



Part 2: Waiting on Jesus' Final Rescue

Genesis 3:1-15

Waiting on Jesus requires our diligence to know and resist Satan's lies.

I. A Waiting People

"To wait on the Lord means to place your hope in him – to trust that God is the One who can deliver you. Your entire confidence rests on Him. We wait upon the Lord because He is God, and we are not. ... waiting is one of the greatest applications of the Christian faith. You are putting your trust in God, placing your hope in Him, and expressing confidence that He is in control." – Mark Vroegop, Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy

Last week: a lot of groaning...the gift of lament...

Waiting on God is hard, too, because we are especially vulnerable to lies about God, ourselves, and reality. Jesus teaches us we have a spiritual enemy determined to deceive and destroy us. This spiritual enemy is known in the Bible by many names, but the two most common are Satan or the devil.

"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44

A few quick observations from Jesus' comments in John 8:

- There really is a Satan or devil, who embodies evil.
- He is a liar, who deceives people with lies & desires to destroy them.
- He has a history with God and humanity – “from the beginning.”

Let’s go back to the beginning of God’s Story of Reality, which is given to us in the Bible.

II. The Reality of Satan

The first promise of a Savior.

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will crush your head, and you shall strike his heel.” Genesis 3:15

Jesus, Paul, and the New Testament writers see the serpent of Genesis 3 as the embodiment of a rebel angel known as Satan or the devil.

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” Romans 16:20

This, of course, raises all kinds of questions for modern, secular people like us. Throughout history, people have wrestled with the question of evil. While these debates are interesting, we don’t have time this morning to do justice to all of those.

Let’s start where Jesus starts: Genesis.

Note: A word about Biblical literature...there are important guidelines for reading and understanding Scripture well: genre of literature; historical-cultural context; literary themes throughout the Bible, etc.

Genesis 3 is clearly intended to communicate truth, but it’s probably symbolic too, i.e. a video camera may not have shown a talking snake.

Note: The English “serpent” is the Hebrew *nachash* which means “snake, serpent,” but it also has a wide range of meanings that speak of “chaos creatures” determined to create chaos and destroy life. This is a theme throughout the Bible, especially the Old Testament, as well as literature in the Ancient Near East (ANE).

Note: For more on this fascinating biblical theme, see The Bible Project podcast series: “Dragons in the Bible.”

Note: a word about Satan’s Mysterious History (Ezekiel 28:12-17). He may have been a seraph entrusted with guarding Eden, who leads a rebellion against God.

The serpent of Genesis 3 is almost certainly a symbolic representation of an evil spiritual being, known as Satan or the devil, who hates God and humans made in God’s image.

III. Satan’s Main Strategy (Genesis 3)

A. The Shape of Satan’s Deception

1. Distorts God’s Word; twists language (Gen. 3:1; cf. 2:16-17).
2. Emphasizes God’s prohibitions rather than His generosity.
3. Lies about God’s Word – Father of lies (Gen. 3:4; John 8:44).
4. Slanders God’s character (Gen. 3:5).

5. Ultimately, God cannot be trusted so live your life on your terms.

B. The Destructive Power of Sin

1. Sin is ethical - our rebellion against God's rightful authority (guilt).
2. Sin is relational – a rupture in our relationship with God (hiding in fear and shame).

“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. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’” Genesis 3:9

3. Sin is a powerful anti-God virus in our hearts – we no longer want to trust or love God naturally. We need the Holy Spirit to change what we want (see John 8:42).

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will crush your head, and you shall strike his heel.” Genesis 3:15

IV. Our Great Need and God's Great Rescue

“Sin, our nature demanded to be healed; fallen, to be raised up; dead, to rise again. We had lost the possession of the good; it was necessary for it to be given back to us. Closed in the darkness, it was necessary to bring us the light; captives, we awaited a Savior; prisoners, help; slaves, a liberator. Are these things minor or insignificant? Did they not move God to descend to human nature and visit it, since humanity was in so miserable and unhappy a state?” – Gregory of Nyssa (335-394)

Q: Can God really be trusted? Is life better, or at least safer, without God? How can we really know the answer to these questions?

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning...The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the father full of grace and truth.” John 1:1-2, 14

Recommended Resources:

1. Live No Lies by John Mark Comer (excellent book!).
2. For more on this fascinating Biblical theme of the serpent as a chaos creature in the Bible, see The Bible Project podcast series - “Dragons in the Bible.”
3. [God's Armor](https://www.greenwoodcc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Gods-Armor.pdf) (GreenwoodCC.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Gods-Armor.pdf).
4. [Biblical worldview](https://www.greenwoodcc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biblical-Worldview.pdf) (GreenwoodCC.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biblical-Worldview.pdf).

5. Greenwood Sermon & notes – Stand, Part 4 - “Taking Spiritual Warfare Seriously.” This sermon presents an overview of Satan’s various schemes and how we resist them.

Discussion questions:

1. Read John 8:42-44. What does Jesus teach us about reality?
2. What is your response to Doug’s main point in this sermon: “Waiting on Jesus requires our diligence to know and resist Satan’s lies.”
3. Read Genesis 3:1-7. What observations do you see?
4. How might the realities expressed in Genesis 3 and John 8:42-44 influence the way you think and live?
5. When you are discouraged in your waiting upon the Lord, what might you do in light of these realities?