

## Genesis 3 – Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

As we come to ch. 3 and realize this is the chapter that speaks of that fateful event we call the *Fall*, we realize that little detail is given about Adam & Eve's life prior to this.

How long did they enjoy the goodness of Eden before this took place?

What did their day consist of?

Just how intimate was their communion with God?

These things aren't spelled out for us though our curiosity runs high.

The lack of narrative about these things reminds us that the Bible doesn't purport to be an exhaustive historical record.

It's theme is to reveal God's plan of redemption and so it centers it's story around this theme.

It tells us only what we need to know so that we might find the answers we need to live as God desires.

Before we get in to tonight's study, we need to see that what we find in this chapter needs to be understood as a *literal historical event*. This isn't myth, or some legend that was concocted to explain evil. Adam and Eve were *real historical figures*. Eden was a real place and the Fall was an historical event.

We have to understand the story this way because of a couple of crucial factors:

1) Jesus referred to Adam and Eve as *real people* and based his teaching on marriage on the account of their union recorded in Genesis 2. [Matthew 19, Mark 10]

Now, either Jesus was mistaken, or He was telling the truth.

Which option ought we go with?

His resurrection from the dead proves Him to be THE reliable source of all truth so we ought to take His reference to Adam & Eve as factual.

2) The Apostle Paul refers to Adam as a literal person and makes him one of two representatives of all humanity.

**1 Corinthians 15:20-22 • But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those**

**who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**

**1 Corinthians 15:45 • And so it is written, “*The first man Adam became a living being.*” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**

**Romans 5:12-15 • Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned . . . Nevertheless death reigned from Adam . . . who is a type of Him who was to come. . . . For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.**

Theologians refer to what Paul says in these passages as the *Federal Headship of Humanity*.

In other words – there are two great representatives for the Human Race: Adam & Christ; the First Adam and the Last Adam, as Paul says it in 1 Cor. 15:45.

All people are descendants of the first Adam in a *physical* sense, and so are under the curse and ban of sin.

Think of it this way – Dominion of Earth had been given to Adam as we saw in Ch. 1.

When they fell, they surrendered that dominion to the devil.

They became slaves of sin, and all children born to a slave are also slaves.

Slaves have no legal rights so no one was qualified to enter the contest to secure man’s freedom and restore his lost dominion.

All that was - until Christ.

Because he was born of a virgin, the stain and curse of Adam’s sin was not passed on to Him.

He was a free man and so able to enter the contest to rescue man and deliver him from bondage to sin and death.

He won that contest and so He's become the NEW head or representative of the human race.

But the great difference between Adam and Christ is that whereas all people are automatically linked to Adam by physical birth, they must chose to link to Christ by spiritual birth – which comes through placing your trust in Him.

The sons and daughters of Adam must come to Christ and ask Him to put the key of salvation to their chains of sin.

In these verses, Paul is saying we are either in Adam or in Christ; one or the other.

Adam must be a real historical figure and the Fall a real event, or the Person and Work of Christ lose their power to save us.

With that as background and foundation, let's dive into the text . . .

### CHAPTER 3

**<sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”**

Though Satan isn't mentioned in this chapter, it's clear that he's the one who's behind this.

In John 8:44, Jesus refers to him as the murderer from the beginning and the father of lies.

In Rev. 12:9 & 20:2 refer to the devil as “the great dragon . . . that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.”

In Ezekiel 28:13-19, we're told that Satan was in Eden.

Other passages link Satan with a serpent. [Job 26:13; Isaiah 51:9]

From what we read later in the chapter when God curses the serpent, we can draw a safe conclusion that Satan *used* one of the animals God had created in his approach of Eve.

He *possessed* it in some manner in order to set this up.

Because of the judgment God lays on the serpent, it's reasonable to conclude that it originally stood upright and was a creature

of beauty.

We conclude this because it's the devil's standard tactic to present himself as an *angel of light*, as Paul says in 2 Cor. 11:14.

So he comes to Eve in a form that would commend itself to her attention.

But his union with the serpent has produced something that was far more intelligent and crafty than any of the beasts God had created.

When the devil approaches the woman in the form of the serpent, he has an agenda, a plan – and that is her destruction.

Of course, he can't admit that to her – she never would have listened to his suggestions if she'd known up front that he intended to make a slave of her and destroy her by destroying her relationship with God.

We used this passage to examine the anatomy of Temptation last Sunday. [Tape/CD]

The question arises at this point – where did Satan come from?

When was he created and how did he come to oppose God?

We don't have time to go into depth on the origin of Satan tonight but let me give just a thumbnail overview of what the Bible says on this score.

In Isaiah 14 & Ezekiel 28 we find the main passage which speak about the origin of the devil.

He began as a heavenly creature named *Lucifer* who was the highest of all God's creations.

He was one of the cherubim who had great beauty and wisdom implanted in his being.

Musical instruments were a part of his equipment and it appears he was charged with the task of leading the heavenly host in the worship of God.

But something happened *inside* Lucifer that proved his undoing; pride moved him to seek to become the *object* of worship instead of contenting himself to lead worship.

Scripture does not give us the reason behind this change but there is a legend from the Jews which may give us some insight.

It's said that when Lucifer found out about God's plan to make man, a creature of the dust into whom He would put His Spirit, and then would eventually raise man to the place of being God's eternal companion, and that Lucifer would be serving UNDER that dirt-born creature, he balked.

Lucifer decided that such a plan was absurd and that if this was God's plan then heaven needed a new ruler.

He convinced a third of the angels to join him in rebellion and assaulted God's throne.

But of course he was defeated – and instead of surrendering, his pride drove him to become God's adversary – which is what the name *Satan* means.

Lucifer, which means "Light holder" became Satan, the adversary.

Since man was the focal point of the controversy between God and Satan, the war between them centers on the fate of man; humanity becomes the battleground and prize.

Satan wants to rob God of His companion, and of course, God wants to redeem man and bring Him home.

So here we see Satan coming to Eve, beginning his long conceived plot to destroy her, her husband, and their descendants.

He begins by asking her about God's command.

**... "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"**

Notice how cunning & crafty he is!

He doesn't want Eve to consider God's goodness or all the freedom and blessing she enjoyed.

No – he wanted her to focus her attention on the *one prohibition* God had given.

So he asks a question that seems to cast her understanding of God's word into some doubt.

"Did God really say you can't eat of every tree?"

See how crafty the devil is? He's already twisting the Word of God into something other than what it means.

In Ch. 2 God was quite clear – they were free to eat of all the trees save 1, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

So the devil comes and with a simple bit of twisted logic he says –

“Well that means you *can't* eat of all the trees!”

Now, until the devil said this – it was all quite clear to Eve – she could eat of all the trees except that one!

Listening to the serpent she begins to get a little confused because just what does all & every mean now?

Instead of considering all she's free to do, her attention is drawn to what's forbidden.

In 2 Cor. 11:3, Paul says that Eve was deceived by the craftiness of Satan.

We would do well to remember this when it comes to temptation.

The devil is a master at twisting things around and getting us to focus on that which we ought not entertain.

We will never outsmart him, we need to trust in Christ and run to Him to protect us when tempted.

The spiritually mature know the very most effective way to resist temptation is to pray, praise, and to bring temptation into the light of Christ's presence.

## **2And the woman said to the serpent, . . .**

Let's stop right there – Eve doesn't seem surprised that the serpent talked to her.

This may mean that prior to the Fall some of the animals had the power of speech – or it may mean that besides communing with God, Adam and Eve also communed with some of the angels who took shape and form in some way.

In any case, Eve doesn't seem put off by the serpent's communication.

## **2And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup>but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”**

Eve rehearses the command of God – and she gets it right, right up to the end, but then she adds something.

God had told them not to eat; He never said anything about touching it.

It seems that in their zeal to keep God's command not to eat of the forbidden tree they had also set up a personal fence around it that

said they wouldn't even *touch* it.

What they did in establishing such a personal conviction is a great idea and something we all ought to do as it relates to the direction of God for our lives.

But the mistake Eve made was in equating her convictions about how to obey God with the Word of God itself.

You see, when I elevate my personal convictions about what God would have me do to the place of the Word of God, then they aren't just for me anymore, they apply to you too.

If I find television offensive and am stumbled by it, so I unplug it and put it in the garage, that's great!

But if I equate that conviction with Paul's command to not be conformed to this world, then I am going to start expecting YOU to unplug your TV too.

And if I visit your home and see a TV, well, then I'm going to think your relationship with the Lord is deficient.

And I'm not going to let my children play with yours because I don't want them being tainted by a worldly mindset!

Elevating *personal convictions* about *how* to obey God *to the place of scripture* is called *legalism*.

Let me be understood clearly here – there is nothing wrong with having personal convictions about how to obey the Commands of God – in fact, having such convictions is good!

What's wrong is when we demand *others* live by *our* convictions.

We must discern the difference between the Word of God and our personal decisions on how to respond to it.

There was confusion in Eve's mind on this score and the devil saw it as an opportunity to launch his attack.

**4Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.**

Regarding what EVE has said – what the devil says here is strictly true – up to a point.

They wouldn't die if they touch it. But they *would* if they ate.

**5For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

Satan weaves both deceit and truth together! And this is what made it all the more powerful and dangerous!

Satan knows that a lie all by itself is fairly easily recognized, so he wraps the lie in a truth to make it more palatable.

Like children's chewable vitamins which are sweet on the outside but have the bitterness in the middle.

Deception is the skin of a truth stuffed with a lie.

The fact of the matter is, the bottom line of their eating of the fruit *was* death – *immediate* spiritual death and *eventual* physical death.

And besides that, they would plunge the earth under the curse where death becomes the inevitable end of *all* living things.

In his cunning, the devil insinuated that the reason why God prohibited them eating of the forbidden tree was because it would grant them something God wanted to keep for Himself – knowledge!

Yeah – he told Eve that by disobeying God, she would gain a benefit.

Sin, he said, would lead to wisdom and experience and the knowledge of good and evil.

Now, the fact is, she already knew good; she just had no knowledge or experience of evil.

And of course – that' was good. That's the way God intended it! There are lots of things God never intended man to know, because knowing them would mean thwarting the knowledge & experience He *wanted* mankind to have.

Which is greater, the innocent enjoyment of a paradise untouched by sin and death forever – or a life in a fallen world marred by depravity, perversion, crime, violence, death, sickness and pain for 70 or 80 years?

Another lie the devil told Eve is that if she ate she would be *like God*.

It's interesting that in Isa 14:14, this was one of the aspirations that motivated Lucifer's rebellion against God.

**I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.**

He decided to try this appeal on Eve too.

You know it's interesting that what the devil said to Eve here is the same thing he says to us in temptation.



- 1) “You will not die.” Don’t worry about the consequences of sin!  
You can duck them; you’ll evade the fallout.  
Don’t think about the consequences, just think about the  
sweetness of the fruit!
- 2) “Your eyes will be opened.”  
Sin will enhance your life!  
God has drawn tight boundaries around you but life has so  
much more to offer!  
Innocence is denigrated and knowledge for knowledge’s sake is  
elevated to the place of what the world calls “sophistication  
– elegance – culture!”  
Think about young people today – being a *virgin* is considered  
laughable while being experienced is a prized trait.
- 3) “You will be like God.”  
The bottom line for Eve was the idea that she didn’t have to  
answer to God any longer.  
She could be independent and be on the same level as He.  
Instead of existing FOR HIM, she could exist for herself; living  
by her own rules and reality.  
It’s interesting that this is precisely the lie we see fostered in all  
of the occult and most clearly in the New Age Movement.  
You may remember the movie some years ago by Shirley  
McLaine – “*Out of My Tree*” or “*Out On A Limb*” or  
something like that.  
It told the story of her spiritual journey and was nothing but  
a puff-piece promo for the New Age Movement.  
But the most telling moment was when she was on the  
beach with her arms outstretched finally chanting the  
mantra that was the bottom line for all her searching – “I  
am God! I am God!”  
I remember sitting there watching and shouting at the TV  
screen – “No you’re not! No you’re not!”  
Shirley, if you’re God, then why do you have facial lifts and  
tummy tucks and liposuction?  
If you’re God then why do you also have to take  
tranquilizers when you’re stressed and pep pills to get  
up?  
If you’re God, then why don’t you go down to East LA and

stop the riots.

Why don't you go into the AIDS hospice you are so fond of supporting and wave your hand over the ill and restore their health?

You're not God, you're Shirley McLaine, a poor deluded sinner who's bought a pack of lies the devil has sold you and is using you to spread around so he can hang on to what Christ desires to set free.

According to a 1992 survey, 12 million Americans are active participants in the New Age movement.

Another 30 million are avidly interested.

If all these people were brought together in a church-like organization, it would be the 3rd largest religious denomination in America.

What's of concern is that more than 90% of the subscribers to *New Age Magazine* are college graduates and are in some of the most influential positions in our society.

Almost all of the cults teach that man *is* or can *become* a god by advancing in the secret knowledge the cult possesses and passes out to those who are proven worthy.

This is the promise of *Mormonism*, *The Way*, *Scientology*, *EST*, *Hinduism*, and a host of other groups.

But it's an empty promise because there are two indisputable truths in the universe;

1) There is a God.

2) You are not He! And you never will be!

**<sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>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 coverings.**

A careful reading of the text thru v. 5 doesn't indicate she was standing by the tree, but here in v. 6 that's where we find her.

It's possible the serpent approached her someplace else, then she went and found Adam and had him follow her to the tree.

Then she paused, took a look, weighed the options and decided to go for it.

She touched the fruit – nothing happened.

So she became emboldened and took a bite.

Then she gave some to Adam and He ate.

And immediately – just as was promised, their eyes were opened and they realized their choice had been the wrong one.

In 1 John 2:15 & 16 John identifies the 3 basic avenues temptation falls in to.

They correspond perfectly with what we find here in v. 6.

**15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.**

By “the world” John means the rebellious world-system orchestrated by the devil that stands in opposition to God.

He mentions . . .

1) “The lust of the flesh” = “the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food”

There is the constant desire of the *body* for carnal satisfaction.

How much of the world is aimed at promising some new sensation, some new pleasure that will make living more fun?

2) “The lust of the eyes” = “the woman saw that the tree . . . *was* pleasant to the eyes”

The appeal here was to her *soul* for the eyes are the window to the soul.

They provide light for the *mind* and stimulate the *emotions*.

The world makes many offers of *happiness* if we’ll just acquire this or that.

3) “The pride of life” = “the woman saw that the tree *was* . . . desirable to make *one* wise”

This was an appeal to her spirit – to gain spiritual insight and arrive at the place of independence from God.

Again, the whole world system is designed to create in us a false sense of security and independence.

So we see how once Eve chose to weigh the options instead of simply and swiftly rejecting the deceit of the devil, she was ensnared by his lies and began to identify herself by the body, soul and spirit as independent from God.

What's *disturbing* is why Adam followed her.

No explanation is given here – we just read that she ate, then she gave some to him and he ate.

In 1 Timothy 2:14 Paul wrote –

**And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.**

Eve fell because she was *deceived*; she thought that by eating some positive good would come.

Adam's fall was based on something *other* than the deception that drove Eve.

Though the root of Adam's choice isn't identified here, many have suggested it was born out of a desire to be *with* Eve, even if being with her meant joining her in sin.

How many people do this today in terms of romantic relationships?

They know the relationship is wrong, but they choose it anyway.

It might be some Christian who chooses to have a romance with an unbeliever.

Or it's someone choosing to have a romantic relationship with someone who's married to someone else.

They know it's wrong, but they choose it anyway.

That's what Adam did.

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.

Someone will ask the question – “What would have happened if Adam hadn't eaten?”

The answer to that is a simple one – We don't know!

Like so many of the “what if” questions, we'll never know

because that's not what happened.

All we can say is, knowing it was God's will that Adam NOT eat, if he hadn't, God would have somehow worked it all out perfectly.

But *how* we'll never know now because that is not the course that was chosen.

Let's learn that lesson – how much of the goodness of God and His awesome ability to turn evil to good has been forfeit in the experience of our lives because we never give Him a chance?

**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 coverings.**

They'd been naked before, remember? That's what 2:25 told us; but they weren't bothered by their nakedness then.

For some reason, now they're ashamed and feel the need to hide themselves.

The difference is the *feeling of guilt*.

They've done something wrong and feel the loss of God's approval and acceptance.

They've crossed a line and now know shame.

1 Tim. 6:16 says that God dwells in light.

Psalm 104:2 says that God covers Himself with a garment of light. Before the fall, as man and woman bore the untarnished image and likeness of God, it's likely they too were clothed with light.

But the moment they ate of the forbidden fruit, the image of God was shattered and the light went out.

Aware of their nakedness, they set about to cover themselves and grabbed some fig leaves.

Now, this seems like a curious choice since fig leaves have tiny hairs on them that would make these garments extremely uncomfortable and itchy!

But this serves up a perfect picture of man's own attempts to cover over his sin and guilt.

Those fig leaves, far from providing a cover for them, only *reminded* them of their failure and what they'd lost.

They serve as a fitting picture of man-invented religion.

At best, all human-originated religion can do is *remind* man of his

failure as it provides an inadequate covering for his sense of guilt.

When you think about those cults and religions that make *works* the basis of salvation you realize that is exactly what happens.

When your relationship with God is based on performance, on how many works you've managed to rack up, you can never be sure you've accumulated enough points to earn God's acceptance.

The entire time you're trying to earn brownie points, you're also adding on some demerits.

You can never rest in the confidence you've done enough.

Those fig-leaves of Adam and Eve speak of a works-based religion.

But they don't cut it, as the story goes on to prove.

One more thing we before we move on – what part of the body do you suppose Adam and Eve covered?

A look at the cultures of the world reveals that there is only one part of the body that gets universal attention when it come to clothing – the genitals!

There is an in-born sense of modesty that moves all humans to hide this area!

This dates back to the Fall and the reaction of Adam and Eve to their sin.

You see, the result of their failure would now be passed on to all of their descendants, and their descendants would of course come through the agency of their union in this way.

Man and woman's modesty in regards to covering this part of their body is the *spiritual echo* of Adam and Eve's sense of shame in realizing what they had bequeathed to all of their descendants for all of time.

What does this mean then when a culture allows people to expose this area; when people lose these sense of shame of being naked?

It means that culture has become some immersed in sin, and so defiant toward God that it has lost it's sense of shame.

That culture stands poised on the edge of destruction. It cannot stand because it has embraced death.

It is said that man is the only animal with the capacity to blush.

When he no longer blushes, he has become just one of the animals!

**8**And they heard the sound 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 among the trees of the garden.

The way this is stated, it makes it appear that it was the normal routine for God to meet with them in the Garden.

The cool of the day is a Hebrew idiom for the late afternoon.

The Bible is clear that no one has seen God the Father, but Jesus did make several appearances on earth before His incarnation in Bethlehem.

So it seems it the regular habit of God to come and commune with Adam and Eve.

When they heard Him now, they ducked behind some bushes.

Why did they hide?

If they were confident in the sufficiency of their new fig-leaf garments, why did they hide?

They were confident. As soon as they heard God, they realized their efforts were useless.

How many people today think that the way to God is through good works?

Most do! Ask anyone why they think they're going to heaven and they'll say that it's because they are a good person.

They're in for a rude shock when they enter the throne room of heaven and face the Heavenly Judge.

Just as Adam and Eve realized in an instant their little adventure as tailors didn't cut it, so they will realize they've built their entire lives on the wrong foundation!

It's not about good works or being a good person!

The best man or woman is still a sinner and falls short of the glory of God.

Only God can provide the help we need.

The evidence that Adam and Eve have lost something central and crucial to their lives is the foolish idea that they could hide from God.

Here's the primary evidence that they have *already* suffered a mortal spiritual blow.

**9**Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him,

**“Where are you?”**

Did God not know where they were?

Of course He knew – then why does He ask this? That will be the subject we’ll look at this Sunday.

**10 So he [Adam] said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”**

Look at the fruit of eating the forbidden fruit – fear, self-consciousness, guilt, stupidity!!!!!!

**11 And He [God] said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”**

Notice that all of this comes in the form of questions. Again, we’ll look at this further this Sunday.

**12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”**

How typical! Adam blames his wife!

**13 And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”**

Eve was a quick study and learned from her husband; when confronted with sin – blame someone else.

I’m only skimming these verses now because we’ll be looking at them in greater depth this Sunday.

**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, And you shall eat dust all the days of your life.**

**15 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.”**

God didn’t ask Satan any questions as He had of Adam and Eve because there was nothing to teach him.



The curse on the serpent has two parts;

The first is directed at the animal Satan possessed -

The second is directed at Satan himself. <sup>[1]</sup>

First – if the serpent had been a beautiful, upright and intelligent creature before, from now on it is condemned to slide on its belly through the dirt.

The early sense of open approach that the serpent had had toward the woman will now cease as well.

God says that enmity, ill-will, will be the normal state of affairs between women and snakes. This is pretty generally the rule!

Second, God switches the direction of the curse and aims it at Satan

## **15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed;**

There is no doubt this is a *prophecy* of Jesus' ultimate defeat of Satan. In the Bible and in the Jewish way of thinking, it's the man who provides the seed.

The reference here to the seed of the woman is a clear reference to the virgin birth.

This is known as the *protoevangelium*, the first gospel.

God is giving here the promise of One who will come through the woman, not by agency of the man, who will . . .

**. . . bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.**

It's clear by the use of the pronouns, "He" & "His" that God is speaking of a specific person.

This One who is to come, will bruise, or *crush*, satan's head.

But in that act, His own heel will be bruised.

What a perfect picture of the Cross – the place where God, in the person of Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, defeated the devil and destroyed his long work of sin and rebellion, but in the process, was Himself bruised by the crucifixion.

The devil's wound was mortal, inflicted on his head, his authority, his power and dominion.

Jesus's wound was only incidental – in His heel.

In Jesus, we share in the victory over Satan.

Romans 16:20 says – “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.”

It's crucial we realize that what God says here in the cursing of the Serpent and Satan is not some add on and emergency measure He had to improvise because of man's failure.

God knew from the beginning that Adam & Eve would Fall. So He took up their failure and used it as the means of doing something *even greater*.

God's plan wasn't 'set back' when Adam and Eve sinned, because God's plan was to bring forth something greater than *innocent man*; God wanted to bring forth *redeemed man*.

A *redeemed* man is greater than an *innocent* man.

But he's only possible because he's had something to be redeemed from.

Here's the great lesson we can learn from this – God does not will evil!

But because God is infinite in His wisdom, goodness, and power, He can take evil and weave it into an even great manifestation of His glory!

No matter what Satan or evil men and women do, God will take it up and redeem it!

He will make of it something awesome!

A weaver was making a beautiful tapestry of bright colors; red, yellow, blue, gold, green.

The design was gorgeous.

But the people who stopped to watch him were amazed that the weaver so often used the black yarn.

It seemed that in between each line of brightly colored thread was a line of black.

From the backside, the tapestry seemed all dark, but when they came around to the front they saw the colors and beauty of the scene the weaver wrought.

He explained, “The black thread is the background upon which the colors sit. Without the black, the colors would all blend and become a confusion.”

And so it is with sin, it's the black thread God weaves into His great plan.

He takes sin, guts it of its evil, transforms it into a lesson learned about His truth, His mercy, His forgiveness, and then weaves it into the tapestry of our lives and of history.

When we stand back and look at His work of redemption all we can say is – “All things do indeed work together for good!”

**16 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.”**

There has been much controversy over exactly what this means.

And that is due to the fact that what God says here seems rather broad in scope.

The general sorrow of women is well documented throughout history.

In most cultures and throughout most of time, women have been poorly treated.

Under the redeeming influence of the gospel of Christ, some of the effects of the curse on women are relieved, and it has been the Christianizing of society that has brought rights and dignity to women.

Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote, “It is difficult for women in Christian lands to realize the miseries of their hundreds of millions of sisters in pagan lands, where the lot of women is little above that of cattle. Where the gospel has gone, the load has been lifted, and woman in Christ has become the reflection of the redeemed Church, the bride of Christ.”

Just as Adam & Eve had covered their reproductive organs, so God says the woman will be reminded of the curse each time she gives birth through the agony that attends it.

It’s interesting to note that while most animals that give live birth do so with a measure of pain, none seems to bear the torment of a human woman.

God adds an additional curse to the woman and it has to do with her relationship with her husband.

**Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you.**

It was always part of God’s order for marriage that the man would

be the head of the relationship – we see that in ch. 2, but there was an amiable equality that existed between Adam and Eve before the Fall that is not lost.

There's the introduction of the idea here that there will be *tension* between men and women and especially in the marital relationship.

The word “desire” is used in 4:7 of the desire of sin to master Cain!

It presents the idea of wanting to dominate and take over.

God is saying that Eve will find herself in *competition* with Adam, but in the end, he shall have the place of dominion over her.

Again – the work of Christ in our hearts goes a long way in ameliorating the problems of the fall when it comes to the roles of marriage, but all of us can see the truth of what God says here.

**17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. <sup>18</sup>Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. <sup>19</sup>In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return.”**

Because of Adam's sin, there is a curse upon *all* creation. <sup>[2]</sup>

Before the curse on man, the ground only produced good.

After the curse, it will still produce good, but thorns and thistles will come faster and easier than the good fruit.

Adam worked before the curse, but it was all joy.

Now his work had a cursed element to it; pain, weariness, and frustration would dog his steps.

The final curse was that after laboring a lifetime of toil & sweat *in* the dirt he would return *to* it in death.

What the First Adam brought in to the world through the Fall, Jesus, the Last Adam has born away on the Cross.

Did sin bring pain in childbirth? No one knew more pain than

Jesus did when He, through His suffering, brought many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:10).  
Did sin bring conflict between man and woman? Jesus endured greater conflict to bring our salvation (Hebrews 12:3).  
Did thorns come with sin? Jesus endured a crown of thorns to bring our salvation. (John 19:2).  
Did sin bring sweat? Jesus sweat, as it were, great drops of blood to win our salvation (Luke 22:44).  
Did sin bring sorrow? Jesus became The Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief, to save us (Isaiah 53:3).  
Did sin bring death? Jesus tasted death for everyone that we might be saved (Hebrews 2:9).  
*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (Galatians 3:13).*

**20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.**

We're so used to referring to the woman as *Eve* we may not notice that this is the first time that name is actually used.  
The name "Eve" means "living" and reflects Adam's faith in the promise of God that He would provide for their redemption through the seed of the woman.  
His naming her also demonstrates his embracing his role as her head.

**21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.**

Heb. 9:22 makes it clear that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.  
The fig-leaf coverings Adam and Eve had wangled together didn't suffice so God, in His grace made new coverings for them.  
But it took the life of some animals to do so – showing them the hideousness of sin and just what it costs.  
It must have been an inordinately sad day for the first man and woman as they experienced the fall, then witnessed the death of a couple of the animals, creatures they had had close and familiar contact with, just so they could be covered.  
The effects of sin are *multiplying* before their eyes.

One bite of the fruit and look at all the devastation, loss, sorrow,  
pain and grief!

There is no such thing as a little sin!

**22**Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

Here is God taking counsel within the persons of the Trinity.

When He says, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil,” don’t read this as a *fulfillment* of what the devil said to Eve.

Satan had promised something *good* – the *real* result was evil.

The other tree that mentioned in the Garden is the Tree of Life.

Of this tree Adam and Eve hadn’t eaten – but if they did so now, they would perpetually locked in a state of sin and separation from God.

So God takes action to make sure they didn’t eat of that tree as well.

**23**therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. **24**So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Adam & Eve were banished from the Garden.

Then God set up guards, cherubim with flaming swords, to guard the way TO the Tree of Life.

Note that-the way was guarded TO the Tree.

The reason why is because God wants man to have access to the Tree of Life but only under the right set of circumstances – when he’s been redeemed from sin.

We find the Tree of life in the Book of Revelation; it’s growing in the new Heavens and New earth and provides healing for the nations.

One last thing to see here – God stationed cherubim at the edge of the Garden.

Cherubim is the plural form of cherub.

Not those fat flying cupids!

The cherubim are those mighty and august creatures we see surrounding God's throne.

They are like God's heavenly bodyguards.

And at least 2 of them were dispatched to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

This seems like overkill if all they were tasked to do was keep man out.

After all, one average run of the mill *angel* was enough to exact the judgment on the firstborn of Egypt and to slay the 185,000 in the army of Assyria in one night. [2 Kings 19:35]

If one angel has that kind of power, one would have been sufficient to protect the tree of Life if the threat was only from man.

It wasn't – and that's why God stations cherubim there – because the threat was from another cherub – the one who'd fallen and started this whole mess in the first place.

It was probably satan's next step to get Adam & Eve to eat of the Tree of Life and forever seal their fate and his dominion over them.

God was not about to let that happen.

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[1] Guzik, David, *On Line Commentary*

[2] *ibid.*