

# The Book of Genesis

## Chapter 3

***3:1 The serpent, which was the most cunning of all the creatures the LORD God had made, asked the woman, "Is it true that God has forbidden you to eat from any tree in the garden?" (REB)***

### Serpent

The term "serpent" comes from a Hebrew root word meaning "to hiss": applicable to almost any reptile—snakes, lizards and dragons. God made not only the physical creatures of the physical creation, but creatures of spirit before the physical universe was made—the serpent being just one of many. The serpent referred to here is the devil. From its creation, this being was, now is and continues to be a dragon. JOB 41 describes this "serpent" as a smoking-nostrilled, fire-breathing, heavily-scaled, long-necked dragon with clawed feet and a long, whip-like tail. This was the being in the garden—not the tree snake portrayed in Christian artwork.

### Confrontation

The devil approached the woman instead of the man. The reason, according to 1PE 3:7 was that the woman was created as the weaker vessel. She was designed by God to be more sympathetic and emotional than the man. The serpent could more easily sway her emotionally than it could the man.

The devil immediately plants the thought that God is holding something back from the man and woman.

***3:2-3 She replied, "We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, except for the tree in the middle of the garden. God has forbidden us to eat the fruit of that tree or even to touch it; if we do, we shall die." (REB)***

***3:4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. (NIV)***

In answer to her statement, the devil partially quotes God by using the term "surely die," just as God did while speaking to Adam in 2:17. This is the first contradiction to the teaching God had given them.

***3:5 "for God knows that, as soon as you eat it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God himself, knowing both good and evil." (REB)***

God's intent was for man to eventually become like Himself. However, the change had to occur after man had proven that he was willing to be like God in thought and action—not just in knowledge. Demonstrating godly character and behavior is unimportant to Satan, who places knowledge above all else. He uses his incredible knowledge to try and mask God's truth from the world. Satan was attempting to convince the woman that whatever she needed to know was attainable without God.

***3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom [REB: "for the knowledge it could give"], she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. (NIV)***

1JO 2:15-16 states: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." The woman gave in to the devil, manifesting the state of mind of the world.

According to Paul in 1TI 2:14, Adam was not deceived by the devil, but Eve was. The wording of vs 6 seems to indicate Adam was present when she ate the fruit.

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 \*\*\* TIME OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD \*\*\*
 

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This event was literally the founding of the present condition of the world, shutting off the privilege of access to the Holy Spirit and beginning Satan's rule over man. Man's decision made it necessary for Christ to shed His blood (REV 13:8), paying the penalty for man's disobedience (GEN 2:17). As Jesus stated in LUK 11:50-51, "*that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel.*"

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**3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.** (NIV)

God created Adam and made Eve each with a neutral mind, receptive to God's instructions. God had not allowed the devil access to the man and woman until the one-on-one confrontation between the devil and the woman. Even then, the devil was only allowed access through intellect, not through spiritual influence. Once Satan had achieved deception through intellectual arguments, God allowed him to resume the position of prince of this world. He then began his spiritual influence over the physical creation. His thoughts began permeating the minds of humanity.

#### Result of Disobedience

There was also knowledge that came with their disobedience; guilt filled the minds of Adam and Eve. This was a new experience, unlike anything they had previously encountered. Not being able to hide the terrible sensation, they tried to hide their bodies. Paul sums up this incident in TIT 1:15 (NIV), "*To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.*"

**3:8 They heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of day; and the man and his wife hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.** (TAN)

Man hid from God; God did not hide from man.

**3:9-10 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."** (NIV)

Adam hid because he knew he had disobeyed. Shame and guilt filled his mind.

**3:11-12 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman You put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."** (NIV)

#### Assigning Blame

Adam would not confess his guilt, passing the blame to his wife while implying that the ultimate fault was with God since He was responsible for her existence.

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

Eve, in turn, passes the blame to the devil. Neither Eve nor Adam admitted fault. They did not display repentance for their disobedience.

**3:14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go [TAN: "on your belly shall you crawl], and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.**

### Curse upon the Devil

The curse was not a loss of legs, but rather a loss of his previous position. He had ruled above every creature on the earth until now. He would lose this position and ultimately be degraded to the lowest of positions. Paul states to the Church in ROM 16:20 that "*God will shortly bruise Satan under your feet.*" The devil will be forced to eat dirt by virtue of man [when elevated to the God plane] walking over him. The extent of the curse was greater than any suffered by any of the physical creatures made by God. The reason was due to the very limited lifespan of the physical creatures, but the thousands of years which the devil would live with the knowledge of his ultimate demise, followed by its fulfillment at the time of the resurrection.

**3:15 And 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** [Judas' betrayal: JOH 13:27; PSA 41:9]." (NIV)

### Enmity

God states that He would cause a level of distaste to develop between the two. The woman would come to detest the devil for what it cost humanity.

### "Your Offspring"

The offspring of the devil are all who follow the devil's directions:

- Jesus called the Pharisees who rejected Him a "*brood of vipers*" (MAT 3:7; 23:33) and the "*children of the wicked one*" (MAT 13:38).
- Paul called Elymas the sorcerer the "*child of the devil*" (ACT 13:10).
- John says that all who sin are "*the children of the devil*" (1JO 3:8-10).
- Jesus claimed the Jews who wanted to kill him had the devil for their father (JOH 8:40-44).

### "Her Seed"

The KJV says "**her seed**"—implying a virgin birth. The offspring is singular and translated "he" in the NIV. This offspring was to be the Christ, who destroyed the works of the devil through His death (HEB 2:14). Jesus showed by His life and through His death that He retained power over the devil, crushing his head—destroying his position of rulership.

This is the first recorded prophecy of a coming Messiah—one who was able to undo the damage created by the devil.

**3:16 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.**

### Curse upon the Woman

The reason for the increase in sorrow was because humanity was condemned to be cut off from God and placed under the authority of the devil—reaping the resulting grief.

### Corruption of Marriage

The REB states "*You will desire your husband, but he will be your master.*" The initial marital arrangement became corrupted, just as did the marriage arrangements of all their descendants. By

making the decision to self-discover good and evil, man forfeited God's guidance in the marital contract. The physically-stronger male began to degrade the woman, and the marital relationship became that of a master and slave, rather than one of equal partners. God is forewarning them about the consequences of their decision to disobey.

**3:17 To Adam He said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,...' (NIV)**

#### Persuading Adam

Adam knew better. Yet, he allowed himself to be persuaded by his wife to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Some have interpreted this verse to mean that a man should never take the advice of a woman. Yet, there are other examples in the Bible to show the value of a woman's advice (1SA 25; The Book of Esther). What this verse does show us is, at this time, Adam should have refused her persuasion.

**3:17 (cont.) "...Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. (NIV)**

#### Curse upon the Man

Until this time, man had been given a garden where all of his food needs could be met without much physical labor. All he was required to do was keep the vegetation under control. This level of prosperity would have allowed man more time to pursue deepening his relationship with God. Now, however, the earth would be firmly under the devil's control again, and the result would be what follows.

**3:18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,... (NIV)**

God's way would have yielded the knowledge of how to keep the environment unpolluted and productive. Man would now need to experiment on his own, and with the influence of the devil in his mind, would eventually pollute the environment and destroy the soil until it would yield vegetation greatly lacking in wholesome nutrition.

**3:18 (cont.)-19 ...and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." (NIV)**

God had ordained that disobedience would result in death. Now He indicates that the the lifespan of man would be limited.

**3:20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living. (NIV)**

#### Naming Eve

Adam had already called her "woman" (2:23) indicating her origin "out of man." Now he gives her a proper name, signifying her unique position.

**3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed [Hebrew: "labash" = "to put on apparel"] them. (NIV)**

#### Bloodshed

Now that sin had been committed, it was necessary for blood to be shed. From this point on, man was allowed to eat the flesh of certain animals as well as the vegetation God had earlier appointed as food (1:29).

#### Clothing

Clothing was not given to them because their bodies were sinful and needed to be hidden. Instead, without God's protection in the garden, they would now require clothing to protect their bodies from the elements, and as children were born, to maintain proper bodily privacy. God was not hiding their bodies; the Hebrew word for hiding or concealing is "kasah" (9:23), which is not used here.

***3:22 And 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." (NIV)***

#### Requirement of Grace

This does not mean that if man had quickly eaten the fruit of the Tree of Life after disobeying God, that he would live forever in the flesh, or as a spirit. Once the choice was made for all mankind, God's plan required access to Him and His spirit to be limited to those that He would specifically choose. To allow man access to the Tree of Life would go against the principle defined by Paul in ROM 9:15-16, "...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy...It does not therefore depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy." God's plan now required mercy and grace in order to comprehend His plan and learn how to receive the spirit necessary for entry into His family.

***3:23 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. (NIV)***

#### Cut off from God

God had to close off mankind's access to His spirit, symbolized by the Tree of Life.

***3:24 After He drove the man out, He placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (NIV)***

#### Cherubim

These guardians are most likely responsible for the ever-present guardians of treasures found in mythology worldwide.