

Second Sunday after Pentecost

KIDS WILL BE KIDS—FINALLY!

Genesis 3:8-15

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Analysis by Marcus Felde

8They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." 13Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." 14The LORD God said to the serpent,

*"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.*

*15I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel."*

[We are reading an excerpt which is meant to stand for the whole Story of the Ruination in Genesis 3, from the serpent in verse 1 to the cherubim in verse 24. And we are not eager to read out loud, in public, the cursing of women and men for the thing Eve and Adam did. Yet, to analyze the story with no reference to those would be culpable mischief. So, although it isn't until verse 19 that the Lord quotes from the Ash Wednesday liturgy, I want it kept in mind that there and then he said "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." Also note that the Prognosis steps borrow freely from the Gospel for the day.]

DIAGNOSIS: Keep Away

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *The Mice Will Play*

Adam and Eve erred. Forgetting God, they listened to a clever creature and partook of what God had forbidden. Why not? How was God to know? They anointed a creature their maitre d', literally, "master of." Of them. Let the games begin, and intimacy (with God, with each other) depart.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *Hide and Seek (v. 10)*

Reminded of their God by the sound of One walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, they ran for cover/covering. Like mice disappearing into a mouse hole. Conscience was inflamed at the fear of being **dis**covered. Having God see their **dis**obedience. Even unto the twenty-first century, people run and hide when they hear footsteps in the garden. Dust we are, and we lie beneath the rug (shroud?) under which Adam and Eve were first swept, a mat woven of ridiculous posturing and rationalization and excuses. ("Remember the woman **thou** gavest me? It's her fault, not mine!!!)

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *Pop! Goes the Weasel (v.24)*

Damned they were. In contempt they stood. Because they had sought to be more than they were created to be, displacing God, they became less than God had been intended them to be, and got themselves thrown out of the garden. Cherubim guarded the entrance, in case they got any ideas. With a sword flaming and turning to keep them from taking back life. Keep away!

PROGNOSIS: Chain Tag (with references to the Gospel for the day)

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *King on the Mountain*

Enter Jesus of Nazareth, stage left, in Zorro costume. He will plunder the house of the strong man (Satan) to whom refugees from Eden are all subject, by 1) first binding the strong man (his crucifixion?), and then 2) plundering his property (resurrection?). Jesus does not simply lead us back into Eden through the main, cherubim-and-sword gate. First, he fixes the wagon of the Maitre d'.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Advanced Solution) : *Olly, Olly, Oxen Free*

But this one who walks into our dry places calls out with appealing mercy, "People will be forgiven for their sins! . . . You are my mothers and my brothers and my sisters." Can you hear me now? We do!

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *Let Us Play*

We do the will of God. Not in order to become God's kids, but because we are! This time around, when Satan tries to pull the old "Simon Says" trick on us, we tell him "But we are baptized; so take a flying leap." Frolicking in God's redemption, we play nice with brothers and sisters, even enemies. When we hear the

sound of the Lord God walking in the garden, nowadays, we
organize vespers. Also show and tell.