

SO SEND I YOU, INC. 2024 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

Saint John Baptist Church is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: 2024 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

Time: Feb 14, 2024 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Every day, until Mar 28, 2024, 44 occurrence(s)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82089300351?pwd=qdHdd5LGaTRWPhJCRgOxsK6bL2Fnji.1>

Meeting ID: 820 8930 0351

Passcode: 628471

Dial by your location

- **+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)**
- **+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)**

DAY 1 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024

NAKED, ASHAMED, AND SEPARATED FROM GOD

Rev. Dr. Derrick L. Boykin

Genesis 3:9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

The story of Adam and Eve is commonly characterized as "humanity's fall from grace," or, differently expressed, humans' descent from divine favor into sin. Today's scriptural passage is the biblical evidence often cited by theologians to support this claim. Certainly, you are familiar with the broader context of Genesis chapter 3, which reveals, that it was through the duplicity of the serpent that Eve succumbed to temptation, followed then by Adam. Their mutual act of violating God's command by eating the forbidden fruit led to their "fall from grace." As a result of what occurred on that day in Eden, Christian theologians have reasoned, that not only did Adam and Eve "fall from grace," specifically, but humankind "fell" generally.

Describing the consequence of Adam and Eve's actions, however, as solely a "fall from grace" is to misrepresent Jehovah God. A more accurate description would be a "fall from grace to a greater grace!" Let me explain.

After eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve experienced a loss of innocence, as they were awakened to the pain that comes with moral choices. They, like you and I today, were also capable of feeling the guilt that accompanies sinful decisions. In fact, they saw themselves through sinful eyes. They were ashamed of what they had experienced. Furthermore, they were ashamed of what they had become. For the ugliness of their deed had changed them forever. However, the good news for them and us today is this: Despite falling into sin, God's grace still remains. Just look at what follows next. God didn't abandon them. Instead, God sought them out. For the Bible states, "But the Lord God called to man. "Where are you?"

This rhetorical question, posed by God, is all the more beautiful when we consider the acts of God that follow in the sacred text. Watch this! God does not raise the question to find Adam and Eve and destroy them on sight. Neither does God do it to solely mete out judgment. For when God finds them, God's grace shines brightest. God doesn't curse them like God curses the serpent. In the case of Adam, specifically, the curse he actually deserved, God places it on the ground instead! God's grace doesn't stop there though. God then provides Adam and Eve with clothing for their nakedness. So, God hides that part of them that they've come to know as shameful. This is what our gracious God is able to do for us sinful creatures; that is, cover our shame so that it's no longer exposed!

But that's not the end of the story! During Lent, we reflect upon what salvation history reveals. In Eden, Adam and Eve's disobedience initiated a deadly separation between God and humanity. Yet, Jehovah gifted us with a greater grace through Jesus Christ, whose incorruptible life and shed blood, bridged the gap between God and humankind. Hallelujah to Jesus who restores what was lost in Eden for everyone who would call upon His name for salvation.

Prayer:

God of greater grace, though sin had led to our nakedness, shame, and estrangement, we give You and our Lord Jesus Christ thanks for His great work of reconciliation ! In Jesus' Name. Amen.