

**Meadow Creek Presbyterian Church**  
**Reading Together**  
**The Golden Thread—The Story of Jesus**

**January 9 – Genesis 3: 16 – 19**

Yesterday we saw the curse that God pronounced on Satan because he tempted Adam and Eve, and in doing so declared war on the Kingdom of God. Today we see God now curse Eve, Adam and all of creation because of their sin. Everything about life would become hard.

Remember the mandate God originally gave to Adam and Eve? “Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, rule it and subdue it.” The curse of sin made fulfilling that mandate so much more difficult for man to carry out. Being fruitful and multiplying would be more difficult. There would be pain in child bearing, and I don’t believe that is just referring to the physical pain of child birth, but rather it refers to all the pain and heartache that is associated with trying to raise Godly children. Think about how much harder child rearing became because children would now be born with a sinful nature. Because children are born with a predisposition to sin is why parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, must, through prayer, engage in spiritual warfare, and call upon spiritual resources to protect our covenant children from Satan having his way with them. Because of sin, there would be strife in the family between parents and children and husbands and wives (verse 16). But that is just the curse that fell on Eve.

Adam’s curse brought pain and trouble to his work. No longer would the rest of creation cooperate in Adam’s effort to rule and subdue the earth. Before the fall, work was enjoyable for Adam, because everything went right—whatever he planted grew and produced fruit, there were no natural disasters to contend with that would undo the work Adam did. But now after the fall there would be sweat, weeds and thorns, and the chaos of natural disasters. Work would become a toilsome burden, because nature would no longer cooperate in the process.

**Romans 8:19-22** *The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

Even creation awaits the day when all will be made right again. But that is not even the end of the curse, rather than living eternally man will die

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and return to the dust he was made from. It is no wonder the world we live in is such mess, is it? But thanks be to God, because He has sent Jesus to reverse the curse.

**January 10 – Genesis 3: 6 – 23**

After God placed a curse upon the serpent (Satan), Eve, and Adam, He sent them out of the Garden and into the world where they would have to fend for themselves. Before they had sinned, Adam and Eve didn't know what evil was, or know what guilt felt like.

**Genesis 2:25** *The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

Now they knew both of those things all too well.

**Genesis 3:6-10** *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. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" <sup>10</sup> He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

The moment Adam and Eve rebelled against God their innocence left and they were covered with guilt and shame. Now think about how they tried to deal with that guilt and shame. They sewed garments of fig leaves together to cover their nakedness and shame, and they tried to hide from God. What is our first reaction when we sin? Isn't it to try to cover up our sin? Isn't it to try to hide from God? How do we do that? Often, it is by sewing together fig leaves of self-righteousness to try to cover up our sin and inadequacies. Here's the problem—we can't hide from God.

**Psalms 139:7-12** *Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. <sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, <sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. <sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," <sup>12</sup> even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.*

And what about our attempts to cover up our sin?

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**Proverbs 15:3** *The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.*

God can see right through the cover up. The fig leaves of self-righteousness wither under His gaze. It is interesting that Adam and Eve tried to use fig leaves to cover their nakedness and shame. How long would it be before those leaves would dry out, wither and expose them once again? They needed something better, so in Genesis 3: 21, the Bible tells us that God made coverings from animal skins to clothe them and cover their shame. This is the first record of a sacrifice—of one living creature losing their life for the sake of another. It is a picture of what Christ would do for us on the cross. As he hung there naked and bore the wrath of God, his sacrifice covers our guilt and our shame, but unlike Adam and Eve's fig leaves, his sacrifice for our sins is permanent and covers us completely for all of eternity.

**Hebrews 7:26-27** *Such a high priest meets our need-- one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.*

Are you trusting in Christ alone as the only acceptable sacrifice to cover your sin, or do you have your own garment of fig leaves you are trying to cover your guilt and shame with? Are you hoping that somehow your good works will cover your shame? If you are, then you are trusting in a garment made of fig leaves.

**Isaiah 64:6** *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.*

### **January 11 – Genesis 3: 20 – 24**

Adam and Eve are driven from the Garden by God. This was much more than just losing their home and a nice place to live. They also lost access to the thing they needed to be able to live eternally—the Tree of Life (verse 22). But even more importantly, they also lost the thing they needed more than anything else in the world—their intimate relationship with God the Father. The Garden was the place where God came and walked with them and had fellowship with them. Because of sin, this would no longer be the case. The angel with the flaming sword not only

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kept Adam and Eve from going back home again, he kept them from the Tree of Life, and he also kept Adam and Eve from entering the presence of God again.

All seems to be lost, except remember the promise that God made as he placed the curse on Eve.

**Genesis 3:15** *From now on, you and the woman will be enemies, and your offspring and her offspring will be enemies. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

We already have seen that when God spoke these words he was looking ahead to Jesus. Jesus is the one who makes the way for us to get back to the Garden. Through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross we will once again have a wonderful place to live for all of eternity.

**John 14:1-3** *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*

Through faith in Christ we once again have the hope of eternal life.

**John 3:16** *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Through Christ, in that eternal home that awaits us, we once again will have access to the Tree of Life.

**Revelation 22:1-2** *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.*

Through Christ, we get back to the Garden, and we once again have access to God both now:

**Hebrews 4:16** *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

And for all of eternity:

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**Revelation 21:3-5** *"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." <sup>5</sup> He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

**Revelation 22:3-6** *The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. <sup>6</sup> The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true."*

**January 12 – Genesis 4: 3 – 10**

In this passage we read the account of the first murder as Cain, in a fit of jealous rage, kills his brother Abel. It seems like Cain thought that no one had seen his crime, and no one would know how Abel had died, but look at verse 10. God tells Cain that Abel's blood is crying out from the ground. What did Abel's blood cry out? It cried out for justice, for Cain to be called to account for shedding the innocent lifeblood of his brother; for God to take vengeance on Abel's behalf.

In John's vision, in the Book of Revelation, there is something very similar that takes place.

**Revelation 6:9-11** *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. <sup>10</sup> They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" <sup>11</sup> Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.*

The typical cry of shed blood is to cry out for justice and vengeance, but in the Bible we also find an exception to what is typical. Rather than crying out for vengeance, the blood of Christ cries out for our forgiveness.

**Luke 23:33-34** *When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals-- one on his right, the other on his left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*

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Jesus' cry for forgiveness wasn't just for those who were physically nailing him to the cross. It was for us. It was our sin that caused him to go to the cross. His blood cries for forgiveness for each of us.

**Hebrews 12:23-24** *You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, <sup>24</sup> to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

The blood of Abel rightly cries out for justice and vengeance, the blood of Christ cries out for forgiveness. The righteous blood of Abel cries out in condemnation of Cain; the perfectly righteous blood of Jesus cries out for our forgiveness.

**John 3:17** *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

*Five bleeding wounds He bears, Received on Calvary.  
They pour effectual prayers; They strongly plead for me.  
"Forgive him, oh, forgive," they cry,  
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die."*

*Arise My Soul Arise—Charles Wesley*

**January 13 – Genesis 6: 5 – 22**

In today's reading we find the beginning of the very familiar account of Noah and the Ark. Notice how today's reading begins. God was grieved that He had made man, because man had gone from being the very image of God to being a creature whose "every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all of the time." Because of that evil, creation was doomed to destruction, but salvation for mankind, and all of creation, would be found in one righteous man. Does that sound familiar? It should, because in a very real way the account of Noah and the Ark gives us a picture of a greater salvation that is to come through a man even more righteous than Noah. Noah's faithfulness in building the Ark preserved the descendants of Adam until a savior could come. Jesus is that savior—the true Ark of salvation. His faithfulness in going to the cross makes it possible for us to not just live to see another day, but for us to live for all of eternity.

In the story of Noah, God's wrath against the sinfulness of humanity was poured out on all of humanity and just one man and his family was saved. At the cross we see something similar and yet very different. At the cross, we see God's wrath against the sinfulness of humanity

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poured out on one man so that many can be saved. But, just as in the account of Noah, the only people who will be saved will those who have faith in Christ's atoning death on the cross.

Noah's seeking of salvation by building and then taking his family into the ark was an act of saving faith, and if we are to be saved we must have that same faith. Faith to climb into Jesus—to place our lives in him.

*"Being 'in Christ Jesus' is a stupendous reality. It is breathtaking what it means to be in Christ. United to Christ. Bound to Christ. If you are 'in Christ' listen to what it means for you:*

1. *In Christ Jesus, you were given grace before the world was created. 2 Timothy 1:9, "He gave us grace in Christ Jesus before the ages began."*
2. *In Christ Jesus, you were chosen by God before creation. Ephesians 1:4, "God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world."*
3. *In Christ Jesus, you are loved by God with an inseparable love. Romans 8:38–39, "I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
4. *In Christ Jesus, you were redeemed and forgiven for all your sins. Ephesians 1:7, "In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses."*
5. *In Christ Jesus, you are justified before God and the righteousness of God in Christ is imputed to you. 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For our sake God made Christ to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*
6. *In Christ Jesus, you have become a new creation and a son of God. 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." Galatians 3:26, "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith."*
7. *In Christ Jesus, you have been seated in the heavenly places even while he lived on earth. Ephesians 2:6, "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*
8. *In Christ Jesus, all the promises of God are Yes for you. 2 Corinthians 1:20, "All the promises of God find their Yes in Christ."*
9. *In Christ Jesus, you are being sanctified and made holy. 1 Corinthians 1:2, "To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus."*
10. *In Christ Jesus, everything you really needed will be supplied. Philippians 4:19, "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."*

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11. *In Christ Jesus, the peace of God will guard your heart and mind. Philippians 4:7, "The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*
12. *In Christ Jesus, you have eternal life. Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
13. *And in Christ Jesus you will be raised from the dead at the coming of the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." All those united to Adam in the first humanity die. All those united to Christ in the new humanity rise to live again*

*John Piper Desiring God*

Jesus clearly taught that there is yet another judgment that is still to come—a final judgment when all men will be called to account for their sin. This judgment will take place when he comes again. Jesus' message to us is just as Noah was prepared for the flood by building an ark, we must be prepared for his second coming and the final judgment by trusting in him and obeying his commands.

**Matthew 24:37-42** *As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup> Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>42</sup> "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.*

Peter also tells us that the ark is a symbol of the salvation we have in Christ.

**1 Peter 3:20-22** *God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, <sup>21</sup> and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand-- with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

During the flood, salvation only came to those who took God at his word and found safety inside the ark. In the same way, when Jesus comes again, salvation will only come to those who in faith cling to the cross, and find their life, and righteousness, in Christ alone.



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**January 14 – Genesis 9: 7 – 17**

As the flood waters subsided, God made a covenant with Noah—a covenant in which God promised to never again destroy the earth by means of a flood. As a sign of this covenant, in verse 13, God says this, “I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.” Some translations use the word rainbow rather than bow, and they do this because clearly what we know today as a rainbow is the symbol that God gave to Noah to mark His covenant promise to Noah. But the actual word that some versions translate as rainbow is the word for a warrior’s bow that would shoot arrows. I believe what God was saying to Noah was that God was going to hang his warrior’s bow in the clouds, just as a warrior would hang his bow up after being victorious in battle. The hanging of the warrior’s bow marked the end of hostilities. Even though mankind would continue to persist in our rebellion against God, God was hanging up his bow. In the promise God made to Noah, God promised that there would be stability in creation so that Noah and his descendants could carry out the same work God had given Adam and Eve to do—be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.

This may seem like a minor point, but it is something to think about. God could have hung his bow in the sky so that it was continually aimed at earth, but that is not the way a rainbow hangs in the sky. As a rainbow hangs in the sky, it points toward heaven. Because of sin, God would once again pour out his wrath, but this time He would not shoot his arrow toward the earth, and pour out His wrath once again on mankind. No, instead, the bow points toward heaven, the wrath of God against sin would be poured out on God’s own Son—the arrow of God’s judgment and wrath would pierce His own Son—Jesus.

*Isaiah 53: 4 – 6 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**January 15 – Genesis 11: 1 – 9**

The story of the Tower of Babel is a story of mankind trying to build a perfect society without God—a story of mankind trying to reach the

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heights of heaven in our own power. It is a story that ends in failure, just as all of our attempts to reach God in our power will ultimately end in failure. In the world we live in today there are many who are trying to engineer a perfect society without God in the center of it. There are many who are trying to reach the heights of heaven in their power through their own goodness and righteousness. But none of our schemes to reach heaven on our own, or to create heaven here on earth, can succeed. That's because we really have no idea just how sinful we are.

**Isaiah 64:6** *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.*

Because of our sinfulness, there is no way for us to get to heaven in our strength, so the Son of God left heaven and came down to earth.

**John 1:14** *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*

It was an act of mercy for God to intervene and stop the construction of this tower so that we would see that we can't depend on our own strength to reach heaven, but must depend on Christ alone.

**John 14:5-6** *Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" <sup>6</sup> Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*