What he has decreed to do, He will do.

Second, when sin overtakes you to the point where doubts creep in about whether you're really good enough to be called friends, even sons and daughters of God, realize this. In the words of the late Jack Miller, "Cheer up. You're worse than you think you are, but God's grace is greater than you could ever imagine!" We must never forget that our sin drove Christ to the cross. Martin Luther said that we carry the very nails of Christ in our pockets. We can't pin the blame on Adam and Eve and say it's all their fault, as deep as we know we would not have done any different in the Garden than they did. But here's the really good news. God's grace is greater than you could ever imagine! He knows your history. He knows your current struggles. He knows about *that* sin... whatever it may be. And Christ took the punishment for that sin so you would be set free. Theologian John Stott once wrote that "As we face the cross, we can say to ourselves both 'I did it; my sins sent Him there.' and 'He did it; His love took Him there.'" God alone can deliver from bondage to sin. And He will. Way back in Genesis 3:15, He promised that in the people He would redeem, He would place enmity against sin. The Holy Spirit works to renew our whole person in the image of Christ, and enables us more and more to die to sin. As part of this process, deep, ugly sins may be uncovered. Things we didn't know about ourselves may, upon being identified, threaten to drive us to despair. But be reminded that this sin is what sent Christ to the cross. And this hatred, this enmity toward the sin is a gift of God. In the words of the Psalmist, in Psalm 103:12 and 13, "*As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.*" Christians, realize that because of the deep love of the Father, the record of accusation against you is gone. Your sins are remembered no more. The Lord has compassion on you as a father has compassion on his children. Heed the message in the song the worship team sang as the prelude this morning: "come to Jesus and live!" If you are not a Christian, the message "Come to Jesus... and live!" is also for you. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.

Third, be encouraged by the knowledge that God alone can reverse the curse. Restoration does not depend on us, yet in Christ we share in the victory that He won over death at His resurrection. Clearly reminiscent of the language of the promise amidst the curse in Genesis 3:15, Paul exhorts us in Romans 16:19-20 saying, "*I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.*" The old creation is fallen because of sin. The effects of sin touch every aspect of our lives here on this earth. But restoration has been inaugurated. Victory is certain. Be encouraged by the words of 2 Corinthians 5:17, "*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*"

Recall the song we sang before the sermon. "The world was good, the world is fallen, the world will be redeemed." There is great hope for the future. Remember the places we thought of at the beginning of the sermon, some of the most beautiful places on earth? Well, get this. They are only mere shadows of the world that is to come; just little glimpses to make us long for the future new creation. And that day is coming! The struggles that threaten to beset us now will be gone for eternity. Mourning, crying, and pain will all be things of the past. Sin and death, sorrow and hardship, will all pass away, and in their place will be eternal joy and unbroken fellowship with God. All things will be new.

The final chapter in the Bible reveals a glimpse of this place. As I read this, marvel once more at the mercy and love of God, who took the curse upon Himself so that His people might be redeemed to spend eternity together with Him in the new creation.

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.””

SCRIPTURE SHEET / Grace Reformed Church – Fort Street / Sunday, August 23, 2009

Genesis 3:1-6 “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. **12-13** The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.” Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Genesis 3:14-19 “The LORD God said to the serpent, “because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, And dust you will eat all the days of your life; and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel.” To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” Then to Adam He said, “because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘you shall not eat from it’; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

1 John 3:12 “...not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother.”

Genesis 4:7 “...Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

Romans 5:12 “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...”

Romans 5:7-8 “For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Psalms 103:12-13 “As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.”

Romans 16:19-20 “I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

Revelation 21:3-7 “And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.”

“Where is the Guilty Verdict?”

Genesis 3:14-19

I. The Choice of Life or Death

II. Sinners Justly Deserving Death

III. The Curse upon the Serpent and a Surprising Promise!

1. E_____ between the serpent and the woman
2. Two sp_____ lineages
3. The specific pronoun: H____. A Deliverer, C_____, promised!

IV. Mercy, Consequences, a Curse, but no Guilty Verdict (yet)

To the woman:

Consequence: P_____ in C_____

Mercy: Ch_____

Consequence: Imbalance in R_____

To the man:

Consequence: G_____ cursed because of him

Mercy: S_____ (food)

Consequence: Toil, s_____, and death.

The full measure of wrath is _____ in this passage.

V. The Verdict Comes

1. Judgment imminent for one and all

2. The Substitute

VI. Application

1. God is s_____ over all situations.
2. “Cheer up, you’re w_____ than you think you are, but God’s g_____ is greater than you could ever imagine!”
3. God alone can r_____ the curse: He makes a___ t_____ n_____.

GIG Questions:

1. Think about specific instances in your life when God intervened during a dark moment, showering you with unexpected and undeserved blessing.
2. Why is the realization that “you are worse than you think” good news?
3. Reflect upon the significance of Christ receiving the deserved guilty verdict in your place. In what ways does this understanding affect how you live?