

Sunday School Notes 26 January 2020 Genesis 3: What went wrong?

We learnt last week that God is the WHO of creation. But: If God made everything good, why is the world in such a mess? We hear the news – and all we hear about are deaths and fires and earthquakes and corruption and sickness and climate change. How does this fit in with the idea of God making a ‘very good’ world?

It doesn't! The world God created was perfect. Gen 1:31 tells us that:

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

But God didn't create a puppet society. Puppets can be incredible, but they only work when they are activated. God wanted more than that for us. He gave us what we call ‘free will’. In other words, he gave us the right to choose how we would act in all circumstances. This means that people are free to develop differently. God allows us to make different choices.

And sadly, just like Eve in the Bible, we allow ourselves to get distracted from obedience and goodness. Eve had everything she needed, but she was not content. She wanted the only thing denied to her. It seems that she felt that if she ate that fruit, she would be ‘God-like’. Eve wanted that ‘extra something’ – just as we all do: “I wish I was like ...” and “if only”

And, sadly, we are also all like Adam who knew what was right, but thought: “It is no big deal, I'll join in!” and ideals and principles and obedience fly out of the window!

So, like Eve and Adam, although we are free to choose God we don't easily do so. We exercise our ‘free will’ to choose what suits us at that moment. Everyone in the world is infected with this virus of wanting to suit ourselves. There has been a “Fall” from God's standards.

And this is why the world is in a mess. It is not what God intended; it is the result both of disobedience throughout the ages – and our own disobedience today. (Romans 3:23 – *Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. (NirV)*

The good news, however, is hinted at even as God punishes Adam and Eve. He shows his love as he continues to care for them, providing skins for clothing. He also promises that sin will be defeated in the distant future (*Gen 3:15*) His plan, even then, was that Jesus would rescue us from our disobedient natures and from the consequences of getting out of step with God: *Romans 6:23: When you sin, the pay you get is death. But God gives you the gift of eternal life because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done (NirV)*

So right from the beginning, this story reminds us that we need God's forgiveness so we can escape from the mess our sins cause. But it also tells us that God's great love for us doesn't stop, even though we disobey him.