



Disharmony

Bethel Old Testament Lesson 3

Taking God's Name in vain

(using God's name in a way that is
inconsistent with His personhood)

A good illustration of taking God's
name in vain is found in
Genesis 3

Gen. 3:4 The serpent said to the woman,

“You surely will not die!

Gen. 3:5 “For God knows that in the day you

eat from it your eyes will be

opened, and you will be

like God, knowing good

and evil.”



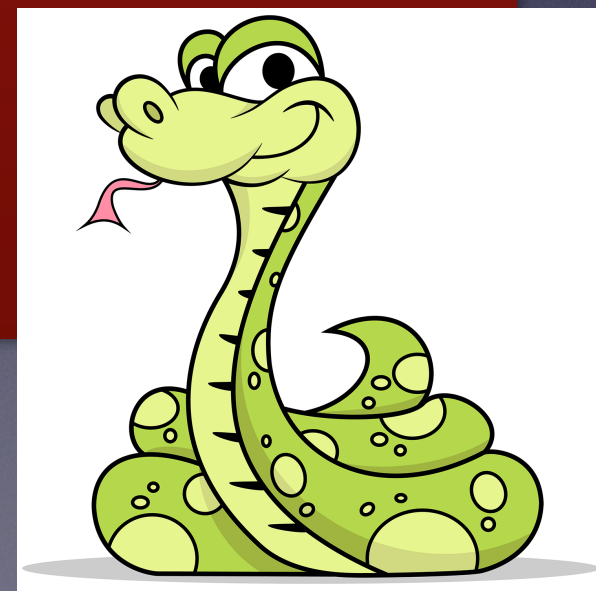
The Serpent was the first to take God's name in vain

- He called into question God's character. The serpent's use of God's name is inconsistent with the true nature of God.
- The crafty beast in the Garden of Eden suggests that Elohim has qualities that He does not have.

The Serpent suggests

- that God is not really what Adam and Eve have been led to believe
- that Adam and Eve cannot trust the word of God
- that God is holding back something which would be good for man

He questions whether
God really
knows what is best or
wants what is best for
man.



Satan is questioning God's

- truthfulness,
- goodness,
- care,
- love.

Satan still wages his campaign
against God in the same way.

He continues to suggest to mankind
that God is not Who and What God
says He is in His Word.

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV)

To Fear God's Name

- Is to take God seriously.
- Is to believe that He is Who and What He says He is.
- Is to be in awe of Him
- Is to believe and rely on His Word.

Teach me your way, O LORD,
and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

Psalm 86:11

“What you think about God—not
what you say you think about God,
but what you really think deep
down inside—is the most
important determination of your
character.”

John H. Walton, Andrew E. Hill, *Old Testament Today*, p. 27

The author of Genesis seems to portray the “fall” not merely as sin but also as the work of fools.

It is in the light of an understanding of God as the one who discerns “good” from “evil”, and who is intent on providing humanity with the good, that humankind’s rebellious attempt to gain the knowledge of “good and evil” for themselves can be seen clearly for the folly that it is.

The result of listening to and believing a
voice other than God's

(in other words,

taking God's name in vain)

is **chaos and disharmony**.



The deliberate, willful,
needless disobedience of
God by man, because he
listened to and followed a
voice other than God's,
destroyed harmony
throughout creation.



- Before the fall there was ONE VOICE, ONE WAY. Afterward, there were many voices, many ways.
- Harmony was destroyed.



There now was disharmony.

- disharmony with God,
- disharmony with self,
- disharmony with others,
- disharmony with nature.

Death began

- In man, spiritual death happened immediately
- He was separated from God by shame, guilt and fear
- He was expelled from the Garden, God's holy space, and from God's presence



- Death in the soul (mind, will, emotions)
produced a disruption
 - in the relationship between man and woman
 - in the relationship of man and the earth
 - in the relationship of man and himself - he now carried a burden of guilt and a sense of guilt and shame

Aging began and the death of
the body would eventually
occur.



With judgment, God's grace toward sinful man is first revealed

- God does not abandon His sinful creatures
- He covers man with an animal sacrifice
- He acts in grace by removing Adam and Eve from the Garden so that they would not eat of the tree of life and live in sin forever.

- God acted in grace when, in the curse on the serpent, He first mentioned the “good news” of the gospel. God has a plan which the serpent will not foil.

The Promise

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



In Genesis 1 and 2,
God had shown Himself a God
of order.

In Genesis 3,
man's sin and rebellion
created chaos.

Man had taken God's name in vain

by refusing to believe

that God was

Who He had revealed Himself to be,

the sovereign and good creator of the
earth.

“The way of rebellion puts immediate pleasure in front of possible consequences, and sets our own perceptions of what is good for us against what God has told us about ourselves and his world. Sin is the name given to that separation from God which begins with the abandonment of trust in God’s goodness and God’s love.”

David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11*, p. 87

Genesis 4 - 11

- In Genesis 4 - 11 there is a downward spiral, the result of the chaos of sin and the loss of the knowledge of God.

Genesis 6:5 ¶ The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

- God is a God of love, of compassion, of patience.
- But He is also a righteous judge, and His tolerance and patience have a limit.
- We see the limit to His patience reached in His sending the Flood and in His confusion of man's language at the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 6:8 *But Noah found favor (grace) in the eyes of the LORD.*

Noah was given grace.

He listened to God and obeyed, and the result was the salvation of Noah, his family, and the animals.

In Genesis 9:8-17, God made a covenant with Noah, his descendants and every living creature with him. God vowed He would not ever again destroy the earth with water.



The rainbow was the sign of this covenant

(We will discuss “covenant” in later lessons.)

But man still did not obey God's Word.
Man continued to take God's name in vain.



Genesis 11 and the Tower
of Babel is proof of that.

God said:

- Genesis 9:1 ¶ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

But man said:

- Gen. 11:4 They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

So God said:

Gen. 11:6 The LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.

Gen. 11:7 “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.”

Gen. 11:8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.

Gen. 11:9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.

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make an order for himself led
to confusion, disorder, and
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