

Genesis 3 Commentary

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Adam and Eve Sin in the Garden of Eden

Click chart to enlarge

cChart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission

[Chart on Genesis](#) - Charles Swindoll

[Another Overview Chart](#)

Summary Chart of The Book of Genesis								
Focus	Foundation Events (Four Events) (Events Predominant)				Foundation People (Four People) (People Predominant)			
Divisions	Creation (Ge 1-2)	Fall (Ge 3-5)	Flood (Ge 6-9)	Nations (Ge 10-12)	Abraham's Faith (Ge 12-24)	Isaac's Family (Ge 25-26)	Jacob's Conflicts (Ge 27-36)	Joseph's Calamity (Ge 37-50)
Topics	Beginning of the Human Race (Race As A Whole)				Beginning of the Hebrew Race (Family of Abraham)			
	Faithfulness of Mankind (Noah)				Faithfulness of One Man's Family (Abraham)			
	Historical				Biographical			

Place	Eastward From Eden to Ur	Westward From Canaan to Egypt
Time	~2000+ Years (20% of Genesis) (~4004-2090BC)	About 300 Years 193 Yr in Canaan, 93 Yr in Egypt (80% of Genesis) (2090-1804BC)
	Primeval History of Humanity	Patriarchal History of Israel
Author	Moses	

BEGINNINGS

- Ge 1:1-25 - The Universe (Everything)
- Ge 1:26-2:25 - The Human Race
- Ge 3:1-7 - Sin Enters the World
- Ge 3:8-24- God Promises Redemption from Bondage to Sin
- Ge 4:1-15 - Family Life
- Ge 4:16ff - Civilization
- Ge 10:1-11:32 - The Nations of the World
- Ge 12:1ff - The Story of Israel and the Jews

NOTE: This Verse by Verse Commentary page is part of an ongoing project to add notes to each verse of the Bible. Therefore many verses do not yet have notes, but if the Lord tarries and gives me breath, additions will follow in the future. The goal is to edify and equip you for the work of service (Eph 4:12-13-[note](#)) that the Lord God might be glorified in your life and in His Church. Amen (Isa 61:3b, Mt 5:16-[note](#))

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

Septuagint - ho de ophis he phronimotatos (wise, sensible, prudent = as relating to the quality of one's thinking, resulting fr. insight = wise, intelligent Mt 7.24 25.4 Lu 16.8) panton ton therion ton epi tes ges on epoiesen kurios ho theos kai eipen go ophis te gunaiki ti hoti eipen o theos ou me (double negative! Satan is a master wordsmith!) phagete apo pantos xulou tou en to paradeiso (fr. old Persian word for garden = park, paradise; in OT Garden of Eden; in NT place of blessedness for souls of righteous dead Paradise Lu 23.43; heavenly place where God dwells (2Co 12.4))

Septuagint English: Now the serpent was the **most crafty** of all the brutes on the earth, which the Lord God made, and the serpent said to the woman, **Wherefore has God said**, Eat not of every tree of the garden?

KJV Now the serpent was **more subtil** than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, **Yea, hath God said**, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

ESV Now the serpent was **more crafty** than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "**Did God actually say**, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

NET Now the serpent was **more shrewd** than any of the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "**Is it really true that God said**, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard'?" (Gen 3:1 NET)

NLT The serpent was the **shrewdest** of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "**Did God really say** you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

CSB Now the serpent was the **most cunning** of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "**Did God really say**, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?"

- **Now:** Ge 3:13-15 Isa 27:1 Mt 10:16 2Co 11:3,14 Rev 12:9 20:2
- **serpent:** Joh 8:44.

- **he said:** Nu 22:28,29 Ec 4:10 1Pe 3:7
- **the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman,** “Indeed, : Mt 4:3,6,9
- [Map of Mesopotamia](#)
- [Wikipedia - Garden of Eden](#)
- [Genesis 3 The Fall](#) - W H Griffith-Thomas
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3
- [Schemes of the Devil](#) - In depth analysis of his schemes
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple sermons and commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Timothy 2:14+ And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

1 Peter 3:7+ You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE!) your prayers will not be hindered.

SATAN'S FIRST TACTIC: CREATE DOUBT IN GOD'S WORD!

Notice the other versions listed above, specifically the words in **bold red font**. These are the first words of Satan and they are craftily constructed to make Eve **doubt** the holy Word of God. Satan and his minions have not changed their tactic for millennia because it still works! Beware when you begin to **doubt** God's Word, for you are surely on a slippery slope which will inevitably lead to fall. The corollary principle is the that the best defense against the lies of the devil (he is always a liar - Jn 8:44+), is the truth of God (God's Word of Truth). The battlefield is our mind and the battle is over truth and error (deception)!

THOUGHT - The chief tactic of the devil is to question the Word of God. This begs the question -- Are you DAILY (not every other day, etc, EVERY day) in the Word of Truth (2Co 6:7+, Jas 1:18+), as Jesus implied by His statement to the devil in Lk 4:4+ (Mt 4:4+)? If not, you are already in trouble and are vulnerable to his subtle lies! Get in the Word and hold it fast (Lk 8:15+) so that the Word can hold you fast when (not "if" but when!) the temptations blow in from the world, the flesh and the devil!

Griffith-Thomas - It is hardly too much to say that this chapter is the pivot of the Bible, for if we take it away the rest of Scripture becomes meaningless. With the exception of the fact of Creation, we have here the record of the most important and far-reaching event in the world's history—the entrance of sin. The record in this chapter, like that of the Creation, is variously interpreted. Many speak of it as 'mythical,' by which is often meant that which is unreal, untrue, and impossible. Others use the term 'myth' as indicating an elementary method of conveying moral and spiritual truth, even though the narrative itself is not historical in form. The former view is naturally to be set aside by all who believe in the fact and veracity of a Divine revelation. The latter interpretation of 'myth' does not seem to be quite satisfactory on any intelligible principle of Divine inspiration. The truest method of interpretation is that which regards these narratives as pictorial records of actual fact; solid history in pictorial form. It is inadequate to speak of the narrative as poetic or merely symbolical, lest we should give the impression that the story is not concerned with actual fact. Allegory, too, is identical with the truth illustrated, and does not necessarily presuppose any historical basis. What we must insist upon and ever keep in view is that, whether allegorical or pictorial, the narrative is expressive of actual fact. ([Genesis 3 The Fall](#))

Paul R. Van Gorder ([The Old Testament Presents... Reflections of Christ](#)) broadly outlines Genesis as

- Genesis 1-2 Generation
- Genesis 3-11 Degeneration
- Genesis 12-50 Regeneration

Now the serpent ([nachash](#)) was more crafty ([arum](#); Lxx - [phronimos](#)) than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made): **Now** introduces the serpent with no fanfare, no background explanation. From the context clearly the serpent is a created being. The question might be raised at this point, was this a literal serpent? Was this being standing at this time in the story? Was this a serpent of the garden that had been in effect possessed by Satan, who we know is a spirit being, albeit an evil spirit and as such has the capability to inhabit a material being (like a serpent)? In answer to that last question, most authorities favor the "serpent of old," Satan (Jn 8:44) was using (possessing) a literal serpent.

This is the age old ploy of Satan = **to question God's word**. One can only imagine what life was like in the Garden before sin. Adam and Eve had tasks to perform, but work was sweet and not sweat! They not only enjoyed perfect oneness and intimacy with each other, perfect because it was untainted by sin, but far better they enjoyed oneness and intimacy with God. But Eve entered into a discussion with the serpent, and, through being deceived, she gave in to temptation, and all of that changed.

Kyle Yates - The Hebrew word contains the idea of exceptional shrewdness. (Rabbinic legend has it that the serpent walked erect.) He had the power of speech and talked freely with his victim. He was wily, insidious, crafty. Later exegesis will identify the serpent with Satan or the devil. In the light of later Scripture truths, we are justified in concluding that the serpent was a specially chosen instrument of Satan for this test...He chose the craftiest, the most subtle, the most cautious of the animals and took full control of him (**ED: REMEMBER THAT SATAN IS A SPIRIT, ALBEIT AN EVIL ONE**) for his disastrous work (**ED: WE MIGHT SAY HE "POSSESSED" THE SERPENT.**). (See context in [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

Satan "the serpent"...

Revelation 12:9, 14, 15+ And the great dragon was thrown down, the **serpent** of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him....14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she *was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the **serpent**. 15 And the **serpent** poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.

2 Corinthians 11:3+ But I am afraid that, as the **serpent deceived** ([exapatao](#)) Eve by his **craftiness** ([panourgia](#)) your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Comment on **deceived** ([1818](#)) ([exapatao](#) from [ek](#) = intensifies meaning of root + [apatáo](#) = seduce, deceive - see study of related word [apate](#)) means to beguile thoroughly, deceive completely or seduce (persuade to disobedience, lead astray by persuasion or false promises) wholly. The result is to lead astray. To cause a subject to believe or accept false ideas about something with the implication of that one is led out of the right way into error and especially to sin (see 1Cor 11:3+, 1Ti 2:14 below). **Richards** writes that "**Apatao** and its derivatives indicate ethical enticement... Deception sometimes comes from within, as our desires impel us to deceive. But more often in the NT, deceit is error urged by external evil powers or by those locked into the world's way of thinking."

Comment on **Craftiness** ([3834](#)) ([panourgia](#) from [pas](#) = all + [ergon](#) = work) is literally "all working" or capable of all work. In the NT it takes on a negative meaning and conveys the ideas of trickery involving cunning, cleverness, craftiness or treachery. **Panourgia** conveys the the idea of clever manipulation of error to make it look like the truth. Someone who practiced **panourgia** would be willing to do anything to achieve his goals. **Panourgia** is the unscrupulousness that stops at nothing.

Related Resources:

- Schemes of the Devil | Precept Austin
- Ephesians 6:11ff Commentary

Scotfield: The serpent, in his Edenic form, is not to be thought of as a writhing reptile. That is the effect of the curse (Ge 3:14). The creature which lent itself to Satan may well have been the most beautiful as it was the most "crafty" of creatures less than man. Traces of that beauty remain despite the curse. Every movement of a serpent is graceful, and many species are beautifully colored. In the serpent, Satan appeared "as an angel of light" (2 Co 11:14).

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - **serpent**. The "serpent" was not merely a talking snake, but was Satan himself (Revelation 12:9; 20:2) possessing and using the serpent's body to deceive Eve. Satan had been originally "created" (see notes on Ezekiel 28:14,15) as the highest of all angels, the anointed cherub covering the very throne of God in heaven. He, along with all the angels, had been created to be "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14). Not content with a role inferior in two important respects to man (angels were not created in God's image, nor could they reproduce after their kind, there being no female angels), Satan led a third of the angels (Revelation 12:4,9) to rebel against God, seeking to become God himself. Evidently, he did not really believe that God was the omnipotent Creator, but rather that all had evolved from the primeval chaos (probably the explanation for the widespread ancient pagan belief that the world began in a state of watery chaos). God, therefore, "cast thee to the ground" (Ezekiel 28:17), allowing Satan to tempt the very ones he had been created to serve. **Crafty** - The physical serpent was clever, and possibly originally able to stand upright, eye-to-eye with man, (the Hebrew word is nachash, possibly originally meaning a shining, upright creature). **he said**. Some of the animals may have originally been

able to communicate on an elementary level with their human masters, an ability later removed by the Curse. More likely, God allowed Satan to use the serpent's throat (as He later allowed Balaam's ass to speak--Numbers 22:28) and Eve was, in her innocence, not yet aware of the strangeness of it. **hath God said.** The root of all sin is doubting God's Word. Satan was successful in this approach even with one who had never sinned before and who had no sin-nature inclining her to sin. Satan merely implanted a slight doubt concerning God's veracity and His sovereign goodness. The approach so successful in this case has provided the pattern for his temptations ever since.

NET NOTE on **crafty** - There is a wordplay in Hebrew between the words "naked" (עָרוּמִים, 'arummim) in Ge 2:25 and "shrewd" (עָרוּם, 'arum) in Ge 3:1. The point seems to be that the integrity of the man and the woman is the focus of the serpent's craftiness. At the beginning they are naked and he is shrewd; afterward, they will be covered and he will be cursed.

Allen Ross has some interesting comments - Genesis 3:1 is connected with Ge 2:25 by a Hebrew wordplay: Adam and Eve were "naked" (**arom**); and the serpent **was more crafty** (**arum**, "shrewd") than all. Their nakedness represented the fact that they were oblivious to evil, not knowing where the traps lay, whereas Satan did and would use his craftiness to take advantage of their integrity. That quality of shrewdness or subtleness is not evil in itself (indeed, one of the purposes of the Bible is to make believers so, according to Prov. 1:4, where 'ārmāh shrewdness, is trans. "prudence"). But it was used here for an evil purpose....The tempter was a serpent (Satan in the form of a snake), thus suggesting that temptation comes in disguise, quite unexpectedly, and that it often comes from a subordinate (someone over whom one should have exercised dominion; cf. Gen. 1:28). Also there may well be a polemical element here, for the serpent was worshiped by pagans. Their symbol of life was in fact the cause of death. Divinity is not achieved (the promise of Satan here; Ge 3:5) by following pagan beliefs and symbols. That is the way of death, not of life. Eve either did not know God's command very well or did not want to remember it. By contrast, Christ gained victory over Satan by His precise knowledge of God's Word (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). Eve disparaged the privileges, added to the prohibition, and weakened the penalty—all seen by contrasting her words (Gen. 3:3) with God's original commands (2:16-17). After Satan heard this, he blatantly negated the penalty of death that God had given (3:4). Satan is a liar from the beginning (John 8:44), and this is his lie: one can sin and get away with it. But death is the penalty for sin (Gen. 2:17). (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

And he said to the woman - She was the object of his attack, being the weaker one and needing the protection of her husband. He found her alone and (apparently) unguarded by Adam. Though sinless, Eve clearly was susceptible to temptation and seduction.

Satan succeeded in deceiving Eve to doubt the truthfulness of God's word and the goodness of His motives. Satan (along with his workers) operates through deception and disguise. In fact, we are told in 2 Co 11:14+ that he disguises himself as an angel of light. When dealing with an enemy who doesn't deal in truth, one must be especially careful to not take anything at face value. Eve should have let God's words be her authority, but as soon as Satan tricked her into calling what God said into question, it was only a matter of time before she went her own independent way. When we make ourselves the judge of whether God's words are true, transgression is inevitable.

Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden' - Note he avoids using the name **LORD God** by which he was created! [See note on a talking serpent.](#) In effect Satan said, "Is it true that He has restricted you from the delights of this place? This is not like one who is truly good and kind. There must be some mistake." So he questions God's goodness. He questions God's Word. He uses the subtle power of suggestion in his deceitful maneuver. He is planing doubts in her mind about God's goodness, truthfulness & the sufficiency. He appeared as an angel of light (2Co 11:14) to lead her to the supposed true interpretation of what God had said. And Eve received him without fear or surprise, but as some credible messenger from heaven with the true understanding, because of his cunning.

***If you don't want the fruits of sin
Stay out of the devil's orchard!***

NET NOTE on **God** - The serpent does not use the expression "Yahweh God" [LORD God] because there is no covenant relationship involved between God and the serpent. He only speaks of "God." In the process the serpent draws the woman into his manner of speech so that she too only speaks of "God."

Crafty (06175)(arum from **arom** = to be shrewd or crafty) means crafty, shrewd, sensible and can be positive (prudent) or negative (shrewd, crafty Ge 3:1, Job 5:12; 15:5). By far most uses are in Proverbs where we see the description of a prudent individual = takes no offense at an insult (Pr 12:16), does not flaunt knowledge (Pr 12:23) gives careful thought of his ways (Pr. 14:8); takes careful thought before action (Pr 14:15); is crowned with knowledge (Pr 14:18); sees and avoids danger (Pr 22:3; 27:12).

Gilbrant - The Hebrew adjective 'ārûm, "clever," "crafty" or "shrewd," is derived from the verbal root 'āram, "to be clever," "to be crafty" or "to be shrewd." The first occurrence of 'ārûm is in a description of the deceiver in the Garden of Eden, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made" (Gen. 3:1, NIV). The serpent's cleverness stood against

obedience to God, thus making such craftiness sin. The Book of Job uses this same term to depict those whom God rejects because of their self-serving intentions and irreverent attitudes. Job 5:12 declares, "He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success" (NIV; cf. Job 15:5). The Book of Proverbs, however, uses 'ārûm positively with the sense of "sensible" or "prudent." The adjective occurs in the NIV in such phrases as, "a prudent man overlooks an insult" (Pr 12:16); "a prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself" (Pr 12:23); "every prudent man acts out of knowledge" (Pr 13:16) and "a prudent man sees danger and takes refuge" (Pr 22:3).

Arum - 11x in 11v - crafty(2), prudent(2), prudent man(3), sensible(2), sensible man(1), shrewd(1). Gen. 3:1; Job 5:12; Job 15:5; Prov. 12:16; Prov. 12:23; Prov. 13:16; Prov. 14:8; Prov. 14:15; Prov. 14:18; Prov. 22:3; Prov. 27:12

Spurgeon on crafty - Satan has abundant craft, and is able to overcome us, for several reasons. Methinks it would be a sufficient reason that Satan should be cunning because he is malicious; for malice is of all things the most productive of cunning. When a man is determined on revenge, it is strange how cunning he is to find out opportunities to vent his spite. Let a man have enmity against another, and let that enmity thoroughly possess his soul, and pour venom, as it were, into his very blood, and he will become exceedingly crafty in the means he uses to annoy and injure his adversary. Now, nobody can be more full of malice against man than Satan is, as he proveth every day; and that malice sharpeneth his inherent wisdom, so that he becometh exceedingly subtle.

Besides, Satan is an angel, though a fallen one. We doubt not, from certain hints in Scripture, that he occupied a very high place in the hierarchy of angels before he fell; and we know that those mighty beings are endowed with vast intellectual powers, far surpassing any that has ever been given to beings of human mould. Therefore, we must not expect that a man, unaided from above, should ever be a match for an angel, especially an angel whose native intellect has been sharpened by a most spiteful malice against us.

Again, Satan may well be cunning now,—I may truthfully say, more cunning than he was in the days of Adam,—for he has had long dealings with the human race. This was his first occasion of dealing with mankind, when he tempted Eve; but he was even then "more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Since then, he has exercised all his diabolical thought and mighty powers to annoy and ruin men. There is not a saint whom he has not beset, and not a sinner whom he has not misled. Together with his troops of evil spirits, he hath been continually exercising a terrible control over the sons of men; he is therefore well skilled in all the arts of temptation. Never anatomist so well understood the human body as Satan does the human soul. He has not been "tempted in all points," but he has tempted others in all points. He has tried to assail our manhood from the crown of our head to the sole of our foot; and he has explored every outwork of our nature, and even the most secret caverns of our souls. He has climbed into the citadel of our heart, and he has lived there; he has searched its inmost recesses, and dived into its profoundest depths. I suppose there is nothing of human nature that Satan cannot unravel; and though, doubtless, he is the biggest fool that ever hath existed, as time continually proveth, yet, beyond all doubt, he is the craftiest of fools, and I may add, that is no great paradox, for craft is always folly, and craftiness is but another shape of departure from wisdom.

And now, brethren, I shall for a few minutes first occupy your time by noticing the craft and subtlety of Satan, and the modes in which he attacks our souls; and, secondly, I shall give you a few words of admonition with regard to the wisdom that we must exercise against him, and the only means that we can use effectually to prevent his subtlety from being the instrument of our destruction. (Read full sermon [AN ANTIDOTE TO SATAN'S DEVICES](#))

QUESTION - [Was Satan the serpent in Genesis chapter 3?](#)

ANSWER - Yes, the serpent in Genesis chapter 3 was Satan. Satan was either appearing as a serpent, possessing the serpent, or deceiving Adam and Eve into believing that it was the serpent who was talking to them. Serpents / snakes do not possess the ability to speak. Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 both describe Satan as a serpent. "He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:2). "The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him" (Revelation 12:9).

While the Bible is not clear as to whether or not the serpent stood up or walked before the curse, it appears likely that, like other reptiles, it probably did walk on four legs. That would seem to be the best explanation of Genesis 3:14, "So the LORD God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.'" The fact that the serpent was cursed to crawl on his belly and eat the dust of the earth forever is also a way of indicating that the serpent would be forever despised and looked upon as a vile and despicable creature and an object of scorn and contempt.

Why did God curse the serpent when He knew that it was actually Satan who had led Adam and Eve into sin? The fate of the serpent is an illustration. The curse of the serpent will one day be the fate of Satan himself (Revelation 20:10; Ezekiel 28:18-

QUESTION - [Why didn't Adam and Eve find it strange that a serpent was talking to them?](#)

ANSWER - Interestingly, the serpent/snake speaking to [Adam](#) and [Eve](#) is not the only instance in the Bible where an animal speaks. The prophet Balaam was rebuked by his donkey (see Numbers 22:21-35). We have to remember that while animals are not capable of speaking, there are powerful beings out there (God, the angels, Satan, the demons) who are capable of the impossible, including enabling animals to speak. Most scholars hold that it was Satan in the Garden of Eden who was speaking through the snake, not the snake itself speaking on its own. Thus, the Genesis 3 account it is not suggesting that snakes were of an intellect that would have enabled them to speak coherently.

Still, why didn't Adam and Eve find it strange that an animal was speaking to them? It is unlikely that Adam and Eve had the same perspective we do on animals. In our era, we know from experience that animals are incapable of speech on the same level as humans. Adam and Eve did not have a childhood, nor did they have other humans to learn from. Given that Adam and Eve had probably only been alive a matter of days, it is not unreasonable for them to believe that animals were capable of speech. It is also possible that this was not the first talking animal Adam and Eve had encountered. Perhaps Satan or even God Himself had used animals to communicate with Adam and Eve before. There are so few details given in the account that much is left to speculation and presumption.

Lastly, it was not unreasonable for Eve to answer the snake. After all, the snake was evidently speaking in a language that she understood and asking an intelligible question. It is also likely that Adam was nearby and could verify that she was not imagining things. It was not the serpent speaking that should have alarmed them. Rather, it was the fact that he was causing them to doubt God's instructions (Genesis 3:1), contradicting God (Genesis 3:4), and calling God's motives into question (Genesis 3:5). That should have been enough to cause both Eve and Adam to stop talking to the serpent. GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [Did Adam and Eve know what death was when God commanded them not to eat from the tree of knowledge?](#)

ANSWER - When God created the first man and first woman, He placed them in the Garden of Eden where they lived in a state of innocence, without sin. God freely gave them the fruit of every tree in the garden but one: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Do not partake of that tree, God said, "for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Genesis 2:17). Some people reason that Adam and Eve's punishment for disobedience was overly harsh, because, before they ate the forbidden fruit, they could not have had knowledge of good and evil; not having that knowledge, they couldn't really tell right from wrong.

In response, we would first point out that the Bible never says that Adam and Eve did not know right from wrong. In fact, Genesis 3:2-3 is clear that they *did* understand the difference between right and wrong; Eve knew God had instructed her and Adam not to eat the forbidden fruit (cf. Genesis 2:16-17). To take the name of the forbidden tree, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:9), to mean that Adam and Eve had no understanding of good and evil is a misunderstanding. In the Bible, the word *knowledge* often means "experience." It is true that, prior to the fall, Adam and Eve had *no experience* of evil. But they *understood* the concept of good and evil perfectly well, or they would not have known what obedience to God's instructions meant. The point is that Adam and Eve had not yet *sinned* until they ate from the tree, and their sin was the gateway to firsthand, *experiential* knowledge of the difference between good and evil.

Adam and Eve knew the difference between right and wrong, because they were created with that understanding; it's just that they hadn't experienced it *personally* until they sinned. Their lack of experience doesn't excuse their actions. God gave a simple, straightforward instruction to Adam and Eve. They both had the understanding and the ability to obey, but they disobeyed anyway.

Second, it could be that God gave Adam and Eve an explanation of *why* they weren't supposed to eat from the tree, other than "you will certainly die." There is no such explanation recorded in Scripture, but we should not assume that one was never given. Of course, even if God never fully explained why eating from the tree was wrong, Adam and Eve could still know that it was wrong. The extra information was not necessary to make a moral decision. We can know with great confidence that murder is wrong, without necessarily being able to explain *why* it is wrong. And even if we can't explain why murder is wrong, we should still be held accountable for an act of murder we commit. Adam and Eve's not knowing the exact reason they were forbidden to eat the tree's fruit has nothing to do with the fact that they clearly knew and understood eating it was wrong.

Third, death exists in the world today because of *sin*, not because of Adam and Eve's *lack of knowledge* (cf. Romans 5:12). In other words, God did not punish Adam and Eve with death for simply "not knowing" something but for acting against what they already knew to be right. Death was a consequence of their disobedience, not their ignorance. Likewise, Adam and Eve did not need to have seen death or experienced death firsthand to know that disobeying God's command was wrong. It's easy for us today to look at the ugly, horrific nature of sin and death and conclude that such a perspective might have made Adam and Eve more reluctant to

disobey God than they were. But that's speculation. Whether or not such firsthand knowledge might have affected their choice, there is no denying that Adam and Eve directly, intentionally disobeyed a command of God. And, as we read in Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death."

Another observation. When people ask how God could punish Adam and Eve (and the rest of us) so harshly for doing something they could hardly have been expected to know was wrong, they seem to assume that Adam and Eve had no more moral intelligence than the average toddler. Thinking of Adam and Eve as harmless, totally naive children certainly makes God's response seem overblown, like a father who has lost all patience with his kids. Wouldn't a reasonable God have at least given His beloved children a second chance? Or at least rid the garden of the tree before they could encounter that danger? Why sentence your own creation to death for one "innocent mistake"?

Thinking about the sin of Adam and Eve as a naive mistake is off base. Innocence is not the same as ignorance. Consider what we actually know about the first couple: they were created in a perfect world and given dominion and freedom over the entire earth; they knew and spoke face to face with their perfect, loving, and good Creator God (Genesis 2:22). It is difficult to imagine the goodness and benevolence of God being any more fully on display for Adam and Eve to behold.

Yet, in spite of all of their blessings—in spite of God's creating them and providing for them and loving them—Adam and Eve listened instead to the serpent, who directly contradicted what God had told them (Genesis 3:4–5). The serpent had done *nothing* to provide for Adam and Eve and *nothing* to love or care for them, and his words only contradicted the goodness of God they had experienced up to that point. Adam and Eve had no reason at all, as far as we know, to trust what the serpent said. Yet trust him they did, even though it meant rejecting what they *did* know about God's provision and loving care. Indeed, their reason for rejecting God's command was not an innocent mistake: Genesis 3:5–6 demonstrates that Adam and Eve saw the fruit as an opportunity to become "like God."

This is truly shocking. Adam and Eve—grown adults, rulers of the earth, perfectly capable of understanding what it meant to obey or disobey the loving God who had given them everything they could possibly need—rejected that same God, in favor of the false promise of a serpent, who had given them not a single reason to trust him over God. This is not the mistake of a child in ignorance; this is the willful, intentional rebellion of the created against the Creator, a mutiny against the rightful Ruler of the universe. Adam and Eve were not artless babes misled into a regrettable choice; they were God's own intelligent, morally accountable creation committing treason against Him. They knew what they were doing was wrong, and they did it anyway. It is hard to imagine an offense against a holy God that would be more deserving of death than this.

In the end, we must come to think of Adam and Eve the way Scripture portrays them: as responsible, comprehending adults who rebelled against the authority of their Maker. They knew and understood that they were disobeying God, yet they ate of the fruit that was "a delight to the eyes, and . . . desirable to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6, NASB).

This was not an accident or a mistake; it was a choice.

And that is the reason that God was justified in sentencing them—and us—to death.

What is even more amazing is that, in spite of the defiance displayed by His own creation, God responded to their disobedience with a promise to redeem them. Genesis 3:15 contains the [first expression of the gospel](#) in the Bible, and it comes during the sentencing of the guilty in the garden: to the serpent, God said, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." The good news of the [gospel](#) is that God has made a way for us to be restored through the work of Christ on the cross. Despite the tremendous evil displayed by Adam and Eve—and that which all of us have displayed ever since—God has reached out to us in love. That is very good news indeed.

[GotQuestions.org](#)

W H Griffith-Thomas - ([Genesis 3 The Fall](#)) The chapter is so full of spiritual truths that it is impossible to deal with everything in detail. It must suffice to call attention to four great realities of the spiritual life which are here brought before us for the first time in the Word of God.

I. Temptation.—

Consider its source. The practical character of the narrative is clearly seen in the reference to the serpent as the immediate cause of human sin. Inasmuch as Satan is not actually mentioned in the chapter, we are surely right in regarding this reference to the serpent as a pictorial and symbolical reference to Satan himself, a view which is confirmed by later passages of Scripture, such as 2 Cor. 11:14; Rev. 12:9 and Rev 20:2. There is no reference to the problem of how and when Satan sinned. The one point of stress is laid upon sin in relation to man, and we are taught very unmistakably two great truths:

(1) That God is not the author of sin, and

(2) that sin came to man from without, and was due to a power of evil suggestion and influence other than that which came from man's own nature.

Even though we fall short of identifying the serpent of this chapter with the personal Satan of later Scripture, we may still regard the teaching of the Fall story as suggesting the personification of an evil principle from without, which in later times is seen to be more than a personification, and nothing less than an actual being (Orr, *Image of God in Man*, pp. 219 ff.).

Mark its subtlety. The stages of the temptation should be carefully noticed: (a) The serpent first of all excites the woman's curiosity by speaking to her; (b) then he raises a suspicion of God by the question that he puts to her (Ge 3:1); (c) then he proceeds to inject a threefold doubt of God—of His goodness, by reason of the restriction (Ge 3:1); of His righteousness, in the assurance that they shall not die (Ge 3:4); and of His holiness, in the assurance that, so far from dying, they 'shall be as gods' (Ge 3:5). (See Candlish's *Lectures on Genesis*, in loc.) (d) Thus he incites the woman to unbelief, and (e) leads her eventually to disobedience. It is very noteworthy that the temptation is associated entirely with doubt of God's Word: 'Hath God said?' This is characteristic of sin at all times; the doubt, the denial, and the disbelief of God's Word. First Satan distorts the Word, then he leads the woman to doubt it, and last of all he denies it. It is also significant that Satan and the woman in their conversation use the term 'God,' and not 'Lord God.' This inadequate and defective reference to God was doubtless part of the explanation of the temptation and the Fall. It would not have served Satan's purposes to have introduced the specific covenant term 'Jehovah' when raising questions about the veracity and faithfulness of God's Word.

Observe its success.

The stages of the woman's attitude have often been pointed out:

(a) She heeded the temptation, and listened to Satan's questioning of God's Word and his new interpretation of that Divine utterance. In her reply to his question, she perverted and misquoted three times the divine law to which she and Adam were subject:

(1) She disparaged her privileges by misquoting the terms of the Divine permission as to the other trees.

(2) She overstated the restrictions by misquoting the Divine prohibition.

(3) She underrated her obligations by misquoting the Divine penalty. And thus she was easily exposed to the temptation to question, doubt, and deny God.

(b) Her curiosity was roused, perhaps, by Satan demonstrating before her the apparent futility of heeding God, for we are told that she saw that the tree was good for food as well as pleasant to the eyes.

(c) Then sprang up physical craving, and she desired to disobey, with the result that

(d) she took and ate, and 'gave also unto her husband and he did eat.'

Her fall was consequently due to dalliance with temptation. She did not repel, but yielded to it. Had she resisted at the very outset she would not have fallen; for it is a universal law that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Nothing is more remarkable in the whole history of man's moral life than the powerlessness of the devil to overcome us apart from our own assent and consent. If we resist, he flees; if we yield, he wins. It is this simple fact that constitutes man's ultimate responsibility for his actions. He never can say, 'I was overpowered in spite of myself.' All that he can say is, 'I was overpowered because of myself.'

II. Sin.—

The reality of sin is undoubted. The chapter is clear as to the fact of a Fall. There is such a thing as moral evil in the world. Human nature, with its constant tendency to retrogression and degeneration, clearly proves this. However and whenever it has come about, we know the universality and persistence of evil to-day, and the world has never had any other adequate explanation than that which is afforded by this chapter. Traditions of the Fall are almost as numerous as those of creation (*Pulpit Commentary*, p. 59). There is scarcely any part of God's Word which is more in accord with the known facts of history and science than the story of this chapter. We have recently been told that the doctrine of a Fall from original righteousness is only found in this chapter and in the theology of St Paul, and yet it is surely obvious that the facts of sin and its universality are presupposed in every part of the Old Testament.

'If a Fall were not narrated in the opening chapters of Genesis, we should still have to postulate something of the kind for the Bible's own representations of the state of man' (Orr, *ut supra*, p. 201).

We may also add that the same postulate is necessary to account for the tendencies to evil seen in the natures of little children throughout the whole world.

The root of sin should be understood. The foundation of all sin lies in man's desire for self-assertion and his determination to be independent of God. Adam and Eve chafed under the restriction laid upon them by the command of God, and it was in opposition to

this that they asserted themselves, and thereby fell. Man does not like to be dependent upon another, and subject to commands from without. He desires to go his own way, to be his own master; and as a consequence he sins, and becomes 'lord of himself, that heritage of woe.'

The responsibility of sin needs constant emphasis. The possibility of sin is involved in the fact of personality. Unless man was to be an automaton, with no opportunity for character, there must be granted the possibility of sin. It is at this point we realise the solemn fact of personal accountability. Whatever may be true of environment and heredity, they never can blot out the distinction between right and wrong, or rob man of his responsibility. Nor must we for a moment suppose that sin was any inherent tendency or primal necessity of human life. Adam had liability, but not a tendency, to sin. Our Lord had neither liability nor tendency, though of course His temptation was real, all the more so because of His sinless nature (Heb. 4:15 E.V., not A.V.). We today, as fallen, have both liability and tendency. Any modern theories of evolution which make sin a necessity of human development tend thereby to blot out the eternal distinction between good and evil. In view of certain aspects of modern evolutionary thought, man had no alternative but to fall; and to add to the confusion of thought and morals, we are also told that this failure was not a fall, but a rise—a fall upwards—so that we must now, it is said, speak of the ascent, not of the fall, of man. In opposition to all this the Bible teaches us that sin was not a necessity, and there never will be any clear Christian thinking until this necessitarian theory is entirely banished from our minds (Orr, *ut supra*, pp. 158 and 298).

III. Punishment.—

'Be sure your sin will find you out' (Nu 32:23) is the great principle written clearly and deeply on this record of the first sin, as, indeed, of every other since that time. What was the punishment associated with the sin of Adam and Eve? The narrative shows this plainly.

They soon had a sense of guilt. At once their eyes were opened, and they became conscious of the shame associated with their wrong-doing. The reference to nakedness and clothing indicates the profound shame that actuated them, and at once they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord. Fear was the result of their guilt; the old experiences of innocence and fellowship were at an end, and now they were guilty before God. Conscience, that element of the Divine image and likeness, was already at work, and their sin was indeed finding them out.

Then followed a sentence of condemnation. God soon dealt with this wrong-doing, and there was a threefold condemnation. All subterfuges (Ge 3:10) and all cowardly attempts to blame others (Ge 3:12) were unavailing, and man stood face to face with the holy God, conscious of guilt and unspeakable shame.

(a) The serpent was first dealt with, and judgment passed upon him (Ge 3:14, 15);

(b) the woman was next judged, and condemned to sorrow and subjection (Ge 3:16);

(c) the man last of all was dealt with, and sorrow, hardship, toil, and death were made his portion (Ge 3:17-19).

Last of all came an act of separation. It was impossible for man to remain in the garden, and in a state of fellowship with God. Sin and Paradise were incompatible, and so the Lord sent them forth, driving them out, and placing the guard with the sword that turned every way. Mark the significance of this phrase. There was no possibility of a return to the old life. Paradise was lost, and by no human effort could it ever be regained. Separation is always the result of sin. 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God' (Isa. 59:2). And thus the threefold punishment of guilt, condemnation, and separation accrued to man because of his sin.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: Death ultimately speaks of separation. Notice the effect of Adam's spiritual death is **separation** from God. Christ came to bridge that gap on the Cross. But for those who refuse to receive His gift of eternal life by grace through faith, the Second Death will finalize forever the **separation** of God and man, Paul writing "These (2 Th 1:8 " those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus") will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, **away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.**" (2 Th 1:9) This final **separation** is the saddest of all for there is no bridging this final gap! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (TODAY) and you will be saved (Acts 16:31). See **Study of Eternal Punishment.**

The chapter, however, does not end with sin and its punishment, and we pass on to consider the fourth great reality.

IV. Redemption.—The announcement of enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between her seed and his seed, is the first message of Divine redemption in its antagonism to, and victory over, sin. This is indeed the Protevangelium, and is the primeval promise which is taken up again and again henceforward in Scripture, until He comes Who destroys him that has the power of death, and casts him into the lake of fire.

Redemption is not only promised in word, it is also pictured in deed. Man attempted to cover his shame by the leaves of the fig-tree, but this was far too slight a covering for so deep a shame. No human covering could suffice, and so we are told with profound significance that the 'Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them.' This Divine clothing took the place of their own self-made

clothing, and now they are clothed indeed. The mention of skins suggests the fact and necessity of death of the animal before they could be used as clothing, and it is more than probable that in this fact we have the primal revelation of sacrifice, and of the way in which the robe of righteousness was to be provided for them.

'Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness

'My beauty are, my glorious dress.'

Looking on to the New Testament, we cannot but associate with this chapter the great Pauline chapter, Romans 8, which ends very significantly with three questions triumphantly asked by the Apostle, and it should be carefully noticed that these questions exactly correspond to the three aspects of punishment mentioned above.

- (a) 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' (Ro 8:33). That is, 'There is no guilt.'
- (b) 'Who is he that condemneth?' (Ro 8:34). That is, 'There is no condemnation.'
- (c) 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' (Ro 8:35). That is, 'There is no separation.'

Thus, where sin abounded grace did super-abound, and 'as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, so now grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.'

God's question to Adam still sounds in the ear of every sinner, 'Where art thou?' It is the call of Divine justice, which cannot overlook sin. It is the call of Divine sorrow, which grieves over the sinner. It is the call of Divine love, which offers redemption for sin. To each and to every one of us the call is reiterated, 'Where art thou? The answer to the question must be either: 'in Adam' or 'in Christ.' These are the only two places where we can be. If we are still 'in Adam,' we are still in sin, and therefore in guilt, condemnation, and in danger of eternal separation. If we are 'in Christ,' we are already pardoned, accounted righteous; subjects of His grace, and heirs of eternal glory.

Note.—For all modern evolutionary and philosophical questions connected with this chapter attention is earnestly called to the very able and scholarly book by Dr Orr, already quoted and referred to. ([Genesis 3 The Fall](#))

The Tempter Genesis 3:1 - John Butler

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1).

The Tempter to sin, Satan, employs much the same tactics today as he did back in the Garden of Eden. Our text exposes the Tempter and warns us of how sin attacks mankind.

FIRST—THE DECEIT IN THE ATTACK

"Subtil." The meaning of the word is cunning, crafty with the context determines the exact word. 'Deceit' is the meaning in this context. Sin always appears in a deceitful form. If it appeared as it really is, no one in their right mind would bite. Satan "deceived." Eve (I Timothy 2:14) and many have been deceived by sin since then. It looks so appealing and it looks like it will help you enjoy life more. Sin emphasizes happiness before holiness. But without holiness there will be no happiness.

SECOND—THE DOUBT IN THE ATTACK

"Yea, hath God said?" Doubt slays many, and sin and Satan often gain a foothold on a person by casting doubt. To counter this vicious attack, know the Word of God well, failure to know the Word well will open the door to much unnecessary doubt which can lead you into much sin. Our secular schools often instill doubt about God's word in the minds of their students. No one grows strong spiritually though doubting the Word of God. Doubt leads to damnation. It is faith that gives us the victory (I John 5:4).

THIRD—THE DISCONTENT IN THE ATTACK

"Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Satan's attack is to make us discontent with what we have. He will major on the minors and minor on the majors to cause this discontent. Adam and Eve were permitted to eat of all the trees of the garden (Genesis 2:16), but Satan would concentrate on the one tree of which they were not to eat and from that cause much discontent in their hearts, and led them to sin. If we were more grateful we would be more holy. But, alas, so few are grateful for what they have but focus on what they do not have and this often leads to great sin. The business world is not innocent here for they emphasize your lack in order to sell their product. Sin is that which is more concerned about its wants than its needs.

FOURTH—THE DIET IN THE ATTACK

"Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Some 17 times the Hebrew word, translated "eat" 15 times and "eaten 2 times, is found in this chapter of the fall of man. All of this says sin likes to focus on the physical, not the spiritual. Often sin enters a life through the physical appetite. Booze and gluttony and illicit sex make fools of men. Satan habitually perverts the physical appetite to lead men into sin, and he is still destroying many lives through the physical appetite. Pamper your physical appetite and you will ruin

STRATEGY OF SATAN

Warren Wiersbe from his excellent book which can be borrowed - [THE STRATEGY OF SATAN](#)
See also in depth discussion in article on [Schemes of the Devil](#)

It is important that you notice the steps Satan took in getting Eve to believe his lie.

(1) He questioned God's Word. Ge 3:1

- Indeed, has God said?

He did not deny that God had spoken; he simply questioned whether God had really said what Eve thought he had said. Perhaps you misunderstood what God spoke, is Satan's suggestion. You owe it to yourself to rethink what he said. It is worth noting that in this suggestion Satan is also questioning God's goodness. "If God really loved you, he wouldn't keep something from you." He tried the same approach with our Lord in the wilderness: "If you are God's beloved Son, why are you hungry?"

(2) He denied God's Word. Ge 3:4,5

- "You surely shall not die!"

It is but a short step from questioning God's Word to denying it. Of course, neither Adam nor Eve had ever seen death. All they had to go on was the Word of God, but this was all they needed. If Eve had not listened to Satan questioning God's Word, she would never have fallen into his trap when he denied God's Word.

(3) He substituted his own lie.

- "You will be like God!"

Adam and Eve were already made in the image of God, but Satan tempted them with an even greater privilege: to be like God! This was, of course, Satan's great ambition when he was Lucifer, God's angelic servant.

"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of the assembly, in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" Isa 14:12-14

Satan is a created being, a creature; but he wanted to be worshiped and served like the Creator. It was this attitude that led him to rebel against God and seek to establish his own kingdom. "**You will be like God**" is the one gigantic lie that has controlled civilization since the fall of man. [Ro 1:25-[note](#)]

Satan desires worship and service, and Jesus Christ would give him neither! Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; and he said to Him,

"All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" Mt 4:8-10 (cp Luke 4:6-8-note)

Satan's lie "**You will be like God**" motivates and controls much of our civilization today. Man is seeking to pull himself up by his own bootstraps. He is working to build a utopia on earth and possibly take it to outer space. Through education, psychiatry, religions of one kind or another (most of which ignore Jesus Christ, sin, and salvation), and better environment, men are defying God and deifying themselves. They are playing right into the hands of Satan.

How did Eve respond to Satan's approach? by making three mistakes that led her into sin.

(1) She took away from God's Word.

In Ge 3:2, Eve omitted the word **FREELY**. God's original word in Ge 2:16 was,

"From any tree of the garden you may eat freely."

We get the impression that Eve caught Satan's subtle suggestion, "God is holding out on you!" When you start to question or FORGET the grace of God and the goodness of God, you will find it much easier to disobey the will of God."

(2) She added to God's Word.

We do not find the words **OR TOUCH IT** in God's original command. They may have been there, but they are not in the record. Not only did Eve make God's original word less gracious by omitting the word FREELY but she also made the commandment more grievous by adding OR TOUCH IT. His commandments are not burdensome" [1Jn 5:3-[note](#)] Satan wants us to believe they are burdensome, and that he has something better to offer.

(3) She changed God's Word.

God did not say, "**Lest you die.**" He said, "For in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die" (Ge 2:17). The penalty for disobedience as presented by the enemy did not seem as harsh; therefore, Eve could consider forsaking God's will and obeying Satan's will.

Once you have treated God's Word in this fashion, you are wide open for the devil's final trick. He merely permitted Eve to consider the tree apart from God's Word. "Get a good look at it! See it as it really is!"

It was "good for food, a delight to the eyes, desirable to make one wise (Ge 3:6). She had to make a choice: God's Word or Satan's word? She rejected God's Word, believed Satan, and sinned. You and I have been suffering from the consequences of her decision, as has the whole human race.

**God accomplishes His will on earth through truth;
Satan accomplishes his purposes through lies.**

When the child of God believes God's truth, then the Spirit of God can work in power; for the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth (Jn 16:13). But when a person believes a lie, then Satan goes to work in that life; for he is a liar, and the father of lies (Jn 8:44).

**Faith in God's truth leads to victory;
Faith in Satan's lies leads to defeat.**

However, Satan never advertises, "This is a lie!" He is the serpent, the deceiver, and he always masquerades his lies as God's truth.

Apart from the Word of God, we have no sure understanding of the will of God. The will of God is the expression of God's love for us.

Ps 33:11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart from generation to generation.

God's will comes from God's heart. It is not an impersonal thing, but a very personal matter with the Lord. He has a personal understanding of each of his children, their natures, their names, their needs and he tailors his plans accordingly. God wants us to know his will.

Acts 22:14+ The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will.

He also wants us to understand his will.

Eph 5:17+ So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

He wants this understanding of his will to fill us and control us.

Colossians 1:9+ We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

The result of all this is the believer doing the will of God from the heart.

Eph 6:6+ not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

God's will is not a duty; it is a delight. The Christian delights to discover the will of God and then obey from the heart.

Ps 40:8 I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is within my heart."

The will of God is his nourishment.

Jn 4:34+ My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.

You and I must pray (as did Epaphras) that we may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. Col 4:12+

If Satan can make you ignorant of God's will, he will rob you of all the glorious blessings God has planned for your life. You will make bad decisions, get involved in sinful activities, and build the wrong kind of life. And, sad to say, you will influence others to go wrong! In my ministry of the Word in many places, I have seen the tragic consequences of lives out of the will of God.

Christians who are ignorant of God's will lose the enjoyment of God's peace and power. They cannot grow into their full potential, nor can they accomplish what God has planned for them. Instead of traveling first-class, they travel second or third-class, complaining all the way. They live like paupers because they have cut themselves off from God's great wealth. They spend their lives even worse, they waste their lives when they could be investing their lives.

1 Jn 2:17+ And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

4. your defense: the inspired word of god

Only the inspired Word of God can reveal and defeat the devil's lies. You cannot reason with Satan, nor (as Eve discovered) can you even safely converse with him. Man's wisdom is no match for Satan's cunning. Our only defense is the inspired Word of God. It was this weapon that our Lord used when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness. Mt 4:1-11+ (Lk 4:1-13+) Our Lord did not use his divine power to defeat Satan. He used the same weapon that is available to us today: the Word of God. Jesus was led by the Spirit of God and filled with the Word of God. As we shall see in a later chapter, the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Ep 6:17+); and the Holy Spirit can enable us to wield that sword effectively. If you and I are going to defeat Satan's lies, we must depend on the Word of God. This fact lays several responsibilities upon us.

(1) We must know God's Word.

There is no reason why any believer should be ignorant of his Bible. We have the Holy Spirit within us to teach us the truths of the Word (Jn16:13-15). If an intelligent believer today does not know his Bible, it is his or her own fault! We must make time, not "find time," to read and study the Word of God. Just as a machinist studies the shop manual, and the surgeon studies his medical texts, so the Christian must study the Word of God.

Bible study is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

(2) We must memorize God's Word.

Our Lord did not have a concordance with him in the wilderness! He reached back into the Books of Moses, selected Deuteronomy, and quoted three verses from that book to silence Satan. Most adults think that Bible memorization is for children in Sunday school, when actually it is for every believer. Adult Christians need the Word far more than the children do, although it is good for children to memorize God's Word.

Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee. Ps 119:11

The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip. Ps 37:31

I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is within my heart. Ps 40:8

(3) We must meditate on God's Word.

Meditation is to the inner man what digestion is to the outer man. If you did not digest your food, you would sicken and die.

Joshua 1:8-note This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. Ps 1:2+

(Ed addition - Job's "secret" of success was similar - "I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have **treasured** [tsapan/sapan] the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." - Job 23:12+)

Do you sincerely delight in the Word of God, or do you read it only out of duty? Do you rush through your morning devotions, or take time to feed on God's truth?

Measure yourself by these statements by the psalmist:

How sweet are Thy words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Ps 119:103

I rise before dawn and cry for help; I wait for Thy words. My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Thy Word. Ps 119:147, 148

I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. Ps 119:114

The law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. Ps 119:72

Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold, yes, above fine gold. Ps 119:127

Here is a saint who would rather have God's Word than food, sleep, or money! Early in the morning and late at night he meditated on the Word of God and enriched his soul. It is this kind of a Christian who is able to use the Word of God to defeat Satan and his lies.

(4) We must use God's Word.

The believer's mind should become like a spiritual computer. It should be so saturated with Scripture that when he faces a decision or a temptation, he automatically remembers the Scriptures that relate to that particular situation. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to bring God's Word to our minds when we need it. [Jn 14:26] But the Spirit of God cannot remind you of something that you have not learned! You must first let him teach you the Word. You must memorize the Scripture that he opens up to you. Then the Spirit of God will be able to remind you of what you have learned, and you can use that truth to battle Satan. Please keep in mind that Satan knows the Bible far better than we do! And he is able to quote it! The Spirit of God will enable you to use the Word of God in the battle against the devil. The Spirit will show you when Satan is "using" the Bible to promote his own lies, as he did with Jesus in the wilderness. Satan quoted Ps 91:11, 12, but he adapted it for his own purposes by omitting "in all your ways." God promises to protect us only when we are in his ways. If we foolishly go our own way, God is not obligated to care for us. This explains why Jesus replied, "On the other hand, it is written" (Mt 4:7). Jesus was comparing Scripture with Scripture. He was taking into consideration the total message (THE WHOLE CONTEXT) of the Bible and not stopping (as did Satan) with one isolated passage. Satan enjoys taking verses out of context and using them to PROVE his false claims. You and I must have a grasp of all Scripture if we are to detect Satan's lies and defeat them. It is important, too, that we look at the world around us through the "eyes of the Bible. We must "walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Co 5:7) If we try to evaluate things around us on the basis of our own thinking and knowledge, we will get into trouble. We must believe that what God says about things in his Word is true.

Therefore I esteem right all Thy precepts concerning everything. I hate every false way. Ps 119:128

A business proposition may LOOK RIGHT to the natural mind, but if it is not based on the truths of God's Word, it will fail. A marriage may seem like JUST RIGHT from the human perspective, but if it contradicts the Word of God, it is wrong. In my pastoral ministry, I have seen business deals fail and marriages collapse because they were not done according to the will of God. Somebody believed Satan's lie.

Taking Inventory

1. Do I spend time daily reading God's Word and meditating on it?
2. Do I systematically seek to memorize Scripture?
3. Do I find myself automatically "thinking Bible" when I am tempted or when I face decisions, or must I telephone my Christian friends to get spiritual guidance?
4. Do I find myself better able to detect Satan's lies?
5. Are there any lies in my mind right now that I am believing?
6. Do I know God's will for my life? Do I really want to know?
7. Am I delighting in God's will and doing it from my heart?
8. Am I guilty of telling lies? Why do I do it?
9. Am I willing to take as true everything God's Word says about everything in my life? Or do I occasionally ask, "Has God really said that?" Do I argue with God's Word?
10. Is the Word of God becoming more wonderful to me? Do I enjoy it more than the natural pleasures of life, including eating and sleeping?

(from Warren Wiersbe's book which I highly recommend - **borrow a copy of [THE STRATEGY OF SATAN](#)**)

You Knew What I Was

Iron Eyes Cody is a native American actor who once did a TV spot for the Keep America Beautiful campaign. He was an Indian drifting alone in a canoe. As he saw how our waters are being polluted, a single tear rolled down his cheek, telling the whole story. This powerful public service commercial still shows up on TV screens after 17 years. In 1988 Cody repeated an old Indian legend in Guideposts magazine. Here it is:

Many years ago, Indian youths would go away in solitude to prepare for manhood. One such youth hiked into a beautiful valley, green with trees, bright with flowers. There he fasted. But on the third day, as he looked up at the surrounding mountains, he noticed

one tall rugged peak, capped with dazzling snow. I will test myself against that mountain, he thought. He put on his buffalo-hide shirt, threw his blanket over his shoulders and set off to climb the peak. When he reached the top he stood on the rim of the world. He could see forever, and his heart swelled with pride.

Then he heard a rustle at his feet, and looking down, he saw a snake. Before he could move, the snake spoke. "I am about to die," said the snake. "It is too cold for me up here and I am freezing. There is no food and I am starving. Put me under your shirt and take me down to the valley." "No," said the youth. "I am forewarned. I know your kind. You are a rattlesnake. If I pick you up, you will bite, and your bite will kill me." "Not so," said the snake. "I will treat you differently. If you do this for me, you will be special. I will not harm you." The youth resisted awhile, but this was a very persuasive snake with beautiful markings. At last the youth tucked it under his shirt and carried it down to the valley. There he laid it gently on the grass, when suddenly the snake coiled, rattled, and leapt, biting him on the leg. "But you promised..." cried the youth.

"You knew what I was when you picked me up." said the snake as it slithered away."

Bits and Pieces, June, 1990, pp. 5-7

Too Strict

Read: Genesis 3:1-6; Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 | God . . . gives us richly all things to enjoy. —1 Timothy 6:17

The tempter knows his craft. After all, he has been practicing it since the world began. He tries to get us to forfeit God's blessing by urging us to ignore God's laws or by slyly getting us to add to them. He knows we can fall into a ditch on either side of the road.

In his chat with Eve, he first suggested that God didn't want her to enjoy any of the trees in the garden (Gen. 3:1). Eve jumped to God's defense, explaining that it was only the fruit of the middle tree that was off limits (vv.2-3). But then she added that even touching the tree would bring death (v.3). God, though, hadn't said anything about touching it.

Some of us try to defend God by being more strict than He is. We believe we are holier if we go beyond His commands. As a result, we miss out on the orchard because we are denied a single piece of poisoned fruit. Not only will we not touch that tree, but we also will not touch the tree next to it or a tree that looks like it. By doing so we dishonor God.

God has given us all good things to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17). He's not pleased when we focus on what is prohibited and fail to enjoy all His blessings. It is not only a shame but also a sin not to enjoy life.

For Further Study

- What do these verses say about enjoying life?
- Genesis 1:28-31; Psalm 36:7-9; Ecclesiastes 2;
- Acts 14:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 2:20-23

The joy of living comes from a heart of thanksgiving.

By Haddon Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Watchful and Alert

Read: Genesis 3:1-7 | Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith. 1 Corinthians 16:13

My desk sits close to a window that opens into our neighborhood. From that vantage point I'm privileged to watch birds perch on the trees nearby. Some come to the window to eat insects trapped in the screen.

The birds check their immediate surroundings for any danger, listening attentively as they look about them. Only when they are satisfied that there is no danger do they settle down to feed. Even then, they pause every few seconds to scan the area.

The best way to escape temptation is to run to God.

The vigilance these birds demonstrate reminds me that the Bible teaches us to practice vigilance as Christians. Our world is full of temptations, and we need to remain constantly alert and not forget about the dangers. Like Adam and Eve, we easily get entangled in attractions that make the things of this world seem "good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom" (Gen. 3:6).

“Be on your guard,” Paul admonished, “stand firm in the faith” (1 Cor. 16:13). And Peter cautioned, “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

As we work for our own daily bread, are we alert to what could start consuming us? Are we watching for any hint of self-confidence or willfulness that could leave us wishing we had trusted our God?

Lord, keep us from the secret sins and selfish reactions we’re so naturally inclined toward. By Your grace, turn our temptations into moments of growth in Christlikeness.

The best way to escape temptation is to run to God.

INSIGHT: In Genesis 3, the serpent twists what God has said to Adam and Eve about the fruit in the garden. Rather than directly challenge what God has said, the serpent exaggerates the claim by asking if God commanded no eating from any tree (v. 1). This distortion on the part of the serpent elicits a similar response from Eve. Instead of responding with God’s own words (see the example of Jesus’s confrontation with Satan in the wilderness in Matthew 4), Eve adds to His words. After rightly correcting that it is only from the tree in the middle of the garden that they may not eat, she adds the prohibition that they may not “touch” the tree (Gen. 3:3).

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Beware Of What You Want

Read: Exodus 20:1-17 | You shall not covet. —Exodus 20:17

Sometimes I wonder why God didn’t list the Ten Commandments in reverse order, since the 10th commandment correlates to the first sin—desire. Eve’s sin wasn’t simply her desire for a piece of fruit; it was the desire for knowledge that Satan told her would make her like God (Gen. 3:5). Eve’s covetousness caused her to violate both the first and tenth commands that God later gave to Moses.

When we don’t covet, we pretty much eliminate our reasons to disobey the other commands. Wanting what isn’t ours causes us to lie, steal, commit adultery, murder, and refuse to honor our parents. We refuse to rest because we can’t get what we want in 6 days of work. We misuse God’s name when we use it to justify something that we want to do. We make gods out of wealth and relationships because we don’t want to have to put all our trust in God.

I have a hard time coming up with sins that don’t involve some form of covetousness. Yet because it’s the last in the list, we tend to think of it as being the least important. But it’s not. When we stop sin while it is still in our hearts and heads, we avoid making others the victim of our sin, and we avoid many of the serious consequences of sin.

When you covet someone else’s things,
Thinking that they’re better than your own,
Just remember that God’s gifts to you
Were designed for you and you alone. —Hess

Contentment is realizing that God has already given me all I need.

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Drifting Away - Joe Stowell

“Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1

On a recent vacation, Tom was casually bobbing around on a raft just offshore. He closed his eyes, basking in the warm sun. Before he realized it, he had drifted too far from shore. He hopped off the raft to get back to the security of the sand, but the water was now over his head. He didn’t know how to swim.

The drift of our lives away from God is just as subtle. And just as dangerous. We drift one thought at a time, one small choice at a time, and often one damaging doubt at a time. In fact, our adversary is delighted to help our rafts drift from the protection and presence of God by casting doubt on God’s goodness to us. If you sense that your life has been set adrift—that God is not as close and precious as He used to be—then you may have just been in the riptide of an old trick of the enemy of your soul. The same trick he used to sever Eve’s heart from the joy of her relationship with her Creator.

Satan's opening volley was not a blistering attack on God; it was simply a question that he wanted Eve to think about. "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Genesis 3:1). Actually, God had said that she could eat of every tree but one. But Satan twisted the facts to suit his purposes and to lead Eve's mind to the conclusion that God was not the generous God she had known Him to be, but rather a stingy, restrictive, joy killer. Once she had let her heart drift to the wrong conclusion, it was easy for her to believe Satan's lie that God just wanted to keep her from being as knowledgeable as He is and that the threat of them dying was just God's way of scaring them into compliance with His stingy ways.

Satan still sets us adrift by planting doubt about God's Word and spinning the facts to his own evil advantage.

Once we begin to suspect God instead of trusting Him, we inevitably drift away from Him. So, beware! Your life is full of scenarios where Satan can put his deceitful twist on your experiences. He is the spin-doctor of hell, and as Jesus said, "When [Satan] lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

With that in mind, keep a lookout for some of Satan's favorite spins:

Lie #1: God is to blame for the evil that Satan has inflicted on our lives.

Lie #2: God has not rewarded me for being good. I've been used, not blessed!

Lie #3: God's rules are restrictive and oppressive. He just wants to take the fun out of my life.

Lie #4: God is good to others but not to me. He must not love me!

And there are many other lies, all custom-made for your head and heart. If you believe them, you have begun to drift away from the safe shores of God's love and protecting provision. You'll soon discover that you are adrift in the middle of nowhere, bobbing dangerously over your head. And count on it, as Eve was soon to learn, Satan won't stay around to make you happy and fulfilled. He'll be slithering off to more interesting company, leaving you in the deep waters of shame and regret.

YOUR JOURNEY...

- Are you drifting in a sea of doubt? Make an appointment to talk to a trusted pastor or friend and ask that person to help you find your way back to God.
- Pray and ask God to reveal the lies that Satan is using in your life. Find Bible verses that contradict the lies and recite them when you are tempted to believe what is not true.
- Do you suspect God, or do you trust Him? How can faith shield you from the pitfall of suspecting and doubting God? Read Jeremiah 29:11; Ephesians 6:16; Galatians 2:20; 1 Timothy 6:12; and Hebrews 11:1-40.

In Disguise

Read: 1 John 2:15-29 | I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve . . . , so your minds may be corrupted. —2 Corinthians 11:3

It's often difficult to understand why people give in to certain temptations. From our vantage point, their problem should be easy to handle.

We may even wonder how Adam and Eve could have been so foolish as to have thrown aside all that God had given them in the dawn of their existence. We wouldn't have fallen so easily—or would we?

Part of the problem is that Satan wears a disguise when he slithers into our lives. As Mephistopheles says in the drama Faust, "People do not know the devil is there even when he has them by the throat."

The Bible tells us that the serpent was "more cunning than any beast of the field" (Genesis 3:1). No ominous hissing or rattling warned of danger. He didn't ask, "Pardon me, may I have 20 minutes to destroy your life?"

Public Enemy No. 1 uses the same tactics today as he did back then. He appeals to our sinful desires (1 John 2:15-16). Satan even disguises himself as an angel of light, and his cohorts appear as ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:14-15; 1 John 2:18-19).

To resist temptation and to detect Satan's deceptions, we must live in close fellowship with Christ (1 John 2:28). Then we won't be fooled by Satan's disguises. —HWR

When sin entices and allures,
Its lies must be ignored;

The strength to gain the victory
Comes when we trust the Lord. —Sper

You need to know God's truth to see through Satan's lies.

By Haddon Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE FALL OF MAN Genesis 3

The first sin was like Elijah's cloud, it was little at the beginning, but it blackened the whole heavens. By one man sin entered, and death came upon all. By Man (Christ) came also resurrection and life (1 Cor. 15:21, 22). We have here the revelation of some root principles. There are:

I. Satanic Teaching. "Ye shall not surely die." The personality of the devil is clearly implied. He does not say "There is no God," but suggests that God does not mean what He says, or if He does He is not a God of mercy. His great purpose is ever to mar the design of God toward man. Wiles of the devil.

II. Carnal Reasoning (v. 6). She saw, because she looked, and, judging by appearance, she desired, and when the desire was nourished it grew into a deliberate act, she took. Then, not satisfied with taking for herself, she gave. The process may have been something like this: 1, Giving heed to the tempter; 2, forgetting God's mercies; 3, looking at the forbidden thing; 4, wishing God had not forbidden it; 5, doubting the Word of God; 6, believing Satan's lie; 7, yielding to taste.

III. Presumptuous Working. "They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons" (v. 7). Their eyes were opened. Sin opens the eyes of the saints to see their own weakness, while it blinds the eyes of the ungodly. This is a vain attempt to cover sinful self. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper" (Prov. 28:13). Why not confess and receive forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

IV. Guilty Concealing. "They hid themselves" (v. 8). Hid among the trees of the garden, among the very blessings God had given them. Many still hide behind the gifts of God while they live in sin. The "voice of the Lord" is always a terror to evil-doers. It is in vain for man to hide anywhere away from God. "I flee to Thee to hide me." Sin always separates from God.

V. Divine Seeking. "Where art thou?" (v. 9). This is the call of Grace. God is always the first seeker. When would Adam have sought God? This divine question (1) Reveals great compassion; this is the Good Shepherd seeking the lost sheep. (2) It awakens conviction by leading to deep heart-searching. (3) It demands confession; yield, and unburden all to God. (4) It suggests judgment, "Where art thou?" There is no escape from Him.

VI. Vain Excusing. "The woman Thou gavest, she gave me" (v. 12). His mouth has not yet been stopped (Rom. 3:19). God justifies the believer, not the boaster. If men don't now lay the blame of sin on God, they go as near as possible when they blame circumstances. There is no excuse for doubting God.

VII. Merciful Covering. "God made coats of skin and clothed them" (v. 21). Man's best will never cover his nakedness in the sight of God. These coats of skin suggest sacrifice. It is significant to remember that atonement means covering. Adam's covering was the covering of another, substitution. It was of God's making and giving, the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all them that believe.

Genesis 3:2 The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

- serpent: Ps 58:4
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3

EVE MISQUOTES THE LORD GOD

Compare WHAT GOD SAID (Ge 2:16–17)

1. From any tree of the garden you may eat freely
2. but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
3. you shall not eat

4. for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.

With HOW EVE QUOTED GOD (Ge 3:2–3)

1. From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat (SUBTRACTED 'FREELY')
2. but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden (SUBTRACTED THE NAME 'KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL')
3. God has said, 'You shall not eat from it **or touch it** (ADDED "OR TOUCH IT")
4. lest you die.' (SUBTRACTED "IN THE DAY THAT YOU EAT FROM IT" AND "SURELY")

The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; -It is incredibly revealing when we look closely at the subtle but significant differences in how Eve quotes God compared to what He actually said. God had actually instructed that they could eat "From any tree . . ." and that they "may eat freely." Both statements emphasize the liberty of the Garden. Eve, by leaving these out, seems to be minimizing or making light of her liberties. God's sole restriction in the Garden was specific—they were not to eat "from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Eve doesn't focus on what the tree is, but on where it is. She avoids the reminder that the tree is associated with evil. In restricting them, God had only said, "you shall not eat." Eve adds the phrase, "**or touch it**," and in so doing, seems to maximize the restrictions or limitations God had placed on them in the Garden. Finally, Eve quotes the consequence as "lest you die." She leaves out the term "**surely**," and the phrase "**in the day that you eat from it**," apparently making light of the certainty and immediacy of the consequences.

THOUGHT - When we shade God's truth just a little, it can have disastrous impact. One antidote is to Memorize Word Perfect. If you are not memorizing God's Word as an active discipline, you are selling yourself short spiritually. Remember that Jesus did not open up His iPhone and find Deuteronomy 8:3 and then quote it to the devil! He was fully Man and He had memorized God's Word of Truth. Imitate Jesus and [memorize God's Word!](#) Your life depends on it! (Don't know what to memorize? See [Memory Verses by Topic](#))

If we stray from the truth of God's Word there are always consequences. We often treat our own temptations with equal disregard. We fail to realize that sin has consequences that reach for generations. Every time I sin someone else is affected. They may be affected directly through some consequence of the sin, or they may be affected indirectly through the loss of the ministry and life I would have given if I had continued walking with God (Read Paul's sobering warning regarding "Disqualification" in 1 Cor 9:24-27+). We learn painfully from Eve that talking with the devil and walking with the Lord do not go hand in hand. The sin in the Garden was more than eating forbidden fruit, it was disobeying the revealed Word of God, believing the lies of the enemy, and Adam and Eve placing their own will above God's will.

Every time I sin, someone else is affected. Either they share in the bad that results, or they are robbed of the good that would have come if I had not sinned. . . .my sins may be personal but they are not private!!! They will affect others.

To parley with the tempter is always dangerous.

-- Kyle Yates

NET NOTE on **we may eat** - There is a notable change between what the LORD God had said and what the woman says. God said "you may freely eat" (the imperfect with the infinitive absolute, see 2:16), but the woman omits the emphatic infinitive, saying simply "we may eat." Her words do not reflect the sense of eating to her heart's content.

Genesis 3:3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

- **But:** Ge 2:16-17
- **touch:** Ge 20:6 Ex 19:12,13 1Ch 16:22 Job 1:11 2:5 19:21 1Co 7:1 2Co 6:17 Col 2:21
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3

Related Passages:

Genesis 2:16-17+ The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

EVE ADDS TO THE SCRIPTURES

but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die: She did not call it what God did but remember God gave the command to ADAM not to Eve. Could it be that in his role as spiritual leader he had failed to tell her the whole counsel of God's Word. ("the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"). Furthermore God had not said anything about TOUCHING the tree (cp Col 2:21), but twice had said don't EAT of it. So what is happening to Eve? She is being deceived (Ge 3:13) -- being led astray from the Truth of God's Word. Deception always causing one to go away from the Word of God, either add to it or take away. We see this deception growing as the interchange continues.

Wiersbe says: Eve took away from God's Word by omitting "freely" (v2); she added to the Word by adding "touch it" (v3); and she changed the Word by making God's "you shall surely die" into "lest you die" (v3). (See context in [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

Henry Morris - Eve, in her developing resentment against God, fell into Satan's trap, both taking away from God's Word and adding to it. God had said they could "freely eat" of "every tree" (Genesis 2:16); Eve quoted him as saying they could eat of the trees. God had said they should not eat of the fruit of one tree; Eve added the statement that they should not even touch it. These are the very sins God warned about after His written Word was finally completed (Revelation 22:18,19). Doubting God's Word, augmenting, then diluting, and finally rejecting God's Word--this was Satan's temptation and Eve's sin, and this is the common sequence of apostasy even today.

NET NOTE on **you will die** - The Hebrew construction is יִפְּ (pen) with the imperfect tense, which conveys a negative purpose: "lest you die" = "in order that you not die." By stating the warning in this way, the woman omits the emphatic infinitive used by God ("you shall surely die," see 2:17).

The Choice

Read: Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-8 | Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat. —Genesis 2:16-17

I watched as a young mother tried to get her 2-year-old child to make a choice. "You can have fish or chicken," she told him. She limited his choice to just two because he was too young to understand beyond that. Choice often allows a wider variety of options, and it also must allow the person to reject the choices.

Adam and Eve were in the best possible environment. God had given them freedom to eat of all the trees in Eden. He drew the boundary lines around only one tree! They had a choice, and it should have been a no-brainer to choose wisely. But their choice was tragic.

Some blame God for what they see as His restrictions. They may even accuse Him of trying to control their lives. But God gives us a choice, just as He did Adam and Eve.

Yes, God draws boundary lines, but they are for our protection. David understood this. He wrote, "You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies . . . I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts. I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your Word" (Ps. 119:98-101).

God cares so much about us that He gives us boundary lines so that we will choose what is right.

Lord, help us to obey Your Word, To heed Your still, small voice; And may we not be swayed by men, But make Your will our choice. —D. De Haan

God's commandments were given to fulfill us, not to frustrate us.

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Genesis 3:4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!

- **Serpent:** Joh 8:44
- **You:** Ge 3:13 De 29:19 2Ki 1:4,6,16 8:10 Ps 10:11 2Co 2:11 11:3 1Ti 2:14
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3

Related Passages:

Rev 12:9+ (SATAN'S ALIASES) And the great dragon was thrown down, **the serpent of old** (Genesis 3) who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives ([planao](#) in the [present tense](#) = this is the devil's non-stop [modus operandi](#), cp "schemes" [[methodeia](#)] in Eph 6:11-[note](#)) **the whole world**; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him

SATAN ADDS TO THE SCRIPTURE

The serpent ([nachash](#)) **said to the woman, "You surely will not die!** -He is a liar and the father of lies (Jn 8:44). Note the arrogant irony as Satan in essence is calling God a liar! He adds to the Scripture and directly counters God's Word.

THOUGHT - As an aside, note God's clear warnings against adding to or taking away from Scripture (Pr 30:6, Dt 4:2+ Dt 12:32+ Rev 22:18-19+)

Jesus addressing Jews who had bought the lie in Jn 8:30 that "*profession*" of Jesus [mental [acquiescence](#)] is synonymous with "*possession*" of Jesus or genuine Spirit wrought new birth Jn 3:3, 5+)

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

Ryrie - Satan was planting in Eve's mind the idea that there should be no restrictions in the perfect plan of a good God. (Borrow the [Ryrie Study Bible](#))

NET NOTE on **You surely will not die** - The response of the serpent includes the infinitive absolute with a blatant negation equal to saying: "Not – you will surely die" (לֹא מוֹת תָּמֻתֶנּוּ, lo' mot témutun). The construction makes this emphatic because normally the negative particle precedes the finite verb. The serpent is a liar, denying that there is a penalty for sin (see John 8:44). **Surely you will not die.** Here the serpent is more aware of what the LORD God said than the woman was; he simply adds a blatant negation to what God said. In the account of Jesus' temptation Jesus is victorious because he knows the scripture better than Satan (Matt 4:1–11+, Luke 4:1-13+).

Moses warned Israel not to "tamper with" the pure Word of God...

You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that (PURPOSE) you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (Deut 4:2+)

Satan also questions the love of God and the goodness of God: "If God is good, why did He put this restriction down?"

The serpent implies that God is not righteous (and just) when he says, "You will not die." Why? Because God's word is immutable, and Satan knew God MUST kill Adam and Eve or otherwise He would break His Own Word.

Satan directly contradicts God. God had warned of death; Satan subtly hissed "That's a lie!" Now two opposing views stood in sharp contrast, and a choice had to be made.

Beware! Satan will flood you with truth to float one lie! One of Satan's most effective tactics down through the ages has been **deception**. (Rev 20:8,10+) He is a master at making things appear what they are not. Remember that **deceive** means to cause someone to believe an untruth. The best defense against this **deception** is to know the Word of Truth as if your life depended on it (because it does! cp Mt 4:4+, Lk 4:4+)

A mixture of truth and error seems to serve his purposes much better than total error. If he walked in with a red suit, horns and a pitchfork and began speaking, very few folks (hopefully) would be deceived!

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - It is interesting that two clay seals found in the archaeological digs at Nineveh may reflect the story of the fall of Adam and Eve. One seems to show the man and woman being tempted by the serpent, the other their expulsion from the garden.

ILLUSTRATION - Donald Grey Barnhouse illustrated this forcefully with the following story:

"Duveen, the famous English art connoisseur, took his little daughter to the beach one day, but could not get her to go into the chilly

water. After persuasion failed, he borrowed a tea kettle, built a fire, and heated a little water until it steamed beautifully. With much flourish, he poured it into the ocean. Greatly impressed, his daughter went in without a murmur." Barnhouse then made this application: Satan "dilutes an ocean of unbelief with a steaming tea kettle of Christian ethics, and people go wading in, self-satisfied, but unaware that they are bathing in unbelief." The adversary is delighted when a person turns over a new leaf or engages in good works, just as long as he continues to reject the provision of God's grace in salvation. Somehow the sinner completely ignores the fatal error or not trusting Christ because his life as been tempered with a teakettle of wholesome resolves. Our Lord's words are very clear: "...he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn 3:18). Don't be deceived by Satan's clever ploy. You cannot dilute an ocean of cold unbelief with a little warm water of religiosity or good human endeavor. (P. R. Van Gorder)

The devil in his subtle way
Will chloroform your soul,
If you don't quickly turn to Christ,
Whose blood can make you whole
- Lyle

Griffith-Thomas - Observe its success. The stages of the woman's attitude have often been pointed out: (a) She heeded the temptation, and listened to Satan's questioning of God's Word and his new interpretation of that Divine utterance. In her reply to his question, she perverted and misquoted three times the divine law to which she and Adam were subject: (1) She disparaged her privileges by misquoting the terms of the Divine permission as to the other trees. (2) She overstated the restrictions by misquoting the Divine prohibition. (3) She underrated her obligations by misquoting the Divine penalty. And thus she was easily exposed to the temptation to question, doubt, and deny God. (b) Her curiosity was roused, perhaps, by Satan demonstrating before her the apparent futility of heeding God, for we are told that she saw that the tree was good for food as well as pleasant to the eyes. (c) Then sprang up physical craving, and she desired to disobey, with the result that (d) she took and ate, and 'gave also unto her husband and he did eat.' Her fall was consequently due to dalliance with temptation. She did not repel, but yielded to it. Had she resisted at the very outset she would not have fallen; for it is a universal law that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Nothing is more remarkable in the whole history of man's moral life than the powerlessness of the devil to overcome us apart from our own assent and consent. If we resist, he flees; if we yield, he wins. It is this simple fact that constitutes man's ultimate responsibility for his actions. He never can say, 'I was overpowered in spite of myself.' All that he can say is, 'I was overpowered because of myself.' ([Genesis 3 The Fall](#))

My Sin

Read: Genesis 3:1-6 | When desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. —James 1:15

Eve explained the rules to the tempter. She and Adam could eat the fruit of any tree in the Garden of Eden, except for the special one in the middle. Just touching it, she said, would bring death.

I can imagine Satan throwing back his head and with mocking laughter saying, "You will not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). He then suggested that God was holding back something good from her (Ge 3:5).

For thousands of years the enemy has repeated that strategy. He doesn't care if you believe in the authority of the Bible, as long as he can get you to disbelieve that the one thing standing between you and God is sin.

"You will not surely die," we are told. That is the theme of so many modern novels. The hero and heroine live in disobedience to God but suffer no consequences. In TV shows and movies the characters rebel against the moral laws of God but live happily ever after.

There is even a perfume called "My Sin." It's a fragrance "so alluring, so charming, so exciting," the ads tell us, "we could only call it 'My Sin.'" You would never guess that sin is a stench in the nostrils of God.

In the temptations you face, will you believe Satan's lie? Or will you obey God's warning?

Personal Reflection

How has sin damaged the lives of people I know?

How has disobedience to God harmed me?

Have I experienced God's forgiveness? (1 John 1:9-10).

One bite of sin leaves a bitter aftertaste.

Satan's Pattern Genesis 3:4 - John Butler

"And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4).

Satan has a pattern that he follows to try and trip up people. We will do better at defeating Satan when we know the pattern which Scripture reveals. There are three features in our text that reveal this pattern.

FIRST—THE DEVIL

"The serpent." Satan uses that which is the best tool for his evil. The snake was a very beautiful creature, very coordinated, and also very "subtil" (Genesis 3:1) / crafty. Satan used the serpent readily for his evil work. Satan still follows this pattern today. Scripture says Paul was not ignorant of Satan's devices (I Corinthians 2:11), but many are because they do not study the Bible as they should. He uses the beautiful (Hollywood actress), the skilled (the athlete) and the crafty (charismatic personalities) to advocate his evil. They look and sound so innocent and are so attractive. But what they advocate is vile wickedness. The outcome is that which allows Satan to use them will become cursed by God as was the snake who was cursed to slithering upon the ground and to being repulsive to mankind (Genesis 3:14, 15). The most attractive of people and things becomes repulsive to the victims.

SECOND—THE DAME

"Said unto the woman." Why did not Satan attack the man? The answer is the woman was more vulnerable. (I Timothy 2:14). We have noticed that at church when a new officer is elected he is quickly approached by the church dissidents to air their cantankerous contentions. They do not try to air them to the veteran officers, for they know they will not win the argument. But let a new person (such as a new deacon or pastor) come on the scene and the dissidents attack them to gain their support. The principle in this pattern of attack is to attack the most vulnerable. Hence our weakest link will be subjected to the devil's attack more than any other area.

THIRD—THE DENIAL

"You shall not surely die." Satan especially likes to deny the negative of sin. True Adam and Eve did not die immediately, but eventually they died. That is the lethal aspect of his lie. When man sins and does not suffer immediately for it, man has a tendency to think he got away with his sin and that sin will not punish him. So the smoker, drinker and immoral person may go for some time before the ill effects of their evil gets them. If you take away the certainty of judgment, you only encourage evil. The leniency of our courts only encourages evil, it does not stop it. Satan does not hesitate to lie about the negative results of evil. Many tell us pornography will not hurt us, that violence on TV cannot be blamed for crime, that AIDS must not be related to homosexuality, that booze does not hurt and promotes fun. We hear and read such arguments 24/7. But they are all lies and contrary to the facts. Adam and Eve died, Satan lied. Sin will curse you. ([Sermon Starters](#))

Genesis 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."

- **God:** Ex 20:7 1Ki 22:6 Jer 14:13,14 28:2,3 Eze 13:2-6,22 2Co 11:3 2Co 11:13-15
- **your:** Ge 3:7,10 Mt 6:23 Ac 26:18
- **like God:** Ex 5:2 2Ch 32:15 Ps 12:4 Eze 28:2,9 29:3 Da 4:30 6:7 Ac 12:22,23 2Co 4:4 2Th 2:4 Rev 13:4,14
- **knowing:** Ge 3:22 2:17
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3

SATAN'S SEDUCTION CONTINUES

For God knows ([yada](#)) that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened The Deceiver brought into question God's goodness, implying He would withhold something good from us. This lie actually led her and Adam to spiritual death (separation from God). So, Satan is called a liar and murderer from the beginning (Jn 8:44).

His lies always promise great benefits (Ge 3:5). Eve experienced this result—she and Adam did know good and evil (Ge 3:22) but by personal corruption, they did not know as God knows in perfect holiness.

J I Packer said that "Original sin was a lust after self-sufficient knowledge, a craving to shake off all external authority and work things out for himself."

The significance of this statement can hardly be overemphasized. All through the ages Satan has attempted to portray God as a begrudging giver who only provides when He must. Satan desires to deceive those who trust in God, and wants them to believe they are lacking and deprived of the good things in life. This is the picture Satan tried to paint in suggesting that God had withheld the fruit of every tree of the garden from Adam and Eve. God is also portrayed as a begrudging giver in the temptation of our Lord (Mt 4:1-11) and in the warning of Paul concerning the doctrine of demons (1 Ti 4:1-4).

And you will be like God, knowing ([yada](#)) good and evil: "You will be like God" is his master lie (Isa 14:12-14; Ro 1:21-25), and people still believe it. This ancient lie is again being perpetrated by the modern [New Age movement](#). (Shirley Maclaine's "spirit guides informed her that each individual is God.")

ESV Study Bible on be like God - "The irony of the serpent's remarks should not be overlooked. The couple, unlike the serpent, has been made in the image of God (Ge 1:26-27+). In this way they are already like God. Moreover, being in the image of God, they are expected to exercise authority over all the beasts of the field, which includes the serpent. By obeying the serpent, however, they betray the trust placed in them by God. This is not merely an act of disobedience; it is an act of treachery. Those who were meant to govern the earth on God's behalf instead rebel against their divine King and obey one of his creatures. It is sometimes claimed that the serpent is correct when he says these things to the couple, for they do not "die"; Adam lives to be 930 years old (Ge 5:5). Further, their eyes are opened (Ge 3:7) and God acknowledges in Ge 3:22 that "the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil." Yet the serpent speaks half-truths, promising much but delivering little. Their eyes are indeed opened, and they come to know something, but it is only that they are naked. They know good and evil by experience, but their sense of guilt makes them afraid to meet God; they have become slaves to evil. And while they do not cease to exist physically, they are expelled from the garden-sanctuary and God's presence. Cut off from the source of life and the tree of life, they are in the realm of the dead. What they experience outside of Eden is not life as God intended, but spiritual death. (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#) or see [online version](#)).

Allen Ross - The tempter also cast doubt over God's character, suggesting that God was jealous, holding them back from their destiny (3:5). They would become like God when they ate—and God knew that, according to Satan. So Satan held out to them the promise of divinity—knowing good and evil. (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

NET NOTE - You will be like divine beings who know good and evil. The serpent raises doubts about the integrity of God. He implies that the only reason for the prohibition was that God was protecting the divine domain. If the man and woman were to eat, they would enter into that domain. The temptation is to overstep divinely established boundaries. (See D. E. Gowan, When Man Becomes God [PTMS], 25.)

Satan focused Eve's attention on desirable ends, a common device of what has been called "situation ethics." Never mind the fact that the means to an end involves disobedience to God. Act only on examination of the supposed results.

Satan's deceptions are always most effective when they have some truth in them. Through eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve would indeed come to "know good and evil," but not "as gods." Satan will flood you with truth to float one lie!

As long as the mind holds to God's truth, Satan cannot win (Jas 4:7 Ep 4:27 Eph 6:11-13,14); but once the mind doubts God's Word, there is room for the devil's lies to move in. Satan questioned God's Word (Ge 3:1), denied God's Word (Ge 3:4), and then substituted his own lies (Ge 3:5).

Note that Satan seeks to undermine our faith in the goodness of God—he suggested to Eve that God was "holding out on them" by keeping them from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When we question God's goodness and doubt His love, we are playing right into the hands of Satan. Satan made the temptation sound wonderful by making an offer: "You will be like God!" Satan himself had wanted to be "like the Most High" (Isa 14:14), and centuries later he offered Christ "all the kingdoms of the world" if He would worship him (Mt 4:8, Luke 4:5-7+).

The phrase is translated by the KJV as "**ye shall be as gods**," is not only not consistent on the part of the translators but also quite misleading. The use of the word "**gods**" in the plural and without a capital letter suggests, to some minds a reference to the angels who are in certain instances, they believe, designated as "sons of God" (cf. Ge 6:4; Job 1:6; 2:1). But the thought is not restricted to the angels (cf. Isa 43:6). Again, the word "**gods**" might be thought to refer to heathen gods; but since there were no heathen at the time Satan appeared in Eden, nor had the notion of "gods many" occurred to any one's mind, such an interpretation is impossible. The original word which is translated gods is none other than Elohim. The plural would be justified if it were at all the practice of the translators elsewhere; which it is not. The omission of the initial capital letter is without excuse. Satan who had said, "I will be like the most High" (Isa 14:14), said to Adam and Eve, "Ye shall be as Elohim." The word Elohim occurs twice in Ge 3:5 and there is no more

reason for translating it **gods** in one case than in the other.

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - Satan's sin led him to desire to be as God, and this was the desire he placed in Eve's mind (see notes on Isaiah 14:13,14). In fact, when one questions or changes the Word of God, he is, for all practical purposes, making himself to be "god." Satan's deceptions are always most effective when they have some truth in them. Through eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve would indeed come to "know good and evil," but not "as gods." ([be as gods](#)). Satan's deceptions are always most effective when they have some truth in them. Through eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve would indeed come to "know good and evil," but not "as gods."

[David Guzik](#) - The goal of becoming God is the center of so many non-Christian religions, including Mormonism. But in our desire to be gods, we become like Satan (who said, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ... I will be like the Most High [Isaiah 14:13-14]) instead of being like Jesus, who came as a servant (Matthew 20:28).

Knows ([Q3045](#))(**yada**) means just that, to know, which is the main meaning. Gilbrant comments on Satan's use of **yada** here - "God "knows" in the sense of having information or facts about reality ahead of the actual occurrence. He is aware of the way things are and are going to be. The serpent implied that God uses this knowledge selfishly against Adam and Eve's best interests. The rest of the Bible shows that in his knowing, God has great loving concern and uses his knowledge for the greatest good of his people (Ex 3:7; Ps 1:6; 103:14). The second use of the verb "to **know**" in Gen. 3:5 is a reference to Adam and Eve committing an act which brings them the experience of what good and evil are all about. The serpent promised their "eyes will be opened" so they would perceive reality more fully; and they will have arrived at a new understanding and consciousness through personal experience. The sad truth not told by the serpent is that this experience was deadly, while all the knowledge that leads to the greatest enjoyment of God's creation was already available to them in their walk with the Lord.. (The Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

DON'T BE DECEIVED

"ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. - Genesis 3:5

One of Satan's most effective tactics down through the ages has been deception. He is a master at making things appear what they are not. A mixture of truth and error seems to serve his purposes much better than total error.

Donald Grey Barnhouse illustrated this forcefully with the following story: "Duveen, the famous English art connoisseur, took his little daughter to the beach one day, but could not get her to go into the chilly water. After persuasion failed, he borrowed a teakettle, built a fire, and heated a little water until it steamed beautifully. With much flourish, he poured it into the ocean. Greatly impressed, his daughter went in without a murmur." Barnhouse then made this application: Satan "dilutes an ocean of unbelief with a steaming teakettle of Christian ethics, and people go wading in, self-satisfied, but unaware that they are bathing in unbelief."

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Our Lord's words are very clear: "...he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). Don't be deceived by Satan's clever ploy. You cannot dilute an ocean of cold unbelief with a little warm water of religiosity or good human endeavor. P. R. V. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The devil in his subtle way Will chloroform your soul, If you don't quickly turn to Christ, Whose blood can make you whole.- Lyle

Satan will flood you with truth to float one lie.

Doubting God

Read: Genesis 3:1-6 | Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. —James 1:17

When Satan tempted Eve, he did so by enticing her to doubt God's character. He told Eve, "God knows that in the day you eat of [the forbidden fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5).

Satan was implying, "God has a hidden agenda, and it is an evil one." The devil knew that once Eve doubted the goodness of God, the temptation would work.

We may not think we doubt God. But when events happen in our lives that make us question Him, that's exactly what we do. We seldom stop believing in Him, but we do stop believing in His goodness. And that is a faith-poisoning idea!

John Greenleaf Whittier knew that at the center of trust is a confidence in God's goodness. He wrote:

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within,
I hear, with groan and travail cries,
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings:
I know that God is good!

Never doubt God's goodness. Even when our trials seem beyond our understanding, we can trust God to give us perfect gifts (Jas. 1:17).

Don't put a question mark where God has put a period.

By Haddon Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Did You Say No?

Read: Genesis 3:1-7 | Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat. —Genesis 2:17

"Okay, here are the rules," Marty said. "You can do whatever you want, wherever you want, whenever you want until someone tells you no."

Those were our instructions on our first visit to our friends' lake house. Marty and his wife, Lynn, who enjoy entertaining, give their guests lots of freedom to enjoy themselves. When we noticed the sailboat next to the paddleboat next to the pontoon boat, we knew we were in for a fun afternoon.

Marty told us no only once—when he saw that we were about to feed the swans that swam up next to us. He knew that if the birds were fed once, they would become aggressive if they didn't get fed the next time.

Adam and Eve lived in the most beautiful locale, and they too had lots of freedom. However, when God said no, they resisted (Gen. 3). He told them not to eat from a certain tree, but they thought they knew better.

Adam and Eve would have kept good company with a lot of us. Sometimes we can't understand why our heavenly Father says no. When that happens, He can help us to adjust our thinking. We need to realize that even as He denies us, He's saying to our hearts, "You can trust Me. I know what is best."

I may not always understand
The way that You may lead,
But, Lord, in faith I'll clasp Your hand
And trust You for each need.
—Dean

God may deny our request, but He will never disappoint our trust.

By Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God Is Good

Read: Genesis 3:1-7 | Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He teaches sinners in the way. —Psalm 25:8

The phrase "God is good, all the time; all the time, God is good" is repeated by many Christians almost like a mantra. I often wonder if they really believe it or even think about what they're saying. I sometimes doubt God's goodness—especially when it feels as though God isn't hearing or answering my prayers. I assume that if others were more honest, they'd admit they feel the same way.

The serpent planted a doubt in Eve's mind about whether God had been good to her and had her best interest at heart. He said, "God knows that in the day you eat of [the fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). Satan tried to convince her to believe that God was holding out on her and not giving her something really good—more

knowledge.

Do you feel as though God isn't answering your prayers? Are you tempted to doubt His goodness? When I feel this way, I have to remind myself that my circumstances aren't the barometer of God's love and goodness—the cross is. He has shown how good He is by giving His only Son Jesus to die for our sin. We can't rely on our feelings. But day by day as we choose to trust Him more, we learn to believe with confidence that God is good—all the time.

When you are tempted to deny
God's goodness, love, and grace,
Look to the cross of Calvary,
Where Jesus took your place.
—Sper

Circumstances aren't the barometer of God's love and goodness—the cross is.

By Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Big Stink

Read: Genesis 3:6-13,22-24 | God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. Genesis 3:5

In August 2013, large crowds gathered at the Phipps Conservatory in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to witness the blooming of the tropical plant known as the corpse flower. Since the flower is native to Indonesia, and may flower only once every several years, its blooming is a spectacle. Once open, the huge spiky, beautiful, red bloom smells like rotten meat. Because of its putrid fragrance, the flower attracts flies and beetles that are looking for rotting meat. But there is no nectar.

Like the corpse flower, sin holds out promises but in the end offers no rewards. Adam and Eve found this out the hard way. Eden was beautiful until they ruined it by doing the one thing God urged them not to do. Tempted to doubt God's goodness, they ignored their Creator's loving warning and soon lost their innocence. The God-given beauty of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil became like a corpse flower to them. The reward for their disobedience was alienation, pain, emptiness, toil, and death.

God made us to share in His life & joy.

Sin looks inviting and may feel good, but it doesn't compare with the wonder, beauty, and fragrance of trusting and obeying God, who has made us to share His life and joy.

What temptations are you facing today? Remember that God promises to help you fight against temptation. Ask Him to help you remember to rely on Him.

God's commands can overpower Satan's suggestions.

INSIGHT: Today's passage records the entrance of sin into an innocent world. But it also records God's grace in response to sin. Rather than let Adam and Eve eat from the tree of life and live forever in their sin, God graciously blocked the way to that tree (vv. 22-23). J.R. Hudberg

By Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Norman Geisler - GENESIS 3:5—Is man made like God or does he become like God?

PROBLEM: Genesis 1:27 says "God created man in His own image." But in Genesis 3:22 God said, "the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil." The former seems to affirm that humans are made like God, and the latter appears to assert that he becomes like God.

SOLUTION: The two passages are speaking of two different things. Genesis 1 is speaking about a human virtue by creation, while Genesis 3 is referring to what he had by acquisition. The first passage refers to Adam and Eve before the Fall, and the last is referring to them after the Fall. The former refers to their nature and the latter to their state. By creation Adam did not know good and evil. Once he sinned, he knew good and evil. Once these differences are understood, there is no conflict. (Online version - [When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties](#).)

Walter Kaiser - Genesis 3:5 Become like God?

Was the serpent more honest with Adam and Eve than God was? The serpent had explained God's prohibition against eating from the fruit of the tree from the motive of divine envy: "you will be like God, knowing good and evil." What knowledge did the man and woman attain?

Some have seen parallels in this passage to the Babylonian flood story, called the Gilgamesh Epic, in which the wild man Enkidu, who is finally civilized by spending six days and seven nights with a prostitute, sees the animals flee from him, and the woman congratulates him: "You are wise, Enkidu. You have become as a god." But the two sentences from Genesis 3:15 and Gilgamesh are totally different, and Enkidu sheds no light on this passage, contrary to undemonstrated assurances from a number of leading scholars.

There are five passages in which the antithetical pair good and evil and the verb to know occur: Deuteronomy 1:39; 2 Samuel 14:17; 19:35; 1 Kings 3:9; and Isaiah 7:15. These passages help to dismiss certain theories that have been proposed. Certainly we cannot say that Adam and Eve attained premature sexual union due to the aphrodisiac qualities of the fruit on these trees. The only argument in favor of this dubious interpretation is the awakening of shame (Gen 3:7) and the punishment on the woman, which was placed in what some construe as the area of her sexuality (Gen 3:16). However, even while the disturbance affected the sexual aspect of personhood, the text makes it clear that the knowledge of good and evil is a divine prerogative (Gen 3:5, 22). The extension of a sexual interpretation to God is obviously grotesque and unwarranted.

This would mean that humankind could become like God either by attaining total knowledge or by having autonomy, particularly moral freedom. Such wisdom "to know good and evil" can be seen in 2 Samuel 19:35, where Barzillai as an eighty-year-old man doubts his ability to exhibit the knowledge between good and evil needed from the king's counselor. Likewise, the woman from Tekoa likened David to an angel who was able to discern good and evil (2 Sam 14:17). Solomon asked that God would also give him "a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong" (1 Kings 3:9).

The lure of the serpent, then, did not imply that humanity would have infinite knowledge like God's knowledge or even that there was some aphrodisiac in the fruit that would open up sexual or carnal relations as an option until then unknown. Instead, the lure of the serpent was an invitation to experience that perpetual quest of human autonomy and freedom. Unfortunately for all, that autonomy turned out to be illusory and actually ended up in a sense of alienation, which has been studied so often since Freud introduced the concept to the modern world. (Go to page 64 in [Hard Sayings](#))

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

- **When the woman saw:** Jos 7:21 Jdg 16:1,2
- **that it was a delight**, Eze 24:16,21,25
- **to the eyes:** Ge 6:2 39:7 Jos 7:21 2Sa 11:2 Job 31:1 Mt 5:28 1Jn 2:16
- **and did:** 1Ti 2:14
- **and he ate:** Ge 3:12,17 Ho 6:7 Ro 5:12-19
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
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Related Passage:

Genesis 2:9+ Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow **every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food**; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

THE DANGER OF LOOKING AT FORBIDDEN FRUIT

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food - It was physically edible but spiritual poisonous. It might have nourished her body, but it killed her spirit. See cross references for how often our eyes are the member that get us in trouble with temptation.

Genesis 39:7 (**Potiphar's wife**) It came about after these events that his master's wife **looked** with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."

Joshua 7:21+ (**Achan**) when I **saw** among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it."

Judges 14:1-2+ (**Samson**) Then Samson went down to Timnah and **saw** a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 So he came back and told his father and mother, "I **saw** a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife."

Comment in Jdg 16:21+ - " Then the Philistines seized him and **gouged out his eyes**; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he was a grinder (the job for a mule!!!) in the prison."

2 Samuel 11:2+ (**David** a man after God's own heart! Acts 13:22+!) Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he **saw** a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.

Job 31:1+ "I have made a covenant **with my eyes**; How then could I **gaze** at a virgin?"

Matthew 5:28+ but I say to you that everyone who **looks** at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29+ "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

1 John 2:16+ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and **the lust of the eyes** and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Here we see the tragic operation of the lust of the flesh ("good for food"), the lust of the eyes ("delight to the eyes"), and the boastful pride of life ("desirable to make one wise")—see 1 Jn 2:15-17+. It is difficult to commit just a solitary sin! Most sins seem to "self-propagate" or at least that has been my experience.

And that it was a delight (taavah) to the eyes - The eyegate was the crucial variable in this "sin equation." (cf Job 31:1+) Had Eve been blind, this would not have occurred but of course that is hypothetical, because the fact is she was not blind and it did occur. Perhaps by way of application we need to be "functionally blind" in the sense that (energized by the Spirit of Jesus) we need to keep our eyes so fixed on Jesus that everything else grows strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace and the luster of the deceptive delectable desirables of this world fades and is lost in the brightness and purity of the glory of Jesus! Lord, each morning enable us by Your Spirit to set our minds on the things above (especially the One above, Jesus) and not on the things of this world which in passing away. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Enticement to evil is often strong,
To sin and engage in all that's wrong;
But we must resist temptation's plea
And yield to the Christ of Calvary.
—Fitzhugh

Delight means desirable, pleasant. The fruit was not noxious or odious, but delightful to look at. Oh how our fallen flesh still falls prey to this one. Many things in the world are a "delight to the eyes" but they will corrupt and destroy our soul if they are "eaten"! This same word **delight** is translated "greedy" in Nu 11:4 (See note on Ex 16:13) describing the "**greedy desires**" of the "**rabble**" (mixed multitude probably some Egyptians who came out of Egypt with Israel and turned out to have a negative leavening influence on Israel) and what were they greedy for? Meat to eat! Meat is neutral but the memory of meat in Egypt was stirred up by their fallen flesh and the result was "**greedy desires.**" And if you read the rest of the story in Numbers 11:1-35 you will see that these "**greedy desires**" brought death to many of the Israelites because their greedy desires and dangerous grumbling inflamed the anger of God. Delight led to death in the Garden and death in the desert. Delight needs to be focused properly only on one thing to be a "safe delight" - Delight yourselves in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart (for then your eyes fixed on Jesus will by His Spirit energize desires in your heart like those in the heart of Jesus in Whom you are delighting!). (Ps 37:4 - See study of [Delight Yourself in the LORD](#)).

And that the tree was desirable to make one wise- Satan succeeds in creating in Eve a lack of satisfaction (and gratitude) with all of the other trees from which one could eat (Ge 2:9+) and focuses her attention on the one tree from which she could not eat. Satan is ever the "counterfeiter!" Satan's way of wisdom is in direct contrast with what God says makes one truly wise - the fear of the LORD! (Pr 1:7+, Pr 9:10, Job 28:28, Ps 111:10)

THOUGHT Doesn't this same deceptive ploy work with us today? We have many good things around us (cf Jas 1:17+), but our fallen flesh (and/or the demons) tempt us to focus on the things we don't have or the things others have that our flesh convinces us are better than what we have (aka "coveting" which is tantamount to idolatry - Col 3:5b+). This ever present danger is why the practice of continually giving thanks to God is so powerful! (1Th 5:18+, Eph 5:4b+) To say it another way, an attitude of gratitude is an effective antidote to fight affections for "forbidden fruit!" Are you content with what you have (cf contentment)? If not, rest assured, you

are potentially vulnerable to falling for the bait of temptation!

NET NOTE - "The quest for wisdom can follow the wrong course, as indeed it does here. No one can become like God by disobeying God. It is that simple. The Book of Proverbs stresses that obtaining wisdom begins with the fear of God that is evidenced through obedience to his word. Here, in seeking wisdom, Eve disobeys God and ends up afraid of God." (NET)

Allen Ross - Physical practicality (good for food), aesthetic beauty (pleasing to the eye), and the potential for gaining wisdom—to be "in the know"—these draw a person over the brink once the barrier of punishment is supposedly removed. (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - - The threefold temptation, appealing to body ("good for food"), soul ("pleasant to the eyes") and spirit ("make one wise"), was the same by which Satan appealed to Christ in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-12+), and against which Christians are warned in 1 John 2:16+ ("the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"). ([make one wise](#))

She took from its fruit and ate - She looked and she took. Watch that first look!!! Make sure it is only a glance and not a gaze!

NET NOTE - "The critical word now discloses the disobedience: "[she] ate." Since the LORD God had said, "You shall not eat," the main point of the divine inquisition will be, "Did you eat," meaning, "did you disobey the command?" The woman ate, being deceived by the serpent (1 Tim 2:14), but then the man ate, apparently willingly when the woman gave him the fruit (see Ro 5:12, 17–19+)."

And she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate- [See why is Adam blamed?](#) Note that Adam is not off picking blueberries, but is on the "scene of the crime" in close proximity to Eve, close enough that she was able to hand him some fruit. Adam could have refused but he acquiesced.

ESV Study Note - The fact that Adam was "with her" and that he knowingly **ate** what God had forbidden indicates that Adam's sin was both an act of conscious rebellion against God and a failure to carry out his divinely ordained responsibility to guard or "keep" (Gen. 2:15) both the garden and the woman that God had created as "a helper fit for him" (Ge 2:18, 20). (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#) or see [online copy of ESV Study Bible](#))

David Guzik - Not only did Eve sin, but she became the agent of temptation for Adam. But when Adam ate, he was not deceived as Eve was. Adam sinned with his eyes wide open, in open rebellion against God. i. Therefore, it is Adam, not Eve, who bears the responsibility for the fall of the human race and for the introduction of death into the created order (Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:22). Eve was tricked into sinning; Adam knew exactly what he was doing (1 Timothy 2:14)...**"Take and eat"** will one day become verbs of salvation, but only after Jesus had lived in the world of Adam's curse and surrendered to death

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - - "It was at this point that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12). There could have been no death in the world before man brought sin into the world. Thus, the fossils in the earth's crust cannot be a record of the evolution of life leading up to man but must be a record of death after man. In the evolutionary scenario, struggle and death in the animal kingdom eventually, after a billion years, brought man into the world. The truth is, however, that man brought death into his whole dominion by his sin." ([he did eat](#))

Ryrie adds that "Adam ate knowingly (cf. 1 Ti 2:14). Their sin was more than merely eating forbidden fruit; it was disobeying the revealed word of God, believing the lie of Satan, and placing their own wills above God's. Sin, with all its dreadful consequences, now entered the human race and the world in general. See note on Rom. 5:12+." (Borrow the [Ryrie Study Bible](#))

Believer's Study Bible - The method of temptation used by Satan established a pattern according to which he would deal with man:

- (1) Questioning God, i.e., distorting or casting doubt on the word of God, is the beginning of every temptation. Satan is powerless without man's assent and consent (Ge 3:1).
- (2) Contradicting God, i.e. denying His word outright, is the inevitable result of questioning it (Ge 3:4).
- (3) Surpassing God is that satanic device in which some imaginary good is sought, above and beyond what God has offered (Ge 3:5).
- (4) Disobeying God is the final result (Ge 3:6).

The areas of testing were threefold: (1) appetite, (2) beauty, and (3) ambition or pride (cf. 1 John 2:16). Every temptation by Satan falls into one of these three areas. Temptation is primarily an attempt to get one to act independently of God by implanting a desire for self-assertion or a determination to go one's own way (cf. Pr 14:12; Isa. 53:6+).

Delight ([08378](#))(**taavah** from **avah** = to incline, to be beautiful, to be desirable) indicating a longing, a desire. It indicates an intense

hunger for something. In Numbers 11:4 the KJV says they "fell **a-lusting**." Compare other negative desires (Ge 3:6, Ps 10:3, Ps 106:14, Ps 112:10, Pr 18:1, Pr 21:25, 26). Positive desires (Ps 10:17, Ps 21:2, Ps 38:9, Pr 10:24, Pr 11:23, Pr 13:19, Pr 19:22) Isaiah 26:8 gives the supreme positive desire - "Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O LORD, We have waited for You eagerly; Your name, even Your memory, is the **desire** of our souls."

Taavah - 19v - delight(1), desire(14), desires*(1), favorite(1), greedy(1), intensely(1), what is desirable(1). Gen. 3:6; Num. 11:4; Job 33:20; Ps. 10:3; Ps. 10:17; Ps. 21:2; Ps. 38:9; Ps. 78:29; Ps. 78:30; Ps. 106:14; Ps. 112:10; Prov. 10:24; Prov. 11:23; Prov. 13:12; Prov. 13:19; Prov. 18:1; Prov. 19:22; Prov. 21:25; Isa. 26:8

Gilbrant's note on taavah - Meaning "desire," "longing," "appetite," "lust," ta'āwāh is derived from the root 'āwāh (HED #181), "to be beautiful," "to be desirable." Desire can be good and just: "Lord, you have heard the desire of the humble" (Ps. 10:17); and "You have given him his heart's desire" (21:2). Good desire fulfilled is a "tree of life" (Prov. 13:12) and "sweet to the soul" (v. 19). Desire can also be wicked: "The wicked will see it [the good deeds of the righteous], and be grieved; he will gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked will perish" (Ps. 112:10).

Ta'āwāh also means "lust" in the bad sense. In the desert wilderness, the children of Israel on their way to Canaan complained about their journeys. They remembered the food of Egypt and rejected the provision the Lord had given them: "The mixed multitude that was among them fell a-lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who will give us flesh to eat?" (Num. 11:4). They lusted a lust (cf. Ps. 78:29f). The result of this attitude was disciplinary punishment: "While the flesh was yet between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah [the graves of lust]: because there they buried the people that lusted" (Num. 11:33f).

The object of desire is also one of the uses of ta'āwāh. Elihu contended that when a man is sick and despairs of life, he "abhors bread, and his soul [rejects] dainty meat [the food of delight]" (Job 33:20). The same phrase, "the food of delight," appears in the narrative that describes the events of the Fall: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and ate" (Gen. 3:6). The notions of honor and ornament are associated with ta'āwāh and appear in the proverb: "The desire of a man is his [honor]: and a poor man is better than a liar" (Prov. 19:22); also, "The blessings of your father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills" (Gen. 49:26). This describes some of the blessings imparted to Joseph's descendants, prophesied by Jacob. ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

QUESTION - [Why is Adam blamed for the fall of humanity when Eve sinned first?](#)

ANSWER - It is true that, chronologically, Eve sinned before Adam. She was tempted, picked the fruit of the [tree of the knowledge of good and evil](#), and ate. After that, she gave the fruit to her husband, and he ate (Genesis 3:1–6). Yet the Bible places the blame on Adam as the one responsible for the fall of mankind.

In Romans 5, Adam is held culpable, with no mention of Eve:

"Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people" (verse 12).

"Death reigned from the time of Adam . . . even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam" (verse 14).

"Many died by the trespass of the one man" (verse 15).

"By the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man" (verse 17).

"Through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners" (verse 19).

This "one man" Paul refers to is Adam, as Romans 5:14 makes clear. Scripture presents that it was Adam, not Eve, who sinned against God and brought alienation from God and death to all mankind. Adam tried to blame Eve, indirectly (Genesis 3:12), but Adam is the one credited with sin's entrance into the world.

There are several reasons why Adam is to blame for the fall of humanity. Adam was created first, and his wife was created to be a "suitable helper" (Genesis 2:18, BSB). God held Adam responsible for his family, as seen in the fact that God sought out Adam specifically (Genesis 3:9). Also, in His conversation with Adam and Eve, God questioned Adam first (Genesis 3:9-13), even though

Eve sinned before Adam. Adam, as the leader of the family, was held responsible for what happened in his family.

Also, the original command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was given to Adam, before Eve was created (Genesis 2:17). Eve knew of the restriction (Genesis 3:2–3)—Adam had obviously informed her—but it was Adam who heard it straight from God’s mouth.

In 1 Timothy 2:14, Paul makes a subtle distinction between the sin of Adam from the sin of Eve: “Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.” Eve fell into sin because of a deception; however, Adam was *not* deceived, which means he chose to sin. When Adam took the fruit from his wife, he knew full well what he was doing. He was not misinformed or misled; he simply decided to rebel against God’s command. He chose to listen to his wife instead of to God (Genesis 3:17).

The New Testament teaches that, as the first man, Adam represented all mankind. He was the head of the human race, and “everyone dies because we all belong to Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:22NLT). The suffering and death that resulted from Adam’s sin emphasizes our need for a Savior—whom Scripture refers to as the “[last Adam](#)” (1 Corinthians 15:45). That title for Christ, and the multiple comparisons of Adam to Christ, would make no sense if original sin had come through Eve.

Although Eve was the first to sin, the solution to sin came through “her Seed” (Genesis 3:15NKJV). The Seed, Jesus Christ, was born of a virgin named Mary (Matthew 1:18–25). He paid the price for sin and will redeem those who receive the salvation He offers (John 3:16). So, just as sin and death came through one man, Adam, it is also through one man, Jesus Christ, that grace and righteousness are given as free gifts to believing sinners. Through Adam we received a curse, but through Jesus we receive a blessing. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [Was Adam with Eve when she spoke to the serpent \(Genesis 3:6\)?](#)

ANSWER - The Bible notes that Eve was the first to eat the fruit from the tree after being deceived by the serpent. Where was Adam during that time? Was he with Eve when she and the serpent were conversing?

Genesis 3:6 says, “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” The key phrase, in consideration of our question, is “who was with her.” Traditional Jewish interpretation takes this phrase to mean that Adam was with Eve the whole time she was being tempted and that he heard the whole conversation.

This understanding helps to explain the emphasis on “Adam’s sin” in the New Testament (Romans 5:12). Adam was created first and placed in the Garden of Eden to care for it along with Eve. Adam then actively participated in breaking the one prohibition God had given him. If Adam had not been present when Eve spoke with the serpent, it would be more difficult to understand why the first sin is emphasized as being Adam’s.

Another view is that the phrase “who was with her” simply means that Adam was with Eve when she offered him the fruit. In other words, Eve heard the serpent’s lies, believed they were the truth, and ate the fruit. Then she found her husband, and once she had him “with her,” she gave him the fruit, too.

This understanding would explain why Adam did not intervene in the serpent’s deception of Eve and why the New Testament insists that Eve was “deceived” but Adam was not (1 Timothy 2:14). The fact that death came through Adam’s sin instead of Eve’s is explained by the idea that the [federal headship](#) of mankind was vested in Adam, as the one first created (1 Timothy 2:13).

Of course, there is a third view, that Adam was in the vicinity of the tree while Eve was being tempted. He was near enough to still be considered “with” his wife, yet far enough away not to hear the conversation. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Steps To Sin Genesis 3:6 John Butler

“When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Genesis 3:6).

This text shows us the steps to the great fall of Adam and Eve. They show the steps of man in yielding to sin. We note a few of the steps from our text.

FIRST—THE PERCEPTION OF SIN

“The woman saw that the tree was good for food.” Experts tell us that 85% of what we learn comes through the eye gate. The vile effects of movies, TV, DVDs and such things as pornography produce much evil. Hollywood has led many into the pit of hell via the

eye gate. If you do not protect the eye gate you will defile and damn yourself.

SECOND—THE PASSION IN THE SIN

"Was good for food." The physical appetite is often a factor in leading men and women to ruin. Here it was the appetite for food, sometimes it is the appetite for such things as sex. Control your appetites or they will control you.

THIRD—THE PLEASURE IN THE SIN

"Pleasant to the eye." Sin is advertised as great pleasure. It does not tell you that the pleasure is short (Hebrews 11:25), and after the pleasure comes the eternal pain. Sin simply advertises itself as being a lot of fun. The Bible speaks first of holiness, for it produces happiness. The world wants happiness apart from holiness. It does not work that way however.

FOURTH—THE PRIDE IN THE SIN

"Desired to make one wise." Sin appeals to the pride of man. Today we cleverly speak of 'self-esteem' which is nothing but pride decorated up to make it look acceptable.

FIFTH—THE PARTAKING OF THE SIN

"She took of the fruit thereof and did eat." Let your eyes dwell upon sin long enough and let your affections be captured by sin and you will soon be a victim of sin. The partaking tells us that sin is not a spur-of-the-moment deed. We sin because we have prepared our heart and lives to sin by actions and thoughts prior to our sin.

SIXTH—THE PROSELYTING OF THE SIN

"Gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat." Sin proselytes. It is not content to sin alone but seeks to get others to sin. Getting others to sin helps the sinner's conscience obviously, for sin likes company. That is why those who would be holy will often be alone (Jeremiah 15:17). Sin is popular, but holiness is not. If you would fraternize with the crowd you will not fraternize with holiness, for the crowd is often very corrupt. Sin is aggressive. Sin seems more successful in proselyting than righteousness does, but that does not change the character of sin. ([Sermon Starters](#))

THE START OF SIN Genesis 3:1–17

Sin started in the Garden of Eden. It really started in heaven with Lucifer—Isaiah 14:12–15. Sin started on earth with Adam and Eve.

1. THE PLAN OF SIN—vv. 1–5
2. THE POWER OF SIN—vv. 6–13
3. THE PAY OF SIN—vv. 16–17

You cannot sin without paying for it! The wages of sin is death, or separation from God—Romans 6:23. What you sow you will some day reap—Galatians 6:7, 8. Your sins may not "catch up" with you for years, but someday you pay for them. If not on earth, they will be revealed at the last judgment—Revelation 20:11–15. (Croft Pentz)

Will We Pass The Test?

Read: Genesis 3-5 | When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, . . . she took of its fruit and ate. —Genesis 3:6

Coyotes can't resist a tasty sheep dinner. That's why a number of years ago researchers experimented with about 500 different chemicals to develop a solution to spray on sheep that would make them "coyote proof." A compound that tasted like spicy hot sauce offered the most promise.

Scientists theorized that if the tests were successful, coyotes might lose their taste for sheep. If that were to happen, the temptation that makes coyotes a public nuisance in sheep country would be gone, and man would become the wild dog's best friend.

Sometimes I wonder why God didn't do something like that in the Garden of Eden. Why didn't He make the tree of the knowledge of good and evil bear ugly fruit? Why didn't He surround it with a chain-link fence with barbed wire at the top? Why did God even create the tree in the first place? Part of the answer, I believe, is that temptation to do evil brought Adam and Eve face to face with the ultimate moral question: Would they show confidence in their Creator and lovingly obey Him with all their heart?

We face a similar test every day. What are we going to do? Will we flunk the test? Or will we trust God completely and obey His commands?

Along life's road are obstacles—

Our choice becomes a test;

Help us, O Lord, to know Your way

That we may choose what's best. —D. De Haan

Every temptation is an opportunity to trust God.

By Mart DeHaan | ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Humpty Dumpty

A favorite nursery rhyme is the familiar tale of an egg that takes an unfortunate tumble:

HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON A WALL
HUMPTY DUMPTY HAD A GREAT FALL.
ALL THE KING'S HORSES AND ALL THE KING'S MEN
COULDN'T PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN.

According to those who know about such things, this piece of wisdom is a relic thousands of years old. Versions have appeared in eight European languages.

In its primitive stages, however, Humpty Dumpty was a riddle. It asked the question: what, when broken, can never be repaired, not even by strong or wise individuals? As any child knows, an egg. Regardless of how hard we try, a broken egg can never be put back together again. We simply have to learn to live with the mess.

There is a Humpty Dumpty story in the Bible. We call it the Fall.

Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit. They claim they possess the necessary wisdom to be like God. When the dust settles, Adam and Eve are not perched on a lofty plane. They have fallen. Regardless of how hard we try, things can never be put back together again.

Our contemporary fall is seen in the feeling that things just don't work anymore. Our lives appear out of control. Changes come faster than our ability to cope. Broken eggs are an appropriate symbol. Wherever we step we hear the crunch of fragile shells beneath our feet. - Brent Philip Waters

Appeal Of The Forbidden

Read: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-6 | When the woman saw that the tree . . . was pleasant to the eyes, . . . she took of its fruit. —Genesis 3:6

The story is told about a young boy who was being cared for by a nanny. He saw a beautiful vase in the china cabinet, and he wanted it. When he was refused, he began screaming, kicking, and crying. His mother, hearing the fuss, came into the room to find out what the problem was.

Picking up the child, she said to him, "What do you want, darling?" He pointed to the vase, so she gave it to him. But that didn't satisfy him and soon he began crying again. "Now what does my little darling want?" the mother asked. "I want . . . I want," said the boy between sobs, and then he blurted out, "I want what I can't have!"

The desire for what is off-limits is not confined to spoiled children. It reflects a tendency in all of us that goes back to the beginning of human history. The fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" was forbidden (Genesis 2:17), a fact that very likely enhanced its appeal.

The Bible teaches us that many practices and attitudes in today's society are forbidden. But that often fuels the flame of desire. So it's important that we know God's will, identify evil allurements, and resist temptation. We must beware of the appeal of the forbidden!

Enticement to evil is often strong,
To sin and engage in all that's wrong;
But we must resist temptation's plea
And yield to the Christ of Calvary.
—Fitzhugh

Don't keep one eye on the temptation while praying not to be led into it.

By Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- **Then the eyes of both of them were opened;** Ge 3:5 De 28:34 2Ki 6:20 Lu 16:23
- **and they knew that they were naked:** Ge 3:10,11 2:25
- **and they sewed fig leaves together** Job 9:29-31 Isa 28:20 59:6
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [War on the Word audio](#) by Steven Lawson - excellent exposition of Genesis 3

EYES OPENED TO GOOD AND EVIL LEADS TO GUILT AND SHAME

Then - note time phrase (see [expression of time](#)). When? The moment they ate. Eyes **opened**. Knew **naked**. **Sewed** fig leaves. A keen sense of guilt immediately followed the act of sinning. Shame is the appropriate emotional attitude for those who have deliberately violated God's commands and ignored His purposes. Mankind inevitably discovers that divine wrath and retribution come in the wake of such a response to God's goodness. Adam was the federal head of the human race, and it was "through the offense of one many be dead" (Ro5:15).

The eyes of both of them were opened([paqach](#)), **and they knew** ([yada](#)) **that they were naked** ([erom](#)) : After the fall of Adam and Eve to the tempter, they did become "like God, knowing good and evil" (Ge 3:5). They had fallen prey to Satan's temptation to doubt God, perverting a "good" for their own selfish ends. To keep from *falling prey*, keep *praying* to the Lord!

The Hebrew word for **opened** is [paqach](#) which is translated in the Septuagint by the verb [dianoigo](#) (also used in Lxx of Ge 3:5 "your eyes will be opened") which means opened thoroughly (what had been closed). How fascinating the very word that reflected their sin against God would one day be used to open the eyes of a sinner's soul to the saving Gospel and the Savior Jesus, referring to the regeneration of Lydia in Acts 16:14+!

Allen Ross -The results, of course, were anticlimactic. The promise of divine enlightenment did not come about. They both ate and saw, but they were spoiled by so doing. They were ill at ease with one another (mistrust and alienation) and they were ill at ease with God (fearful and hiding from Him). Satan's promises never come true. Wisdom is never attained by disobeying God's Word. Instead the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7). (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Barnhouse - "It is more than probable that they were clothed in light before the fall, and when they sinned the light went out."

Guzik - The way they saw themselves changed, but also the way they saw the entire world was now different. After the fall, everything looked worse. Was it good or bad that Adam and Eve saw their nakedness and felt terrible about it? It was good, because it is good to feel guilty when you have done something wrong.

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - on **naked** - The sudden recognition of their nakedness indicates the realization that their descendants, as well as themselves, would suffer the effects of this original sin. The ability and instruction to be fruitful, given by God as a unique blessing, now would also convey the Curse of sin and death. Adam was the federal head of the human race, and it was "through the offense of one many be dead" (Romans 5:15).

THEIR FUTILE ATTEMPT TO COVER THEIR SIN

They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings ([chagorah](#)) -- The innocence noted in Ge 2:25 had been replaced by guilt and shame (Ge 3:8-10), and from then on they had to rely on their conscience (see **Conscience** = [suneidesis](#)) to distinguish between good and their newly acquired capacity to see and know evil.

In a sense by sewing themselves coverings, Adam and Eve provided a [template](#) for every false religion in the world, for all subsequent attempts by unholy men at reconciliation with the Holy God would be by human works calculated to merit salvation. In short, every world religion ever invented by fallen men preaches the mantra of "**DO**" but only the Gospel of grace proclaims **DONE** and now that Good News simply needs to be believed (Ro 1:16-[note](#)). When Jesus died on the Cross, in John 19:30-[note](#) He uttered **the most wonderful word ever spoken** "[Tetelestai](#)!" which means "**It is finished**" or "**Paid in full!**" The price to redeem men from their bondage to sin and Satan was paid in full by the precious blood of the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29, 1 Pe 1:18,19-[note](#)) some 2000 years ago. In sum, only Christianity is a religion of **DONE!** As Paul said "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31-note)

Guzik - Their own attempt to cover themselves took much ingenuity, but not much wisdom. Fig leaves are said to have a prickly quality, which would make for some pretty itchy coverings. Every attempt to cover our own nakedness before God is just as foolish. We need to let Jesus cover us (Revelation 3:5, 18), and put on Jesus Himself as our covering garment (Galatians 3:27). The exhortation from Jesus is for us: Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. (Revelation 16:15)

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - on **fig leaves** - The hasty fabrication of fig leaf aprons might conceal their procreative organs from each other, but could hardly hide their sin from God. Neither will the "filthy rags" of self-made "righteousnesses" (Isaiah 64:6) cover sinful hearts today. The "garments of salvation" and the "robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10) can be provided only by God, just as God provided "coats of skins" for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21).

The story that the consequences of Genesis 3 have as much to do with how Adam and Eve responded to their failure as they do the failure itself. As we see in the difference between king David and king Saul, having a heart after God's heart is not the absence of failure, but the willingness to deal with failure in a biblical way. Today we want to examine more closely the problems with how Adam and Eve dealt with their failure. One of the main reasons for the consequences of sin is not the sin itself, but our unwillingness to deal with that sin God's way!

We see in Ge 3:7 that Adam and Eve start by hiding from each other. They try to cover their nakedness with fig leaves. Next, in Ge 3:8, they try to hide from God among the trees of the Garden (where they should have stayed in the first place). It is our natural flesh response to try to hide when we sin. Pride never wants to be found out. Humility, on the other hand, is quick to take responsibility for failure. In Adam and Eve we see our own tendency to hide when we sin. It is this very tendency that alienates us from other believers (our spouses, our children, etc) and from God, and which gets in the way of putting the sin behind us. Immediately there came a loss of innocence and glory and a sense of guilt and shame. They tried to cover their nakedness with their own works, garments that God did not accept (Ge 3:21). Further, we see a loss of desire for fellowship with God. When they heard God approaching, they hid! Guilt, fear, and shame broke the fellowship with God that they had enjoyed before their disobedience (cp 1 John 1:6-7-note). Note too that there was a growing attitude of self-defense! The man blamed the woman and the woman blamed the serpent. We see here the tragic internal effects of sin.

Believer's Study Notes: The immediate effects of the Fall are fourfold: (1) the discovery that something is wrong with oneself; (2) the effort to hide shame with a self-provided cover; (3) the fear of God which prompts one to hide (Ge 3:8, 9); and (4) the persistence in excusing instead of confessing (Ge 3:10-13). Adam and Eve were not ashamed of their nakedness at first (Ge 2:25). However, after their disobedience, they became ashamed. The explanation for this radical change in attitude is not to be charged to some sexual sin or to sexuality as such. Nakedness in the ancient Near East was considered exceedingly shameful and therefore is an appropriate expression for the shame they experienced. According to 1 Cor. 15:22, Adam's sin had devastating effects on the entire race. In Adam, all of his posterity became subject to sin and death. Consequently, the primordial parents of the race became ashamed of those organs which would perpetuate the memory of their sin, even as they perpetuated the race itself.

Opened (06491)(paqach) means to open (as one's eyes). Baker summarizes paqach "It refers figuratively to one's eyes being opened to wisdom, understanding, reality (Ge 3:5, 7); or to some physical object not noticed before (Gen. 21:19); or even of normally unseen spiritual forces (2 Ki. 6:17, 20). Opening the eyes is a sign of life (2 Ki. 4:35). To open one's eyes is an idiom meaning to pay attention, to be watchful, to notice what is going on (2 Ki. 19:16; Dan. 9:18; Zech. 12:4); or to bring judgment on someone (Job 14:3). It also is used to mean to be diligent, industrious, not lazy (Prov. 20:13). It is used in a proverb to indicate the shortness of life or the possession of riches (Job 27:19). God is able to heal the blind, open their eyes (Ps. 146:8).([Complete Word Study Dictionary- Old Testament](#))

Knew (03045) **yada** to know, to learn, to perceive, to discern, to experience, to confess, to consider, to know people relationally, to know how, to be skillful, to be made known, to make oneself known, to make to known. Used as a description of intimate relations is Ge 4:1, Ge 4:17, Ge 4:25, Ge 38:26, Jdg 11:39, 1Sa 1:19). Knowing God means knowing Him on the spiritual level in the closest personal way.

Yada in Genesis - Gen. 3:5; Gen. 3:7; Gen. 3:22; Gen. 4:1; Gen. 4:9; Gen. 4:17; Gen. 4:25; Gen. 8:11; Gen. 9:24; Gen. 12:11; Gen. 15:8; Gen. 15:13; Gen. 18:19; Gen. 18:21; Gen. 19:5; Gen. 19:8; Gen. 19:33; Gen. 19:35; Gen. 20:6; Gen. 20:7; Gen. 21:26; Gen. 22:12; Gen. 24:14; Gen. 24:16; Gen. 24:21; Gen. 25:27; Gen. 27:2; Gen. 28:16; Gen. 29:5; Gen. 30:26; Gen. 30:29; Gen. 31:6; Gen. 31:32; Gen. 33:13; Gen. 38:9; Gen. 38:16; Gen. 38:26; Gen. 39:6; Gen. 39:8; Gen. 41:21; Gen. 41:31; Gen. 41:39; Gen. 42:23; Gen. 42:33; Gen. 42:34; Gen. 43:7; Gen. 43:22; Gen. 44:15; Gen. 44:27; Gen. 45:1; Gen. 47:6; Gen. 48:19

Naked (05903)(erom) adjective describing something as naked, without clothing (Ge 3:7, 10, 11). Erom can describe a state of scarcity (Dt. 28:48; Ezek 16:39; 23:29). In Ezek 16:7 it has the sense of being in a state of innocence and in Ezek 16:22 a state of

infancy used figuratively of Israel.

Gilbrant - This word occurs ten times in the Bible, as an adjective meaning "naked," or as a substantive meaning "nakedness." It is derived from the verb 'āram. Adam and Eve knew they were naked after they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:7, 10f). The word is also used in a figurative, theological and prophetic sense. Figuratively, in the parable of Israel's beginning, God describes the nation as being spiritually naked (Ezek. 16:7, 22), and He warns that she will be physically naked in time of judgment (v. 39). Theologically, covering the naked with clothes is evidence of righteousness (Ezek. 18:7, 16). Prophetically, nakedness was part of the judgment that would come to Israel for sin and disobedience (Deut. 28:48; Ezek. 23:29).

Erom - 10x/10v - naked(9), nakedness(1). Gen. 3:7; Gen. 3:10; Gen. 3:11; Deut. 28:48; Ezek. 16:7; Ezek. 16:22; Ezek. 16:39; Ezek. 18:7; Ezek. 18:16; Ezek. 23:29

Loin coverings (02290) (chagorah from **chagar** - to gird on) a sash, a belt, a girdle, a loincloth, loin coverings. It refers to a loincloth of fig leaves as the first covering of humankind (Gen. 3:7). It was a regular feature of Israelite clothing (Isa. 3:24). It was a valuable and desirable part of a soldier's military uniform (2 Sam. 18:11). To stain or to put the blood of battle on one's belt was to be guilty of violent bloodshed (1 Ki. 2:5). To put on a military belt was to prepare for war (2 Ki. 3:21). ([Complete Word Study Dictionary- Old Testament](#))

Ed Young - The ḥāgôrâ as worn by women was not an undergarment, as the word "girdle" connotes in modern usage, but a valuable ornamented belt or sash like the Japanese obi (Isaiah 3:24; Proverbs 31:24). With men the ḥāgôrâ (ḥāgôr) was the accoutrement on which the sword was hung (1 Samuel 18:4). The phrase designating young men fit for military service is "all who were able to put on the ḥāgôrâ (2 Kings 3:21; KJV armour, NEB "arms"). This military belt was highly prized as a trophy of war (2 Samuel 18:11); Cyrus Gordon believes that this verse reflects a tradition of belt wrestling. ([link to the TWOT](#))

Chagorah - 5x/5v - Gen. 3:7; 2 Sam. 18:11; 1 Ki. 2:5; 2 Ki. 3:21; Isa. 3:24

QUESTION - [Why didn't Adam and Eve immediately die for their sin \(Genesis 3\)?](#)

ANSWER - God commanded Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). However, Adam and Eve ate of the tree and lived to tell about it. How can we reconcile God's warning with their continued existence?

Interpreters typically answer this question in one of two ways. First, many note that Adam and Eve *did* die, though not immediately. The Hebrew phrase translated "in the day" in Genesis 2:17 is sometimes used to mean "for certain" (e.g., Exodus 10:28; 1 Kings 2:37, 42). So, Adam and Eve "certainly" died; it's just that their death took place much later (Genesis 5:5). This view is also supported by Genesis 3:22, in which God determines to bar man from the tree of life to prevent him from living forever. Adam and Eve lost eternal life, were expelled from the Garden of Eden, and eventually experienced physical death.

The second way to view the warning of Genesis 2:17 is that "death" refers to spiritual death. When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, they experienced a separation from God, a loss of relationship due to their sin. Their first actions after sinning were to cover themselves up and hide from God (Genesis 3:7-8). This alienation from the Source of Life can be viewed as [spiritual death](#).

A third approach understands that both physical and spiritual death were with the result of [original sin](#). The moment Adam and Eve sinned against God, their souls were separated from God, and their bodies began to die. Their spiritual deadness and susceptibility to physical death have been passed on to all humanity (Romans 5:12).

Praise the Lord, He did not abandon Adam and Eve. He provided clothing for them (Genesis 3:21) and allowed them to have children (Genesis 4). He also promised "the seed of the woman" to crush the power of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). This promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who defeated sin and death on the cross and provides abundant life now (John 10:10) and eternal life with God in heaven (John 3:16). As Romans 5:19 says, "For as by the one man's [Adam's] disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's [Jesus'] obedience the many will be made righteous." [GotQuestions.org](#)

Genesis 3:8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

- And they: Ge 3:10 De 4:33 Dt 5:25
- cool of the day: Heb. wind, Job 34:21,22 38:1
- hid: Job 22:14 Job 31:33 Job 34:22 Ps 139:1-12 Pr 15:3 Jer 23:24 Am 9:2,3 Jon 1:3,9,10 Ro 2:15 Heb 4:13
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SIN BREAKS FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

Allen Ross - The remainder of this chapter falls into three sections: (a) the confrontation with the Lord in which the two sinners, hearing Him, feared and hid... among the trees (vv. 8-13); (b) the oracles of the Lord in which new measures were given to the serpent, the woman, and the man (vv. 14-19); and (c) the clothing by the Lord as a provision for the new order (vv. 20-24). The effects of sin are punishment and provision. Whereas the man and the woman had life, they now had death; whereas pleasure, now pain; whereas abundance, now a meager subsistence by toil; whereas perfect fellowship, now alienation and conflict. The motifs in chapter 3—death, toil, sweat, thorns, the tree, the struggle, and the seed—all were later traced to Christ. He is the other Adam, who became the curse, who sweat great drops of blood in bitter agony, who wore a crown of thorns, who was hanged on a tree until He was dead, and who was placed in the dust of death. (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day- Blessed thought! God walking with man. Perfect place, perfect oneness. Praise God for the New Covenant in Christ's blood which restores that perfect oneness and identity and communion with God, now experienced only in part for we still live in bodies that harbor the sinful flesh, but one day in glory to be perfectly realized in a perfect environment forever and ever. Amen.

Leupold on walking in the garden in the cool of the day: "The almost casual way in which this is remarked indicates that this did not occur for the first time just then ... There is extreme likelihood that the Almighty assumed some form analogous to the human form which was made in His image."

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - **walking in the garden.** This is not a crude anthropomorphism, but an actual theophany. The "Word of God," Christ in His preincarnate state, regularly appeared in the garden for fellowship and communication with His people. How long this period of fellowship had endured is not stated, but it was long enough for the Satanic rebellion in heaven and expulsion to earth. Since it was not long enough for Eve to conceive children, however, and since she and Adam had been instructed by God to do so, it was probably not more than a few days or weeks.

Guzik - We can assume this is God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, appearing to Adam and Eve before His incarnation and birth at Bethlehem, because of God the Father it is said, "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18), and no man has ever seen God in the Person of the Father. (1 Timothy 6:16)

And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Job 31:33 Ho 6:7; Pr 28:13 contrast Ps 32:1): Perfect fellowship, union and communion were instantly broken! And so they hid from His holy presence for they knew that their attempt to cover their sin with itchy, bristly fig leaves was unsuccessful.

Young's Literal says "They hid themselves from the face of Jehovah God."

We see this same response by the children of Israel when God spoke from Mt Sinai...

Deuteronomy 5:25 'Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will die.'

Henry Morris has an interesting thought noting that "from Genesis 3:8 onward, the writer (presumably Adam himself, originally) uses the name "Lord God" (Jehovah Elohim). God is still the omnipotent uni-plural God of creation; but He is also the eternal, unchanging Lord of grace and mercy, and, through these experiences, Adam and Eve were coming to know Him in that way also." (Borrow the [The Genesis Record](#))

Their intimate fellowship with God was broken. Suddenly there was hiding and covering up...not only from God but now between man and woman. And there was no longer **OPENNESS** (transparency, walking in the light for as John wrote centuries later "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." = 1 Jn 1:6-[note](#)) as BEFORE the Devil ([diabolos](#) [Mt 4:1, Lk 4:2-note]) & SIN ENTERED perfect harmony!

Guilt produces fear, and fear makes us want to run and hide. Ordinarily, Adam and Eve would have run to meet God, but they had become sinners (Ro 3:10-12). Sinners cannot cover their sins by their own works, nor can they hide from God.

Related Resources on Fear:

- [How To Handle Fear \(1\)](#)
- [How to Handle Fear \(2\)](#)
- [How To Handle Fear \(3\)](#)
- [How to Handle Fear \(4\)](#)

QUESTION - [Did God literally and visibly walk in the garden \(Genesis 3:8\)?](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 3:8 says, “And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.” We know that God is spirit (John 4:24), so how exactly could He be “walking” in the garden?

First, it is clear from Genesis 3:8 that God’s approach in the garden was heralded by a “sound” or a “voice.” The verse begins by stating, “They heard the *sound*” of the Lord God. Whatever form God took, it certainly allowed for the physical production of sound. His walk was audible; He was making noise.

The verse also mentions the “presence” of God “among the trees” of the garden. It was a presence that Adam and Eve acknowledged and thought they could hide from. So, God’s garden walk included both sound and some sort of presence among the trees.

Even given these two statements, interpretations differ greatly. Some emphasize the fact that God the Father is invisible and cannot be seen by humans. According to this view, God did not appear in the flesh; rather, He took on a symbolic, incorporeal appearance, such as a cloud, much like He did with the Israelites in the desert with Moses (Deuteronomy 31:15).

Others suggest that the idea of God “walking” refers to [atheophany](#)—an appearance of God in a tangible, human form. Theologians who hold this view point to a parallel in Genesis 18, where God appears as one of three (seemingly human) visitors to Abraham.

Another theory is based on the Hebrew phrase translated “the cool of the day.” This could be literally translated “the wind of that day.” Some think this might refer to a strong wind. If so, Adam and Eve’s reaction makes more sense. They heard God’s approach as a terrible wind that lashed the trees of the garden, and they took cover. God called (using a Hebrew word that also means “to summon”) Adam to face judgment. Acts 2 records an interesting parallel: the coming of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by “a sound like the blowing of a violent wind” (verse 2). Also, God spoke to Job “out of the whirlwind” (Job 38:1).

Regardless of whether God appeared in human form or in a cloud, or whether He made His presence known by a windstorm, it is clear God Himself confronted the sinners and issued judgment. To the praise of His grace, this judgment also included the promise of a future Redeemer (Genesis 3:15). Thus began a great saga that ultimately led to Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice for sin and substitute for sin’s judgment. Through Christ, those who believe are forgiven of sin and receive eternal life (John 3:16). [GotQuestions.org](#)

C H Spurgeon - "*The voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*" - Genesis 3:8

My soul, now that the cool of the day has come, retire awhile and hearken to the voice of thy God. He is always ready to speak with thee when thou art prepared to hear. If there be any slowness to commune it is not on his part, but altogether on thine own, for he stands at the door and knocks, and if his people will but open he rejoices to enter. But in what state is my heart, which is my Lord's garden? May I venture to hope that it is well trimmed and watered, and is bringing forth fruit fit for him? If not, he will have much to reprove, but still I pray him to come unto me, for nothing can so certainly bring my heart into a right condition as the presence of the Sun of Righteousness, who brings healing in his wings. Come, therefore, O Lord, my God, my soul invites thee earnestly, and waits for thee eagerly. Come to me, O Jesus, my well-beloved, and plant fresh flowers in my garden, such as I see blooming in such perfection in thy matchless character! Come, O my Father, who art the Husbandman, and deal with me in thy tenderness and prudence! Come, O Holy Spirit, and bedew my whole nature, as the herbs are now moistened with the evening dews. O that God would speak to me. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth! O that he would walk with me; I am ready to give up my whole heart and mind to him, and every other thought is hushed. I am only asking what he delights to give. I am sure that he will condescend to have fellowship with me, for he has given me his Holy Spirit to abide with me for ever. Sweet is the cool twilight, when every star seems like the eye of heaven, and the cool wind is as the breath of celestial love. My Father, my elder Brother, my sweet Comforter, speak now in lovingkindness, for thou hast opened mine ear and I am not rebellious.

Listening to God

Read: Genesis 3:8–17 | The Lord God called . . . “Where are you?” Genesis 3:9

My young son loves to hear my voice, except when I call his name loudly and sternly, followed by the question, “Where are you?” When I do that, I am usually calling for him because he has been into some mischief and is trying to hide from me. I want my son to listen to my voice because I’m concerned about his well-being and do not want him to get hurt.

Adam and Eve were used to hearing God’s voice in the garden. However, after they disobeyed Him by eating the forbidden fruit, they hid from Him when they heard Him calling, “Where are you?” (Gen. 3:9). They didn’t want to face God because they knew they

had done something wrong—something He had told them not to do (v. 11).

Thank You, Lord, for Your love and care.

When God called for Adam and Eve and found them in the garden, His words did include correction and consequence (vv. 13–19). But God also showed them kindness and gave them hope for mankind in the promise of the Savior (v. 15).

God doesn't have to look for us. He knows where we are and what we are trying to hide. But as a loving Father, He wants to speak to our hearts and bring us forgiveness and restoration. He longs for us to hear His voice—and to listen.

Thank You, Lord, for Your love and care. Thank You for sending Your Son, our Savior, to fulfill Your promise of forgiveness and restoration.

When God calls, we need to answer.

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Buyer's Remorse

Read: Genesis 3:1-8 | He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness. — Isaiah 61:10

Have you ever experienced buyer's remorse? I have. Just prior to making a purchase, I feel the surge of excitement that comes with getting something new. After buying the item, however, a wave of remorse sometimes crashes over me. Did I really need this? Should I have spent the money?

In Genesis 3, we find the first record of a buyer's remorse. The whole thing began with the crafty serpent and his sales pitch. He persuaded Eve to doubt God's Word (v.1). He then capitalized on her uncertainty by casting doubt on God's character (vv.4-5). He promised that her eyes would "be opened" and she would become "like God" (v.5).

So Eve ate. Adam ate. And sin entered the world. But the first man and woman got more than they bargained for. Their eyes were opened all right, but they didn't become like God. In fact, their first act was to hide from God (vv.7-8).

Sin has dire consequences. It always keeps us from God's best. But God in His mercy and grace clothed Adam and Eve in garments made from animal skins (v.21)—foreshadowing what Jesus Christ would do for us by dying on the cross for our sins. His blood was shed so that we might be clothed with His righteousness—with no remorse!

Then will I set my heart to find
Inward adornings of the mind:
Knowledge and virtue, truth and grace,
These are the robes of richest dress. —Watts

The cross, which reveals the righteousness of God, provides that righteousness for mankind.

INSIGHT: Satan misapplied God's words in today's passage. God's prohibition against eating applied only to the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:16-17), not to every tree (3:1). Satan's phrase "You will not surely die" (v.4) was a direct challenge to God's declaration, "You shall surely die" (2:17). In turn, Eve also modified God's clear instruction: "nor shall you touch it" (3:3). The story of the fall is a clear warning to us to study and know God's Word so that we will not be led astray.

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Seeking By God Genesis 3:8 - John Butler

"They heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden" (Genesis 3:8).

God's gracious reaction to the sin of Adam and Eve is recorded in our text.

FIRST—THE MOUTH OF GOD

"They heard the voice of God." The voice of the of the Lord refers to the Word of God. The Word pursues us in our sin to convict us and to bring us back into fellowship with God. That is one good reason why churches need to have a strong pulpit. It is that which convicts and calls men back to the Lord. The de-emphasis on the Word of God in our churches today is the work of Satan, for it keeps men from God, and it keeps men from being convicted of sin.

SECOND—THE MERCY OF GOD

"Walking in the garden in the cool of the day." This speaks of the mercy of God. Both the "walking" and the "cool of the day" show Divine mercy.

- The pace in the mercy. "Walking." When man sinned God did not run after man. He waited and sought man in walking. Sometimes we are not cut down the moment we sin. Men often pervert this mercy of God into thinking that they got away with their sin. But it is just God walking after them. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Ecclesiastes 8:11). This text expresses the habit of men. If God demonstrates mercy, men will pervert it to do more evil. If the courts delay to execute punishment for evil, crime increases.
- The patience in the mercy. "The cool of the day." God did not seek Adam and Even in an holy rage in the heat of the day to condemn and annihilate. It came in the cool of the day which showed the patience of God towards sinful men. God would first give man a time to consider his sin and turn from it. If men refuses the mercy of God, other Scripture tells us that God will cease to demonstrate patience but will bring judgment swift and severely upon man for their evil. But such judgment does not come before the mercy of God has had opportunity to try and rectify the situation.

THIRD—THE MESSAGE OF GOD

"Hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." What caused men to hid from God. The answer is sin. The decreased interest in fellowship with God and the things that have to do with God, is caused by sin against God. When people decline in their church attendance it is because of the presence of sin in their lives. When you read your Bible less and pray less it is because of sin in your life. Sin kills interest in Divine things. Sin encourages us to avoid the presence of God. Sin will keep you from sweet fellowship with God. ([Sermon Starters](#))

Genesis 3:9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

- Ge 4:9 Ge 11:5 Ge 16:8 Ge 18:20,21 Jos 7:17-19 Rev 20:12,13
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ADAM WHERE ARE YOU?

Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" -LORD - In the NAS "LORD" in all capital letters is always the Hebrew Name YHWH, Yahweh, Jehovah. See study of [Jehovah](#) and [Jehovah = Jesus God](#) Study this great Hebrew Name [Elohim](#) The question was God's way of bringing man to explain why he was hiding, rather than expressing ignorance about man's location. Shame, remorse, confusion, guilt, and fear all led to their clandestine behavior. There was no place to hide; there never is. [Ps 139:1-12]. Note that

THOUGHT- Don't miss the fact that both Adam and Eve were present, but the **LORD God** addressed the man! Adam failed in his role as head of the household. He failed to lead and guard Eve! Men we have a higher accountability as leaders of our families! When God looks at your family, He first looks for the man of the house!

God created Adam with a DESIGN IN VIEW. He placed mankind in the center of His work with a CLEARLY DEFINED PURPOSE. But it is important to realize that Adam COULD NOT FULFILL GOD'S PURPOSE for his life APART FROM GOD. God's intent for mankind first and foremost is that they REFLECT HIS IMAGE on planet earth. EVERYTHING ELSE FLOWS OUT OF THAT PREEMINENT PURPOSE. Consider by way of analogy the moon-it lights up the night sky. When the moon is full it gives enough light so that one can travel freely at night with no other source of illumination. But the moon has no real light of its own, it merely reflects the light of the sun. If the sun stopped shining, the moon would be black. In fact, unless the moon is facing the sun, it has no light at all to give to us. When something stands between the moon and the sun it ceases to give light. We call this an eclipse. The moon cannot FULFILL ITS PURPOSE apart from the sun. In the same way, MAN DERIVES HIS PURPOSE FROM GOD, and is DEPENDENT ON GOD to FULFILL HIS PURPOSE. If man CEASES TO WALK IN RELATIONSHIP with God, he ceases to REFLECT THE LIFE OF GOD. The IMAGE OF GOD is eclipsed-it can no longer be seen. Not only that, but if man is not facing God, walking in fellowship with Him, and reflecting Him, then it is impossible for man to reproduce what God desires and designed. Without the LIGHT OF GOD, his darkness bears CHILDREN OF DARKNESS (cp Ge 4:7-8). Without oneness with the Creator it is also impossible for man to reign in life in a way that reflects God. Ge 3 illustrates INTERRUPTED ONENESS and its disastrous effect on God's DESIGN being fulfilled.

[Guzik](#) on **where are you?** - This is not the interrogation of an angry commanding officer, but the heartfelt cry of an anguished father.

God obviously knew where they were but He also knew a gulf had been made between Himself and man, a gulf that He Himself would have to bridge

Adrian Rogers - Adam, when he sinned, ran off into the bushes and hid. God came looking for Adam. "Adam, where are you?" Because sin had separated God and man. Now it's not God that needs to be reconciled. God didn't do anything wrong; we're the ones who are reconciled. The Bible never talks about God being reconciled; we're reconciled to God. But we are, have much more in Jesus than we ever lost in Adam. In the Garden of Eden, Adam walked with God, but Jesus lives in us. In the Garden, Adam walked with God, but Jesus lives in us. Folks, we gain much more in Christ than we ever lost in Adam. "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Ro 5:10+) ([CLICK for his sermons on Genesis 3](#))

Where are you? - Perhaps the most profound lesson here is that God comes to man calling out to Adam asking, "Where are you?" Of course, God knows where Adam is, but He wants Adam to admit where he is (lost, dead in sin - Ro 5:12+) and why he is there. It is an invitation to repent (See **Repent** = [metanoeo](#); **Repentance** = [metanoia](#)). God comes "in the cool of the day." He waits until the sin is done and the sinners have time to be convicted of their sin. He comes personally ("Where are you?"). He also comes with accountability. He will not let Adam and Eve futile fleshly efforts hide their sin. He comes in judgment, but with it there is a mingling of mercy, for in Genesis 3:15+ He promises to send a victorious Deliverer, a Sin Bearer to serve as their Substitute (and receive the just penalty of sin = death - Ro 6:23+). It is clear that God holds Adam more accountable than Eve even though she was the first to eat of the forbidden fruit. While the text does not state it specifically, it is reasonable to place Adam standing (passively) at the scene of the crime (so to speak). Without question Adam was a poor leader and either he had not spoken the warning clearly to Eve (Ge 2:17+) or she had failed to memorize it word perfect. Either way, he is guilty. Failing to lead rightly is sin. The Father (immediately) sought the lost sinners, as Jesus did when He was on earth (Lu 19:10+, Mk 10:45+, 2Pe 3:9+), and as the Holy Spirit does today through His people (Acts 8:29-39+). Now as a manifestation of His amazing forgiveness and grace, the Father desires to use saved sinners to call lost men and women to salvation (Acts 1:8+).

THOUGHT Where are you? - Beloved the Lord still seeks His wayward children. I get letters frequently from those who have once enjoyed sweet fellowship with God but have walked away for extended periods of time. To them and to all who are in the desert of spiritual darkness I call you to remember Adam after he sinned and to know that the LORD God is calling out to you today "_____, where are you?"

PLAY DON FRANCISCO'S sad song "[Adam Where Are You?](#)"

NET NOTE - Where are you? The question is probably rhetorical (a figure of speech called erotesis) rather than literal, because it was spoken to the man, who answers it with an explanation of why he was hiding rather than a location. The question has more the force of "Why are you hiding?"

Adrian Rogers - Now, notice, it was not Adam who was seeking God. It was God who was seeking Adam. You would have thought that after Adam realized the terrible, awful, thing that he had done, after Adam had seemed the sense of shame, and guilt that Adam conscious smitten would have said, oh, God, oh my God, where art thou? Come God, have mercy on me, but he didn't do that. Rather than seeking God, he runs from God, he hides from God. You put it down straight and put it down big, God sought Adam, not Adam seeking God. Now, you say, what does that have to do with me today? Friend, we need to learn something about salvation. We love Him because He first loved us. Just remember this, You say, well, no, no, no, no, it was my idea. I saw my need of God. I sought God out. The only reason that you sought Him is because He first sought you. The Bible says in Romans 3:11, "There is none that seeketh after God, no not one." None that seek after God. Where out of your old sinful depraved heart is going to come a desire to know God? It cannot. Man is sinful and I thank God for the grace of our salvation that the mighty God was moved into mercy by the pitiful plight of sinful man and God himself took the initiative. And God would have been perfectly just to have flung them into Hell, right then. But, He didn't do it. And when God comes into the Garden of Eden, He does not come in there as a detective. He does not come in there as a policeman saying where are you? It is a heart of compassionate love, a broken heart, Adam, Adam, where are you? God is seeking. I want to tell you something, dear friend, God is seeking you today. Did you know that? He still seeks. He still calls. He still searches. ([CLICK for his sermons on Genesis 3](#))

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."
-- Luke 19:10+

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - Where art thou?

The cool of the day, when the breeze steals over the fevered landscape, is an appropriate time for man to hold fellowship with God. We need to have His hand laid on our throbbing temples, stilling, tranquillizing, shedding His serenity throughout our being. What the breath of evening is in summer, fellowship with God will be for thee, my soul; see that thou art not so absorbed with thy sins, thy love, or thy business, as to miss the tryst, when the sun is westering.

God misses His child. - That hour of fellowship was much to Adam, and it was more to God. Love, God's love, craves for fellowship.

As the musician for his lute, as the hart for the brook, as the mother for the twining arms and babbling talk of her child - so does God long for the free outpourings of His child's heart in prayer; misses them when withheld; is jealous when they are fitful and intermittent.

God seeks His child. - He did not wait till Adam found his way back to His side. But He hastened in search of him. So through the glades He comes to seek thee, O truant one! Where art thou, that for these many days thou hast withheld thyself from the hour of prayer? Wilt thou not say with the psalmist, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek?"

God mourns over His child. - These words, in one version, are rendered, Alas, for thee: as though the heart of God were wrung with sorrow for our loss, as well as His. But He does not content Himself with regret. By the pang of travail, by the prick of thorns, by the necessity of labor, by sacrifice and gifts of covering for our nakedness, He brings us back to Himself.

Where Are You? (play "[Adam Where Are You?](#)")

Read: Genesis 3:1-10 | The Lord God . . . said to him, "Where are you?" —Genesis 3:9

The two teenage boys heard the sound of their parents' car and panicked. How would they explain the mess in the house? Their father's instructions had been clear that morning before he and their mother drove out of town: no parties, no rowdy friends. But the unruly friends came and the boys allowed them to stay, despite their father's warning. Now the house was in a jumble and the boys were tipsy and disheveled. In fear, they hid.

That was how Adam and Eve must have felt after they had chosen to disobey God and then heard the sound of Him approaching. In fear, they hid themselves. "Where are you?" God called (Gen. 3:9). Adam responded, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself" (v.10). Sin makes us feel afraid and naked, and we become vulnerable to even more temptation.

God is still calling to people: "Where are you?" Many run away, trying to hide from Him or drown out the sound of His voice. Yet we cannot hide from God; He knows exactly where we are. Rather than hide in fear, we can respond in this way: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" (Luke 18:13+).

Would you be free from the burden of sin?
There's power in the blood, power in the blood;
Would you over evil a victory win?
There's wonderful power in the blood.
—Jones

The only place to hide sin is under the blood of Christ.

INSIGHT: God did not force Adam and Eve to obey Him but allowed them to choose. Similarly, He did not force them to come to Him after they sinned. Instead, He called to them and allowed them to respond to His call.

By Lawrence Darmani ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Gleason Archer - If it was not until after Adam and Eve had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and were hiding their nakedness in the garden that God knew they had disobeyed Him, how is this compatible with the belief that God is everywhere and knows what is in man's heart and what man will do? - (See online on page 79 in [Bible Difficulties](#))

The inference that God did not foreknow that Adam and Eve would yield to temptation and fall into sin is not supported by Scripture. In John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as the "Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world" (cf. Rev. 13:8), then God certainly foreknew that our first parents would sin and fall before they were even created. Even so, Jesus foreknew—and foretold—Peter's triple denial of Him in the courtyard of the high priest, even though Peter asserted his willingness to die for his Master if need be (Matt. 26:33–35). It was after Peter had denied knowing Jesus for the third time that Jesus turned His gaze in Peter's direction and their eyes met (Luke 22:60–61).

When the Lord called out to Adam in the garden (Gen. 3:9), He knew perfectly well where Adam was hiding (cf. Ps. 139:2–3), what he had been thinking, and what he had done (cf. Prov. 15:3). But there was no other way He could deal with Adam and Eve

concerning their sin than to question them about it: “Have you eaten from the tree?... What is this you have done?” (Gen. 3:11, 13). Parents normally use this approach when they apprehend their children in wrongdoing, even though they are well aware of their guilt. The use of a question leads to the necessary first step of confession: “Yes, Father, I broke it—by accident, of course.”

Obviously, God was already aware of what Adam and Eve had done, and He had already decided how to deal with them in the light of their transgression (Gen. 3:14–19). This is simply an example of the general principle set forth in Acts 15:18: “Known to God are all His works from the beginning of the world.” See also Isaiah 41:26; Isa. 42:9,23; Isa. 43:9,12; Isa. 44:7–8—all of which lay the strongest stress on God’s foreknowledge of the future and His ability to predict exactly what is going to happen, even to revealing these matters to His prophets centuries in advance of their occurrence.

Gleason Archer - Were Adam and Eve saved? When God clothed them with animal skins after the Fall, did He also teach them about blood sacrifice and the atonement? Was Adam a high priest for his family? (See online on page 79 in [Bible Difficulties](#))

The first people to be forgiven of their sin were undoubtedly Adam and Eve. Their repentance and forgiveness are presupposed in Genesis 3:9–21, even though it is not explicitly spelled out. To be sure, the recorded remarks of both Adam and Eve included some evasion of personal responsibility for eating the forbidden fruit—Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent—but both admitted by implication that they had actually committed the very offense that they had promised never to do.

Even though no genuine, full admission of guilt and repentance for sin is recorded in this chapter, the disciplinary measures meted out by God—Eve is to have painful childbirth and be subordinate to her husband; Adam is to eke out a hard living from the soil, with the prospect of eventual death to his body—are governed by considerations of forgiveness and grace. God did not reject them and leave them to the punishment they deserved, but He put them under a chastening discipline out of motives of love. He showed His purpose to be a salutary reminder of their past unfaithfulness and of their need to put Him first in their lives.

Since Genesis 3:15 contains the first announcement of the coming of the Savior—“He [the Seed of the woman] shall bruise you on the head, and you [the satanic serpent] shall bruise him on the heel”—it seems logical to conclude that at the time God clothed the nakedness of Adam and Eve, He also instructed them in the significance of the atoning blood of the substitute sacrifice. Adam then doubtless passed on to his sons his understanding of the blood-sacrifice atonement; for it is clear that Abel, Adam’s second son, was a true believer and was well instructed about substitutionary atonement, symbolized by his sacrifice of an innocent lamb on the altar (Gen. 4:4).

Cain and Abel seem to have approached their own altars directly, thus being personally responsible for their offerings, since there is no mention of Adam’s serving them in a priestly capacity. Cain’s vegetable offering would never have secured his father’s approval, because Cain tried to approach God without atoning blood; and Adam would never have approved what God condemned (Gen 4:5).

We conclude, therefore, that Adam and Eve were the first humans to conceive of saving faith in the grace of God, though Abel was the first person to die in a state of salvation, having predeceased his father by more than eight hundred years (Gen. 5:3–5).

One final comment about drawing conclusions from silence needs to be made. The Gospels never speak of Jesus ever kissing His mother. But would it be safe to conclude that He never did? Even so it is unjustified to infer from the absence of Adam’s words of self-condemnation and sorrow for sin that he never, in the 930 years of his earthly life, expressed his heartfelt repentance to the Lord.

Genesis 3:10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”

- **and I:** Ge 2:25 Ex 3:6 Job 23:15 Ps 119:120 Isa 33:14 57:11 1Jn 3:20
- **because:** Ge 3:7 2:25 Ex 32:25 Isa 47:3 Rev 3:17,18 16:15
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ADAM'S SIN BRINGS SHAME AND FEAR

He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden: Adam responds with the language of fear and sorrow, but not confession.

I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself- Fig leaves fail to prevent fear (and guilt)! The disastrous outcome of their choice not to follow God was a total eclipse of oneness, not just with God but even with each other (Adam quickly blamed Eve). Instead of walking with God, they hid from Him. Instead of joy, they had fear. They had allowed sin to come between them and the

Light of the world, and now they stood in darkness. The intimate oneness with God that we lost in Adam is restored in Christ when we enter the New Covenant by grace through faith (cf [Oneness of Covenant](#)). For example, compare (Ro 6:1-23) which unveils the great truths of our death to sin's power because of our identification and union which speak of oneness we now have in covenant with Christ. Sanctification (outworking of practical righteousness) allows us to once again walk with God in the garden in the cool of the evening so to speak. John writes "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but **if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light**, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son (present tense - continually) cleanses us from all sin." (1Jn 1:6-7+)

Sin had shattered the ONENESS WITH GOD that they had experienced in the Garden. Instead of a ONENESS WITH GOD there was DIVISION and RUNNING from God. Instead of HONESTY BETWEEN THEMSELVES and their Creator, there was BLAME and EXCUSES. The ONENESS between Adam and Eve was gone as well. In its place were SEPARATION, ACCUSATIONS, and DISHARMONY. With Adam's disobedience, sin entered the human race. Instead of LIFE and ONENESS with God, they experienced DEATH and SEPARATION (cp Ro 5:12+).

Adam and Eve's choice to follow their own will instead of following God's word affected not only them, but the design of God as well. The image of God could no longer be clearly seen in mankind. If mankind is to be like a mirror, to reflect God like a mirror reflects our face, the mirror has become muddied -- it is stained by sin. One could still see GLIMPSES OF THE FORMER GLORY, but GOD COULD NO LONGER BE CLEARLY SEEN IN MANKIND. It was as if the mirror was now shattered into pieces. Not only did sin negate mankind's ability to reflect the image of God, as a result it also stained what man reproduced.

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - on **naked** - hid myself. The shame associated with nudity is no artificial inhibition of civilization, but has its source in this primeval awareness of sin. It is only lost when consciences are so hardened as to lose sensitivity to sin. Clothing is even worn in heaven (Revelation 1:13; 19:14).

John Piper comments: Three human relationships were corrupted in the Fall.

1. First, the relation to ourselves. "Thy eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together" (Ge 3:7). Rebellion against God in the human heart is so contrary to the way man is designed to be, that he must constantly put on airs, clothes, make-up, poses to try to convince himself that he is not really a naked, helpless child.
2. Second, the relation to God was ruined. "They heard the sound of the Lord God ... and the man and his wife hid themselves (Ge 3:8). And man has been running from God with his guilty conscience ever since. A youth who has said to his father, "I don't want your counsel, I don't want your authority, I don't want your help," cannot bear to be in the presence of his dad. We are homeless fugitives, always on the run until we give it up and come home to God.
3. Third, our relations with other people have been ruined. "'Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate.'" (Ge 3:12). If anybody deserves to die, she does! Tender-hearted, loving, chivalrous husband! When the heart is in rebellion against God and is, therefore, wholly taken up with self-justification, other people turn into patsies. Therefore, all human relations -- with ourselves, God and other people -- are corrupted in the fall. And the misery that has resulted is untold. ([The Emergence of Sin and Misery](#))

Genesis 3:11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

- Ge 4:10 Ps 50:21 Ro 3:20
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GOD'S SECOND RHETORICAL QUESTION TO ADAM

And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" God knew but wanted Adam to know that He knew. Adam's sin was evidenced by his new knowledge of the evil of nakedness, but God still waited for Adam to confess to what God knew they had done. The basic reluctance of sinful people to admit their iniquity is here established. Repentance is still the issue. When sinners refuse to repent, they suffer judgment; when they do repent, they receive forgiveness.

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - God's questions were not to obtain information but to encourage Adam and Eve to confess their sin. Instead of repentance, however, they responded by feeble attempts at self-justification, each blaming

someone else. In this, they behaved like most of their descendants. [Hast thou eaten](#)

NET NOTE - Who told you that you were naked? This is another rhetorical question, asking more than what it appears to ask. The second question in the verse reveals the LORD God's real concern.

Genesis 3:12 The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."

- Ge 2:18,20,22 Ex 32:21-24 1Sa 15:20-24 Job 31:33 Pr 19:3 28:13 Lu 10:29 Ro 10:3 Jas 1:13-15
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ADAM BLAMES EVE DIRECTLY AND GOD INDIRECTLY!

The man said - Look at where Adam and Eve place the blame for their sin. What can we learn from this about our own tendencies in dealing with sin?

The woman whom You gave to be with me - We see in Adam's response that with one statement he tries to shift the blame for his sin to both Eve and God. He says, "that woman (blaming Eve) that You gave me ..." (blaming God). Eve takes the same approach, for she tries to shift the blame onto Satan ("the serpent deceived me."). Our human tendency is to blame someone else, instead of taking responsibility for our sins.

David E O'Brien - Adam's petulant, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it" (3:12), is a far cry from the ecstatic cry of recognition he uttered in 2:23. Nothing gives stronger proof of the radical change that has taken place in the relationship between Adam and Eve than this. Here we see the adversary relationship that characterizes so much of our modern literature on the subject. The fall and its effects give rise to notions of subordination and inferiority, not creation. ([Today's Handbook for Solving Bible Difficulties](#))

Adrian Rogers - You notice the alibis here, ha? You notice how God is trying to bring them face to face with their sin. But, I want you to notice a proclivity in human nature that does not want to bow its head and say, I am guilty, have mercy upon me. Man constantly wants to make an alibi for his sin. Man wants to believe that he is ill, but not evil. He is sick, but not sinful. He is weak, but not wicked. And it's really the result of environment and here Adam begins to blame it on God. He says the woman whom thou gavest me, in other words, it's not my fault, God, it's your fault or at least it's her fault. The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave to me and I did eat. You gave her to me, she gave it to me. Not my fault, Lord. Adam blamed Eve. God turns to Eve. Eve says, well, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. She blamed the serpent. Adam blamed Eve. Eve blamed the serpent. The serpent didn't have a leg to stand on. There, just one, two, three. Everybody is being blamed, but nobody is saying it's me, it's me, it's me, oh Lord standing in the need of prayer. Nobody is saying I acknowledge my transgression and my sin is ever before me. But here is the searching eyes of God and here is God trying to bring Adam and Eve into this place where they come into a confrontation with their sin. And that's what God is trying to do today. ([CLICK for his sermons on Genesis 3](#))

She gave me from the tree, and I ate - Adam pitifully put the responsibility on God for giving him Eve. That only magnified the tragedy in that Adam had knowingly transgressed God's prohibition, but still would not be open and confess his sin, taking full responsibility for his action, which was not made under deception (1 Ti 2:14).

And something has happened to the relationship between Adam & Eve..."the woman" So all of a sudden Adam is not her PROTECTOR...he is now her ACCUSER...

So here is the POINT...something happened to their relationship to God and the result was a break in their relationship. And we find this manifesting itself in so-called "mid life crisis" which previous generations never talked about...our generation has gotten so far away from the truth of God, listened to so many of the serpent's lies, that we have become so alienated from God and when we come to these difficult periods of our life, instead of running to God and casting ourselves upon His mercy and grace, we do what is right in our own eyes and the result is DISASTER! Marriage after marriage is today full of regrets...they did not understand their relationship with God which makes every horizontal relationship upside down BUT ESPECIALLY AFFECTS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND WIFE! DIVORCE OR SEPARATION IS ALWAYS A RESULT OF A PROBLEM IN THE PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN/WOMAN. Spouses are leaving bc they did not believe God and did not walk the way God said they were to walk...His torah gives us the instructions for LIFE AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

So how can you have a marriage without regrets?

- (1). Make your relationship with God top priority. Counselors can give you bandaids but only God's word gives

you the cure for the cancer. God made man first, woman second and woman was to be a HELPER to man.

(2). Since we are created male and female one must understand the difference between man and woman.

Even at 6 weeks in utero the male is more active than the female. What does the Serpent try to do? He tries to say there is no difference between men and women...they are both same...they both have equal rights (and here he has partial truth)...BUT WE BOTH HAVE A DIFFERENT CALLING...the enemy is trying to distort that distinctiveness of male and female and come up with UNISEX!

(A). MEN NORMALLY SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE
WOMEN SEE THE DETAILS.

Eg, women often interrupt their husbands when they tell a story bc he is off on the details

(B). MEN ARE LOGICAL ("I THINK")...

WOMEN ARE INTUITIVE ("I FEEL").

Women move by what they feel but

men live by what they KNOW.

(C). MEN ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MAKING DECISIONS...

WOMEN LACK SELF-ASSURANCE.

(D). MEN ARE MORE EMOTIONALLY CALM.

WOMEN ARE MORE VOLATILE.

E). MEN WORK ON GOALS.

WOMEN WORK ON RELATIONSHIPS.

F). MEN ARE OBJECTIVE.

WOMEN ARE SUBJECTIVE.

G). MEN ARE REALISTIC...he is direct and objective so he deals with the facts the way they are.

WOMEN ARE IDEALISTIC.

Related Resource:

- [Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage](#)

Ray Pritchard in his sermon [Is It Becoming Easier to Say "I Was Wrong?"](#) observes that "Adam is cornered, caught red-handed, *stripped naked* if you will of all his excuses. God knows! What will he do? He does what any self-respecting man does. He passes the buck. His answer is a classic form of evasion: "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Did you get that? "The woman you put here with me." Adam passes the buck twice. First it was the woman. Then it was the woman you put here. "Lord, it was her fault. She gave me the fruit and so I ate it. What was I supposed to do? She's my wife. You know how it is, Lord, when your wife wants you to do something. What was I supposed to do? Say no and watch her pout all night? And anyway, who put her in the garden? You did! She wasn't my idea. I'm not complaining, Lord, because she's beautiful and cute and all that, but I didn't have this problem when it was just me and the animals."

And so it goes. The first man, the father of the human race, is also the first one to pass the buck. Make no mistake. The Bible is telling us something significant. It is in our nature to deny our own guilt and to try to shift the blame to others. That's what Genesis 3:8-12 is all about. It's no coincidence that the first sin led to the first cover-up. The first disobedience led to the first denial. The first trespassing led to the first buck-passing.

In all the thousands of years since then, nothing has really changed. Human nature is the same. Passing the buck is in our spiritual bloodstream. We do it now because Adam did it back then. He established the pattern:

Disobedience which leads to

Guilt which leads to

Shame which leads to

Fear which leads to

Hiding which leads to

Blaming others

The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." —Genesis 3:12

Not long ago my wife asked me to pick up a belated birthday card for her brother. Scanning the rack, I ran across a card with a chimpanzee on the front holding a phone receiver in his hand.

This is what it said: "I better not hear . . . about how upset you are that I missed your birthday. I mean, how do you know I wasn't in a serious car accident and lying in some ditch out in the middle of nowhere? . . . Well, I may have forgotten your birthday, but I didn't exactly get any phone calls to see if I was okay. All I know is you better have a good excuse why I didn't hear from you on your birthday!"

The extent to which people avoid legitimate responsibility is almost laughable, but it is nothing new. When God confronted Adam for eating the forbidden fruit, he chose to blame his wife and God: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate" (Gen. 3:12).

When we have done something wrong, we can either accept legitimate blame for what we have done or shift the blame to others. The way that pleases God and results in spiritual growth is to accept personal responsibility for our actions. Irrationally blaming others is no laughing matter.

His eye our secret thoughts behold,
His mercies all our lives enfold,
He knows our purposes untold,
You cannot hide from God!
—Ackley

A good test of a person's character is his behavior when he is wrong.

By Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

You Can't Say That!

"Lord, what do You want me to do?" —Acts 9:6

According to a career-building Web site, certain words should be avoided on the job. When someone in authority asks you to do a project, you shouldn't say, "Sure, no problem," if you don't mean it and aren't going to follow through. Otherwise, you'll become known as someone who doesn't keep his word. And don't say, "That's not my job," because you may need that person's help in the future.

And if your boss comes to you with a problem, careerbuilder.com suggests it's best not to blame someone else and say, "It's not my fault!"

That's the excuse Adam and Eve gave to God. They were told not to eat from the fruit on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17). When they disobeyed and were confronted by God, Adam blamed God and Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent (3:9-19). They basically said, "It's not my fault!"

Perhaps there are things we should avoid saying to God about what He's told us to do or not to do. For example, He gives us specific instructions for Christlike behavior in

1 Corinthians 13, yet we may be tempted to say, "I just don't feel convicted about that," or "That's not really my gift."

What is the Lord asking of you today? How will you respond? How about, "Yes, Lord!"

God wants complete obedience, Excuses will not do; His Word and Spirit show His will— Then we must follow through. —Sper

The highest motive for obeying God is the desire to please Him.

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The Blame Game

The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." —Genesis 3:12

A city employee in Lodi, California, is suing the city for damages after he backed a dump truck into his own parked car. The 51-year-old man argues that because the "city's vehicle damaged my private vehicle," the city owes him \$3,600. As ridiculous as this sounds,

blaming others has been a basic human trait since the beginning.

When Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree, their eyes were opened and they lost their innocence. God asked the man a simple, yet penetrating question: "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9). In the past, Adam had intimate fellowship with God, but now he responded in fear and hid himself.

God's follow-up question was more convicting than the first: "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" (v.11). Then the blame game started: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate" (Ge 3:12). The man blamed God and the woman for his sin. The woman blamed the serpent rather than herself. Ever since that day in the Garden of Eden, we tend to blame others rather than ourselves for our sinful choices.

When we sin, we should take responsibility. Let's pray like David: "I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden" (Ps. 32:5).

Lord, help me not excuse my sin
And blame another person;
For if I don't admit my wrong,
My sin will only worsen.
—Sper

The first step in repenting from sin is to admit that you are to blame.

By Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Genesis 3:13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Greek Septuagint - kai eipen (3SAAI) kurios o theos te gunaiki ti touto epoiesas (2SAAI) kai eipen (3SAAI) e gune ho ophis epatesen (3SAAI: apatao: deceive, mislead Ep5.6) me kai ephagon (3PAAI)

- **What is this you have done:** Ge 4:10-12 44:15 1Sa 13:11 2Sa 3:24 12:9-12 Joh 18:35
- **The serpent deceived:** Ge 3:4-6 2Co 11:3 1Ti 2:14
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Revelation 12:9+ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, **who deceives the whole world**; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

1 Timothy 2:14+ And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Then - Marks progression in the narrative.

The LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done? And the woman said, "The serpent([nachash](#)) deceived ([nasha](#); Lxx - [apatao](#)) me, and I ate - Another rhetorical question from God. She had just heard Adam's blamed placed on her, so she quickly passes the buck to the lying snake! Serpent is [nachash](#) a snake from the idea of HISS.

Serpent ([05175](#))([nachash](#)) is a masculine noun meaning snake. The word *nāḥāsh*, meaning *to make a hissing sound*, undoubtedly refers, to the kind of being known to us as a in Ex. 4:3; Nu 21:6; Dt. 8:15; Pr 30:19, Eccl. 10:8, 11; Amos 5:19.

Nachash refers to an image of in the famous passage in Nu 21:9+. Sadly Israel began to worship the image of bronze serpent which ultimately had to be destroyed as Nehushtan, which means a worthless piece of brass! (2 Ki 18:4). **Nachash** is used describing the Devil as Eve's tempter (Ge 3:1, 2, 4, 13, 14).

Nachash figuratively described the tribe of Dan as "a serpent in the way" (Ge 49:17). The tribe Dan would be exceedingly dangerous to his foes. In later times members of the tribe of Dan fulfilled these words with remarkable accuracy. After a time in their original territory, the Danites moved to the north and occupied the northernmost point in Israel. These people were never distinguished for their spiritual attainments. In 931 B.C. Jeroboam set up a golden calf in Dan to provide opportunity for pagan worship. Other figurative uses of **nachash** are the wicked rulers (Ps. 58:4) and enemies (Isa. 14:29; Jer. 8:17; 46:22). In Proverbs 23:32 alcohol is described as "at last it bites like a **serpent**."

Nachash - 29x in 26v in the OT - Usage: serpent(24), serpent's(2), serpents(2), snake(1).

Genesis 3:1 Now the **serpent** was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?"

Genesis 3:2 The woman said to the **serpent**, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

Genesis 3: 4 The **serpent** said to the woman, "You surely will not die!

Genesis 3:13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The **serpent** deceived me, and I ate."

Genesis 3:14 The LORD God said to the **serpent**, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

Genesis 49:17 "Dan shall be a **serpent** in the way, A horned **snake** in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that his rider falls backward.

Exodus 4:3 Then He said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a **serpent**; and Moses fled from it.

Exodus 7:15 "Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he is going out to the water, and station yourself to meet him on the bank of the Nile; and you shall take in your hand the staff that was turned into a **serpent**.

Numbers 21:7 So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the **serpents** from us." And Moses interceded for the people.

Nu 21:9 And Moses made a bronze **serpent** and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a **serpent** bit any man, when he looked to the bronze **serpent**, he lived.

2 Kings 18:4 He removed the high places and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan.

Job 26:13 "By His breath the heavens are cleared; His hand has pierced the fleeing **serpent**.

Psalms 58:4 They have venom like the venom of a **serpent**; Like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear,

Psalms 140:3 They sharpen their tongues as a **serpent**; Poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah.

Proverbs 23:32 At the last it bites like a **serpent** And stings like a viper.

Proverbs 30:19 The way of an eagle in the sky, The way of a **serpent** on a rock, The way of a ship in the middle of the sea, And the way of a man with a maid.

Ecclesiastes 10:8 He who digs a pit may fall into it, and a **serpent** may bite him who breaks through a wall.

Ecclesiastes 10:11 If the **serpent** bites before being charmed, there is no profit for the charmer.

Isaiah 14:29 "Do not rejoice, O Philistia, all of you, Because the rod that struck you is broken; For from the **serpent's** root a viper will come out, And its fruit will be a flying **serpent**.

Isaiah 27:1 In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing **serpent**, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.

Isaiah 65:25 "The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the **serpent's** food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

Jeremiah 8:17 "For behold, I am sending **serpents** against you, Adders, for which there is no charm, And they will bite you," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 46:22 "Its sound moves along like a **serpent**; For they move on like an army And come to her as woodcutters with axes.

Amos 5:19 As when a man flees from a lion And a bear meets him, Or goes home, leans his hand against the wall And a snake bites him.

Amos 9:3 "Though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there; And

though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea, From there I will command the **serpent** and it will bite them.

Micah 7:17-note They will lick the dust like a **serpent**, Like reptiles of the earth. They will come trembling out of their fortresses; To the LORD our God they will come in dread And they will be afraid before You.

Deceived (05378)(nasha) means to deceive beguiled, led astray, deluded, seduced. Nasha means to use deceptive methods or deceit to accomplish something as Satan did with Eve (Ge. 3:13). Deceive by political means or giving false hopes of deliverance (2Ki. 18:29; 19:10; 2Chr. 32:15). Death deceives and surprises (Ps. 55:15) Nasha describes false prophecies (Jer. 29:8). It can describe self-deception (Jer. 37:9; 49:16; Obad. 1:3, 7) Used of God (Jer. 4:10).

Gilbrant - The Hebrew verb *nāshā'* means "to lend money." But in the Hiphil and Niphal stems, the verb can also mean "to deceive," "to trick" or "to give false hope." This term is often misunderstood in light of the present day banking practice of lending money to a borrower who in turn owes interest along with the repayment of the principal. But this was not a lawful practice within the community of Israel. For example, Exo. 22:25 forbids Israelite lenders from charging interest to Israelite borrowers, but instead, the lender is allowed to hold an item of value pledged by the borrower as collateral (cf. Deut. 23:19; 24:11). Certain guidelines were established pertaining to the taking of a pledge, in order to prevent economic oppression and harassment by the lender upon the borrower. Deuteronomy 24:10f commands, "Do not go into his house to get what he is offering as a pledge. Stay outside and let the man to whom you are making the loan bring the pledge out to you" (NIV). However, charging interest to foreigners was acceptable (cf. Deut. 23:20). In fact, Israel exacted interest of twenty to fifty percent on loans to neighboring nations, insuring the increased wealth of Israel's upper class. A higher rate was charged on grain than on precious metals. For example, in the Old Babylonian era, thirty-three and one-third percent was charged on grain, while twenty percent was charged on silver.

When a debtor offered a pledge, this often included a man's property, wife or his children, each of which could become the possession of the lender if the debt were not paid in the agreed fashion. Second Kings 4:1 records the predicament of a widow whose two sons would be collected as a pledge payment by a creditor to whom her husband owed money. Elisha told her to fill as many water pots as could be found with the little oil she possessed. This little amount of oil miraculously provided enough to repay the creditor who would have taken possession of her sons. Furthermore, a just creditor had to return by nightfall a garment taken as a pledge (Exo. 22:26f; Deut. 24:13), and no item that helped support the family, such as a millstone, could be taken as a pledge (Deut. 24:6).

In 1 Sam. 22:2, *nāshā'* refers to an individual who owes money to a lender (cf. Isa. 24:2). Nehemiah 5:7 describes the unjust creditors who were oppressing their poor brothers by exacting unlawful interest upon their loans.

The Hiphil stem also offers a different meaning. For example, Eve, instead of confessing, pointed to the deception and trickery of the serpent who tempted her to eat of the fruit in Gen. 3:13. This deception can also originate from a king (2 Ki. 18:29), a false god (Isa. 37:10) or one's own heart (Jer. 49:16; Obad. 3). The Niphal stem presents the action of "deceiving oneself" in Isa. 19:13, by stating that the wise men of Memphis had done so by trusting in their own wisdom. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

NET NOTE "This verb (the Hiphil of נָשָׂא, nasha) is used elsewhere of a king or god misleading his people into false confidence (2 Kgs 18:29 = 2 Chr 32:15 = Isa 36:14; 2 Kgs 19:10 = Isa 37:10), of an ally deceiving a partner (Obad 7), of God deceiving his sinful people as a form of judgment (Jer 4:10), of false prophets instilling their audience with false hope (Jer 29:8), and of pride and false confidence producing self-deception (Jer 37:9; 49:16; Obad 3). "

Nasha - 14x/14v - come deceitfully(1), deceive(8), deceived(3), deluded(1), utterly deceived(1). Gen. 3:13; 2 Ki. 18:29; 2 Ki. 19:10; 2 Chr. 32:15; Ps. 55:15; Isa. 19:13; Isa. 36:14; Isa. 37:10; Jer. 4:10; Jer. 29:8; Jer. 37:9; Jer. 49:16; Obad. 1:3; Obad. 1:7

Paul picks up on this in warning the church at Corinth...

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the **serpent** deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Hiding From God

The Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" —Genesis 3:13

Two brothers were extremely mischievous and their parents were at their wits' end. So they asked their pastor to talk with the boys.

The pastor sat the younger one down first. He wanted him to think about God, so he started the conversation by asking, "Where is God?" The boy didn't respond, so he repeated the question in a stern tone. Again he gave no answer. Frustrated, the pastor shook his finger in the boy's face and shouted, "Where is God?!"

The boy bolted from the room, ran home, and hid in his closet. His brother followed him and asked, "What happened?" The younger boy replied, "We're in big trouble now. God is missing, and they think we did it!"

Sounds a bit like Adam and Eve, who were filled with guilt and tried to hide from God (Genesis 3:10). They had known the Lord's close fellowship, but now they were afraid to face Him. God pursued them, though, and asked, "What is this you have done?" Instead of repenting, Adam blamed God and Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent.

How do we respond when we've sinned against God? Do we hide, hoping He won't notice? If we are His, He'll pursue us. The wisest choice is to come out of our hiding place, confess our sin, and have our fellowship restored.

Heavenly Father, forgive me for trying to hide from You.

I confess my sins and ask for Your forgiveness.

Help me own up to my wrongs and not let anything come between You and me. Amen.

Sin brings fear; confession brings freedom.

By Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Genesis 3:14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

- thou art: Ge 3:1 9:6 Ex 21:28-32 Lev 20:25
- dust: Ps 72:9 Isa 29:4 65:25 Mic 7:17
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Micah 7:17+ **They will lick the dust like a serpent**, Like reptiles of the earth. They will come trembling out of their fortresses; To the LORD our God they will come in dread And they will be afraid before You.

Isaiah 65:25 "The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and **dust will be the serpent's food**. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

THE SERPENT CONDEMNED TO CRAWL

The LORD God said to the serpent ([nachash](#)), "**Because you have done this, Cursed** ([arar](#); Lxx - epikataratos = being under a curse) **are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field** - It is likely that the serpent which Satan spoke through was not the crawling creature that we know today. The name suggests brightness and glory, but because the creature yielded to Satan and shared in the temptation, it was judged and condemned to a lowly life in the dust. Snakes are a reminder of the danger of temptation and the fall of man. There is a suggested play on words for in Genesis 3:1 the serpent is **crafty**, Hebrew [arum](#), but now the serpent is **cursed**, Hebrew [arar](#)!

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - God's Curse fell first on the Serpent, representing man's great enemy the devil, as a perpetual reminder to man of his fall. All other animals were also placed under the Curse but the Serpent was cursed above all others, becoming a universal object of dread and loathing. Whatever may have been its original posture, it would henceforth glide on its belly, eating its prey directly off the ground and covered with the dust of the earth. ([cursed above all cattle](#))

On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life- "Another one bites the dust!" (so to speak - it's an old rock song). Eating dust is a symbol of humiliation, not an item the serpent's diet! The cattle and all the rest of creation were cursed (Ro 8:20-23 Jer 12:4), but the serpent was uniquely cursed to a greater degree.

Cursed (0779) [arar](#) refers principally to exclamations, or imprecations, uttered by one person against another. To inflict with a curse. This verb, in a more specific sense, means to bind (with a spell); to hem in with obstacles; to render powerless to resist.

It bears the idea of people reviling one another and carries the idea of being bound or banned from something. Therefore, God's original curse to Satan in Ge 3:14, 17, means he was banned from all the other animals and condemned to the dust. In God's curse upon Cain, "you are cursed from the earth" (Ge 4:11, 12), Cain was banned from enjoying the productivity of the earth's soil. Furthermore, the curse pronounced upon Jezebel by Elijah ([1 Ki. 21:23](#)) barred her from a proper burial (2 Ki. 9:34). Balaam was hired by King Balak to curse the Israelites (Num. 22:6ff). Although his efforts were unsuccessful, Balak desired Balaam to disable the Israelite forces. The Israelites, however, eventually brought the curse of God upon themselves through idolatry and its accompanying immorality (Num. 25:1-9). Most of the curse sayings are within proclamations of laws (Deut. 27:15-26; 28:16-19) or pronouncements of threats (Jer. 11:3; 17:5).

Arar in Genesis - Ge 3:14; Ge 3:17; Ge 4:11; Ge 5:29; Ge 9:25; Ge 12:3; Ge 27:29; Ge 49:7

The Serpent = Satan ([07854](#))(satan, saw-tawn') an opponent: esp Satan, the arch-enemy of good:--adversary, Satan, withstand.

The Origin of Satan:

1. Satan's Original State Ezek. 28:12-18
2. Satan's Fall Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek 28:15-17; Lu 10:18; 1 Ti 3:6; Rev 12:7-9

The Present Abode of Satan

1. Satan Lives in Heavenly Places Eph 6:11,12
2. Satan Has Limited Access to God's Presence
Job 1:6; Job 2:1; Zech. 3:1-2
3. Satan Roams the Earth Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 2:12,13

The Destiny of Satan

1. Satan Is Destined to Be Defeated Gen. 3:14,15; Isa. 14:12-17; Lu 10:18; Jn 12:31,32; Jn 14:30; Ro 16:20; Col 2:15
2. Satan Is Destined to Be Condemned Jn 16:11; 1 Ti 3:6
3. Satan Is Destined to Be Expelled from Heaven Rev 12:7-12
4. Satan Is Destined to Be Bound Rev 20:1-3
5. Satan Is Destined to Be Thrown into the Lake of Fire Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Here is the [Septuagint version](#) of this verse - kai ecthran (enmity, hostility, hatred both as an inner disposition and objective opposition) theso (1SPA1: tithemi - place, put) ana meson sou kai ana mesontes gunaikos kai ana meson (ana meson = in the midst, among as in Mt 13:25) tou spermatos (seed) sou kai ana meson tou spermatos autos **AUTOS** (Greek pronoun = MASCULINE NOMINATIVE SINGULAR = a prediction of Christ - see Ga 3:16,19-note) sou teresei ([tereo](#) = protect, watch, keep guard...somewhat difficult to understand what the Lxx translators were contemplating when they chose this verb to translate "bruise") kephalen kai su tereseis autou pternan

An unfortunate translation in the Vulgate changes the pronoun his from the masculine to the feminine, providing spurious support for unfounded claims concerning "the Blessed Virgin Mary."

- **enmity**: Nu 21:6,7 Am 9:3 Mk 16:18 Lu 10:19 Ac 28:3-6 Ro 3:13
- **between your seed** Mt 3:7 12:34 13:38 23:33 Joh 8:44 Ac 13:10 1Jn 3:8,10
- **her seed**: Ps 132:11 Isa 7:14 Jer 31:22 Mic 5:3 Mt 1:23,25 Lu 1:31-35,76 Ga 4:4
- **He shall bruise you on the head** Ro 16:20 Eph 4:8 Col 2:15 Heb 2:14,15 1Jn 3:8 5:5 Rev 12:7,8,17 Rev 20:1-3,10
- **you shall bruise him on the heel**: Ge 49:17 Isa 53:3,4,12 Da 9:26 Mt 4:1-10 Lu 22:39-44,53 Joh 12:31-33 14:30,31 Heb 2:18 5:7 Rev 2:10 12:9-13 13:7 15:1-6 Rev 20:7,8
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE PROTOEVANGELIUM "FIRST GOOD NEWS!"

See [protoevangelium](#)

And I will put enmity: ([eybah/ebah](#)) In most of its occurrences it connotes the hatred in which a hostile act is perpetrated whether in a legal context (Nu 35:21-22) or a context describing the hostile acts of Israel's enemies (Ezekiel 25:15; Ezekiel 35:5). Any anthology of religion tells the story of man's search for God. My friend, that is not the way God tells it. Let's tell it like it is: Salvation is God's search for man. Man ran away from Him, and God called to him, "Where art thou?"

Henrietta Mears - Someone has said that this is the germ of all prophecy that unfolds into the perfect, fragrant bloom of the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley.....It was through the line of Seth that the Messiah promised in Genesis 3:15 was to come. The greatest teaching of all Genesis 3 is in this fifteenth verse. This is the first Messianic promise. The Redeemer of the race was to be "the seed" of the woman. The entire Bible is occupied with the development and fulfillment of this promise of a coming Savior. Christ was to be born of a virgin, and He would come to put an end to the works of the devil through His death and resurrection.

W. H. Griffith Thomas (Genesis - Devotional Commentary) writes: The announcement of enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between her seed and his seed, is the first message of Divine redemption in its antagonism to, and victory over, sin. This is indeed the Protevangelium, and is the primeval promise which is taken up again and again henceforward in Scripture, until He comes Who destroys him that has the power of death, and casts him into the lake of fire. Redemption is not only promised in word, it is also pictured in deed. Man attempted to cover his shame by the leaves of the fig-tree, but this was far too slight a covering for so deep a shame. No human covering could suffice, and so we are told with profound significance that the 'Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them.' This Divine clothing took the place of their own self-made clothing, and now they are clothed indeed. The mention of skins suggests the fact and necessity of death of the animal before they could be used as clothing, and it is more than probable that in this fact we have the primal revelation of sacrifice, and of the way in which the robe of righteousness was to be provided for them. ([Genesis 3 The Fall](#))

'Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress.'

GOD DECLARES WAR ON SATAN

Warren Wiersbe - In Genesis 3:15, God declared war on Satan and gave the first promise of the Redeemer. Satan would bruise Christ's heel, but Christ would bruise Satan's head and defeat him (John 12:31; Col. 2:15). (See context in [With the Word: The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook](#))

W A Criswell - Many Christian commentators since the second century have called this the Protevangelium (Lat.), the "first preaching of the gospel." It has also been described as "the Bible in embryo, the sum of all history and prophecy in a germ." It is a prediction of continual hostility between good and evil, between man and the satanic forces that oppose his moral well-being, and between the people of God and the unregenerate world system in which they live. This is more than a prediction, however. Such conflict is said to be divinely caused. It is God's will that until the final redemption, the Christian and the world should not be at peace. The "woman" is emphasized because she was beguiled by the Serpent; it is she who is "the mother of all living" (Ge 3:20), and it is by the woman that the Savior would come (Gal. 4:4). The "seed" of the Serpent must include all the followers of the Evil One (cf. John 8:44). There is a unique allusion in "her Seed," the first announcement of the virgin birth, for biologically in conception the seed or sperm is delivered by the man; but in the miraculous conception of the Messiah, the seed was the woman's, the result of her being overshadowed by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 4:4). Jesus Christ, then, as the "Seed" of the woman, will ultimately defeat Satan and his "seed." The phrases "bruise your head" and "bruise His heel" reveal suffering for both sides, but the final wounds to the Serpent are ultimately devastating, while the victory most certainly comes for the descendants of Eve. The Savior was "bruised for our [man's] iniquities" (Isa. 53:5), but His sufferings and death are now history. A bruised "heel" may be nursed until healed, but the crushing of the "head" means certain death. In the atonement and promised return of Christ, Satan's head is crushed (cf. Ge 9:13, note; Rev. 20:2, 3). ([Believer's Study Bible](#))

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) - - This verse is famous as the Protevangel ("First Gospel"). The Curse was directed immediately toward the Serpent, but its real thrust was against the evil spirit possessing its body, "that old serpent called the devil" (Revelation 12:9). Satan may have assumed he had now won the allegiance of the woman and all her descendants, but God told him there would be enmity between him and the woman. ([enmity between thee](#))

Ryrie on between your seed - (the spiritual descendants of Satan; cf. John 8:44; Eph. 2:2) and her seed (those who are in the family of God). He. An individual from among the woman's seed, namely, Christ, will deal a death blow to Satan's head at the cross, while Satan (you) will bruise Christ's heel (cause Him to suffer). (Borrow the [Ryrie Study Bible](#))

Between you and the woman, : This is the first Gospel declared in the Bible: the good news that the woman's seed (Christ) would ultimately defeat Satan and his seed (Ga 4:4-5). It is from this point on that the stream divides: Satan and his family (seed) oppose God and His family. God Himself put the enmity (hostility) between them, and God will climax the war when Satan is cast into hell (Rev 20:10). Review the Parable of the Tares in Mt13, and note that Satan has children just as God does. In Ge 4, Cain kills Abel, and 1 Jn 3:12 informs us that Cain was "of that evil one"—a child of the devil. The OT is the record of the two seeds in conflict; the NT is the record of the birth of Christ and His victory over Satan through the cross.

And between your seed - The "seed" of the Serpent must include all the followers of the Evil One (cf. Jn 8:44, Ro 5:12, Jn 3:5), a family every believer belonged to before he or she was saved (rescued) by grace through faith in Christ! (cf Col 1:13-14+, Acts 26:18+).

And her seed - (John 3:3,5 Her Seed = Gal 4:4, 3:16, 19). Biologically, a woman produces no seed, and except in this case Biblical usage always speaks only of the seed of men. This promised Seed would, therefore, have to be miraculously implanted in the womb. In this way, He would not inherit the sin nature which would disqualify every son of Adam from becoming a Savior from sin. This prophecy thus clearly anticipates the future virgin birth of Christ.

ESV Study Bible - The motif of the **offspring (seed)** of the woman is picked up in Ge 4:25+ with the birth of [Seth](#); subsequently, the rest of Genesis traces a single line of Seth's descendants, observing that it will eventually produce a King through Whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed. (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#))

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) - on **her seed** - The "seed of the woman" can only be an allusion to a future descendant of Eve who would have no human father. Biologically, a woman produces no seed, and except in this case Biblical usage always speaks only of the seed of men. This promised Seed would, therefore, have to be miraculously implanted in the womb. In this way, He would not inherit the sin nature which would disqualify every son of Adam from becoming a Savior from sin. This prophecy thus clearly anticipates the future virgin birth of Christ. ([her seed](#))

Ray Stedman - Without a doubt we have here a most remarkable prophecy of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are those today who tell us that the virgin birth is an unimportant doctrine, but it is one of the most important doctrines concerning our Lord. Here we have a most remarkable prophecy which cannot be explained in any other terms than that it finds fulfillment in the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus. This concept of the seed of the woman is unique. Nowhere else in the Bible do you find such an expression occurring. Everywhere else in Scripture descent is reckoned through the male line. It is the seed of the man that is the line of descent and all the genealogies of the Bible trace the line of descent through the male. The father's name is given and when the mother's name is given it is only incidental, as referring to the wife of so-and-so. ([The Devil's Burden | Gen 3:14-15](#))

Thomas Constable on Genesis 3:15 - This is a prophecy of the victory of the ultimate "Seed" of the woman (Messiah) over Satan (cf. Rev. 19:1–5; Gal. 3:16, 19; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8). Most interpreters have recognized this verse as the first biblical promise of the provision of salvation (the protoevangelium or "first gospel"). The rest of the book, in fact the whole Old Testament, proceeds to point ahead to that Seed. ([Genesis 3](#))

Adrian Rogers - A Chosen Seed - For example, God said in the Old Testament that Messiah was to come from a race: "Messiah's not to be an angel; He's to be a man. Messiah is to be a human being." (1) A Battle Prophesied - Genesis 3:15—here's what God said to the serpent: "And I will put enmity"—that means "warfare"—"between thee and the woman"—by the way, women still don't like snakes today—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed"—the word seed means "descendant"—"between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15) This is the first prophecy in all of the Bible. It's found right there on the threshold of the Bible, and it is called by theologians the "protoevangelium," which means "the first evangelistic message." And here, a battle is prophesied—the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. And, we're seeing that battle go on through all history. (2) A Birth Prophesied - Not only is the battle prophesied, but a birth is prophesied. Here is the seed. You know, in the Bible, the word seed is used more than one hundred times, and it always refers to the offspring of a male. But here, God speaks concerning the woman—the seed of the woman. The old rabbis used to scratch their heads at this and say, "No, no, no. It's the seed of the man." Yet here in Genesis 3:15, it's called "the seed of the woman," a prophecy of the [virgin birth](#). (3) A Bruising Prophesied - Not only a battle, not only a birth, but a bruising is prophesied. That seed of the serpent is going to bruise his heel, Messiah's heel, but Messiah is going to crush his head. Isn't that an amazing thing? I mean, right there in the beginning of the Bible, you find that Messiah is going to be a human being. He's the seed of the woman....Now, let me come to a conclusion tonight and tell you two things: number one, you can trust the Word of God; secondly, you can trust the God of that Word. I mean, if you trust the Word of God, you certainly ought to trust the God of that Word. Now, the

Old Testament says that somebody is coming. The New Testament says that somebody has come. And, the book of the Revelation says that somebody is coming again. Now, the New Testament tells you how Jesus, who is coming, gets you ready for His Second Coming, how you can know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. ([The Christ of the Old Testament | Part 1](#) [The Christ of the Old Testament | Part 2](#)) ([CLICK for his sermons on Genesis 3](#))

THE FATAL BLOW TO SATAN

He shall bruise ([shûph](#)) you on the head: This masculine pronoun ("He") definitely indicates that the fulfillment of this promise, the seed of the woman, would be a man, born of a woman. It finds an initial fulfillment at Calvary but awaits its culmination until Rev 20:9,10 that the implications of the verse reach their climax. Satan will inflict a painful wound on the woman's Seed, but Christ in turn will inflict a mortal wound on the Serpent, crushing his head. This prophecy was fulfilled in the first instance at the cross, but will culminate when the triumphant Christ casts Satan into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

Another couplet may be added:

"Satan rejoices when he sees
Lukewarm Christians all at ease."

Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible (BORROW) on **bruise ([shûph](#)) you on the head** - Satan will inflict a painful wound on the woman's Seed, but Christ in turn will inflict a mortal wound on the Serpent, crushing his head. This prophecy was fulfilled in the first instance at the Cross, but will culminate when the triumphant Christ casts Satan into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10). ([bruise thy head](#))

ESV Study Note - Some interpreters have suggested that by saying "he" and "his," the intended meaning is that one particular offspring is in view. Within the larger biblical framework, this hope comes to fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who is clearly presented in the NT as overcoming Satan (Heb. 2:14; 1 Jn 3:8; cf. Mt 12:29; Mk 1:24; Lk 10:18; Jn 12:31; 16:11; 1Co 15:24; Col 2:15), while at the same time being bruised. (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#) or see [online copy of ESV Study Bible](#))

Paul, in a passage strongly reminiscent of Genesis 3, encouraged the believers in Rome,

And the God of peace **will soon crush ([suntribo](#)) Satan under your feet**. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. (Ro 16:20⁺)

Believers should recognize that they participate in the crushing of Satan because, along with their Savior and because of His finished work on the cross, they also are of the woman's seed. For more on the destruction of Satan we read about his fate in Hebrews

Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He (Jesus) Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (Hebrews 2:14,15)

Allen Ross commenting on Ro 16:20 - "Crushing Satan" - Paul is probably here referring to the imagery in the garden when Satan tempted Eve and Adam to sin. As a result of the fall, God announced the oracles on the human race. Life would be very different now that sin was present. In those oracles God said to the serpent, Satan, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he will bruise you in the head, but you will bruise him in the heel" (Gen. 3:15). The declaration was that there would be perpetual conflict between the forces of evil, Satan and his "seed," and the human race. The "seed of the serpent" would be Satanic forces and dupes, or we can say, demons and humans who do the work of Satan. Recall that Jesus described His enemies as being of their father the devil (John 8:44). They share his work and do his bidding. And so those who oppose the kingdom of Christ or the work of the Gospel may very well belong to that evil empire of Satan. They may not even know it. And down through history they have delivered crippling strikes to the work of God, and to the good of humanity in the process, for Satan is not attempting to set up a rival, good kingdom. He is the destroyer of life and goodness. It is the nature of Satan and his seed to bruise us in the heel.

And you shall bruise ([shûph](#)) him on the heel - This primeval prophecy made such a profound impression on Adam's descendants that it was incorporated, with varying degrees of distortion and embellishment, in all the legends, mythologies and astrologies of the ancients since they are filled with tales of mighty heroes engaged in life-and-death struggles with dragons and other monsters. Mankind, from the earliest ages, has recorded its hope that someday a Savior would come who would destroy the devil and reconcile man to God. Jesus Christ is "the last Adam" (1 Co 15:45-49). The first Adam's disobedience plunged us into sin,

but the Last Adam's obedience brought salvation (Ro 5:12-21). The first Adam was a thief and was cast out of Paradise. The Last Adam told a thief he would enter paradise (Luke 23:43). In Adam we die; in Christ we have eternal life.

[Henry Morris - The Defender's Study Bible \(BORROW\)](#) on **bruise his heel** This primeval prophecy made such a profound impression on Adam's descendants that it was incorporated, with varying degrees of distortion and embellishment, in all the legends, mythologies and astrologies of the ancients since they are filled with tales of mighty heroes engaged in life-and-death struggles with dragons and other monsters. Mankind, from the earliest ages, has recorded its hope that someday a Savior would come who would destroy the devil and reconcile man to God. ([bruise his heel](#))

John MacArthur - This "first gospel" is prophetic of the struggle and its outcome between "your seed" (Satan and unbelievers, who are called the Devil's children in Jn 8:44) and her seed (Christ, a descendant of Eve, and those in Him), which began in the garden. In the midst of the curse passage, a message of hope shone forth—the woman's offspring called "He" is Christ, who will one day defeat the Serpent. Satan could only "bruise" Christ's heel (cause Him to suffer), while Christ will bruise Satan's head (destroy him with a fatal blow). Paul, in a passage strongly reminiscent of [Ge 3], encouraged the believers in Rome, "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly" (Ro 16:20). Believers should recognize that they participate in the crushing of Satan because, along with their Savior and because of His finished work on the cross, they also are of the woman's seed. For more on the destruction of Satan [Heb 2:14,15 Rev 20:10]. (See context in [The MacArthur Bible Commentary](#))

Adrian Rogers - The first gospel sermon that was ever preached was preached by God himself in the Garden of Eden—the congregation, Adam and Even. You want to hear the first gospel sermon ever preached? Here it is. Genesis 3:15. Because the searching led to a Savior, and, I want you to see, the first gospel sermon ever preached. This is the seed bed of all Bible prophecy. Almost all of the Bible is wrapped up in Genesis 3:15. And God says, "And I will put enmity between Thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall, bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." There are three things in this verse I want you to see.

First of all, a battle is prophesied. Secondly, a birth is prophesied. Thirdly, a bruising is prophesied. In Genesis 3:15. First of all, a battle is prophesied. God says, I'm going to put warfare serpent. I'm going to put warfare between your seed and the seed of the woman. I will put enmity between you, your seed and the woman. A battle enmity means warfare, ha, and what God was doing right now is declaring war on the devil and declaring wrong sin, and war has been declared, and God has thrown down the gauntlet, and there is a continuing battle between righteousness and unrighteousness, between Heaven and Hell, between sin and evil, between light and darkness, between Christ and Antichrist. The seed of a woman and the seed of a serpent. There is a battle and that invisible war is raging on American soil and that battle is being taught in this congregation this morning as I am pleading for the souls of men. There is a battle with no holds barred. It is a fight to the death, warfare. And, I want to tell you who's going to win, and it's not the devil. Amen. Ha, He must prevail, He cannot fail, our great God. Amen. But, here is a battle prophesied. But go on.

There's a birth that is prophesied. Look again, if you will in verse 15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman. Now watch it, between thy seed, and her seed." S E E D, her seed. Ha, now, the old rabbi's used to read this and scratch their heads because this is an unusual verse. The seed of the woman. Now, if you know anything about Bible language, you know the Bible always speaks of the seed of the man. The seed for procreation is in the man. The egg for fertilization is in the woman. And so the Bible speaks of the seed of the man, the seed of a man, more than one hundred times. But, in this place, in this place only it speaks of the seed of the woman. What's our Lord talking about? Over here in the dawn of human history He's pointing to the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There would be coming one who would be the seed of the woman. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and be with child. And thou shalt call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." Here, our Lord looks down at the war and then He looks at the way that He's going to accomplish the war and He's going to look at His mighty victor. That one who was God himself who would become man and be born of a virgin and through man He is going to destroy him who is the devil. Now, God could just (claps) like that and destroy the devil. God says I'm going to do it another way. I'm going to become a man. And as man, that the devil has tried to ruin, I'm going to destroy you, devil. It is the seed of the woman. You see, why did Jesus have to be born of a virgin? Why the virgin birth? You take away the virgin birth and your hope of Heaven collapses like a house of cards. Why the virgin birth? You see, we need a substitute and in order to be our substitute, God had to become a man. But, further more, we need a sinless substitute, and in order for Jesus to have been sinless and not to have inherited the sinful nature of Adam, He had to be born of a virgin. And so, therefore, we have a perfect sinless substitute provided by the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. The seed of the woman. The seed of a woman. See here in Genesis 3:15 how a battle is prophesied. There is a warfare going on. See how a birth is prophesied? One of these days the seed of the woman, the Lord God Emanuel is going to step out of Heaven, down to this earth and be born as a man and fulfill the prophecies that says there's one God and one mediator between God and man himself man, Christ Jesus. A man who will die for us. The seed of the woman, But, I want you to notice something else. Not only was there a battle prophesied and not only was there a birth prophesied but there was a bruising prophesied and here in Genesis 3:15, God says that the seed of the serpent is going to bruise the seed of the woman in the heel. Look at it again. And God says, "it shall bruise thy head and thou," the serpent, "shall bruise his heel."

What's he talking about? He is talking here about what happened to the Lord Jesus when He came into this world. You see, where does a serpent strike? Right there in the heel. And here is this withering, slithering, vile serpent that reaches out with those fangs and fastens those fangs upon the Lord Jesus Christ and injects into the Lord Jesus the bitter, burning, venom of sin, and the old serpent strikes at Jesus. And bruises His heel. Him who knew no sin, God hath made to be sin for us. And the Bible says He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. He was, the Lord Jesus. And He took that terrible, vile, awful venom, the precious perfect, cleansed holy Savior, not cleansed, He never needed to be cleansed. The holy Savior took the venom of sin. That is a prophecy of the first coming of Jesus because He came into the world the first time to die and the serpent bruised His heel. But, go back and look in verse 15. It says, "and her seed, it, the seed of a woman will bruise thy head." Ha ha, there's coming a time at the second coming of Jesus when our mighty Lord coming in power will crush the serpent's head. That's the Second Coming of Jesus, when He comes again. You see, what a wonderful prophesy this is. His incarnation and His carnation are prophesied here. You see the bruising of the serpent's head is still out in the future. Oh, I realize that the power of the devil was broken at the cross but I want you to know that he is going to be crushed. You see, the devil's still at work today. Don't get the idea that the devil is inoperative today. The devil is doing his dirty work but there's coming a time, just put in your margin, Romans 16:20. I love this verse. Romans 16:20. Here's what Paul told of those saints who were at Rome who were suffering, under the iron boot of Esaias. Here's what Paul told them. And he said, "and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet." Now, wait a minute, wait a minute, who is going to bruise the devil? Jesus or us? The answer is yes. Yes. You see, here's the great thing. Man, when we got saved, we became a part of the body of Christ. I am in Him and He is in me. And we are going to participate with our Lord in that victory. And when He reigns, we will reign with Him. Some ladies were talking about the body of Christ and where they would like to be since we are members of His body. One woman said, I'd like to be His great heart and love as He loved. Another said, I like to be His eyes and to be able to see and understand as He understands. Another said, I'd like to be His ears and know and learn as He learns. One little old saint who had a hard time all of her life, the devil had been giving her what for so long, said I want to be one of His feet, bruise the devil when he comes. Friend, we will. ([CLICK for his sermons on Genesis 3](#))

Related Resources:

- [Seed of Promise in Genesis 3:15](#)
 - [The Significance of Genesis 3:15 - Ligonier Ministries](#)
 - [Don Stewart : What Does Genesis 3:15 Mean?](#)
 - [Prophecies of the Birth of Christ - Bible.org](#)
 - [The Messianic Hope of Genesis: The Protoevangelium - Jared M. August in Themelios](#)
 - [Hope Through the Curse - John MacArthur](#)
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C H Spurgeon calls Genesis 3:15 The Bible's First Promise - THIS is the first promise to fallen man. It contains the whole gospel and the essence of the covenant of grace. It has been in great measure fulfilled. The seed of the woman, even our Lord Jesus, was bruised in His heel, and a terrible bruising it was. How terrible will be the final bruising of the serpent's head! This was virtually done when Jesus took away sin, vanquished death, and broke the power of Satan; but it awaits a still fuller accomplishment at our Lord's second advent and in the day of judgment. To us the promise stands as a prophecy that we shall be afflicted by the powers of evil in our lower nature, and thus bruised in our heel: but we shall triumph in Christ, who sets His foot on the old serpent's head. Throughout this year we may have to learn the first part of this promise by experience, through the temptations of the devil, and the unkindness of the ungodly who are his seed. They may so bruise us that we may limp with our sore heel; but let us grasp the second part of the text, and we shall not be dismayed. By faith let us rejoice that we shall still reign in Christ Jesus, the woman's seed. (Faith's Checkbook)

Enmity (0342) ('**eybah** or '**ebah** from '**ayab** = to be hostile) is feminine noun meaning hostility, animosity, ill will or hatred. It denotes the blood-feud that runs deepest in the heart of man. In most of its occurrences it connotes the hatred in which a hostile act is perpetrated. In Nu 35:21-22 it indicates hostility of one human towards another which is in the context of a teaching on manslaughter where the sentence of death was contingent on whether he committed the act with or without enmity. If the act was without enmity, the guilty party could seek protection in a city of refuge. '**Eybah** is used in a context describing the hostile acts of Israel's enemies and speaks of God's judgment on Philistia for acting in hostility towards Israel (Ezekiel 25:15) A similar intention is expressed towards Edom in Ezekiel 35:5.

Warren Baker on '**eybah** - It is used to signify acrimony, as between the woman and the serpent (Gen. 3:15); malice that leads to violent acts against another (Nu. 35:21); and the lingering hatred between mortal enemies (Ezek. 25:15; 35:5). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: OT)

Brown-Driver-Briggs Expanded Definition - אִיבָה

noun feminine enmity — Genesis 3:15 2t.; construct אִיבַת Ezekiel 25:15; Ezekiel 35:5 — *enmity*, personal hostility, between men Numbers 35:21,22 (P), between serpent & woman Genesis 3:15 (J), between peoples אִיבַת עוֹלָם Ezekiel 25:15; Ezekiel 35:5.

'**Eybah** - 5v in OT - all translated "**enmity**":

Genesis 3:15 And I will put **enmity** Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Numbers 35:21 or if he struck him down with his hand in **enmity**, and as a result he died, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death, he is a murderer; the blood avenger shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

Numbers 35:22 'But if he pushed him suddenly without **enmity**, or threw something at him without lying in wait,

Ezekiel 25:15 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because the Philistines have acted in revenge and have taken vengeance with scorn of soul to destroy with everlasting **enmity**,"

HCSB Study Bible Note - The Philistines migrated to the coast of Palestine from the Greek coasts and islands of the Aegean Sea (Jer 47:4; Am 9:7; Zeph 2:5). As early as the time of the judges they were constant adversaries of Israel (Jdg 3:31; 10:7; 13-16; 1 Sam 4; 13; 31; 2 Sam 5; 2 Ki 18:8; 2 Chr 21:16-17; 28:18). David was credited with the final subjugation of the Philistines during his reign (2 Sam 5:17-25). Though there is virtually no record of the existence of the Philistines after the time of the Maccabees (second century B.C.), the region of Canaan came to be called Palestine (Philistine = Palestine).

Ezekiel 35:5 "Because you have had everlasting **enmity** and have delivered the sons of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of the punishment of the end,

HCSB Study Bible note - The bitter relations between Israel and Edom began in the womb of Rebekah (Ge 25:22-23) and continued with Jacob's deception of Isaac for Esau's blessing (Gen 27:1-46). The phrase **ancient** (everlasting) **hatred** occurs elsewhere in the Bible only in Ezekiel 25:15 in reference to the actions of the Philistines. The theological significance of the word "**hatred**" (Hebrew = 'eybah) is clear from its use in Genesis 3:15 in reference to the perpetual hostility that exists between the serpent and Eve's descendants. "**Hatred**" here in Ezekiel 35:5 refers to the hostility between Jacob and Esau, as their personal rivalry (Gen 27:41) spilled over into a national conflict (Nu 20:14-21; 2 Sa 8:13-14). When Nebuchadnezzar leveled Jerusalem, the Edomites stood by clapping their hands with joy at this disaster (Ps 137; Lam 4:21; Joel 3:19; Ob 1-14; Mal 1:2-5).

The Lxx translates the Hebrew word for **enmity** with the Greek word **echthra** (2189) which describes that extreme negative attitude that is the opposite of love and friendship. The NT views this attitude as the source from which hostile acts flow. It is the inner source rather than the acts themselves that are focused on.

NET NOTE - The Hebrew word translated "hostility" is derived from the root byae ('ev, "to be hostile, to be an adversary [or enemy]"). The curse announces that there will be continuing hostility between the serpent and the woman. The serpent will now live in a "battle zone," as it were.

Bruise (07779) (**shûph**) to gape, snap at; to overwhelm: break, bruise, cover.

Baker on shuph - A verb meaning to crush, to bruise. A verb used twice, once referring to the attack of the serpent and once of the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). It may be translated as crush in Job 9:17 to describe God's supposed attack on Job. It also has the sense of to engulf, to hide, to cover (Ps. 139:11). II. A verb meaning to strike, to snap at. It is used of the attack of the serpent and the response of the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). The verb is rendered figuratively as follows by the various translations: KJV, bruise . . . bruise; NIV, crush . . . strike; NASB, bruise . . . bruise; NKJV, bruise . . . bruise. III. A verb meaning to cover, to envelop, to overwhelm. It is used of darkness engulfing or hiding a person from God (Ps. 139:11). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

Used only 4x in the OT (twice in Ge 3:15) and in

Job 9:17 "For He **bruises** (Lxx = ektribo = to cause removal by irritation, to obliterate as by rubbing and so ruin; to rub out, i.e. to destroy root and branch) me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause.

Psalms 139:11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm (shuph; Lxx = katapateo = will trample underfoot, treat with contempt) me, And the light around me will be night,"

NET NOTE on **shuph** in this passage - The Hebrew verb **shuph** which means "to crush; to wound," in (Ge 3:15) and Job 9:17 is problematic here.

QUESTION - [What does Genesis 3:15 mean that "he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel"?](#)

ANSWER - In Genesis 3 God metes out various judgments against those who brought sin into His perfect world. Adam, Eve, and the serpent all hear of the consequences of their rebellion. To the serpent God says, in part, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15, KJV).

Even in this judgment, there is mercy. God's curse on the serpent, in particular, was laced with words of hope. The woman mentioned in Genesis 3:15 is Eve. The serpent, addressed directly, is the animal that Satan used to deceive the woman. Some of the curse was directed at the animal (verse 14); at the same time, the curse of God falls upon [Satan](#), who had taken the serpent's form or body in Eden (cf. the dragon in Revelation 12:9).

As part of the curse, enmity—mutual hatred and ill will—will exist between the woman and the serpent. Later, the same enmity will continue between the woman's seed or offspring (mankind in general, since Eve is the "mother of all living," Genesis 3:20) and the serpent's seed. Their offspring will remain enemies throughout all generations. The serpent's (metaphorical) offspring are demonic forces and also those people who follow the devil and accomplish his will. Jesus called the Pharisees a "brood of vipers" in Matthew 12:34 and said they belonged to their "father, the devil" in John 8:44. In short, God says that Satan will always be the enemy of mankind. It follows that people who side with Satan will be at perpetual war with God's elect and that we are engaged in a very real battle between good and evil (Ephesians 6:12).

Genesis 3:15 is a remarkable verse, often called the protoevangelium (literally, "first gospel"), because it is the Bible's first prediction of a Savior. The second half of the verse gives two messianic prophecies concerning that Savior:

The first messianic prophecy in Genesis 3:15 is that "he will crush your head." That is, the seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head. The Amplified Bible makes it clear that "the woman's seed" is more than mankind in general; it is an individual representing all mankind:

"And I will put enmity (open hostility)
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed (offspring) and her Seed;
He shall [fatally] bruise your head."

The second messianic prophecy in Genesis 3:15 is that "you will strike his heel." That is, the serpent will bite the heel of "the woman's seed." The heel-bite is set in contrast to the head-crush, as the Amplified Bible brings out: "And you shall [only] bruise His heel."

This passage points to the promise of Jesus' birth, His redemption, and His victory over Satan. The woman's offspring is Jesus. Being [virgin-born](#), He is literally the offspring of a woman (Matthew 1:25; Galatians 4:4; cf. Isaiah 7:14). Being the [Son of Man](#), He is the perfect representative of humankind. The devil's offspring were the evil men and demonic forces who, like a snake, lay in wait for the Savior and struck at Him. Their venomous conspiracy condemned Jesus to be crucified.

But the serpent's strike did not spell the end of the Offspring of the woman. Jesus rose the third day, breaking the power of death and winning the ultimate victory. With the cross, Jesus "crushed" the devil's head, defeating him forever. So, in Genesis 3:15, the crushing of the serpent's head was a picture of Jesus' triumph over sin and Satan at the cross (cf. John 12:31). The striking of the Messiah's heel was a picture of the wounding and death of Jesus on the cross. Satan bruised Jesus' "heel," but Jesus showed complete dominance over Satan by bruising his "head."

Satan, although still active in this world, is a defeated foe. His doom is sure: "And the devil . . . was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur" (Revelation 20:10). Until that time, there remains enmity between Satan and God's children.

The protoevangelium shows us that God always had the plan of salvation in mind and informed us of His plan as soon as sin entered the world. Satan formulated a plan involving the serpent in Eden, but God was way ahead of him, having already ordained the Serpent-crusher. Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled God's mission: "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What is the protoevangelium?](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 3:15 says, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." This is known as the protoevangelium—the first gospel. The verse introduces two elements

previously unknown in the Garden of Eden, elements that are the basis of Christianity—the curse on mankind because of Adam's sin and God's provision for a Savior from sin who would take the curse upon Himself.

Ge 3:14 makes it clear that God is speaking to the serpent whom He curses to crawl on his belly and “eat dust” all his days. In verse 15, God switches from condemning the serpent to the one who inhabited it, Satan. He curses Satan to be forever at war against mankind, depicted as the seed or offspring of the woman. The woman in question is in a general sense Eve herself, all of whose offspring would forever be harassed by Satan and his minions. Sin enters the human race at this point, and the ravages of sin and its consequences reverberate down to us today. We inherit sin and the sin nature from Adam, and we suffer for it continually. The enmity—the hostility and hatred—of men and demons, between whom the warfare still continues, begins here. Evil angels and also wicked men are called serpents, and even a brood of vipers (Matthew 3:7), and they war against the people of God, the seed of the church, who are hated and persecuted by them, and so it has been ever since this affair in the Garden.

More specifically, the offspring of the woman refers to Jesus Christ, who was born of a woman. The “enmity” or hostility and hatred spoken of here is between Satan and Christ. The seed of the serpent, evil men and demonic forces, struck at the heel of the Savior when Judas, the Pharisees, the rabble, and the Romans, conspired to condemn Jesus to be crucified. But His wound was not the final act. He rose the third day, having paid the price for the sin of all who would ever believe in Him. The ultimate victory was His, and He crushed the head of Satan, removing forever his rule over man. The power of Christ would destroy Satan and all his principalities and powers, confound all his schemes, and ruin all his works. The power of the cross would crush Satan's whole empire, strip him of his authority (particularly his power over death), and his tyranny over the bodies and souls of men. All this was done by the incarnate Christ when He suffered and died for the souls of men (Hebrews 2:14–15). Because of what Jesus did on the cross, he “crushed” the devil's head, defeating him forever. The protoevangelium shows us that God always had the plan of salvation in mind, and informed us of His plan as soon as sin entered the world. “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work” (1 John 3:8). GotQuestions.org

M R De Haan - Portraits of Christ in Genesis

We point out a number of important facts in this first promise of redemption.

1. Notice first of all that this declaration of war and ultimate victory was spoken to the enemy, the serpent, and not to Mother Eve. This verse, Genesis 3:15, serves notice on Satan that although he seems to have won the first skirmish against the Word of God, it is only the beginning of a conflict which will end in complete victory for the Seed of the woman.

2. Notice next that this promise of victory was given soon after the fall, and before Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden. God had declared the sure penalty of death, both physical and spiritual, upon their sin, and so before the poor sinner could die and be lost forever, God came with the glorious promise of redemption. What an illustration of the words of Paul, that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans 5:20).

3. Then, thirdly, notice that we have here the first clear mention of the Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus, here called the seed of the woman. Every human being born since the days of Adam and Eve is the seed of Adam. The seed is always traced through the male line. But there is one exception to this rule. Jesus Christ is called the “seed of the woman.” There is no mention of Adam in this verse at all, and this is the one and only place in the entire Bible where a person is called the “seed of the woman.” It was Eve who fell before the deception of Satan, and God has designed that the woman too should bring forth the Redeemer. By woman had come sin, and by woman should come the Saviour. By woman had come the curse, and by woman should come the One who would remove the curse. Yes, indeed, “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” The coming Saviour was to be virgin-born, without a human father. Higher critics and skeptics have ridiculed the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ, and have attacked especially the verse in Isaiah 7:14,

... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

All the attacks of the critics have concentrated on this verse, because they say the Hebrew word “almah” may also refer simply to a young woman. However, the New Testament gives its real meaning in the account of the Virgin Birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:27). But the revelation of the Virgin Birth goes way back to the Garden of Eden where the coming Deliverer is called the seed of the woman, not the seed of the man.

4. Then notice further that there are two seeds mentioned, the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. Since the seed of the woman was to be a person, the seed of the serpent will also be a person. Satan will have a personal seed as well as the woman. These two seeds are later identified as Christ and the Antichrist. Since Christ will be the supernatural Son of God, the Antichrist will reveal himself in the end time as the son of perdition, the man of sin. The final struggle announced in this first declaration of war in Genesis 3:15 will be between Christ, the Son of God, and the Antichrist, the son of perdition. That the seed of the serpent will be a literal person is the only logical conclusion we can reach in view of the fact that the seed of the woman will be the personal Redeemer—the Man, Christ Jesus.

5. One more observation we would make before we conclude this inexhaustible picture of the coming Deliverer in the Protevangelium of Genesis 3:15. And this final observation is of utmost importance if we are to understand the agelong struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent until the final victory of the end time. In Genesis 3:15 we have the beginning of the “battle of the seeds” between Satan and Christ. It will be finally culminated in the complete victory of the Saviour. We have the account of this final victory in the last book of the Bible. It begins in Genesis and ends in Revelation. The personal Antichrist is defeated and cast into the lake of fire at the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 19:20), while Satan himself will be doomed to the same place later on (Revelation 20:10).

Between these two events (the beginning of the battle in Genesis 3, and the end of the battle in Revelation 20) is a history of struggle which indeed seems to be in favor of the enemy, for will you notice we have two bruising in this verse. The seed of the serpent will bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, and ultimately the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent. One of these bruising is history—when the Redeemer came the first time it seemed to be a victory for the enemy, for the Redeemer was put to death on the cross. Here His heel was bruised, symbolic of the sufferings and death of our Saviour, who was “wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5). This part of the promise and prediction of Genesis 3:15 is history. It happened almost two thousand years ago, but it was only His heel which was bruised. The other “bruising” of the serpent’s head is still future. It will be consummated at the Second Coming of Christ. The Saviour’s heel was bruised at His First Coming, but Satan’s head will be crushed at His Second Coming. This is the only possible interpretation of the prediction of Genesis 3:15. We must emphasize the difference between the two “bruising,” not only as to time but also result. The bruising of the heel was not fatal, but the bruising of the head is fatal. It will be the end of Satan’s attack upon both the Redeemer and His redeemed. It will take place when our Lord returns to earth in person and power, and when “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, shall be bound for a thousand years, and be cast into the bottomless pit” (Revelation 20:2, 3).

What an evidence of the divine inspiration of the Word of God! Who but He who knoweth the end from the beginning could have given such an accurate, unassailable outline of all subsequent history and condensed it all within the limits of one verse of only twenty—eight words, way back in the Garden of Eden? One wonders indeed how the skeptics and unbelievers can fail to see in this one verse alone the incontrovertible evidence of divine inspiration. What human mind could have conceived such a prediction? It is only because the same “mastermind” who deceived the woman in the Garden is still blinding the eyes of them that believe not. But all these attacks upon the Word do not disturb us who believe, when we have such evidence of divine revelation and the witness of the Spirit of God through this infallible Word.

If you cannot see in all this God’s revelation of His Son, then you are still blinded by unbelief. The Bible needs no proof; it needs only to be honestly faced and believed. Then every page of the Book will reveal a picture of the Christ of God.

Allen Ross - OT Christology

Genesis 3:15 “The Seed of the Woman”

One thing in life seems never to change, the perpetual struggle between good and evil. Ever since sin entered into the world, there has been this struggle, this enmity between the force of death and the desire for life. And the human race has had to endure pain, conflict, anxiety and death as a result. This is the declaration of the oracle of God in Genesis 3—but that declaration is not all bad news, even though it is popularly referred to as “the curse.” It is more than that, for it declares that the victory belongs to the human race. In what has been called the “protoevangelium,” the first good news, we have these words:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed;
he will bruise you in the head,
but you will bruise him in the heel (Gen. 3:15)

These words are said to the serpent, whom Revelation 12:9 explains is Satan, or the Devil, in the form of a serpent in the garden. There would be a perpetual struggle between Satan and his seed, and the woman and her seed. Now the language is definitely figurative, so we have to ask what is meant here by “seed.” The word is usually used for the descendant or descendants of a man. So it is unusual to describe the woman’s seed. But in spite of that figurative use, the oracle would first include all descendants of the Eve, the woman. The conflict would first begin in Genesis 4 where her first “seed” or descendant, Cain, would be sought by the forces of evil. The text says, “sin is couching at the door, and its desire is to have you” (4:7). Sin is personified in the passage as a force, and may imply even more than a personification, for in cognate languages the word “couching” is a kind of demon. The first edition of the Jewish Publication Society’s translation had “sin is the demon at the door.” Whether that is the best translation or not, we would have to say that the “seed of the serpent” would be figurative as well, referring to all who share his nature and do his work. And that could include humans as well as fallen angels and evil spirits. Jesus told His enemies that they

were of their father the devil (John 8:44). This would be a prime example of the way the language of “father” or “seed” could be applied figuratively. The human race, then, will be constantly at war with the forces of evil, led by Satan and his angels. This is the spiritual warfare of the ages.

When the Son of God came into the world to redeem the world, He was born of a woman, without human father. And so in a special sense He would be the offspring, the seed of a woman, and not of a human father (see Gal. 4:4). Paul made the point that the promise was given to the “seed” of Abraham. And while the word seed refers to all the descendants of Abraham who will share the victory of faith, spiritual as well as spiritual-physical seed of Abraham (Gentile believers as well as Jewish believers), Paul notes that the word is singular, and so has a particular application to “the Seed” of Abraham, the One descendant who is the promised One—Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:15-20). Now that we are “in Christ” by faith, we too are “sons of God” (Gal. 3:26--4:7) and so part of the seed that will have victory over evil.

Satan and his forces would cripple the human race, but not destroy it. That is the meaning of bruising them in the heel. But the Seed of the woman would ultimately destroy the serpent. That is the meaning of bruising him in the head. That victory would come in two stages, corresponding to the first and second coming of Christ. In the first coming Jesus defeated Satan at the temptation, just the opposite of the temptation in the garden of Eden. At the cross Jesus paid for our sins, and that took away the accusation of the accuser of the brethren. At the resurrection Jesus conquered death and the grave, and that took the main weapon out of Satan’s hands. Then, at the end of the age, Jesus will judge Satan and cast him into the lake of fire. Believers can have victory over Satan in Christ, for Christ has given them the victory.

THE FALL

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15).

In his early years, Ansel Adams, the famous landscape photographer, studied piano. Once, while playing Chopin for a friend, he could not get his hands coordinated. The next day the friend gave him a backhanded critique by telling him, "You never missed a wrong note." Although no one knows exactly when or where Adam and Eve sounded the first sour note, people have been playing wrong notes perfectly ever since. The tragic Eden error called sin means missing the mark. The discord that started in God's garden has been heard through-out history. As the New England Primer put it, "In Adam's sin, we sinned all." As Adam and Eve experienced guilt, loneliness, and estrangement, so have all of their offspring. Without the Fall, death could never have sung the blues' dark song, and lying, hatred, and pride would not have become the funeral march of the masses. The mad sounds of sin would still be humanity's only tune had it not been for God's note of grace—He followed Adam and Eve out of the gate. - Our Daily Bread

Shopping with Liam

He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel. — Genesis 3:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: Genesis 3:14-19

My son Liam loves to pick dandelions for his mother. To date, she hasn't wearied of receiving them. One man's weed is a little boy's flower.

One day I took Liam shopping with me. As we hurried past the floral section, he pointed excitedly to an arrangement of yellow tulips. "Daddy," he exclaimed, "you should get those dandelions for Mommy!" His advice made me laugh. It made a pretty good Facebook post on his mother's page too. (By the way, I bought the tulips.)

Some see in weeds a reminder of Adam's sin. By eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve brought on themselves the curse of a fallen world—relentless work, agonizing birth, and eventual death (Gen. 3:16-19).

But Liam's youthful eyes remind me of something else. There is beauty even in weeds. The anguish of childbirth holds hope for us all. Death is ultimately defeated. The "Seed" God spoke of in Genesis 3:15 would wage war with the serpent's offspring. That Seed is Jesus Himself, who rescued us from the curse of death (Gal. 3:16).

The world may be broken, but wonder awaits us at every turn. Even weeds remind us of the promise of redemption and a Creator who loves us. By: Tim Gustafson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Help us, Father, to find You even in the midst of all life's pain and aggravations. Forgive us for so often overlooking the beauty You have planted everywhere.

Creation reminds us of the promise of redemption.

The War is Over - The bitter conflict had finally ended between the North and the South. The soldiers of the US Civil War were free to return to their families. But a number of them remained hidden in the woods, living on berries. They either didn't hear or didn't believe that the war was over, so they continued enduring miserable conditions when they could have been back home.

It's something like that in the spiritual realm too. Christ made peace between God and man by dying in our place. He paid sin's penalty on the cross. Anyone who accepts His sacrifice will be forgiven by a holy God.

Sadly, many people refuse to believe the gospel and continue to live as spiritual fugitives. Sometimes even those who have placed their trust in Christ live on almost the same level. Either out of ignorance or unwillingness, they fail to claim the promises of God's Word. They do not experience the joy and assurance that should accompany salvation. They do not draw from their relationship with God the comfort and peace He intends for His children. They are the objects of His love, care, and provision but live as if they were orphans.

Have you been living apart from the comfort, love, and care of your heavenly Father? Come on home. The war is over!—Richard De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We fail, O Lord, to realize
The fullness of what You have done,
So help us trust Your saving work
And claim the triumph You have won.
—D. De Haan

Christ's victory over death means peace for His saints.

Genesis 3:15 SOUR NOTES

In his early years, Ansel Adams, the famous landscape photographer, studied piano. Once, while playing Chopin for a friend, he could not get his hands coordinated. The next day the friend gave him a backhanded critique by telling him, "You never missed a wrong note." Although no one knows exactly when or where Adam and Eve sounded the first sour note, people have been playing wrong notes perfectly ever since. The tragic Eden error called sin means missing the mark. The discord that started in God's garden has been heard throughout history. As the New England Primer put it, "In Adam's sin, we sinned all." As Adam and Eve experienced guilt, loneliness, and estrangement, so have all of their offspring.

Without the Fall, death could never have sung the blues' dark song, and lying, hatred, and pride would not have become the funeral march of the masses. The mad sounds of sin would still be humanity's only tune had it not been for God's note of grace—He followed Adam and Eve out of the gate.

Satan's Strategies Against the Seed of the Woman - Robert Neighbour "Sermons and Bible Studies"

We have before us some very striking scenes presenting satan's strategies against the Seed of the woman.

After man had sinned, God entered the garden and pronounced the curse. While addressing the serpent, God gave His great prophecy of the coming Seed. He said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel" (Gen. 3:15).

Thus God foretold the Divine method of redemption, which He had purposed in Christ Jesus, before the world began. Satan might do much (he would bruise Christ's heel); Christ would do much more (He would bruise the serpent's head). Through the disobedience of one, sin might abound; but through the righteousness of One, bruised for us, grace would super-abound.

With the promise of the "coming Seed" hanging over him, satan at once began his conflict against the Almighty. Satan sought first of all, to keep the Seed from being born; and later when the Seed was born, he sought to overcome the Son.

Old Testament Types - Ian Paisley

If you glance at the Old Testament scriptures you will find there are many types of the resurrection. The resurrection is first of all suggested to us in Genesis 3:15. Because in Genesis 3:15 we have the prophecy of the absolute victory of Christ over the serpent. The serpent's head was to be bruised.

Jesus Christ proved that He had bruised the serpent's head. How? By rising from the dead and showing that He had destroyed him that had the power of death, that is to say the Devil.

You have another wondrous type of the resurrection in Genesis with Isaac. Isaac was laid on the altar after three days journey. And if you read Hebrews chapter eleven and verse nineteen you will find that Paul says he was a type of the resurrection. Abraham received Isaac back from the dead as in a figure. It was after three days and three nights.

I was greatly struck this week when I discovered that the children of Israel marched into the Red Sea exactly three days and three nights after the Passover lamb was slain. And of course the Red Sea crossing is a perfect type of the resurrection. They went down into death and they rose again three days and three nights after they had eaten the Passover lamb.....

In the first five Books of Moses we have seven prophetic representations of Christ. Seven is the perfect number so it is a perfect prophetic representation of Christ.

1. Seed: Genesis 3:15
2. Shiloh: Genesis 49:10*
3. Shepherd: Genesis 49:24*
4. Stone: Genesis 49:24*
5. Staff: Numbers 18:8
6. Star: Numbers 24:17
7. Sceptre: Numbers 24:17

The Promise of the Saviour "The seed of the woman." Genesis 3:15

The promise of a Saviour. How sweet those words must have been to fallen man and woman. Stripped of their glory, shaking with fear and crushed and cursed by sin amidst their terrible night, a light had sprung up. Undeserved salvation and not deserved damnation was promised. This promise was a lifeline to our fallen first parents, sinking in the dark and troubled sea of their own iniquity.

That Adam believed the promise is evident, for the fallen woman who ought to have been a vehicle of death he called Eve—the mother of all living. Note the word living—life. Adam's faith triumphed over the fall. Parting thought: "We cannot close with Christ without a promise, and we must not close with a promise without Christ"—Thomas Martin. (Ian Paisley - A Text a Day Keeps the Devil Away)

GLORYING IN THE CROSS - James Smith

Gal. 6:14 We glory in the Cross because in it we see—

- 1 The Fulfilment of Prophecy. Gen. 3:15. Isa. 55. Dan. 9:24-26.
- 2 The Love of God Exhibited, 1 John 3:16
- 3 The Love of Christ Declared, John 15:13; Gal. 2:20
- 4 The Removal of that which was against us, Col. 2:14
- 5 The Redemption price for our souls, Gal. 3:13
- 6 The Way of Escape from our sins, 1 Peter 2:24
- 7 The Foundation of our Peace established, Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:16

Nowhere To Hide

Read: Genesis 3:6-13,22-24 | To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. —Revelation 1:5

I smelled something burning, so I hurried to the kitchen. Nothing was on the stove or in the oven. I followed my nose through the house. From room to room I went, eventually ending up downstairs. My nose led me to my office and then to my desk. I peeked beneath it and there, peering back at me with big eyes pleading for help, was Maggie, our dog, our very "fragrant" dog. What smelled like something burning when I was upstairs, now had the distinct odor of skunk. Maggie had gone to the farthest corner of our house to escape the foul smell, but she couldn't get away from herself.

Maggie's dilemma brought to mind the many times I have tried to run away from unpleasant circumstances only to discover that the problem was not the situation I was in but me. Since Adam and Eve hid after sinning (Gen. 3:8), we've all followed their example. We run away from situations thinking we can escape the unpleasantness—only to discover that the unpleasantness is us.

The only way to escape ourselves is to stop hiding, acknowledge our waywardness, and let Jesus wash us clean (Rev. 1:5). I am grateful that when we do sin, Jesus is willing to give us a brand-new start.

From the wondrous cross on Calvary
Flows the stream that still avails,
Cleansing hearts and bringing victory
Through that love which never fails.
—Elliott

Sin's contamination requires the Savior's cleansing.

By Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."

Lxx: kai te gunaiki eipen plethunon plethuno (1SFAl: increase Mt 24:12) tas lupas sou kai ton stenagmon sou en lupais texo (2SFMI:tikto) tekna kai pros ton andra sou he apostrophe sou kai autos sou kurieusei (3SFAl: being lord or master over, exercising dominion Lu 22.25, sin, death, law are said to exercise control or dominion over mankind as in Ro 6.9).

Brenton's English of the Lxx : And to the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pains and thy groanings; in pain thou shalt bring forth children, and thy submission shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Comment - Brenton's translation **does not make sense** - the Greek word means a "turning back" or "turning away from" not a submission to and is also the same noun used in Ge 4:7 to translate desire.

Septuagint NETS - And to the woman he said, I will increasingly increase your pains and your groaning; with pains you shall bring forth children, and your recourse will be to your husband, and he will dominate you.

BGT κα τ γυναικ ε πεν πληθων πληθουν τ ς λ πας σου κα τ ν στεναγμα ν σου ν λ παις τ ξ τ κνα κα πρ ς τ ν νδρα σου ποστροφ σου κα α τ ς σου κυριε σει

KJV Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. {to thy...: or, subject to thy husband}

NET To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labor pains; with pain you will give birth to children. **You will want to control your husband**, but he will dominate you."

CSB He said to the woman: I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children in anguish.¹ Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you.

ERV Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

ESV To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (See [ESV Study Note below](#))

NIV To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children.^a Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.^b"

NLT Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.¹ "

NRS To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

YLT Unto the woman He said, 'Multiplying I multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow dost thou bear children, and toward thy husband is thy desire, and he doth rule over thee.'

GWN He said to the woman, "I will increase your pain and your labor when you give birth to children. Yet, you will long for your husband, and he will rule you."

NKJ To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

NAB To the woman he said: "I will intensify the pangs of your childbearing; in pain shall you bring forth children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall be your master."

NJB To the woman he said: I shall give you intense pain in childbearing, you will give birth to your children in pain. Your yearning will be for your husband, and he will dominate you.

ASV Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

DBY To the woman he said, I will greatly increase thy travail and thy pregnancy; with pain thou shalt bear children; and to thy husband shall be thy desire, and he shall rule over thee.

BBE To the woman he said, Great will be your pain in childbirth; in sorrow will your children come to birth; still your desire will be for your husband, but he will be your master.

BHT ׳e|l-hă'îššâ ׳ămar harBâ ׳arBè `iccübônèk wühë|rônèk Bù`e`ceb Të|ldî bânîm wü`el-`îšèk Tüšû`qätè`k wühû` yimšol-Bäk s

NAS To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain 1in childbirth, In pain you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

NIRV The LORD God said to the woman, "I will greatly increase your pain when you give birth. You will be in pain when you have children. You will long for your husband. And he will rule over you."

RSV To the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

- **In pain you will bring forth children:** Ge 35:16-18 1Sa 4:19-21 Ps 48:6 Isa 13:8 21:3 26:17,18 53:11 Jer 4:31 6:24 13:21 22:23 49:24 Mic 4:9,10 Joh 16:21 1Th 5:3 1Ti 2:15
- **Yet your desire will be for your husband** Ge 4:7
- **And he will rule over you.:** Nu 30:7,8,13 Es 1:20 1Co 7:4 11:3 14:34 Eph 5:22-24 Col 3:18 1Ti 2:11,12 Tit 2:5 1Pe 3:1-6
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

EVE'S SENTENCE LABOR PAINS

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply ([rabah, rabah](#)) Your pain in childbirth, In pain (itstsabon; Lxx - [lupe](#) - sorrow, grief, pain, affliction) **you will bring forth children** - The couple was initially told to **multiply** ([rabah](#)) offspring, but now there seems to be a play on words with a double use of [rabah](#) when the woman gives birth to offspring. So in addition to spiritual death, there are individual consequences for the sins of Adam and Eve. Eve is condemned to: a state of sorrow, and a state of subjection, proper punishments of a sin in which she had gratified her pleasure and her pride. **Pain** the rare Hebrew word **itstsabon** (from atsab = to hurt, pain, grieve) which is used for Adam's toil in Ge 3:17 and Ge 5:29.

Yet your desire ([teshugah](#)) will be for your husband, And he will rule ([mashal](#); Lxx = [kurieuo](#) - exercise authority) over you - The **desire** spoken of here is not sexual or psychological, both of which Eve had for Adam before the Fall as his specially created helper. It is rather the same desire spoken of in Ge 4:7, where the same Hebrew word for "rule over" ([mashal](#)) is used. The term comes from an Arabic root that means "to compel, impel, urge, or seek control over." The Lord warned Cain, "Sin is crouching at your door; it **desires** to have you [that is, control you], but you must master it" (Ge 4:7 niv). Sin wanted to master Cain, but God commanded Cain to master sin. **The curse on Eve was that a woman's desire would henceforth be to usurp the place of man's headship and that he would resist that desire and even more strongly exercise his control over her.** The Hebrew word here translated "**rule**" is not the same as that used in Ge 1:28. Rather it represented a new, despotic kind of authoritarianism that was not in God's original plan for man's headship. With the Fall and its curse came the distortion of woman's proper submissiveness and of man's proper authority. That is where the battle of the sexes began, where women's liberation and male chauvinism came into existence. Women have a sinful propensity to usurp men's authority, and men have a sinful propensity to put women under their feet. The divine decree that man would rule over woman in this way was part of God's curse on humanity, and it takes a manifestation of grace in Christ by the filling of the Holy Spirit to resolve the created order and harmony of proper submission in a relationship that has become corrupted and disordered by sin.

NET NOTE on **desire** says the romantic interpretation of [teshugah](#) "makes little sense in Ge 3:16. First, it does not fit well with the

assertion "he will dominate you." Second, it implies that sexual desire was not part of the original creation, even though the man and the woman were told to multiply. And third, it ignores the usage of the word in Ge 4:7 where it refers to sin's desire to control and dominate Cain. (Even in Song of Songs it carries the basic idea of "control," for it describes the young man's desire to "have his way sexually" with the young woman.) In Gen 3:16 the Lord announces a struggle, a conflict between the man and the woman. She will desire to control him, but he will dominate her instead. This interpretation also fits the tone of the passage, which is a judgment oracle. See [What is the Woman's Desire?](#)

ESV Study Bible Note - These words from the Lord indicate that there will be an ongoing struggle between the woman and the man for leadership in the marriage relationship. The leadership role of the husband and the complementary relationship between husband and wife that were ordained by God before the fall have now been deeply damaged and distorted by sin. This especially takes the form of inordinate desire (on the part of the wife) and domineering rule (on the part of the husband). The Hebrew term here translated "desire" ([teshuqah](#)) is rarely found in the OT. But it appears again in Ge 4:7, in a statement that closely parallels Ge 3:16—that is, where the Lord says to Cain, just before Cain's murder of his brother, that sin's "desire is for you" (i.e., to master Cain), and that Cain must "rule over it" (which he immediately fails to do, by murdering his brother, as seen in Ge 4:8). Similarly, the ongoing result of Adam and Eve's original sin of rebellion against God will have disastrous consequences for their relationship: (1) Eve will have the sinful "*desire*" to oppose Adam and to assert leadership over him, reversing God's plan for Adam's leadership in marriage. But (2) Adam will also abandon his God-given, pre-fall role of leading, guarding, and caring for his wife, replacing this with his own sinful, distorted desire to "*rule*" over Eve. Thus one of the most tragic results of Adam and Eve's rebellion against God is an ongoing, damaging conflict between husband and wife in marriage, driven by the sinful behavior of both in rebellion against their respective God-given roles and responsibilities in marriage. ([See notes](#) [or [see online version](#)] on Eph. 5:21-32 for the NT pattern for marriage founded on the redemptive work of Christ.) (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#) or see [online copy of ESV Study Bible](#))

John MacArthur writes "The Hebrew word translated "**rule**" means "to reign." In the Septuagint the word used ([kurieuo](#)) means "to elevate to an official position." It's as if God were saying to the woman, "You were once co-regents, wonderfully ruling together as a team, but from now on the man is installed over you." That was not in God's original plan for man's headship." Just as the woman and her seed will engage in a war with the serpent, i.e., Satan and his seed (v15), because of sin and the curse, the man and the woman will face struggles in their own relationship. Sin has turned the harmonious system of God-ordained roles into distasteful struggles of self-will. Lifelong companions, husbands and wives, will need God's help in getting along as a result. The woman's desire will be to lord it over her husband, but the husband will rule by divine design (Ep 5:22-25). This interpretation of the curse is based upon the identical Heb. words and grammar being used in [4:7] to show the conflict man will have with sin as it seeks to rule him.

In his sermon [Wives, Marriage, and Submission](#), **John MacArthur** adds that "The Hebrew word here for "rule" is not the same as that used in Ge 1:28. (ED: Hebrew = radah = have dominion; Lxx - [katakurieuo](#) = become master, subdue, exercise dominion) Rather it represented a new, despotic kind of authoritarianism that was not in God's original plan for man's headship. With the Fall and its curse came the distortion of woman's proper submissiveness and of man's proper authority. That is where the battle of the sexes began, where women's liberation and male chauvinism came into existence. Women have a sinful inclination to usurp man's authority and men have a sinful inclination to put women under their feet. The divine decree that man would rule over woman in this way was part of God's curse on humanity, and it takes a manifestation of grace in Christ by the filling of the Holy Spirit to restore the created order and harmony of proper submission in a relationship that has become corrupted and disordered by sin."

John Piper - When it says, "**Your desire shall be for your husband**" it means that when sin has the upper hand in woman she will desire to overpower or subdue or exploit man. And when sin has the upper hand in man he will respond in like manner and with his strength subdue her, or rule over her. So what is really described in the curse of Ge 3:16 is the ugly conflict between the male and female that has marked so much of human history. Maleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin. Femaleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin. The essence of sin is self-reliance and self-exaltation. First in rebellion against God, and then in exploitation of each other. So the essence of corrupted maleness is the self-aggrandizing effort to subdue and control and exploit women for its own private desires. And the essence of corrupted femaleness is the self-aggrandizing effort to subdue and control and exploit men for its own private desires. And the difference is found mainly in the different weaknesses that we can exploit in one another.

As a rule men have more brute strength than women and so they can rape and abuse and threaten and sit around and snap their finger. It's fashionable to say those sorts of things today. But it's just as true that women are sinners. We are in God's image male and female; and we are depraved, male and female. Women may not have as much brute strength as men but she knows ways to subdue him. She can very often run circles around him with her words and where her words fail she knows the weakness of his lust.

If you have any doubts about the power of sinful woman to control sinful man just reflect for a moment on the number one marketing force in the world — the female body. She can sell anything because she knows the universal weakness of man and how to control him with it. The exploitation of women by sinful men is conspicuous because it is often harsh and violent. But a moment's reflection

will show you that the exploitation of men by sinful women is just as pervasive in our society. The difference is that our sinful society sanctions the one perversity and not the other. (There are societies that do just the opposite.)

This is not the way God meant it to be before sin, when man and woman were dependent on him for how to live. This is the result of rebellion against God. ([Manhood and Womanhood: Conflict and Confusion After the Fall](#))

Multiply (07235) **rabah** speaks of numerical increase. "means to become numerous or great: it expresses God's original mandate for humans to multiply on earth (Ge 1:22, 28). It depicts the increase of Israelites in Egypt (Ex 1:10, 12); it refers to an increase in volume, extent, power, or influence (Ge 7:17, 18; Ps 49:16; Da 12:4). It is used for both animals and inanimate things (Ex 11:9; Dt 7:22; 8:13; Ezek 31:5). It refers to an increase or multiplication of time: days (Gen. 38:12); years (Pr. 4:10). It indicates in a comprehensive sense God's greatness over humans (Job 33:12). In the intensive or causative stems of the verb, it indicates the increasing or enlarging of someone or something: (Jdg 9:29; Ps. 44:12; Lam 2:22; Ezek 19:2). God makes His followers great (2Sa 22:36; Ps 18:35); the leaders of His people (1Chr 4:10). He increases in number persons, things (Dt 17:16; Hos 2:8). Adverbially (especially harbēh), it means to do something, to perform greatly (Amos 4:4). The phrase harbāh 'arbeh means I will increase, multiply greatly (Ge 3:16; 16:10; 22:17). ([Complete Word Study Dictionary- Old Testament](#))

Desire (08669) (**teshuqah**) is a feminine noun meaning longing, urge, craving, desire and refers to an urge to control or dominate. In Genesis 4:7 the desire is that which sin has for Cain, a desire to control for the sake of evil, but Cain must have mastery over it. The meaning in Ge 3:16 is debated - Some feel **teshuqah** in Ge 3:16 refers to sexual desire, because the passage discusses the relationship of a wife to her husband, and also because **teshuqah** is used in a romantic sense in Song 7:10.

It was used to describe the strong feelings of desire that one person had for another, but it was not always a healthy desire. As part of the judgment after Adam and Eve's sin, God said that a woman would long for her husband (Gen. 3:16). People are not the only thing that can long: God told Cain that sin was lying at his door, desiring to enter (Ge 4:7).

Teshuqah - 3x in the OT

Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your **desire** will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."

Genesis 4:7 "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its **desire** is for you, but you must master it."

Song 7:10 "I am my beloved's, And his **desire** is for me.

Related Resource:

- Susan T Foh [What is the Woman's Desire?](#) - Westminster Theological Journal 37, 1974/75

Rule (4910) (**mashal**) means to reign, or to have dominion over. Baker writes that "Although its general tone communicates leadership and authority, its specific nuance and connotation are derived from the context in which it appears. In the creation narratives on the fourth day, God created the great luminaries. The greater luminary was to rule the day, and the lesser was to rule the night (Gen. 1:18). It is also applied to people who rule: a servant over his master's household (Ge 24:2); a king over his country (Josh. 12:5); or his people (Jdg. 8:22, 23); a people over another people (Jdg. 14:4). God is also said to rule over His people (Jdg 8:23); not over His adversaries (Isa. 63:19); over the nations (2 Chr. 20:6; Ps. 22:28[29]); over Jacob (Ps. 59:13); over all things (1Chr. 29:12)."

Mashal - 73v - Usage: dominion(1), gain control(1), govern(1), had charge(1), have authority(1), master(1), obtain dominion(1), really going to rule(1), rule(27), ruled(5), ruler(18), ruler's(2), rulers(6), rules(9), ruling(3), wielded(1). Ge 1:18; 3:16; 4:7; 24:2; 37:8; 45:8, 26; Ex. 21:8; Dt. 15:6; Jos. 12:2, 5; Jdg. 8:22f; 9:2; 14:4; 15:11; 2 Sam. 23:3; 1 Ki. 4:21; 1 Chr. 29:12; 2 Chr. 7:18; 9:26; 20:6; 23:20; Neh. 9:37; Job 25:2; Ps. 8:6; 19:13; 22:28; 59:13; 66:7; 89:9; 103:19; 105:20, 21; 106:41; Prov. 6:7; 12:24; 16:32; 17:2; 19:10; 22:7; 23:1; 28:15; 29:2, 12, 26; Eccl. 9:17; 10:4; Isa. 3:4, 12; 14:5; 16:1; 19:4; 28:14; 40:10; 49:7; 52:5; 63:19; Jer. 22:30; 30:21; 33:26; 51:46; Lam. 5:8; Ezek. 19:11, 14; Dan. 11:3, 4, 5, 39, 43; Mic. 5:2; Hab. 1:14; Zech. 6:13

QUESTION - [Why did God punish women with pain in childbirth \(Genesis 3:16\)?](#)

ANSWER - A woman's pain in childbirth is part of the suffering brought into the world through sin. As a direct result of the [original sin](#), Adam, Eve, and the serpent were all cursed in one way or another. Genesis 3:16 lists one of the judgments for Eve's sin as pain in childbirth: "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children."

It appears that, even before the fall, there would have been some pain in childbirth. God says, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth” (ESV), using a Hebrew word meaning “to increase.” The pain of childbirth would be *more* than before. The pain was amplified.

The pain in childbirth that Eve and all her daughters would experience involved more than the actual delivery of the baby. The phrase “painful labor” indicates that the whole process of childbirth, from conception to delivery, would include much difficulty.

This judgment from God was meant to be one that every childbearing woman would experience. Pain in childbirth was placed on Eve and on every future mother. This pain serves as a universal reminder of God’s judgment for the sin Adam and Eve brought into the world.

Of course, Adam did not experience the pain of childbirth. His judgment included a curse on the ground for his sake (Genesis 3:17–19). In the Garden of Eden, food was plentiful without laborious farming. But after his sin Adam spent the rest of his life working to provide food for himself and his family. While Eve’s judgment took place during the times she carried and delivered children, Adam experienced his judgment every day for the rest of his life.

Interestingly, this judgment passage is immediately followed by Genesis 3:20: “Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.” Despite God’s judgment of painful and difficult childbearing, God gave His blessing to Adam and Eve in the form of children. Even in judgment, there is mercy. Eve took on the role of mother of all living; in the pain of childbirth, she would also receive a blessing.

A further blessing, even in the face of the pain of childbirth, is found in the condemnation of the serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15). This is a messianic prophecy, but it also contains an immediate focus: Eve will have children who will be in conflict with the serpent (Satan). This conflict between Satan and humanity has been ongoing ever since, and it began with Adam and Eve and their offspring (Genesis 4).

Certainly, Genesis 3 does not provide every detail regarding why Eve was judged with increased pain in childbirth. However, we know that this judgment impacted the rest of Eve’s life and serves as an ongoing reminder of the far-reaching consequences of sin. GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [How is a woman’s desire for her husband a curse \(Genesis 3:16\)?](#)

ANSWER - As God pronounces judgment on Eve for her part of the transgression in Eden, He says, “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (Genesis 3:16). This verse causes some puzzlement. It would seem that a woman desiring her husband would be a good thing, and not a curse.

The Hebrew phrase in question does not include a verb and is literally translated “toward your husband your desire.” Since this judgment is predictive, the future tense verb “will be” is added for clarity: “Your desire will be for your husband.” The most basic and straightforward understanding of this verse is that woman and man would now have ongoing conflict. In contrast to the ideal conditions in the Garden of Eden and the harmony between Adam and Eve, their relationship, from that point on, would include a power struggle. The NLT translation makes it more evident: “You will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.”

God is saying that Eve would desire to rule over her husband, but her husband would instead rule over her. Replacing the mutually interdependent relationship the Lord had created was a desire for one spouse to lead the other. Sin had wrought discord. The battle of the sexes had begun. Both man and woman would now seek the upper hand in marriage. The man who was to lovingly care for and nurture his wife would now seek to rule her, and the wife would desire to wrest control from her husband.

It is important to note that this judgment only states what will take place. God says that man and woman will live in conflict and their relationship will become problematic. **The statement “he shall rule over you” is not a biblical command for men to dominate women.**

In the New Testament, God affirms His ideal relationship between man and woman in marriage. Christ-like qualities are emphasized. What the curse of sin created, believers in Christ are called to correct by living according to God’s Spirit. Ephesians 5 says that the wife should willingly submit to her husband’s authority in the home, in essence, refusing to scratch the curse-fueled itch to seize control (verses 22-24). Husbands are to love their wives unconditionally and sacrificially, just as Christ loves the Church (verses 25-30). The whole passage begins with an emphasis on mutual submission to one another: “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (verse 21).

From the beginning, God’s focus has been love and respect between husband and wife. Though sin has tainted the original beauty

of this relationship, God commands believers in Christ to pursue this ideal relationship between husband and wife, an ideal perfectly illustrated in Christ's relationship with the Church. GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [What is the Adamic covenant?](#)

ANSWER - The Adamic Covenant can be thought of in two parts: the [Edenic Covenant](#) (innocence) and the **Adamic Covenant** (grace).

The Edenic Covenant is found in Genesis 1:26-30; 2:16-17. The details of this covenant include the following:

1. Mankind (male and female) created in God's image.
2. Mankind's dominion (rule) over the animal kingdom.
3. Divine directive for mankind to reproduce and inhabit the entire Earth.
4. Mankind to be vegetarian (eating of meat established in the Noahic covenant: Genesis 9:3).
5. Eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil forbidden (with death as the stated penalty).

The Adamic Covenant is found in Genesis 3:16-19. As the result of Adam's sin, the following curses were pronounced:

1. Enmity between Satan and Eve and her descendants.
2. Painful childbirth for women.
3. Marital strife.
4. The soil cursed.
5. Introduction of thorns and thistles.
6. Survival to be a struggle.
7. Death introduced.
8. Death will be the inescapable fate of all living things.

Although these curses are severe and inescapable, a wonderful promise of grace was also included in the Adamic Covenant. Genesis 3:15 is often referred to as the "Proto-Gospel" or "First Gospel." Speaking to Satan, God says, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, / And between your seed and her seed; / He shall bruise you on the head, / And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Here God promises that one born of a woman would be wounded in the process of destroying Satan. The "seed" of the woman who would crush the Serpent's head is none other than Jesus Christ (see Galatians 4:4 and 1 John 3:8). Even in the midst of the curse, God's gracious provision of salvation shines through. GotQuestions.org

Walter Kaiser - Genesis 3:16 Is Childbearing a Curse or a Blessing?

If bearing children was declared a blessing from God in Genesis 1:28, why did God totally reverse this blessing as a result of the Fall? Indeed, the "pains," a word which reappears in verse 17 in the curse on man as well, are said to have increased. But no pain had been mentioned previously; only a blessing.

There is no doubt that this term refers to physical pain. Its root lies in a verb that means "to injure, cause pain or grief." Whether the pain would lie in the agony of childbirth or in the related grief that accompanies raising that child cannot be finally determined; the text would seem to allow for both ideas.

Katherine C. Bushnell, in *God's Word to Woman*, suggests that verse 16 be translated differently since the Hebrew text could support such a reading. She noted that some ancient versions attached the meaning of "lying in wait," "an ambush" or "a snare" to the word generally read as "multiply." This idea of a snare or a lying in wait, however, may have been moved back to Genesis 3:15 from its more normal position in Genesis 3:16. Bushnell would render the opening words of verse 16 this way: "Unto the woman he said, 'A snare has increased your sorrow and sighing.'"

This translation is not all that different in meaning from the more traditional "I will greatly multiply ..." The difference between the two readings is found wholly in the interlinear Hebrew vowel signs which came as late as the eighth century of the Christian era. The difference is this (using capital letters to show the original Hebrew consonantal text and lowercase to show the late addition of the vowel letters): HaRBah AaRBeh, "I will greatly multiply," and HiRBah AoReB, "has caused to multiply (or made great) a lying-in-wait." The participial form ARB appears some fourteen times in Joshua and is translated as "ambush" or "a lying in wait."

If this reading is correct (and some ancient versions read such a word just a few words back in verse 15, probably by

misplacement), then that “liar-in-wait” would undoubtedly be that subtle serpent, the devil. He it was who would increase the sorrow of raising children. This is the only way we can explain why the idea of “a snare” or “lying-in-wait” still clings to this context.

But another matter demands our attention in verse 16, the word for conception. This translation is difficult because the Hebrew word HRN is not the correct way to spell conception. It is spelled correctly as HRJWN in Ruth 4:13 and Hosea 9:11. But this spelling in Genesis 3:16 is two letters short, and its vowels are also unusual. The form is regarded by lexical authorities such as Brown, Driver and Briggs as a contraction or even an error. The early Greek translation (made in the third or second century before Christ) read instead HGN, meaning “sighing.” The resultant meaning for this clause would be “A snare has increased your sorrow and sighing.”

What difference does such a rendering make? The point is simply that this curse cannot be read to mean that the right to determine when a woman will become a mother is placed totally outside her will or that this function has been placed entirely and necessarily in the hands and will of her husband.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that this statement, no matter how we shall finally interpret it, is from a curse passage. In no case should it be made normative. And if the Evil One and not God is the source of the sorrow and sighing, then it is all the more necessary for us to refuse to place any degree of normativity to such statements and describe either the ordeal of giving birth to a child, or the challenge of raising that child, as an evil originating in God. God is never the source of evil; he would rather bless women. Instead, it is Satan who has set this trap.

The next clause strengthens the one we have been discussing by adding “in sorrow [or pain] you will bring forth children.” Once again note that bearing children in itself was a blessing described in the so-called orders of creation of Genesis 1:28. The grief lies not so much in the conception or in the act of childbirth itself, but in the whole process of bringing children into the world and raising them up to be whole persons before God. (Go to page 65 in [Hard Sayings](#))

Genesis 3:17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

Septuagint - to de Adam eipen hoti ekousas tes phones tes gunaikos sou kai ephages apo tou xulou ou eneteilamen soi toutou monou me phagein ap autou epikataratos (epikataratos: under a curse, yet more cursed: Gal 3:13+: "cursed is everyone who hangs..." Same word to describe Christ redeeming us from the CURSE of the law...how? by becoming a CURSE for us!!! To take away the curse on the earth!) he ge en tois ergois sou en lupais phage auten pasas tas hemeras tes zoes sou

Septuagint in English: And to Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and eaten of the tree concerning which I charged thee of it only not to eat -- of that thou hast eaten, cursed is the ground in thy labours, in pain shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.

- **Because:** 1Sa 15:23,24 Mt 22:12 25:26,27,45 Lu 19:22 Ro 3:19
- **and have eaten from the tree:** Ge 3:6,11 Ge 2:16-17 Jer 7:23,24
- **cursed:** Ge 5:29 Ps 127:2 Ec 1:2,3,13,14 2:11,17 Isa 24:5,6 Ro 8:20-22
- **In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life** Job 5:6,7 14:1 21:17 Ps 90:7-9 Ec 2:22,23 5:17 Joh 16:33
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 2:16-17+ The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat (THE CLEAR COMMAND), for (THE CLEAR CONSEQUENCE) in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it' - This sentence begins with a term of explanation (because) which most often forces us back to the preceding context, but in this case is explained in the text that follows. God gives 2 reasons - (1) listening to your wife (2) overtly disobeying the command not to eat. God had made the command crystal clear

Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life The judgment on man involved his work: paradise would be replaced by wilderness, and the joy of ministry in the garden by the sweat and toil in the field. It is not work that is God’s penalty, because work is not sinful (Ge 2:15). It is the sweat and toil of work and the obstacles of nature that remind us of the fall of man. All of creation suffered consequences when Adam and Eve rebelled against the Lord. Ro 8:20, 22 tells us, “For the

creation was subjected to futility ...for we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." Fortunately, when the Lord returns he will lift that curse.

Allen Ross has an interesting comment on the punishment - These punishments represent *retaliatory justice*. Adam and Eve sinned by eating; they would suffer in order to eat. She manipulated her husband; she would be mastered by her husband. The serpent destroyed the human race; he will be destroyed....No matter how hard people try to do away with male dominion, agonizing labor, painful childbearing, and death, these evils will continue because sin is present. They are fruits of sin. (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

The full force of the Curse fell on Adam, as the responsible head of the human race, and on all his dominion. Instead of believing God's Word, Adam had "hearkened to the voice of his wife," and she had been beguiled by the voice of the serpent. It is always a fatal mistake to allow the words of any creature to take precedence over the Word of God. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. Can any of us reading this identify? I certainly can and I even had a medical degree, but so often was forced to struggle and toil and labor (and experience frivolous lawsuits)!

When the **Kinsman-Redeemer** takes the Scroll, the Title Deed of the Earth, breaks its seals and then returns to planet earth, He will redeem the earth of this curse, as prophesied in Zechariah 14:11+ speaking of the Messiah's Millennial Kingdom -

People will live in it, and **there will no longer be a curse**, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

The Forest And The Tree

Read: Genesis 3:17-24 | Blessed is the man who endures temptation. —James 1:12 (See [Commentary](#))

All of us have been so close to a temptation that we lost our perspective. It may have involved something as small as a rumor that we knew shouldn't be passed along, but the urge to gossip blocked out our sense of love and good judgment.

Adam and Eve faced a similar problem long ago. They became so preoccupied with one plant in their garden paradise that they couldn't see the forest for the tree.

Just look at what it cost them. The Garden of Eden had been created especially for them. In it they knew no evil, no trials, no sickness, no death. They enjoyed the company of the Creator Himself. Yet they gave up all they had just to eat of the fruit of that one forbidden tree.

Their mistake still plagues us. How often do we miss the whole forest of God's goodness for a single tree of testing? The moment of temptation seems so overwhelming, the idea so irresistible, our twisted logic so justifiable.

Today, think about all that Adam and Eve left behind in the Garden. Fill your mind with the truths of God's Word and rely on the Holy Spirit's moment-by-moment guidance and strength. Then you'll experience the joy of God's blessing rather than temporary pleasure.

HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

- Seek God with your whole heart (Ps. 119:9-16).
- Listen to wisdom (Prov. 8:1-11).
- Resist the devil; draw near to God (Jas. 4:7-8).

The way you respond to temptation will make you or break you.

By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Genesis 3:18 "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;

- **Thorns:** Jos 23:13 Job 5:5 31:40 Pr 22:5 24:31 Isa 5:6 7:23 32:13 Jer 4:3 12:13 Mt 13:7 Heb 6:8
- **plants:** Job 1:21 Ps 90:3 104:2,14,15 Ro 14:2
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**THORNS AND THISTLES
THANKS TO ADAM!**

Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field- If you have ever had a thorn in your foot

or finger, you have Adam to thank for it! And if you have ever tried to grow a beautiful lawn, you know the battle against the seemingly strongly weeds, especially the crabgrass variety!

NET NOTE on **plants** - The Hebrew term עֵשֶׂב ('esev), when referring to human food, excludes grass (eaten by cattle) and woody plants like vines.

Genesis 3:19 **By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."**

- **By the sweat of your face:** Ec 1:3,13 Eph 4:28 1Th 2:9 2Th 3:10
- **Till you return to the ground:** Job 1:21 Ps 90:3 104:29 Ec 5:15
- **for dust:** Ge 2:7 18:27
- **and:** Ge 23:4 Job 17:13-16 19:26 21:26 34:15 Ps 22:15,29 104:29 Pr 21:16 Ec 3:20 12:7 Da 12:2 Ro 5:12-21 1Co 15:21,22
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 2:7+ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

LIFELONG TOILING FOR OUR FOOD

By the sweat of your face you will eat bread - **Sweat** speaks of toil (a metonymy). At least God shows mercy and allow man to **eat bread**. He could have caused us to graze grass like He did with arrogant Nebuchadnezzar! (Da 4:33+)

Solomon asked a Genesis 3 related question in Ecclesiastes 1:3 "What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun?"

Till you return to the ground - **Till** is essentially a "time phrase." Signifies toil will be from our birth to our death (or the rapture if that comes first! Maranatha!). From dust and back to dust is man's fate!

ESV STUDY note - The Bible looks forward to a time when nature will be set free from the consequences of human sin; i.e., nature will no longer be the arena of punishment, and it will finally have glorified human beings to manage it and bring out its full potential (Ro 8:19-22). (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#))

NET NOTE- **Until you return to the ground**. The theme of humankind's mortality is critical here in view of the temptation to be like God. Man will labor painfully to provide food, obviously not enjoying the bounty that creation promised. In place of the abundance of the orchard's fruit trees, thorns and thistles will grow. Man will have to work the soil so that it will produce the grain to make bread. This will continue until he returns to the soil from which he was taken (recalling the creation in 2:7 with the wordplay on Adam and ground). In spite of the dreams of immortality and divinity, man is but dust (Ge 2:7), and will return to dust. So much for his pride. In general, the themes of the curse oracles are important in the NT teaching that Jesus became the cursed one hanging on the tree (Gal 3:13-note). In his suffering and death, all the motifs are drawn together: the tree, the sweat, the thorns, and the dust of death (see Ps 22:15). Jesus experienced it all, to have victory over it through the resurrection.

Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return. The Curse on Adam had four main aspects: (1) sorrow, because of the futility of endless struggle against a hostile environment; (2) pain, signified by the thorns; (3) sweat, or tears, the "strong crying" (Heb5:7) occasioned by the labor necessary to maintain life and hope; and (4) eventual physical death in spite of all his efforts, returning back to the dust.

But Christ, as the second Adam, has borne the Curse for us (Ga 3:13): as the "man of sorrows" (Isa 53:3), wearing the thorns and suffering the greatest pain (Mk 15:17), accompanied by strong crying (Heb 5:7) to sweat drops of blood before being finally brought into the dust of death (Ps 22:15). Because He so suffered for us, someday God will dwell with men, and "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev 21:4). Indeed "there shall be no more curse" (Rev 22:3).

The Curse thus applies to man and woman, the animals, and the physical elements: God's whole creation. It is so universal as to have been discovered and recognized empirically as a general scientific law, the law of increasing entropy ("in-turning"). This famous Second Law of Thermodynamics is sometimes also called the law of morpholysis ("loosing of structure"). It expresses the universal tendency for systems to decay and become disordered, for energy to be converted into forms unavailable for further work,

for information to become confused, for the new to become worn, for the young to become old, for the living to die, even for whole species to become extinct. One of the most amazing anomalies of human thought is the concept of evolution, which has never been observed in action scientifically and is exactly the opposite of the universally proven scientific principle of increasing entropy. This theory is nevertheless believed to be the most fundamental principle of nature by almost the entire intellectual establishment.

QUESTION - [What does it mean when God tells Adam, “For dust you are and to dust you shall return” \(Genesis 3:19\)?](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 2:7 teaches that God created [Adam](#) from the dust of the earth: “The Lord God formed a man from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” After Adam sinned, God informed him that he will toil the earth his entire life. It will be frustrating and difficult. Ultimately, Adam’s lifelong work would end in death, and he would return back to the dust from which he was created. Death was the final consequence of Adam’s choice to sin. In Genesis 3:19, God tells Adam, “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (NKJV).

God formed each element of creation with His word. He said it, and it was. But God specially formed Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Humanity is made from a combination of the earth and the life-giving breath of God Himself. The glory of God is found in His breath in us, while being made from the dust of the earth is a reminder of our lowliness and dependence on Him. God’s declaration to Adam that “to dust you shall return” is final and gave Adam a continual awareness that one day he would die physically.

The curse of death that came to Adam was imparted to all humans who have lived since. Because of Adam, sin entered the world (Romans 5:12), all were condemned because of sin (verse 18), and death came to all humanity (verse 15; 1 Corinthians 15:22). All people are sinners (Romans 5:19) and will one day die and face judgment before God (Hebrews 9:27). The reality that “to dust you shall return” is for everyone. For those who trust in Christ, though, the curse of death will be overcome (Ephesians 2:1–10). Rather than fear death, believers have the assurance of eternity that fuels the way we live.

Peter urges believers to remember that we are pilgrims and [sojourners](#), and as such we are “to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul” (1 Peter 2:11). The certainty that “to dust you shall return” should humble us to seek and follow God. Our time on earth is short compared to eternity. Paul calls our bodies “earthly tents” in 2 Corinthians 5:1. This world is not our permanent home, and our bodies are destined to return to dust. On earth we groan and are burdened. Yet resurrection and eternity with God in a heavenly dwelling are promised to those who belong to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:4). We cannot be so entangled in the affairs of this world that we miss out on what matters eternally.

James also reminds believers, “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:14). We are called to be Christ’s ambassadors, sharing the gospel with others and urging them to be reconciled with God (2 Corinthians 5:20). In light of the brevity of life, we should take account of how we live. Instead of living for ourselves, we should live for God and do good (James 4:16–17). “To dust you shall return” should impact how we live and what our lives are about.

As pioneer missionary C. T. Studd penned,

“Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

God’s declaration to Adam that “to dust you shall return” still rings true for every person today. We all come from dust, and we will all return back to it. What happens in between matters. May we live our lives for His glory, in obedience to Him and telling others of the hope we have in Christ. May many turn to Him before it is too late. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Genesis 3:20 Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.

- **The man:** Ge 2:20,23 5:29 16:11 29:32-35 35:18 Ex 2:10 1Sa 1:20 Mt 1:21,23
- of: Ac 17:26
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**ADAM NAMES EVE
THE LIFE-GIVER**

Now the man called his wife's name Eve - Her name means life or life giver, life-producer, life giving. Adam had originally called her [ishshah](#) (woman or "out of man") (Ge 2:23+). But he now calls her life producer or life giver after they have been told they will die!

Because - Term of explanation, explaining why she is named Eve or "Life-Giver."

Allen Ross sees this as a manifestation of Adam's faith writing "Adam's faith and God's provision are noted in these verses. God would save them and ensure that they would not live forever in this state. Adam's faith is seen in his naming **his wife Eve** (lit., "living"). Thus Adam was looking to the future and not primarily to death. Eve's faith is seen later (Ge 4:1) when she named her firstborn Cain because he was from the Lord." (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

She was the mother of all the living - There were no children at this time, so this statement is apparently an editorial insertion by Moses, testifying that all mankind had descended from Adam and Eve.

NET NOTE - The explanation of the name forms a sound play (paronomasia) with the name. **'Eve'** is חַוְּוָה (khavvah) and **"living"** is חַיָּה (khayah). The name preserves the archaic form of the verb חַיָּה (khayah, "to live") with the middle vav (ו) instead of yod (י). The form חַיָּה (khayah) is derived from the normal form חַיָּה (khayah). Compare the name Yahweh (יְהוָה) explained from חַיָּה (hayah, "to be") rather than from חַוְּוָה (havah). The biblical account stands in contrast to the pagan material that presents a serpent goddess hawwat who is the mother of life. See J. Heller, "Der Name Eva," ArOr 26 (1958): 636-56; and A. F. Key, "The Giving of Proper Names in the OT," JBL 83 (1964): 55-59.

Ray Stedman explains why Adam called his wife Eve - In order to understand that we must link it immediately with Verse 15, where we have God's statement to the serpent about the woman: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." That is dealing with the woman's issue, the seed of the woman. Verse 20 deals with the same. The woman is to become "the mother of all living." In response to this promise of a seed to come through the woman, Adam changes his wife's name. In the beginning, her name was not Eve (is it not strange that we never refer to her as anything but Eve?) but Adam called her *Ishsha* which is the Hebrew for "woman." In Verse 23 of Chapter 2 you will note this was the case.

Then the man said,
"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called *Ishsha*[Woman],
because she was taken out of *Ish*[Man]." (Genesis 2:23 RSV)

He called her "Out of Man," and that was her original name. Now he changes her name to *Chavah*, which means "life." He first called her "Out of Man," but now because of God's promise, he calls her "Life," which is the meaning of the word *Eve*. Our English word, *Eve*, is simply an anglicization of this Hebrew word *Chavah*.

Ordinarily Verse 20 is taken to indicate Adam's understanding that a race of men and women are to come from Eve, thus, she is to be the mother of all living. But that was rather obvious from the beginning. Adam and Eve knew that they were to be mother and father of a race, because God had told them to multiply and fill the earth. But here, you will notice, this verse immediately follows the announcement that the ultimate doom of man is death. God has said to Adam, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return," and Adam understands, from that, that he is now to become the father of a doomed race, that, because of his sin, that which he begets is doomed to death from the moment of birth. How certainly we know the truth of this. We begin to die the moment we are born, and the process goes on until it results in the inevitable conclusion of the grave.

I am always faintly amused by the optimistic reports of the medical profession about the present increase of life span, though I am sure this is progress and is something good. But there is always the implication that ultimately we are going to win this battle. Yet the interesting thing is that though we have won great victories in the medical field, the death rate has remained exactly what it has been for centuries -- a flat 100%.

Adam realizes that this is true. But if you read carefully here you will notice something important:

Adam changes the name of his wife because Eve has heard God's promise and believed it. This is the only possible explanation for Verse 20. When a human being, guilty in sin, believes the promise of God, truly believes it, he or she passes immediately from **death unto life**. In recognition of that change, Adam calls his wife's name, "Life," because she has passed from death unto life. "Therefore," he says, "she is the mother of all living," i.e., the first of a long line of those who would pass from death unto life. This ties in exactly with the promise of the seed of the woman (Ge 3:15) which would ultimately come and which would bruise the serpent's head. All those associated with Christ become part of this redeemed humanity, which is the seed of the woman, and Eve was the first of that line. All this is exactly in line with the significance of a **change of name** throughout the rest of the Bible. Have you noticed how many times biblical characters change their name, and always with this same significance? It means that a person has also changed his nature, changed his character. He has become a different person: A bit later in Genesis we learn that God changed the name of **Abram** to **Abraham**, and the name of Abram's wife, **Sarai**, to **Sarah**. These names are significant. Later, also,

he changed the name of **Jacob** (which means a supplanter, a usurper) to **Israel** (which means a prince with God). It is always God who changes these names. In the New Testament, our Lord changed the name of **Simon**, the brother of Andrew, to **Peter**, because he said he would become like a rock, which Peter means. He also changed other names. **Saul** of Tarsus becomes **Paul**, which means "little." He lost his conceit and became little in his own eyes and so his name was changed to Paul (means small or humble in Latin). Thus you have all through the Scriptures this significant change of name. It always refers to something which had occurred within, which has changed the whole nature of the person. So this is therefore not a promise that Eve was to become the mother of a race of literal human beings; this is the promise, rather, that she is to be the mother of those who would find life through Jesus Christ. Thus the immediate response to the promise of God is an act of faith on Adam's part. After all, this is the only proper response to a promise: to believe it and to act on it. And that is what Adam did. ([Exit from Eden](#))

QUESTION - [Who was Eve in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - Eve in the Bible was the wife of Adam, the first man that God created. Eve was the mother of Cain and Abel and Seth and "other sons and daughters" (Genesis 4:1–2, 25; 5:4). Eve was the first woman, the first wife, and the first mother in the world.

The name *Eve* comes from the Hebrew word *chavâh*, which means "the living" or "life." She was called "Eve" because she was the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20). God created her after allowing Adam to see that he did not have among the animals a suitable companion—that is, there was no other creature like himself. So God created Eve as Adam's counterpart. Eve was made in God's image, just as Adam was (Genesis 1:27).

God gave a command to Adam (who relayed it to Eve) while he was living in the garden of Eden. God's command was not to eat of a tree called "the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil" because, He warned, on the day they ate of that tree, they would surely die (Genesis 2:17). The Bible doesn't tell us how long Adam and Eve lived in the garden without incident, but at some point Eve gave into the temptation to eat from the forbidden tree. She was deceived by the serpent (1 Timothy 2:13–14) who, it is generally believed, was a creature used by Satan. The serpent sowed doubt in Eve's mind by asking her whether God had really meant what He said in forbidding eating the fruit from the tree (Genesis 3:1). Then, the serpent fed Eve a lie: "You will not certainly die. . . . For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:4–5). Eve took some of the fruit and ate it and then gave some to her husband, Adam, who also ate. Adam and Eve immediately understood what they had not previously understood—their eyes were opened to both good and evil. But God had not lied—death came as a result of Eve and Adam's disobedience.

Death came to the whole human race as a result of what Eve was tricked into doing and Adam's subsequent choice to sin. Two specific curses were given to Eve and all her daughters. First, God multiplied Eve's pain in childbearing. Second, God pronounced that the relationship between man and woman would be characterized by conflict (Genesis 3:16). These two curses have been proved true in every woman's life throughout history. No matter how many medical advances we achieve, childbearing is always a painful and stressful experience for a woman. And no matter how advanced and progressive society becomes, the relationship between man and woman remains a power struggle, a battle of the sexes, full of strife.

Eve was the mother of all the living and also the first to experience these specific curses. However, Eve will be redeemed along with Adam because of the second Adam, Christ, who was without sin (Romans 5:12–14). "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. . . . 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45). [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [Questions about Adam and Eve](#)

ANSWER - Were Adam and Eve saved? The Bible does not specifically tell us whether Adam and Eve were saved. Adam and Eve were the only two human beings who knew about God before they became tainted with sin. As a result, they likely still knew God better after their fall than any of us do today. Adam and Eve most definitely believed in and depended on God. God continued to talk with Adam and Eve and provide for them after the fall. Adam and Eve knew of God's promise that He would provide a Savior (Genesis 3:15). God made garments of skin for Adam and Eve after the fall (Genesis 3:21). Many scholars understand this as the first animal sacrifice, foreshadowing the eventual death of Christ on the cross for the sins of the world. Putting these facts together, it would seem that Adam and Eve were saved and did indeed go to heaven / paradise when they died.

How many children did Adam and Eve have? The Bible does not give us a specific number. Adam and Eve had Cain (Genesis 4:1), Abel (Genesis 4:2), Seth (Genesis 4:25), and many other sons and daughters (Genesis 5:4). With likely hundreds of years of child-bearing capability, Adam and Eve likely had 50+ children in their lifetime.

When were Adam and Eve created? If Old Testament history and the ages in Genesis chapter 5 are traced using a young-earth

creationist view, Adam and Eve were likely created in approximately 4,000 BC. Other interpretations of Genesis have much broader ranges for that date.

Were Adam and Eve cavemen? Genesis chapter 3 records Adam and Eve having a fully intelligent conversation with God. In chapter 2, Adam had named all the animals, exercising his dominion and showing great creativity and the abilities to categorize and perceive the true nature of things. Adam and Eve were married, also in chapter 2. Adam and Eve were not primitive, "ape-like," or intellectually deficient by any means. The first human beings were created flawless, in a perfect state; until they chose to sin, Adam and Eve were the ideal human beings.

Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons / navels? A belly button / navel (or bellybutton) is formed by the umbilical cord that connects a baby in the womb to its mother. Adam and Eve were created directly by God, and did not go through the normal birthing process. So, Adam and Eve would probably not have had belly buttons / bellybuttons. GotQuestions.org

Related Resources:

- [Is the Adam and Eve story to be understood literally? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [How long were Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [What language did Adam and Eve speak? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [Why weren't Adam and Eve created at the same time \(Genesis 2\)? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [If God knew that Adam and Eve would sin, why did He create them? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

Genesis 3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

- **make** (KJV): Ge 3:7 Isa 61:10 Ro 3:22 2Co 5:2,3,21
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEHOVAH JIREH THE LORD PROVIDES

The Name [Jehovah Jireh](#) means the LORD provides. While that great Name is not encountered until Genesis 22, the principle of divine provision is clearly shown in this passage.

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them - Note that the sinful couple did not place an order for new clothes. God takes the initiative to provide leather garments to replace temporary fig leaves! This passage surely prefigures Christ being made sin for us that we might be clothed with the righteousness of God in Him (2 Co 5:21), Who became to us "wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1Co 1:30). The aprons fashioned by Adam and Eve were inadequate, testifying that man-made efforts to prepare for God's presence will be rejected. Do not miss the mercy of God, for the first physical deaths should have been Adam and Eve but instead it was an animal, which serves as a shadow of the reality that God would someday slay His own Son as a substitute to redeem sinners from eternal death in hell.

Ray Pritchard - God became the world's first clothing designer. If you think about it, this was inevitable since the fig leaves were never going to be a long-term solution. They were only a temporary solution at best. There are so many problems with fig leaves. They fall apart easily, they itch, it's hard to find the right size, and every day or two you've got to get a new outfit. Plus you can't do much plowing or planting or serious cooking if you're wearing fig leaves. I'm smiling as I write this but there is a deadly serious point underneath it all. Man's puny attempt to cover his sin is always doomed to failure. First there is sin, then there is shame, and then there is a desperate attempt to cover the shame. We don't use fig leaves today but other than that, nothing has really changed. We use religion, money, sex, power, and a veneer of good works to cover the guilt within. We stay busy, we work hard, we go to church, we try to be good neighbors, we get along with others if we can, and we hope that somehow our meager efforts will calm the voice of a stricken conscience. It works for a while but nothing we do ever works forever. Sooner or later, we have to face our guilt and admit that nothing we do or say can adequately cover our sin and our shame. ([Farewell to Paradise: Cast Out That We Might Someday Return](#))

The garments of skin - These are a foreshadowing of substitutionary atonement, which would one day provide the "garment of righteousness" as a result of Christ's sacrifice in sinful man's place (2Co 5:21 1Co 1:30 Isa 61:3,10 cp Isa 63:1). There must be the shedding of blood for Heb 9:22 says "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." Heb 10:4 adds that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." So there had to be an offering of innocent, sinless life for the guilty sinner. Adam and

Eve had tried to cover their sin and shame with leaves (Ge 3:7), but these good works were not accepted by God for as Paul says in Eph 2:9 salvation is "not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." Fig leaves were not adequate to cover their guilt and shame.

Pritchard adds that "Centuries later the Jews will learn more about it when they are told to sacrifice a lamb and apply its blood to the doorposts so that the death angel will "pass over" them (Exodus 12). And in the Mosaic Law God specifies a number of animal sacrifices that were required as a part of their worship. If you read Leviticus, it seems like they were slaughtering animals left and right. Lots of killing, lots of blood. The message was clear: God must be approached by way of sacrifice because your sins are so great that you dare not approach him on your own. Either come with the blood of a sacrifice or don't come at all. What starts with a little hint in Genesis 3:21 comes to full flower when Christ died for our sins on the Cross. He was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). His death was the ultimate sacrifice, the just dying for the unjust, the Holy One dying for the unholy that he might by his death bring us to God." ([Farewell to Paradise: Cast Out That We Might Someday Return](#))

Garments in the Bible are often a picture of salvation. (Isa 61:10 Zec 3:3-5 Col 3:9,10 Ga 3:27 Ro 13:14) The prodigal son was clothed afresh when he came home (Lu 15:22). The garments of self-righteousness and good works are but filthy rags in God's sight (Isa 64:6).

Henry Morris - They learned, in type, that an "atonement" (or "covering") could only be provided by God and through the shedding of blood on the altar (note Leviticus 17:11). (Borrow the [The Genesis Record](#))

ESV Study Bible note - Because God provides **garments** to clothe Adam and Eve, thus requiring the death of an animal to cover their nakedness, many see a parallel here related to (1) the system of animal sacrifices to atone for sin later instituted by God through the leadership of Moses in Israel, and (2) the eventual sacrificial death of Christ as an atonement for sin. (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#))

Allen Ross - "All God's dealings with people as sinners can be traced back to this act of disobedience by Adam and Eve. God is a saving God, however, and the fact that He clothed... Adam and Eve testifies to that. An animal was sacrificed to provide garments of skin, and later all Israel's animal sacrifices would be part of God's provision to remedy the curse—a life for a life. The sinner shall die! (Ezek. 18:20; Ro 6:23) Yet he will live if he places his faith in the Lord, Who has provided a Substitute. **The skin with which God clothed Adam and Eve perpetually reminded them of God's provision.** Similarly in the fullness of time God accepted the sacrifice of Christ, and on the basis of that atonement He clothes believers in righteousness (Ro 3:21-26)." (See context in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Warren Wiersbe writes that it is worth noting "that God wanted Adam and Eve to be covered. He approved their sense of shame. It is always a sign of degeneration when a people reverse this and go back to nakedness. "Modest apparel" is God's standard (1Ti 2:9)." (See context in [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#) or borrow a copy of [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

Matthew Henry - See also God's care for our first parents, notwithstanding their sin. Clothes came in with sin. Little reason have we to be proud of our clothes, which are but the badges of our shame. When God made clothes for our first parents, he made them warm and strong, but coarse and very plain; not robes of scarlet, but coats of skin. Let those that are meanly clad, learn from hence not to complain. Having food and a covering, let them be content; they are as well off as Adam and Eve. And let those that are finely clad, learn not to make the putting on of apparel their adorning. The beasts, from whose skins they were clothed, it is supposed were slain, not for man's food, but for sacrifice, to typify Christ, the great Sacrifice. Adam and Eve made for themselves aprons of fig-leaves, a covering too narrow for them to wrap themselves in...Such are all the rags of our own righteousness. But God made them coats of skin, large, strong, durable, and fit for them: such is the righteousness of Christ; therefore put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. ([Genesis 3](#))

NET NOTE - **The LORD God made garments from skin.** The text gives no indication of how this was done, or how they came by the skins. Earlier in the narrative (v. 7) the attempt of the man and the woman to cover their nakedness with leaves expressed their sense of alienation from each other and from God. By giving them more substantial coverings, God indicates this alienation is greater than they realize. This divine action is also ominous; God is preparing them for the more hostile environment in which they will soon be living (v. 23). At the same time, there is a positive side to the story in that God makes provision for the man's and woman's condition.

Henry Morris - An incidental bit of instruction from this record is that, in man's fallen state, a sense of shame relative to nakedness is entirely appropriate. Modern nudists and hedonists, despite protestations about the beauty of the human body and the "freedom" and "naturalness" of displaying it openly, should recall that God Himself took pains to provide clothing to cover the nakedness of the first man and woman. (Borrow the [The Genesis Record](#))

Salvation Coats - Genesis 3:21 - John Butler

"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21).

Adam and Eve had clothed themselves with fig leaves but that was inadequate (fig leaves would wear out quickly), so God clothed them with leather (skins of animals—it is a good thing the animal-rights people weren't around then). This covering of Adam and Eve by God is a good picture of the Gospel.

FIRST—THE SOURCE IN THE COVERING

"The Lord God." The idea of the covering was God's idea, it was God's plan. Man did not figure out that animal skins was a better cover than fig leaves. The Gospel is God's plan, not man's plan. Man would not deem himself so sinful as to need Jesus Christ as Savior. Man thinks his works will prevent judgment. But fig leaves are no comparison to leather.

SECOND—THE SACRIFICE FOR THE COVERING

"Make coats of skins." In order for God to make these leather clothes for Adam and Eve, the animals had to die. Blood had to be shed. So in the Gospel, in order for man to be saved, to be clothed in robes of righteousness, Jesus Christ had to die. He had to sacrifice His life and shed His blood to provide sinful mankind "with the garments of salvation" (Isaiah 61:10). There is no Gospel salvation apart from the cross of Christ. His death on Calvary was not man overpowering God, but was the plan of God which was necessary for us to be clothed "with the garments of salvation."

THIRD—THE SUBSTITUTION FOR THE COVERING

"Make coats of skins." In order for Adam and Eve to be clothed, another one, namely, an animal here, had to die. Here is the great doctrine of substitution. Christ was our substitute to die on the cross in our place that we may be clothed in the "robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10) instead of in our sin. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who [Christ] knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

FOURTH—THE SAFETY IN THE COVERING

"Clothed them." This clothing was to provide safety for Adam and Eve from the elements and to cover their shame which came as a result of sin. They would protect Adam and Eve not only from the elements, but from the general wear and tear to the human body as it came into contact with creation. Likewise the Gospel provides us with a shield to protect us from the judgment of God upon sin. The leather garments would provide safety for Adam and Eve. It provides the safety from the damnation of sin and from the curse of sin. Fig leaves would not provide such protection, for they could be easily torn and would dry out quickly and provide no safety at all. But the leather covering was a different story. It was durable, strong and lasting. So is the Gospel, it is durable, strong, lasting. Without it man will perish in their sins. Are you protected from the judgment of God?

Clothed by God

Human beings generate shame; God covers it with a durable product that requires the shedding of blood. Human beings suffer a metaphysical chill; God warms them with garments they should never have needed. —Melvin D. Hugen and Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. Books & Culture, Vol. 2, no. 2.

Genesis 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"--

- **the man has become like one of Us:** Ge 3:5 1:26 11:6,7 Isa 19:12,13 47:12,13 Jer 22:23
- **tree:** Ge 2:9 Pr 3:18 Rev 2:7 Rev 22:2
- **eat:** Ps 22:26 Joh 6:48-58
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 3:5+ (**SATAN'S PROMISE**) "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."

Genesis 2:9+ Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Proverbs 3:18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast.

Revelation 2:7+ 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who

overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

Revelation 22:2+ in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL AND THE TREE OF LIFE

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil- In other words Satan's promise in Ge 3:5 was true because in Ge 3:7 "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Unfortunately, man instead of knowing good, was instead fixed on knowing evil! They now knew sin but not righteousness, so in that sense, Satan's promise was only half correct. Yes their eyes were opened but they now saw all things with eyes ruled by a sinful heart! And to a degree, they may have known good but they had no power to do good! On the other hand, they knew evil, and unfortunately (as we all know from personal experience) were unable to resist it. They had become [totally depraved!](#)

One of us has a suggestion of the Trinity. "Us" is referred to as **'plural of majesty** ([see note](#))" Other passages on God's reference to "Us"...

Genesis 1:26+ Then God said, "Let Us make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Genesis 11:7+ "**Come**, let **Us** go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech."

Isaiah 6:8+ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for**Us**?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

And now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever- This declaration is filled with grace and mercy! God could easily have let this happen and He would have been perfectly just. In mercy, he saves mankind from committing a fatal mistake, one from which apparently there would have been no possible redemption, as indicated by His statement that he would live forever. Yes, man would have been immortal and eternal, but he would have been eternally dead. How kind and loving is our great God to protect us from ourselves! He did it then and He still does in the lives of His children as most of us could testify!

Henry Morris comments that this verse "gives a brief insight into the inner councils of the triune Godhead. As in Genesis 1:26, such a council was recorded relative to the decision to create man, so now the council decrees his expulsion from the garden and the tree of life. In both passages, the divine unity is stressed ("And the Lord God said") and also the divine plurality ("us"). The council recognized that man had "become as one of us, to know good and evil." This statement is not made in irony or ridicule, as some have thought, but in sadness. Man had once known only the goodness of God; but now he had come to know experimentally the evil inherent in rejecting God's Word, as well as the necessary spiritual and physical suffering resulting from such action, so that he did, indeed, "know good and evil." His hoped-for "godness," however, as promised by the Serpent, was indeed a pitiful caricature of what he had anticipated. He had been created in God's very image, but now that image had been gravely marred and defaced by his experience of evil." (Borrow the [The Genesis Record](#))

Ray Stedman - God seems to have drastically changed his attitude, hasn't he? He had just accepted Adam and Eve, dressed in the new clothing which he himself had provided, and suddenly now he banishes them from his presence, drives them out, slams and locks the door behind them, and sets a guard in the path to keep them from coming back in. Is there not something wrong here? If we read this passage that way, we have surely misread it. It is important that we note carefully exactly what it does say. Notice that Verse 22 is one of the few unfinished sentences in the Bible. God acknowledges that man has fallen into a condition of self-centeredness. He says, "the man has now become like one of us." Man knows good and evil by relating it to himself. This is the basic problem with mankind. We have no right to know good and evil by relating it to ourselves, but that is what we do all the time. It is recorded in the book of Judges: "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes," (Judges 17:6, 21:25). That is the formula for anarchy. It means we are relating and judging everything by the way it appears to us. This is the way God does it, for he is the measure of all things, but it is wrong for man. God acknowledges this condition and, having done so, he now faces the problem of the other tree in the garden: This is not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, now, but the tree of life. God says, "What if man, doomed now to guilt, shame, limitation and loss, should now reach forth his hand and take and eat of the tree of life, and live forever." It would mean that man would never physically die but would go on in his evil condition forever. Notice that God leaves the sentence hanging in the air as though the result is too terrible to describe. What if man should do this? Then God's loving solution follows. He says, "Drive him out, cast him out of the garden, and put at the gate of Eden the cherubim [throughout the rest of

Scripture cherubim appear; these are what we might call angelic animals, related to the holiness of God] and a flaming sword which turns every way [but now notice] to guard the way to the tree of life." It does not say. "to keep men from coming to the tree of life." That is not what the barrier is for. It is to guard the way to the tree of life, so that men come the right way and not the wrong. We usually read this passage as though God has barred man from the tree of life -- and there is no way to get back in. But that is not true. There was a way in, but it is no longer a physical way. That is what this text is telling us. Man must be kept from trying to come through some physical way, but must be forced to find the right way back. That is what the cherubim and the flaming sword are for. They absolutely cut off any other way to God than the right way. There is no other way, only one. This is why what you do with your body, religiously, is of no importance whatever unless it be a genuine reflection of what you do with your spirit, religiously. This explains why you can come to church every Sunday morning, sit in the pews, nod your head, pray, stand, sit down again, genuflect -- anything you want -- but if the heart is not doing the same thing it is an ugly, distasteful thing in God's sight, and he has no regard for it at all. There is no way to come to God by doing something -- none at all. The physical approach to God is completely cut off. But here, read the words of the Lord Jesus in the 14th chapter of John, Verse 6. What does he say? "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." (John 14:6 RSV) That is the only way there is. That is not only the way to begin the Christian life but it is also the way to continue the Christian life. Do you know the way to the tree of life? In the passage read for us from the book of the Revelation we heard that the tree of life is for healing. Do you know how to find healing, do you know the way to the place of healing? When your spirit has been torn and broken, or you are pressed by despair, or wounded by sorrow or grief, heartache or guilt, whatever it may be, do you know the way to the place of healing, to the place where the living waters flow? Have you learned not to go but once, but many, many times; to drink again and again of the water of life? Do you know what that means? ([Exit from Eden](#))

Gleason Archer - In the Garden of Eden, the serpent told Eve that if she and Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, they would be "as gods" (Gen. 3:5 KJV). Then in Genesis 3:22 God says, "Behold, the man has become like one of us" (NASB). Does "gods" and "us" imply the existence of more than one God?- Online on page 78 in [Bible Difficulties](#)

Not at all. The usual Hebrew term for "God" is 'elōhīm, which is the plural of 'elōah. It is occasionally used as a true plural, referring to the imaginary gods of the heathen. But usually it refers to the one true God, and the plural ending is known to Hebrew grammarians as the "plural of majesty." Like 'adōnīm ("lords" or "Lord") and be'ālīm (plural of ba'al, "lord," "master," "owner," "husband"), 'elōhīm also may be used to give a heightened impressiveness of majesty to God. As such, this plural is modified by adjectives in the singular and takes a singular verb.

In the case of the serpent, serving as Satan's mouthpiece, his previous uses of 'elōhīm (3:1,5a) are unquestionably intended as a designation of the one true God; hence, it is altogether likely that it should be so used here. Therefore, the proper rendering of 3:5b should be (as ASV, NASB, NIV, and even the Luther Bible): "You will be like God, knowing good and evil." The last phrase acts as a qualifier; that is, "you will be like God in that you will have personal knowledge of the moral law, with the distinction that it draws between good and evil." No longer would they remain in a state of innocency, but they would have a (guilty) personal experience of evil and would be to that extent closer to God and His angels in the matter of full moral awareness.

Who, then, constitutes the "us" referred to in v.22? Conceivably the three persons of the Trinity might be involved here (as in Gen. 1:26), but more likely "us" refers to the angels surrounding God's throne in heaven (cf. 1 Kings 22:19; Isa. 6:1-3, etc.). There are a few passages in the Old Testament where the angels are referred to as benê 'elōhīm ("sons of God," e.g., Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:6; cf. benê 'ēlīm—a shortened form of 'elōhīm, Ps. 29:1; 89:6). In some cases, just as benê Yīsrā'el ("sons of Israel") is shortened to Yīsrā'el alone (referring to the nation of Israel rather than to Jacob), so also benê 'elōhīm ("sons of God" in the sense of angels) is shortened to 'elōhīm, as in Psalm 97:7.

It was certainly true of the angels of heaven that they too had acquired a knowledge of good and evil. Before the dawn of human history, there was apparently a revolt against God under the leadership of Satan or "Lucifer" (see Isa. 14:12-15, where Satan is addressed as the patron of the king of Babylon). This is probably alluded to in 2 Peter 2:4: "God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment." Therefore, those angels who remained true to the Lord were members of His heavenly court, having passed the tests of faithfulness and obedience in the face of temptation.

QUESTION - [How did the knowledge of good and evil make man like God \(Genesis 3:22\)?](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 3:22 notes, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the [tree of life](#) and eat, and live forever." God is speaking in this verse. The question arises: how, exactly, did knowing good and evil make man like God?

Adam and Eve already knew, *intellectually*, the difference between good and evil because of God's command to not eat of the tree's fruit. They knew it was right to eat of *those* trees and wrong to eat of *that* tree. However, when they chose to disobey, they knew

evil *experientially* because they themselves had sinned against God. At that point, they fully understood both right and wrong. God, who knows everything, already understood the nature of evil. When Adam and Eve lost their innocence, they, too, understood the nature of evil because of its very real presence within them. They became “like God” in that they now realized what evil was truly like.

The serpent’s deception in the Garden had included a grain of truth. Satan told Eve, “God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5). What the serpent did *not* say was that knowing evil would damage Adam and Eve’s relationship with God. Half-truths can be as deceptive as full-blown lies.

It was enough for humans to understand and experience the good, and much good had been given to them (Genesis 1:31). But Adam and Eve wanted more knowledge and more experience, to their own detriment. The entry of sin into the world was a curse leading to a loss of fellowship with God and other judgments upon Adam and Eve. Those judgments have affected all humanity (Genesis 3:16–19). Only in the end, when God creates new heavens and a new earth, will this curse be broken. Revelation 21:3–4 promises, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘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.” Revelation 22:3 adds, “No longer will there be any curse.”

Knowing good and evil was not a positive thing for Adam and Eve; rather, it served as the entry of sin into humanity. Now, all people sin and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), and we all live under the twin curse of sin and death (Romans 6:23). “Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:24–25; cf. John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8–9). GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [Why was it wrong for Adam and Eve to know good and evil \(Genesis 3:22\)?](#)

ANSWER - In Genesis 3:22 God says, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.” Knowledge in itself is not wrong (see Luke 2:52), so what was so bad about man “knowing good and evil”?

It is vital to know the context of God’s statement. God had already told Adam not to eat from this tree. Adam was already aware that doing so was wrong, and he knew the consequences, yet he chose to join Eve in eating the fruit. When they ate, they were not simply *aware* of evil; they *experienced* evil, to the extent that they *became* evil—sinners by nature.

Man knew what was good: he was created in goodness and was surrounded by it (Genesis 1:31). He had been given everything God wanted him to have, including authority over all the rest of God’s creation. Adam had everything he needed for a fulfilling life. He did not need to “know” evil, especially when the only way for him to “know” it was to *experience* it. It should have been enough that God had warned Adam against disobedience. God did not want Adam and Eve to “know” evil in the sense of participating in it. The sin of Adam and Eve was not in attaining knowledge but in rejecting God’s will in favor of their own.

Because of their sin, Adam and Eve received dire consequences. First, Eve was told, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (Genesis 3:16).

Second, Adam was told, “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life” (Genesis 3:17).

Third, for both Adam and Eve, “You are dust, and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:19). They had been told they would “die” if they ate from the tree (Genesis 2:17). This consequence did not happen immediately, but Adam and Eve did both physically die, a pattern followed by all other humans.

Fourth, they were expelled from the Garden of Eden: “So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken” (Genesis 3:23).

Adam and Eve began life in ideal conditions: an idyllic garden, plentiful food, a harmonious relationship with one another, and close fellowship with God. Due to sin, they lost their garden, were required to work to produce food, experienced interpersonal conflicts, and damaged their fellowship with God. These consequences of Adam’s sin still affect us today.

The apostle Paul spoke about the last Adam (Jesus) who came to restore our broken relationship with God (1 Corinthians 15:45). Paul also noted, “Since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man” (1 Corinthians 15:21). Adam was responsible for sin’s entrance into humanity. Jesus Christ was responsible for providing the way for resurrection. After sin entered humanity, Jesus became the perfect substitute to allow every person the opportunity to believe and receive eternal life (John 3:16). GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the tree of life?](#)

ANSWER - The tree of life, mentioned in the books of Genesis and Revelation, is a life-giving tree created to enhance and perpetually sustain the physical life of humanity. The tree was planted by God in the Garden of Eden: “The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the [tree of the knowledge of good and evil](#)” (Genesis 2:9). The centrally located tree of life would have been easily accessible to Adam and Eve from any point in the garden.

More details concerning the tree of life come after Adam and Eve’s sin: “The LORD God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever’” (Genesis 3:22). In his disobedience, [Adam](#) lost his eternal life. The tree of life in Eden must have had some role to play in maintaining the life of Adam and Eve (and possibly the animals). Adam would “live forever,” even in his fallen condition, if he had eaten the tree of life after his sin. God placed a sword-wielding cherub at the entrance to the garden specifically “to guard the way to the tree of life” (verse 24). It seems access to the tree of life would have prolonged Adam’s physical life indefinitely, dooming him to an eternity in a cursed world.

It was a mercy that God kept us from the tree of life. By barring access to the tree of life, God showed compassion in His omniscience. Knowing that, because of sin, earthly life would be filled with sorrow and toil, God graciously limited the number of years men would live. To live eternally in a sinful state would mean endless agony for humanity, with no hope of the relief that comes with death. By limiting our lifespan, God gives us enough time to come to know Him and His provision for eternal life through Christ but spares us the misery of an endless existence in a sinful condition.

In His great love, God provided One who would redeem fallen mankind. Through one man, Adam, sin entered the world, but through another Man, Jesus Christ, redemption through the forgiveness of sin is available to all (Romans 5:17). Those who avail themselves of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross will be resurrected to see the tree of life again, for it stands in the middle of the Holy City, the [New Jerusalem](#), where it bears “twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2). In the eternal state, the curse will be no more (verse 3), access to the tree of life will be reinstated, and darkness will be forever banished (verse 5). Eden will be restored. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What is the majestic plural \(PLURAL OF MAJESTY\), and how is it used in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - The majestic plural, also called the royal plural, is the use of a plural word (such as the pronoun *we* or *us*) to refer to a single person. As a type of nosism, the majestic plural emphasizes something or honors someone in a stylistic way. Basically, when a member of royalty, referring to himself, says, “We” instead of “I,” he is using the majestic plural. For example, Queen Victoria, upon hearing a tasteless joke, is said to have replied, “We are not amused.”

The ancient Hebrews used the majestic plural, and some examples are found in the Old Testament. But the construction is not unique to Hebrew. The Latin language also had what the Romans called *pluralis maiestatis* (“the plural of majesty”), and, as has been noted, English sometimes uses it as well. Other modern languages using the royal plural include Punjabi, Hindustani, Telugu, and Egyptian Arabic (in which the President of Egypt is referred to as “Your Excellencies”).

The effect of the majestic plural is to indicate greatness, power, and prestige. It is normally reserved for use by nobles, kings, popes, and other persons of high rank when speaking in an official capacity or by those of lower rank when speaking of or to their betters.

In the Bible, we find four verses in which God refers to Himself using plural pronouns. The most well-known passage is Genesis 1:26: “Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.’” See also Genesis 3:22; Genesis 11:7; and Isaiah 6:8. The One God is speaking of Himself in plural form: *us* and *our*. This is a perfect example of the majestic plural. God’s divine greatness and transcendence are emphasized through the simple use of pronouns.

The majestic plural is also found in one of God’s most common names in the Old Testament, *Elohim*. The word itself is plural (the singular is *Eloah*), and it is sometimes translated as “gods” (when referring to a plurality of false gods). When it refers to the One True God, *Elohim* (plural) is correctly translated as “God” (singular).

Deuteronomy 4:35 says, “The LORD is God”—literally, “*Yahweh* is *Elohim*.” And the famous [Shema](#) says, “The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” Again, we have the singular *Lord* coupled with the plural *Elohim*, and this time in a verse that is crystal clear that there is only one God. His name’s plural form indicates His sovereign supremacy, His matchless might, and His exceeding eminence.

We carefully note that the majestic plural in the Old Testament was not meant to teach the doctrine of [the Trinity](#). It is simply a linguistic tool that God employed to accentuate His greatness. However, the use of plural constructions to refer to God leaves open the possibility of God’s triune nature. Later, when the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in the New Testament, the use of the majestic plural fits right in. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [Why does God refer to Himself in the plural in Genesis 1:26 and 3:22?](#) [SEE RELATED VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 1:26 says, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" Genesis 3:22 states, "And the LORD God said, 'The man has now become like one of us.'" There are other passages in the Old Testament in which God refers to Himself using plural constructions. It is also interesting to note that [Elohim](#), one of the primary titles of God in the Old Testament (occurring over 2,500 times), is in the **plural** form.

Some people have used these verses to hypothesize that there are more than one God. However, we can rule out polytheism (belief in multiple gods), because that would contradict countless other Scriptures that tell us that God is one and that there is only one God. Three times in Isaiah 45 alone, God states, "I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me" (Isaiah 45:5, 6, 18).

A second possible explanation for God's referring to Himself in the plural is that God was including the angels in His statement. In saying "us" and "our," God was speaking of all the heavenly host, Himself included. However, the Bible nowhere states that angels have the same "image" or "likeness" as God (see Genesis 1:26). That description is given to humanity alone.

*The Old Testament hints at the plurality of God,
and the New Testament clarifies this plurality with the doctrine of the Trinity.*

Since the Bible, and the New Testament especially, presents God as a Trinity (three Persons but only one God), Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 3:22 can only represent a conversation within the Trinity. God the Father is having a "conversation" with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament hints at the plurality of God, and the New Testament clarifies this plurality with the doctrine of the Trinity. Obviously, there is no way we can fully understand how this works, but God has given us enough information to know that He does exist in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources:

- [What does it mean when God said, "Let Us make man in Our image" \(Genesis 1:26\)?](#)
- [What does the Bible teach about the Trinity? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Genesis 3:23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

- **to cultivate the ground:** Ge 3:19 2:5 4:2,12 9:20 Ec 5:9
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PARADISE LOST!

Therefore - A very crucial [term of conclusion](#)! Had man stayed and eaten of the tree of life, not only would paradise have been lost so would have been the opportunity for redemption and regeneration!

The LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden - Note the verb "**sent**" which indicates that they did not want to leave the beautiful (presumably it was still beautiful) garden. But it was not just the loss of the beautiful setting but far more the loss of the special fellowship they had experienced with God!

Ray Pritchard - If they stay in Eden and eat from the Tree of Life, they will live forever in their sin, separated from God. What do you call a place where you live forever in sin, always separated from God? Hell! For them, Eden would be like hell itself. Paradise is not only lost, it is now transformed into a prison. It is for their own good that they are cast out. As humiliating as it was, it was also a "severe mercy" of the Lord. If God lets them stay, they are both doomed and damned. Imagine how terrible it would be if sinners never died. What if Hitler lived forever? What if child molesters lived forever, unchanged, always molesting? What if murderers and rapists could never die? This earth would quickly become unbearable. And unlivable. It is judgment indeed that sinners should die, but it would be much greater judgment if they lived forever in their sins. In this life there is always the opportunity to come to Christ. It is only after death that the door is finally closed. ([Farewell to Paradise: Cast Out That We Might Someday Return](#))

To cultivate the ground from which he was taken- Adam sent to cultivate the cursed earth. We are still battling with the cursed earth, experiencing droughts, hurricanes, destructive wildfires, tornados, tsunamis, and the list goes on describing the consequences of the curse!

Gleason Archer - Can the Garden of Eden be located on a map? - Online on page 73 in [Bible Difficulties](#)

Genesis 2:10–14 furnishes some clues to the general location of Eden, but it presupposes geological conditions that no longer hold. Hence it is hazardous to conjecture any site more precise than the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the highlands of Armenia (i.e., the eastern border of modern Turkey).

The large river flowing from Eden subdivided into the Tigris and the Euphrates, as well as into two other long rivers (the Pishon, leading down to Havilah, along the southern coast of Arabia, and the Gihon, which went over to Cush—which may have been some Asiatic region lying to the east rather than the African Cush that was Ethiopia).

This indicates that the site was high plateau or mountainous region (insuring a cool and comfortable temperature for Eden during the summer season), having copious headwaters to supply the four major river systems this passage describes. The Havilah, through which the Pishon flowed, was rich in gold, spices, and deposits of precious stones—which were found in abundance along the southern or southwestern coasts of Arabia. For the Cush, no such helpful clues are given; the name has been connected by some scholars with Kish in Sumeria or with the Kassites (who are thought to have originated in the Zagros mountain region).

The most plausible explanation for the later complete disappearance of the Pishon and Gihon rivers is the theory that mountain-building activity accompanying continental drift (for Arabia was originally connected with the Somalian and Ethiopian coast during prehistoric times) may have terminated those two river systems in the antediluvian period. This would be analogous to the uplift of the Mount Seir Range in Edom, which prevented the Jordan River from flowing all the way down to the Gulf of Aqaba, as it originally did

Genesis 3:24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Septuagint - kai exebalen (ekballo: 3SAAI: eject by force Mt8:16) ton Adam kai katokisen (3SAAI: cause to dwell, assign a dwelling place, send to live in Ja4.5) auton apenanti (improper prep. w. gen. lit. of place opposite, in front of, before Mt27.61; fig. of someth. happening before the eyes of onlookers in the presence of, Mt27.24; Ac3.16) tou paradeisou tes truphes kai etaxen ta cheroubim kai ten phloginen romphaian ten strephomenen phulassein ten hodon tou xulou (wood, tree; as an instrument for execution by crucifixion cross Ac5.30 Rev22:2,14) tes zoes

LXX English - And he cast out Adam and caused him to dwell over against the garden of Delight, and stationed the cherubs and the fiery sword that turns about to keep the way of the tree of life.

ICB God forced the man out of the garden. Then God put angels on the east side of the garden. He also put a sword of fire there. It flashed around in every direction. This kept people from getting to the tree of life.

- **east:** Ge 2:8
- **Cherubim:** Ex 25:2,20,22 1Sa 4:4 1Ki 6:25-35 Ps 80:1 99:1 104:4 Eze 10:2-22 Heb 1:7
- **flaming:** Nu 22:23 Jos 5:13 1Ch 21:16,17 Heb 1:7
- **to keep:** Joh 14:6 Heb 10:18-22
- [Genesis 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 2:15; Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the **garden of Eden** to cultivate it and keep it.

Ezekiel 36:35 “They will say, ‘This desolate land has become like the **garden of Eden**; and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited.’

Joel 2:3 A fire consumes before them And behind them a flame burns. The land is like the **garden of Eden** before them But a desolate wilderness behind them, And nothing at all escapes them.

THE MERCY OF GOD IN DRIVING MAN OUT OF THE GARDEN

So He drove the man out ([garash](#)) - God in effect evicted them, booted them out, kicked them out! As noted above, God had to drive them because otherwise they would have stayed and they would have eaten of the other tree (which they apparently could eat from prior to the Fall). Why did He do this? He loved them. They did not deserve His love, but in love He drove them out to protect them from eternal existence in spiritual death if they had eaten from the tree of life.

It is also worth noting that God had to drive man out in order for the prophecy of a future Redeemer (cf Kinsman-Redeemer) to be fulfilled. God's promises are all always fulfilled. Had He allowed man to remain and had man eaten of the Tree of Life, He could not have fulfilled Genesis 3:15 because man would have entered into an eternal state of death. Amazing grace from our amazing God! Praise Him all ye His people! Amen.

and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim Later in Israel's history, two cherubim or angelic figures guarded the ark of the covenant and the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle (Ex 25:18-22), where God communed with His people. In a similar way the CHERUBIM woven in the tapestry of the VEIL "guarded" the way into the Holy of Holies [Ex 26:31 36:8, 35]

NET NOTE - Angelic sentries (Heb "cherubim"). The cherubim in the Bible seem to be a class of angels that are composite in appearance. Their main task seems to be guarding. Here they guard the way to the tree of life. The curtain in the tabernacle was to be embroidered with cherubim as well, symbolically guarding the way to God. (See in addition A. S. Kapelrud, "The Gates of Hell and the Guardian Angels of Paradise," JAOS 70 [1950]: 151-56; and D. N. Freedman and M. P. O'Connor, TDOT 7:307-19.)

ESV Study Bible note - The placing of cherubim to the **east of the garden** is reflected in the tabernacle and temple, where cherubim were an important component in the structure and furnishings (see [The Ark of the Covenant](#)). (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#))

and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life - Guard([shamar](#)) "exercise great care over."The Hebrew depicts the sword as moving from side to side to prevent anyone from passing or as whirling around, ready to cut to shreds anyone who tries to pass. This impediment shows the grace of God: He drove the man and woman out of the garden! They had forfeited their right to the **tree of life** by disobeying God. If they had eaten of that tree, they would have lived forever in their sinful state. This would mean that the Savior, the Second Adam, could not come to die to deliver humans from sin. Thus, in driving Adam and Eve out of paradise, God was showing His grace and mercy to the whole human race.

The tree is guarded but it is not destroyed.

The whole truth of salvation hangs on that point.

-- Ray Pritchard

Ray Pritchard - Cherubim are a particular class of heavenly angels. It appears from the rest of the Bible that they have a special assignment to guard the throne of God. They are the Heavenly Secret Service, if you will, standing guard around the throne, preventing any unwanted person from coming near to God. It's also worth noting that when God gave the design for the tabernacle, he instructed that a thick veil be hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. That veil contained figures of the cherubim woven into it. Inside the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant, with a golden lid called the Mercy Seat. Over the Mercy Seat were the two golden cherubim whose wings almost touched. Once a year, and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, one man, and only one man, the high priest, entered the Holy of Holies, carrying with him the blood of the sacrifice. When he sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat, it was consumed by fire from heaven, signifying that the Lord had covered the sins of the people. If anyone besides the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, or if the high priest entered on any other day than the Day of Atonement, or if he did not bring the blood of the sacrifice, he would be put to death. The cherubim were there to symbolically say, "You can't come to God on your own. You can't make it up as you go along. You must come to God in his way, or you can't come at all.... The door was closed and they could never return on their own. As a result, man is now separated from God because of sin. The progress of the human race will move in two directions from this point. Man will make great strides in the realms of science and technology, and at the same time he will be utterly unable to conquer his own sinful heart. As he climbs out of the pit, he will slide back down again and again and again." All appears hopeless and lost until we consider one important fact. As the curtain lowers for the final time on Eden, our last view is of the cherubim and the flaming sword guarding the entrance, and somewhere in the distance stands the Tree of Life. Make a note of that. The tree is guarded but it is not destroyed. The whole truth of salvation hangs on that point. If God had destroyed the Tree of Life, none of us would ever be saved. We would live, die, and enter eternal punishment. Eden as a place disappears after Genesis 3. No one ever goes there again. It vanishes from the face of the earth, apparently destroyed in the great flood of Noah's day. But what about the Tree of Life? What happens to it? To get the answer to that question, we have to

go all the way to the last chapter of the last book of the Bible. This is how Revelation 22 begins: *“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 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. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations”* (Revelation 22:1-2). When John gets his final glimpse of the heavenly city of God, he sees the throne of God, and from that throne a mighty river of water—the water of life!—flowing through the midst of the city. And there on each side of the river stood the tree of life. One tree? Many trees? Who knows? The Tree of Life is now everywhere. Each month it brings forth a fruit. And its leaves are for the healing of the nations, meaning that God intends that vast multitudes should come to this tree and find strength, life, help, hope and healing. What was once a single tree for just two people to enjoy has become a vast heavenly orchard with fruit for billions of people. And where are the cherubim? They are gone. Where is the flaming sword? It is nowhere in sight. Now the Lord has opened the way to the Tree of Life. Anyone who is hungry or thirsty, come and eat and live forever. Anyone who wants a new life, come, this tree is for you. How has this happened? What made the difference? When Jesus died on the cross, the great veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. That veil—the one with the cherubim on it—the veil that constantly reminded the Jews that they could not come into God’s presence on their own, was torn in two. The message is clear as crystal. Through Jesus Christ, the way to God is now open to anyone, anywhere, any time. That’s why the Tree of Life appears at the end of the Bible. Christ has opened the door to heaven, and through him and by him and in him anyone who wants to, can come in. ([Farewell to Paradise: Cast Out That We Might Someday Return](#))

1 Co 10:11 teaches us that “these things happened to them (Adam & Eve) as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” We must recognize that the biographical sketches of Adam and of Eve we have just read in Ge 1-3 are not simply a matter of history, but are written for our instruction. This means their lives and their mistakes make demands on our lives. We must be willing to ask several questions

- How does this apply to me today?
- Where am I listening to the lies of the crafty adversary?
- What truths about God am I not clear on, which if I were, they would serve to fight off the fiery missiles of the evil one?
- Am I reading and memorizing and meditating on God's Word of Truth that I might be fortified against the lies of the Devil?
- Am I forgetting that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one and am I being drawn into his domain? (1 Jn 5:19^{note})

Warren Wiersbe - Ro 5, 1Co 15:42-49 explain the contrasts between the first Adam and the Last Adam, Christ. Adam was made from the earth, but Christ came down from heaven. Adam was tempted in a perfect garden, while Christ was tempted in a terrible wilderness. Adam deliberately disobeyed and plunged the human race into sin and death, but Christ obeyed God and brought righteousness. As a thief, Adam was cast out of paradise. Speaking to a thief, Jesus said, “Today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Lu 23:43). Note that in Ro 5 we have several “much more” statements (Ro 5:9, 10, 15, 17, 20), indicating that the death of Christ did not simply put us back to where Adam was. It gave us MUCH MORE than Adam ever had. We are kings and priests unto God and will reign with Christ forever! (See context in [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#) or borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

Henry Morris - It would have been calamitous had they continued in a perfect environment as sinful people, especially eating of the life-tree fruit and living on indefinitely in such a condition. They and their descendants to many generations must be taught the true nature and effects of sin, and of living out of fellowship with God, so that they could eventually come to know and understand and love Him fully, as Savior, as well as Maker and Provider....To “keep” (or “guard”) the way of the tree of life, God placed at the east of the garden two cherubim, with a revolving swordlike flame flashing around them like lightning bolts. These creatures, apparently the highest in the angelic hierarchy, are described more fully in Ezekiel 1:4–28; 10:1–22; and Revelation 4:6–8. Satan himself had once been the “anointed cherub” (Ezekiel 28:14) on God’s holy mountain. The cherubim are always associated closely with the throne of God (note Psalm 18:10; 80:1; 99:1) and it is thus intimated that God’s presence was particularly manifest there at the tree of life. Later, His presence was especially revealed over the mercy seat in the holy of holies in the tabernacle (Exodus 25:17–22; Hebrews 9:3–5), and it is significant that this mercy seat was overshadowed by two golden representations of the cherubim. It was here that once each year the high priest entered with the sacrificial blood of atonement to sprinkle over the mercy seat (see Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9:7–9; 24–28). (Borrow the [The Genesis Record](#))

The ideal environment of Eden did not prevent the entrance of sin. A favorable environment is not the answer to man’s problems.

Consider this prayer in light of the profound lessons in this chapter:

Lord You have created me in Your image—You desire to be seen in me. Yet so many times I choose to go my own independent way. I choose my will over Yours. Guard me, I pray, from mishandling Your truth—from making too much of the limitations Your Word places on me, and too little on the freedoms You give. Help me to trust the truthfulness of everything You say and the goodness of all your motives toward me. Help me to look to Your Word for answers when the enemy sends temptation my way. Most of all, when I do blow it, help

me not to hide my sin or blame others for it, but to come back to you and make things right. Thank you for Your love, Your grace, Your forgiveness, and most of all for Your empowerment. Help me to walk with you for the sake of Your Almighty name, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Judgment For Sin - Genesis 3:24 - John Butler

"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24).

Judgment was the product of sin in the Garden of Eden.

FIRST—THE PROMPTING OF JUDGMENT

"So." Judgment comes from God when we sin. Adam and Eve sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit. This prompted judgment. Already God had pronounced judgement upon the serpent—(cursed, repulsive to mankind, crawling; the serpent lost his position and had to literally eat the dust of the ground, and would eventually be destroyed by the seed of the woman whom he deceived), the sinners—(Adam and Eve would now live a much harder life, sin never makes things nicer). Now the climax of the judgment was the excommunication from the Garden of Eden. Sin causes us to lose great blessing.

SECOND—THE POWER OF JUDGMENT

"He drove out the man . . . Cherubim . . . a flaming sword." Three experiences by Adam and Eve showed this power of judgment.

- The power of authority. "He drove out the man." God would not permit Adam and Eve to remain in the Garden of Eden. Driving out indicates man was not willing to leave. But the attitude of man will not stop the judgment of God. Not only was the unwillingness of man evident here but so was the weakness of man. "Drove out" indicates the power of God in judgment. No man can overcome this judgment. It will happen whether man wants it to or not.
- The power in the angels. "Cherubims." When Divine judgment comes, the angels of God will be on God's side. No longer will they be "ministering spirits" (Hebrews 1:14) for you, but they will be at enmity with you.
- The power of holy anger. "Flaming sword." God was upset with Adam and Eve and the power His holy wrath is seen in the flaming sword which help to prevent entrance into the Garden of Eden.

THIRD—THE PURPOSE OF JUDGMENT

"He drove out man . . . to keep the way of the tree of life." We can see at least two purposes here in this judgment.

- Prohibiting. "He drove our man." Sin limits our blessings. Because Adam and Eve focused on the one thing they did not have instead of on all the things they did have, they lost everything they had plus the thing they thought they could obtain by sinning. We have been in rescue missions men who had it all but lost it all because of booze.
- Protection. "To keep the way of the tree of life." God would protect the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. Sin will keep you from experiencing life and from eternal life. Judgment will protect these blessing from going to the wrong people. There will be no bad people in heaven (Revelation 21:27). God protects heaven from evil and from wicked people obtaining blessings they are not to have. ([Sermon Starters](#))

Ray Pritchard brings Genesis 3 to a God glorifying conclusion...

Now we see clearly the message of Genesis 3. We were cast out for our own good, to protect us and to teach us that we could never go back in on our own. We were cast out so that someday we might return through Jesus Christ. Paradise Lost has now become Paradise Regained. Learn from this that our God is a God of justice. He takes sin seriously and judged it sternly. But he is also a God of mercy, who in the midst of judgment, closes a door for our own good so that in his time, he might make a way for us to return. Just as he provides the garments for Adam and Eve, he now provides for us the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. And where once the cherubs barred the way into his presence, in Christ the door has been thrown wide open.

Let the message go out to the ends of the earth. The door to heaven is now open!

You who were banished, the Father calls you home.

You who were rejected, heaven waits for you.

You who were condemned by family and friends, and you whose conscience condemned you all the more, stop your running. Cease from your tears. The Tree of Life with all its fruits is yours for the taking.

Let all the sinners come.

Let all the failures come.

Let all who have blown it big time come and be forgiven.

Let the wretched and despised come.

Let the hated and rejected come.

Let the worst sinners come to the Tree of Life.

Were you cast out? Were you called a Hopeless Case? Did you lose everything because of your own stupidity? Join the club. We're all in the same boat, if the truth were told. And to all of us who fit the label "sinner," there is good news today. The Tree of Life is waiting, the door has been opened, the Son of God has shed his blood, the price has been paid, the sacrifice made, atonement has been accomplished.

Fear not. And don't wait another moment. Heaven waits for you. Rejoice as you come to Christ, but come quickly and come now, in this very instant. Welcome him into your heart. Then come and eat from the Tree of Life. Why will you die when you could live forever? May God give you wings of faith to fly to Jesus for your salvation. Amen. ([Farewell to Paradise: Cast Out That We Might Someday Return](#))

Drove out (01644)(garash) is a verb that means to cast out, drive out. Garash depicts God driving Adam and Eve from Eden (Ge 3:24), God driving Cain from His presence (Ge 4:14), Jonah expelled from God's sight (Jonah 2:4), Pharaoh driving out the Israelites (Ex 6:1; 12:39), Pharaoh driving Moses and Aaron from his presence (Ex. 10:11), repeatedly used of God driving out Israel's enemies (Ex 23:28-31, 33:2, 34:11, Dt 33:27, Jos. 24:12, Ps. 78:55, Ps. 80:8 contrast result because of Israel's disobedience - Jdg 2:3-note, Hos. 9:15) . It is used in the general sense of banishing outcasts from society (Job 30:5). In its figurative usage, it indicates divorcing one's wife (Lev. 21:7). It describes the sea or a river as driven and tossed (Isa. 57:20; Amos 8:8). The word is also used of a divorced woman in Lev. 21:7, a woman that is "put away from her husband."

Garash - 46x in 45v - Usage: dismissed(1), dispossessed(1), divorced(5), drive(16), driven(6), driven it away(1), driving(1), drove(8), drove them away(1), evict(1), expelled(1), surely drive(1), toss(1), tossed about(1), tossing(1).

Gen. 3:24; Gen. 4:14; Gen. 21:10; Ex. 2:17; Exod. 6:1; Exod. 10:11; Exod. 11:1; Exod. 12:39; Exod. 23:28; Exod. 23:29; Exod. 23:30; Exod. 23:31; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Lev. 21:7; Lev. 21:14; Lev. 22:13; Num. 22:6; Num. 22:11; Num. 30:9; Deut. 33:27; Jos. 24:12; Jos. 24:18; Jdg. 2:3; Jdg. 6:9; Jdg. 9:41; Jdg. 11:2; Jdg. 11:7; 1 Sam. 26:19; 1 Ki. 2:27; 1 Chr. 17:21; 2 Chr. 20:11; Job 30:5; Ps. 78:55; Ps. 80:8; Prov. 22:10; Isa. 57:20; Ezek. 31:11; Ezek. 36:5; Ezek. 44:22; Hos. 9:15; Amos 8:8; Jonah 2:4; Mic. 2:9; Zeph. 2:4

QUESTIONS - [Why did God have the cherubim guard just the east side of Eden \(Genesis 3:24\)?](#)

ANSWER - Genesis 3:24 says, "He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life." According to this verse, only one side of Eden was guarded—the east side. Was it possible for Adam and Eve to have sneaked in another way?

Part of understanding this passage is a consideration of the Hebrew perspective regarding directions. The Jewish people listed directions starting with "east," unlike Western cultures that typically list the compass points starting with "north." To say "at the east of the Garden of Eden" could have been a reference to the edge of Eden. Though this is not definitive, it appears to fit the context of the passage.

In addition, the presence of the sword-bearing [cherubim](#) stresses that Adam and Eve were forcefully expelled from the Garden of Eden. The word *cherubim* is plural, indicating several angelic beings, either on the eastern side or the edge of the Garden, who completely blocked the way to the [tree of life](#). The added facts that the sword was *flaming* and "turned every way" (which might mean that each angel had a sword) also emphasize the strong security God had provided. There was no possibility that Adam and Eve or any other person could later reach the tree of life.

Another possibility may be that guarding the "east side" of Eden is related to Genesis 2:8, which says, "And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed." If Eden was in the east, then guarding "the east" would make sense. In this interpretation, guarding the east means to guard the area where Eden was located.

Either way, the emphasis is that God completely protected the tree of life from any humans who would approach it. Whether the intended idea is protecting "the edge" or protecting "the location" of Eden, God's Word emphasizes that Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden of Eden, unable to return.

The Bible mentions the tree of life again, when it shows up in the new heaven with the Lord. Revelation 22:1-3a notes, "Then the

angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, **the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month** The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed.”

At the end of time, God’s people will experience the blessings of a restored creation and renewed access to the tree of life. GotQuestions.org

WHAT IS THE WOMAN’S DESIRE? SUSAN T. FOH

The current issue of feminism in the church has provoked the reexamination of the scriptural passages that deal with the relationship of the man and the woman. A proper understanding of Genesis 3:16 is crucial to this reconsideration of the Biblical view of the woman. In Genesis 3:16 God pronounces judgment on the woman. Two areas of the woman’s life are specifically mentioned: childbearing and her relationship to her husband. The latter is the concern of this article; “yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (Gen. 3:16b, RSV).

A. Common Interpretations

The translation of תשוקה causes a large part of the difficulty in understanding Genesis 3:16b. There are three typical interpretations.

(1) תשוקה is frequently equated with sexual desire. The woman’s craving for her husband “will be so strong that to satisfy it she will be ready to face all the pains and sorrows of childbearing.” **(1)** “... Thy desire shall be to thy husband—thou shalt not be able to shun great pain and peril for childbearing, for thy desire, thy appetite, shall be to thy husband ...” **(2)** The woman still desires marital intercourse though the result, conceiving and bearing children, brings pain. This interpretation closely links verse 16b with verse 16a (as does the RSV rendering of the waw as “yet,” which could be translated “and”), and so fits the immediate context.

(2) תשוקה is viewed as “the desire that makes her the willing slave of man.” **(3)** It is that “immense, clinging, psychological dependence on man.” **(4)** Seeing no reason to limit the scope of “desire” to sexual appetite, Clarence J. Vos would not exclude from it the woman’s desire for the man’s protection. **(5)** Keil and Delitzsch see “desire” as a morbid yearning; the woman “... was punished with a desire bordering upon disease (תשוקה from שוק to run, to have a violent craving for a thing) ...” **(6)**

(3) Calvin states that Genesis 3:16b means that the woman will desire only what her husband desires and that she will have no command over herself. **(7)** The woman’s desires are wholly subservient to her husband’s, as a result of God’s judgment. **(8)**

Despite the differences in the interpretation of תשוקה, all of the commentators cited above agree that, through the woman’s desire for her husband, he rules her. In other words, because the woman desires the husband in some way, he is able to rule over her.

B. Objections to the Preceding Interpretations

(1) The interpretation of תשוקה as sexual desire appears to be contradicted by etymology. Biblical scholars are well aware of the danger of confusing diachrony and synchrony in the use of this tool, but all sources of help must be weighed when there are only three occurrences of the word. **(9)** The verbal root appears to be שוק for which BDB suggests three homographs. BDB would relate תשוקה to the Arabic root šāqa, to desire, excite desire. **(10)** However, as they are aware, the phonemic equivalent of the Hebrew š is s in Arabic, a fact recognized by G. R. Driver **(11)** and Koehler-Baumgartner. **(12)** This suggests that the proper etymology in Arabic would be sāqa, to urge, drive on, impel, **(13)** a meaning consonant with the interpretation to be argued below.

(2) The rule of the husband, per se, is not a result of or punishment for sin. The headship of the husband over his wife is a part of the creation order. The commentators have dealt with this problem in two ways. The one ignores or misunderstands the New Testament interpretation of the creation order. **(14)** It is suggested that before the fall, man and woman were equal and that neither ruled.

... and he shall rule over thee, though at their creation both were formed with equal rights, and the woman had probably as much right to rule as the man; but subjection to the will of her husband is one part of her curse. **(15)**

The other more frequent method of dealing with this problem is to differentiate between the husband’s God-ordained headship and his “rule” in Genesis 3:16. The woman was subordinate to her husband from the beginning, but the “supremacy of the man was not intended to become a despotic rule, crushing the woman into a slave ...” **(16)** as it does after the fall. Before the fall, man’s rule was gentle; afterwards it is tyrannous. Rule (משל) in Genesis 3:16 is said to suggest suppressing or overcoming. **(17)** Not all agree that

the post-fall rule of man is different in quality. Some have suggested it is different only in extent; after the fall, the woman is wholly subject to her husband (causing one to wonder what the pre-fall limits on the husband's authority were). This total subjection of the woman makes her liable to arbitrary treatment by her husband; so the complete rule of the husband can lead to a reign of tyranny. **(18)** Practically, then, there is no difference in the rule of worse quality and that of greater extent.

(3) The preceding solution satisfies the demands of the overall context, i.e., the tyrannous rule of the husband seems an appropriate punishment for the woman's sin. However, if the woman's desire makes her a willing slave of her husband (A.2) or if she has no desires except for husband's (A.3), the hardship of punishment in Genesis 3:16b is absent, because the woman willingly submits herself to her husband's rule. But willing submission contradicts the context of judgment and clashes with the New Testament commands to submit to the husband's authority (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1), as well as experience.

C. Genesis 3:16b and Genesis 4:7b

תשוקה occurs only three times in the Old Testament (Gen. 3:16; 4:7; Song of Solomon 7:10). **(19)**

A comparison of Genesis 3:16b and 4:7b reveals that the Hebrew is the same, except for appropriate changes in person and gender; but the English translation (RSV, ASV) varies. **(20)**

כך-ימשל תשוקתך והוא אשך-ואל
3:16b
כו-תמשל ואליך תשוקתו ואתה
4:7b
RSV
... Yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.
... its [sin's] **(21)** desire is for you,
but you [Cain] must master it.
ASV
... and thy desire shall be to thy husband,
and he shall rule over thee.
... and unto thee shall be its desire;
but do thou rule over it.

In Genesis 4:7 sin's desire is to enslave Cain—to possess or control him, but the Lord commands, urges Cain to overpower sin, to master it. An active struggle between Cain and sin is implied; the victor of the struggle is not determined by the words God speaks to Cain.

E. J. Young notes the similarity of language in Genesis 3:16 and 4:7 but fails to account for it.

As we examine the language of the Lord, we note that it is capable of two interpretations. First of all, however, it is well to compare it with the similar language in Genesis 4:7. In that verse we read, 'and his desire is unto thee.' The meaning in this context of the fourth chapter is that what sin desires is what Cain will carry out. His desire is unto Cain in the sense that Cain is a slave thereto, and must perform whatever sin's desire may be. In the present verse Gen. 3:16 we may render, 'and unto thy husband is thy desire.' It is obvious that the meaning here is the reverse of what it was in the fourth chapter. Is it not clear that in this third chapter the meaning cannot be that the desire of the woman is unto the husband so that he must do what she wishes? Is it not clear that the woman is not here pictured as a despot who compels the man to do the thing she desires? Plainly this is not the meaning of the text. **(22)**

The above argument relies on certain presuppositions about the nature of the husband/wife relationship and about what the passage means. Young neglects the primary exegetical consideration—context.

The passage, he continues, has two possible meanings, which we have considered before:

- (1) The desire of the woman will be subject to her husband (A.3).
- (2) The wife has a yearning for her husband, as a disease (A.2).

Young prefers the first alternative. **(23)**

What Young considers an obviously impossible meaning for "desire," the meaning which "desire" has in the same syntactical setting only 15 verses away, is not impossible. The woman has the same sort of desire for her husband that sin has for Cain, a desire to possess or control him. This desire disputes the headship of the husband. As the Lord tells Cain what he should do, i.e., master or rule sin, the Lord also states what the husband should do, rule over his wife. The words of the Lord in Genesis 3:16b, as in the case

of the battle between sin and Cain, do not determine the victor of the conflict between husband and wife. These words mark the beginning of the battle of the sexes. As a result of the fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband. The woman's desire is to control her husband (to usurp his divinely appointed headship, and he must master her, if he can. So the rule of love founded in paradise is replaced by struggle, tyranny and domination.

Experience corroborates this interpretation of God's judgment on the woman. If the words "and he shall rule over you" in Genesis 3:16b are understood in the indicative, then they are not true. As Cain did not rule over sin (Genesis 4:7b), so not every husband rules his wife, and wives have desires contrary to their husbands' and often have no desire (sexual or psychological) for their husbands.

As we have stated earlier on the basis of context, the woman's desire does not contribute to the husband's rule; the opposite is the case. The two clauses, "and your desire to control shall be to your husband" and "but he should master you," are antithetical. The presence of the personal pronoun *אתה* (*hū*) in Gen. 4:7) supports this understanding of the relationship of the two clauses.

The participants of two parallel but in some ways different activities are brought into prominence by realizing them as grammatically similar items in preverbal positions. A common way of doing this is to refer to the two participants by means of explicit pronoun subjects. (24)

The use of the personal pronoun in preverbal position (*הוא*) is unusual and redundant and brings the participants into contrast. (25)

D. Summary

Contrary to the usual interpretations of commentators, the desire of the woman in Genesis 3:16b does not make the wife (more) submissive to her husband so that he may rule over her. Her desire is to contend with him for leadership in their relationship. This desire is a result of and a just punishment for sin, but it is not God's decretive will for the woman. Consequently, the man must actively seek to rule his wife.

The reasons for preferring this interpretation are:

- (1) It is consistent with the context, i.e., it is judgment for sin that the relation between man and woman is made difficult. God's words in Genesis 3:16b destroy the harmony of marriage, for the rule of the husband, part of God's original intent for marriage, is not made more tolerable by the wife's desire for her husband, but less tolerable, because she rebels against his leadership and tries to usurp it.
- (2) It permits a consistent understanding of *תשוקה* in the Old Testament also consistent with its etymology.
- (3) It recognizes the parallel between Genesis 3:16b and 4:7b. The interpretation of 4:7b is clearer; we know from the context that sin's desire to Cain involves mastery or enslavement and that Cain did not win the battle to rule sin.
- (4) It explains the fact that husbands do not rule their wives as a result of God's proclamation in Genesis 3:16b. (Further support is implied by the New Testament commands for wives to be submissive to their husbands and the requirements for elders to rule their families.) *בך-והוא ימשל* is not an indicative statement, for if God states that something will come to pass, it will.

Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Notes:

- 1 - David R. Mace, *Hebrew Marriage; a Sociological Study*, London, The Epworth Press, 1953, p. 196.
- 2 Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Kansas City, Mo., Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, p. 22
- 3 John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (International Critical Commentary), Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1930, p. 82.
- 4 Gini Andrews, *Your Half of the Apple; God and the Single Girl*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1972, p. 51.
- 5 Clarence J. Vos, *Woman in Old Testament Worship*, Delft, N. V. Verenigde Drukkerijen Judels & Brinkman, n.d., p. 24.
- 6 C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, V. 1: *The Pentateuch*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., n.d., p. 103. Cf. H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, Columbus, The Wartburg Press, 1942, p. 172.
- 7 John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, v. 1, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1948, p. 172.

8 Cf. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part 1*, Jerusalem, The Magnes Press, 1961, p. 165, and Edward J. Young, *Genesis 3: A Devotional and Expository Study*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, p. 127.

9 As J. Barr also recognizes, “Etymology and the Old Testament, Language and Meaning (Oudtestamentische Studien, Deel 19), Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1974, p. 2.

10 Francis Brown, S. R. Driver & Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1907, p. 1003.

11 G. R. Driver, “Notes and Studies: Theological and Philological Problems in the Old Testament,” *Journal of Theological Studies*, XLVII, 1946, p. 158.

12 Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1953. KB recognizes the derivation as from sāqa by their distinguishing only two verbal roots, p. 957. One must suspect that the major influence which made BDB willing to contradict the usual phonemic equivalence and associate תְּשׁוּקָה with the Arabic šāqa was the notion that תְּשׁוּקָה was a reference to sexual desire. The sounder lexicography may have been overruled by a commitment to the understanding of the passage.

13 Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Bk. 1, Pt. 4, London, Williams and Norgate, 1872, p. 1470.

14 1 Corinthians 11:8; 1 Timothy 2:13a. The source of and reason for the creation of the woman is significant. Man is created first; he is the source of the woman’s existence; and she is created for the sake of the man. Therefore, the head of the woman is man.

15 Clarke, p. 22.

16 Keil & Delitzsch, p. 103. Cf. Calvin, p. 172, and Young, p. 127.

17 Vos, p. 25

18 Keil & Delitzsch, p. 83.

19 Because the context of Song of Solomon 7:10 is ambiguous, it is not possible to determine the precise meaning of תְּשׁוּקָה in this case. We shall only suggest that the meaning of “desire” proposed in this article is credible in Song of Solomon 7:10. Note that the immediate context is that of possession: “I am my beloved’s ...”

20 KJV translated them the same; in Gen. 4:7, “... and thou shalt rule over him.” The problem is that Cain does not in fact rule, whether the antecedent of “him” is sin or Abel. Therefore, the future indicative or predictive translation of Gen. 4:7 is incorrect.

21 The masculine pronouns refer to the feminine noun “sin” חַטָּאת A. R. Hulst in *Old Testament Problems* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1960, p. 1) says: “The Hebr. active part. rōbēš ‘beseiger’, is often used of an animal that lies in wait for its prey... It is quite possible then, that the writer’s use of the masc. suffixes has been determined by this mental image of ‘the croucher’.” Cf. Robert S. Candlish, *The Book of Genesis*, v. 1, Edinburgh, Adam & Charles Black, 1868, p. 99; G. R. Driver, p. 158; Keil & Delitzsch, p. 112. The only other alternate antecedent for the masc. pronouns is Abel; then the rule of Cain as the first born is in view. This interpretation is unlikely because (1) “Abel” is distant from the pronouns and does not occur in God’s words to Cain but only in the preceding narrative; (2) it is not conclusive that the first born ruled his younger siblings; for instance, rule over his brothers is given to the supposed first born only at the death-bed of Isaac, and it is given to the second born Jacob by mistake (Gen. 27:29); and (3) what is the meaning of “desire” in such a case? Calvin (p. 203–4) explains the desire of Abel for Cain as that of an inferior for the superior, in this case the first born Cain. “Moreover, this form of speech is common [?] among the Hebrews, that the desire of the inferior should be towards him to whose will he is subject; thus Moses speaks of the woman (3:16) that her desire should be to her husband.” Calvin’s interpretation of “desire” in Gen. 3:16 and Gen 4:7 is consistent, but it is not appropriate in Song of Solomon 7:10, where the man’s desire is to his beloved. According to Calvin’s theory, the man would then be the inferior.

22 Young, p. 126–7.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

24 Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, The Hague, Mouton, 1974, p. 150.

25 *Ibid.*; cf. Takamitsu Muraoka, *Emphasis in Biblical Hebrew*, thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1969, p. 42.