



Genesis – Chapter 3:1-24 Sin Enters Paradise! (The Fall of Man) (Lesson #7)

3:1 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'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Vs 1 - The opening of chapter 3 is abrupt and startling! From no shame and then abruptly, now the serpent!

The Hebrew word is נחש (**nachash**). It is used a total of 31 times in the Old Testament. In the ESV it is translated as “**serpent**” all 31 times it is used. There are some who maintain that originally the word meant “**shining, upright creature.**” They support this idea, by the curse that God placed upon the serpent, Gen 3:14.

I am not sure I agree, but I understand where they are coming from.

Notice, the serpent is **craftier** than any other **beast of the field**. The Hebrew word can mean **crafty, cunning**, or even **clever**.

The serpent speaks and talks to the woman. Now could this type of animal speak in the garden? We do not know. Was Eve surprised when this animal talked? We do not know.

It is apparent that this serpent, was likely being used by **Satan** (adversary) aka the **Devil** (slanderer). So, there is more to this story than a **talking snake**.

But we do get this hint from the New Testament:

“7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world — he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” (Re 12:7-9 ESV)

In Satan’s interaction with Eve we learn something about the **enemy of men’s souls** that we should never forget.

The first scheme of the serpent, employed against Eve was to question what God had said. But notice what Satan asks: *“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”* Interesting, God said nothing like that. It seems Satan wants to get Eve interacting.

Most commentators tell us Satan’s goal here was to cause Eve to doubt God’s word, and I agree, but at this point it seems his goal is to get Eve talking.

Now as best we understand the story this is a great attack. If you remember Eve likely learned what God has said from Adam, so she did not hear it directly from God, but instead from her husband.

Satan does this all the time, his desire is our doubt, doubt in what we read in the Bible, doubt God’s love because of our circumstances, doubt. Doubt. DOUBT!

Vs 2 - So the woman responds to the serpent. Her reply appears to at first be correct, but then it shifts to incorrect. She says, *God said: You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden.*

Vs 2b - Then, she goes on to say: *“neither shall you touch it, lest you die.”*

As we understand the story, **God never set a prohibition around touching the tree.** Now maybe Adam added this prohibition when he told Eve. Maybe Eve in her own mind added the prohibition.

Maybe it was **innocent**, maybe there was **maliciousness on Eve's part**, we **simply do not know**.

APPLICATION: Now, there is a good lesson for us, even if it does not precisely apply to Eve. You and I are provided clear warnings about adding to or taking away from the word of God.

"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you." (De 4:2 ESV) Also (Pro 30:6; Rev 22:18-19)

Satan has got Eve talking, Eve has slightly modified God's word. Now Satan is ready to strike.

Vs 4 - The Serpent speaks for the second time. **Here we find what is likely his number one scheme.** The first time he **questioned** what God said to get Eve talking. Now Satan out and out **denies** what God said.

This is an out and out, **God lied to you.** That simple, but Satan is not done. **What God has told you is a lie.**

Now Satan has set Eve up for the kill shot, first he denies what God says, Now the final step.

Vs 5 - Here Satan launched a direct attack on God. An attack at the very person and motives of God!

Here is his method of operation:

- 1) **Question Eve** and get her talking.
- 2) **Deny** what God said, with the goal of causing **doubt** in what God has said.
- 3) **False Claim** that God is actually the villain here and He is trying to prevent you from getting something that would be good for you.

Question, Deny to cause Doubt, False Claim (this is the bait).

The creature, that was created to rely on Yahweh, can choose **moral autonomy**. That is to be like God, to make their **own rules**, to be their **own God**. The problem, they are not God, but instead, if they take this step, they will **become rebels** who are rebelling against **God's authority!**

Not that God has created evil, but they will **experientially come to know evil** (disobeying God).

6 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. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 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. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

So will Eve, (following the questioning, the denial, and the false claim) allow her mind and emotions, both attributes given by God to be influenced by Satan, or will she come back to what she knows is true?

Vs 6 - Here the woman **looks and considers the tree:**

- 1) It appears to be **good for food**.
- 2) It is actually a **very attractive tree**.
- 3) It is to be desired to make one **“wise.”** To give a person wisdom and understanding. To make one like God. The tree could do this, **so said the serpent**.

One cannot help but see John’s description:

“For all that is in the world — the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life — is not from the Father but is from the world.” (1Jo 2:16 ESV)

APPLICATION: Beware when you start looking and considering sin. For the next step gets much easier to take. Rather we should flee, leave the room, leave the area, call our spouse, phone a friend, grab our Bible, start quoting scriptures.

Confess, resist in the Spirit, and do not give place to the devil!

Considering all of that, the creature (the woman) chooses to **act autonomously**. To **disobey God**, to do things her **own way**. To **blaze her own trail**, to make her **own decisions**. I can see here reaching out and plucking the fruit!

Did something happen in her, at that moment? At least one thing, she has just disobeyed her creator and she likely immediately felt that guilt, a feeling that would have been alien to Eve, up until that moment.

Vs 6b - It appears that Adam was here the whole time. If not right there, he was close by, and she brings the fruit to him. We do not know what she said. We do not know what he said.

But rather than step in, rather than say no. Adam sinned, sinned against God, operated with **God-like autonomy**, violated the one command given by the one true and living God.

In a moment, what Paul told us in Romans 5 and 8 happens

- 1) Adam and Eve die spiritually.
- 2) The whole creation is plunged into death and spiritual darkness.
- 3) Adam begins dying physically and all of his offspring will be born only to die.
- 4) His progeny will all be brought into this world spiritually dead, at birth estranged from God!

Why would Adam eat **willfully from the tree**? He was not deceived like Eve, he was not tricked like Eve. I believe that he loved Eve so much he was willing to join her in the consequences of her sin, rather than stand outside of those consequences. I am not justifying Adam.

In this, there is something **gospel rich**. Eve sinned and Adam joined her in that sin. This is a picture of Jesus:

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2Co 5:21 ESV)

You see Jesus never sinned, but He identifies with us in our sin, out of His love for us!

Vs 7 - So the moment they ate, we read their **“eyes were opened.”** **What does this mean?** We are not talking literally, but they now have knowledge that they did not have before. They now know they are naked. They have always been naked, but now it is an issue, now they do not want to be naked in front of each other. Now being naked appears to bring some type of shame.

Not only have they picked up some knowledge God did not intend for them to have, but they have experienced shame and guilt, things God never intended for them to experience.

They take fig leaves and sew them together to cover their nakedness, to cover their reproductive organs.

From innocent bliss, in a moment, in a second, to shame and guilt, and worse separation from their Creator!

Vs 8 - Then, the next thing we are told is that they “**heard**” the sound of Yahweh Elohim, walking in the garden, in the cool of the day.

Then they hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh Elohim. Having disobeyed his ONE law, the fugitives now hide from their creator.

It is likely that God showed up each afternoon in the “cool of the day” to commune with his creation.

Today he shows up, but they do not meet Him. Of course, He knew what happen before it happened and he knew the minute it happened.

APPLICATION: This is where sin takes us every time. A nanosecond of pleasure, but the regret, shame, and remorse is a gift that keeps on giving!

Vs 9 - Then Yahweh Elohim, calls to the man and says **where are you?** Now of course God knows where Adam is and he knows what His creatures have done.

We do not know how many times he calls, but ultimately, he finds Adam and Eve and we read in verse 10.

Vs 10 - It appears that Adam speaks for the couple, he recounts how he heard God in the garden, and he was afraid. The Hebrew word is **יָרָא** (yare’) and this is the first occurrence of this word in the Hebrew Bible.

For the first time ever, **man was afraid.**

Naked, the Hebrew word is **עֵרֹם** ‘eyrom ay-rome’. As you might have guessed this is the first time this word is being used in the Old Testament.

Adam and Eve for the first time, hide from their creator! Adam and Eve for the first time have experience shame! Adam and Eve for the first time have experienced fear!

Vs 11 - God, knowing the answer asks the question. Who told you that you were naked? Then He asks a second question, have you eaten of the single tree that I commanded you not to eat of. Of, course God knows the answers to these questions.

Vs 12 - Here, man tells the truth, this is indeed what happened, but it is more than that. This is man **shirking his responsibility**. This is fallen man, **blaming the woman** for what he did.

But it is more than that, notice how Adam says it: *"The woman whom you gave to be with me..."*

God this is your fault. You gave me the woman after all! **Notice what is missing.** God I am sorry, Father, I am sorry. God can you ever forgive me? God, I blew it!

Instead, this started an epidemic of man of blaming someone else for his own sinful behavior.

13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the

days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." 16 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." 17 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Vs 13 - Then Yahweh Elohim said to the woman. **What have you done?** She too tells the **truth**, yet within that telling, is a **complete denial of all her own responsibility in what happened**. This is not solely and completely the fault of the serpent.

As you might imagine this is the first use in the Old Testament of this word translated **deception**. It is the Hebrew word: נָשָׂא (nasha'), which means to **deceive** or **beguile**. Prior to this there had been no deception, now we live in a world that is characterized by lies and deception.

Again, it is clear what is missing, God I am sorry, Father, I am sorry. God can you ever forgive me?

Vs 14- Yahweh Elohim, now turns to the serpent. Not to ask questions but to pronounce judgment!

The judgment appears to be in part on the animal that Satan used when he launched his attack against man as well as on Satan himself.

Because you have done this (a curse):

- 1) **You** are cursed above all livestock and beasts of the field and on your belly shall you go.
- 2) **On your belly** you shall eat dust.

These two pronouncements seem to be against the animal that Satan used.

Many believe, based on this proclamation that the **serpent**, originally had **legs** and **did not crawl on his belly**.

This curse makes no sense if the serpent is already crawling on his belly!

Vs 15 – Here the curse goes directly to the agent who launched this attack against God's crowning creation:

- 3) **I will put hatred** (enmity) between **you** and the **woman**.

As you consider this, Satan likely thought, OK, I now have man and woman on my side in my rebellion against God. They are now my allies, even if unwillingly.

But God will not let this alliance stand, nor will He allow Satan to pull down his crowning creation.

Instead... God will execute a plan to save man. A plan hatched in the mind of God long before man ever fell. A plan to redeem man, although this plan would be very costly to execute.

So instead of the woman becoming an ally, God will put hatred between the woman and Satan.

- 4) **I will put hatred** between your offspring and her offspring.

The Hebrew word is "seed" and it brings with it biological connotations. Neither Satan nor Eve can produce the "seed." Only the human male can produce "seed" of humans.

Satan's seed consists of those who knowingly and willfully set themselves against the seed of the woman. In doing this they partake, in a very real sense of the character of the adversary:

"43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (Joh 8:43-44 ESV) Also (Eph 2:1-2)

The seed of the woman on the other hand refers to those in the human family who would choose to follow God, to obey God and are brought into his family by faith in him. This prophecy forecasts and a long conflict between the children of the kingdom children and the children of the wicked one.

I believe there is also one primary seed of the woman (Jesus) and one primary seed of the serpent, who is likely Satan himself or the coming anti-christ, the one whom the dragon gives his power to (Rev 13:2).

So first, hatred between Eve and Satan, second hatred between her offspring and his offspring.

Here we are introduced to something that will develop throughout the Old Testament the “**seed of the woman.**” It will find its ultimate and final fulfillment in the birth of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah.

5) **The offspring** of the woman shall **bruise** שׁוּפָה (shuwph), **bruise, crush, or break your head.** This promised seed will crush the head of the serpent. Not only will the serpent's plans fail. But here God is promising one who will be born of woman who will **crush Satan's head.**

This is what theologians call the proto-evangelion. The initial announcement of the good news! Here we find at least veiled references to the coming Messiah:

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isa 7:14 ESV)

“6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.” (Isa 9:6-7 ESV)

6) **You shall bruise** (same Hebrew word) crush or break the heel of this promised off-spring of the woman.

This seed, will be attacked by Satan, and He will be injured by Satan, and sustain a bruise to his heel.

But the grand declaration is that **Jesus will crush his head!**

A sixfold **curse** is pronounced upon the serpent and the one who is behind the serpent (Satan, or the Devil).

Vs 16 - Yahweh Elohim, now turns to the woman and pronounces judgment in the form a curse:

- 1) I will **multiply your pain in childbearing**, in pain you will bring forth children. Apparently pain associated with the gift of bringing new life into the world, was not part of the original design.
- 2) **Your desire**, shall be for your husband.
- 3) **Your husband** shall “**rule**” over you. It is the same Hebrew word that the sun would rule over the day.

Here, **something changes** between the relationship of the one who is taken out of the side of man and meant, by design to serve alongside him.

Vs 17 - Third, God turns to Adam. Here the full force is vetted not against Eve, but against Adam! It is interesting, that at least in word count, the largest curse is reserved for the man.

Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, rather than the voice of God!

- 1) **The ground is cursed** because of you. The ground, the earth, the entire creation is plunged into the curse.

The curse is over the entire physical creation. Even the elements, the dust of the earth are cursed because of Adam's sin!

I suspect that God did not create death in the creation, as much as he removed his power to keep it in a steady state, and thus **entropy begins**.

Gradual, degenerative mutations would now begin in the plants, animals and even in man.

Thus, because of Adam's sin all living things, wear out, they break down, the mutations collect over time and chaos ultimately ensues.

- 2) **In pain** (a better translation is **sorrow** or **toil**), you shall eat of the ground all the days of your life. Again, it appears the creation that was willingly bearing food, will now need to be worked, and with great reluctance it will now bear food.
- 3) **Thorns and thistles** it shall bring forth to you and you work to produce drops that you will eat.
 - a. Apparently thorns and thistles were not part of the original creation.
- 4) By the **sweat of your brow**, you shall labor hard to get the earth to produce.
 - a. It seems originally, it was a willing participant.
- 5) You shall work hard, until you ultimately **return to the ground** from which you were taken.
- 6) For you were **created from the dust** and you shall **return to the dust**.

20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 ¶ And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. 22 ¶ Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever — " 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 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.

Vs 20 - Adam, who had named her woman, now gives her a unique name, **Eve**, because she is the mother of all living. In the Hebrew her name literally means "**living**" or "**life**"

It seems that Adam is here indicating his trust and faith in God's promise, not only would they have children, but God would send the "seed of the woman" to bring salvation.

How is Eve the mother of all living? It is assumed that this was added later by Moses, because at the time she was the mother of no one, although it could also be a grand declaration of faith.

Now, this verse seems to enforce the idea that all men descended from Eve, and thus there is no other non-Adamic men, or men who came from some other place on the planet. Thus Eve is the "**mother of all living!**"

Vs 21 - Yahweh Elohim made for Adam and Eve garments that were made out of the skins of animals and he clothed them.

Adam and Eve had tried to hide their nakedness with fig leaves they sewed together. But the father, likely in front of them, killed animals, we would guess two sheep and provided "a covering" for them.

Here we are also introduced to the need for a "covering" atonement for our sins, we are introduced to blood sacrifice (life for life), a lesson that the nation of Israel will be raised on.

We can imagine that Adam and Eve watched in horror as the father killed two animals to provide for them clothing and more importantly a covering.

The deeper truth is that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins (Heb 9:22). The still deeper truth is that the blood of bulls and goats could never atone for man's sins, could never cover man's sin (Heb 10:4). It would require the death of the last Adam, the Son of God, the second person of the Godhead to cover man's sins!

Don't miss the most important point. At this point, man could do nothing, God is the one who stepped in and covered man's nakedness pointing to the greater reality that God would step in and fix man's sin problem with the sacrifice of His Son!

One more point, when we say that Jesus Christ atoned for our sins. The word brings with it the idea of purging guilt and covering sins and thus providing reconciliation. This idea is first introduced here!

Vs 22 – Then God declares that the man has **become like us...** **Here again, we see a hint at the trinity, it is a clear reminder of the uni-plurality of God.**

Man has declared himself to be like God, moral autonomy, knowing good and evil. This statement, made by the triune God, should be viewed as a statement made in great sorrow, contrary to the design of the creator.

Man created in God's image, and now that image is shattered, marred, damaged, by Adam exercising moral autonomy.

The tree of life, which was no doubt a real tree, but is likely meant to serve as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So had Adam and Eve, eaten from this real tree, they would have lived forever, in a sinful fallen state.

We cannot know for sure, but not only was the tree a picture of Christ and a picture of His tree (the cross), but it had real medicinal value that allowed it to somehow prevent cellular decay and possibly even enact cellular repair, possibly why it was in the garden in the first place.

Vs 23 - Then read these somber, yet shocking words: ***the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.***

At first glance this seems harsh, over-bearing, even unfair. **But mercy and grace must drive** Adam and Eve them from the garden and from tree, into the harsh environment of a fallen world!

God banishes man and woman from the garden, lest he eat of the tree of life and live forever in a rebellious state.

Vs 24 - If we were to give a title to verses 24 it would likely be **Paradise Lost!**

He (Yahweh Elohim) drove out the man and woman. At the east of the garden, He (Yahweh Elohim) placed a cherubim, a powerful angel with a flaming sword, one that turned every way.

The role of the cherubim... To guard, the exact same word that was translated **keep** for Adam. It is the Hebrew word: שומר (shamar) shaw-mar', it means to **keep, to preserve, or to guard.**

Here the ones who had been placed in the garden to work (serve) to keep (guard) are banished from the garden of Eden, by Yahweh Elohim and sent out to till the ground.

In their place cherubim are assigned to keep or guard שומר (shamar), **the way to the tree of life!**

Adam and Eve were to keep the garden, having sinned against God, they are cast out of the garden!
