

## Chaos vs. Order

### The Consequences of Disobedience Genesis 3:10-24

#### Introduction

In verse 9, God calls out to Adam and says, "Where *are* you?" In verse 10, Adam tries to explain his sin.

"So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." (Genesis 3:10-12 NKJV)

Adam's disobedience made him afraid of God's presence and voice. Even today, our disobedience to God's commands causes us to run and hide from God's presence. And our continual sinning causes us to ignore and refuse to listen to God's Word. Yet, because we are made in God's image, something deep within us still longs to be in the presence of God and desires to hear His voice. But our sin keeps us from Him and makes us afraid of Him.

God asked Adam, "Who told you that you were naked?" Of course, God knew the answer to this question, but He gives Adam the opportunity to repent and tell the truth. However, Adam tries to deflect and blame Eve and God for his sin. We can't undo the sins we commit, but we can always come clean and ask God to forgive us and be restored in fellowship.

God asks Adam, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Notice that to this point, God has not addressed Eve at all. Adam, as the head, is the problem greater problem. Adam's attempt to blame Eve is consistent with our fallen human nature.

Not many people are willing to say, as David did, I have sinned against the LORD (2 Samuel 12:13). Most of us follow Adam's model, who unjustly accuses Eve and refuses to take responsibility for his part in her sin. Adam even blames God for his sin when he says, "*You* gave me the woman." Adam wasn't content to blame Eve; he blamed God too.

In verse 13, we have Eve's response to God.

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

When confronted by God, at least Eve doesn't shift the blame. She admits the serpent deceived her, and then she ate. The problem comes when we fail to see

that being deceived is sin when we exchange the truth of God for the lie (Romans 1:25).

In verse 14, God pronounces His judgment upon their sin, and Adam and Eve must now face the consequences of their actions.

## **I. God's Judgment on the Serpent**

God's first judgment falls upon the serpent.

"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. 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 3:14-15 NKJV)

When God spoke to Adam and Eve, He questioned each of them. But God didn't ask any questions of Satan, who appeared as the serpent. His rebellion against God had already decided his fate. "The Lord God did not ask the serpent anything, for he knew that he was a liar, but he at once pronounced sentence upon him." (Spurgeon)

God directed the first part of the curse against the creature that Satan used to bring the temptation. God commanded the serpent to slither on the ground instead of walking on legs like any other animal.

Adam and Eve must have been terrified as this once-beautiful creature called a serpent was transformed into the creeping, slithering, hissing snake we know today. They may have thought, "It's our turn next!"

In addition, there would be a natural aversion between humans and serpents, especially with women. Whatever nobility the serpent had before the fall and the curse, it was gone now.

God's judgment on Satan is for him always to know defeat. He will always reach for victory but always fall short of it. Satan thought he was majestic and triumphant over Jesus on the cross, but he failed. By attacking Jesus, Satan sealed his doom.

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. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen." (Romans 16:20 NKJV)

God pronounces the second part of the curse directly upon Satan himself. God puts a natural animosity between Satan and humans. Enmity means ill will, hatred, and mutual antagonism. Satan's hatred of Eve was nothing new; it was already present – but now man would have a reciprocal antagonism towards Satan. The friendship Eve and the serpent seemed to enjoy earlier is finished. There is now a natural fear of Satan.

Even though we are born naturally rebellious against God, we are also born cautious and afraid of Satan. You must override this natural cautiousness to willingly and knowingly serve Satan. Instinctively, we don't serve God or Satan; we serve ourselves (which is fine with Satan).

God prophesies the doom of Satan, saying the real battle is between Satan and the Seed of the Woman describing Jesus' ultimate defeat of Satan. God announces that Satan would wound the Messiah (you shall bruise His heel), but the Messiah would crush Satan with a mortal wound (He shall bruise your head).

Immediately after the Fall, God announces His plan of salvation to bring deliverance through the one known as the Seed of the Woman. This prophecy also gives the first hint of the virgin birth. It declares the Messiah would be the Seed of the Woman, but not of the man.

Genesis 3:15 has been called the *proto-evangelium*, the first gospel. Martin Luther said of this verse: "This text embraces and comprehends within itself everything noble and glorious that is to be found anywhere in the Scriptures" (Leupold).

God's plan wasn't defeated when Adam and Eve sinned. God would bring forth something greater than the innocence of man; God would bring forth the redemption of humanity.

## **II. God's Judgment Upon Women**

In verse 16, God pronounces His judgment upon the woman.

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." (Genesis 3:16 NKJV)

God greatly multiplies the sorrow of the woman. Men and women have each known sorrow throughout history, but there is a unique sorrow for women that is well known. When Christ came, some of the curse's effects were relieved, and the Christianizing of society brought many rights and dignity to women.

One writer says, "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 women in Christ have become the reflection of the redeemed Church, the bride of Christ." (Barnhouse)

Women would also experience pain in regard to their children in general, not just in the act of giving birth. Researchers say women bring forth children with more pain than just about any other creature.

God also tells Eve, "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." This is true of women in a way that is not true for men. There is a contrast between the woman's desire and the husband's rule over her. There is an inherent challenge for a woman to embrace the husband's role as leader of the home and family. The same word for desire is used in Genesis 4:7 of the desire of sin to master Cain. Eve would have to fight a desire to master her husband and the desire that works against God's ordained order for the home.

God established the principle of Adam's headship as a husband before the fall (see Genesis 2:18 and 2:22). Now the curse on Eve makes it much harder for her to submit and flow with God's institution of male headship in the home.

Susan Foh writes, "As a result of the fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight from 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." (Susan T. Foh, cited in Boice)

Submission is a struggle for all of us.

### **III. God's Judgment Upon Men**

In verse 17, God pronounces judgment upon Adam.

"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. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 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." (Genesis 3:17-19 NKJV)

It wasn't just as if Adam took Eve's advice. He chose to be with Eve instead of obeying God. When Adam puts Eve ahead of God, there is a sense in which he makes Eve an idol as part of his disobedience against God.

Because of Adam's sin, there is a curse upon all creation. Before the curse, the ground only produced good crops. After the curse, it still produced well, but thorns and thistles came up faster and easier than good fruit. It's interesting to note the curse promised thorns and thistles, and when Jesus bore the curse for us, He was crowned with thorns (Matthew 27:29). Before the curse, Adam's work was pure joy. But now pain and weariness became a part of work. The final curse upon man promised there would be an end to his toil and labor on the earth – but it was an end that would come through death.

Adam's sin extended to the entire human race. Because of Adam:

- Sin entered the world (Romans 5:12).

- Death affected all Humanity (Romans 5:15, 1 Corinthians 15:22).
- Death reigned over man and creation (Romans 5:17)
- All of Adam's descendants were condemned (Romans 5:18).
- All of Adam's descendants were born sinners (Romans 5:19).

Jesus bore every aspect of the curse upon Adam and Eve. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." Sin brought death, but Jesus tasted death for everyone so that anyone who comes to Jesus might be saved (Hebrews 2:9).

## Conclusion

In verse 20, Adam names Eve.

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living."  
(Genesis 3:20 NKJV)

Up to Genesis 3:20, the woman has never been called Eve. We are so used to saying "Adam and Eve" that we assume she already had her name. But to this point, she was called a *female* (Genesis 1:27), a *helper comparable* (Genesis 2:18), a *woman* (Genesis 2:22, 23), and a *wife* (Genesis 2:24, 25; 3:8).

The idea that a woman takes her husband's name in marriage and that both genders are referred to in terms like mankind and humanity is not merely cultural; it is Biblical. A woman gains more of her identity from her husband than the man does from the wife. For this reason, women should take special care in which man they marry.

Even though she was not a mother when Adam named his wife Eve, he called her Eve because he knew, in faith, she was to become the mother of all living. She wasn't even pregnant yet. But Adam trusted in God and believed He would bring forth a deliverer from the woman since God said He would defeat Satan through the Seed of the Woman (Genesis 3:15).

Verse 21 says, Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them." (Genesis 3:21 NKJV)

God wanted Adam and Eve clothed, not naked. If nudity represented a higher, freer life, don't you think God would have let Adam and Eve remain naked – but instead, He clothed them?

God approved of the sense of shame which led our first parents to cover their nakedness. A sacrifice had to be made for Adam and Eve to be clothed. An animal had to die. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). An animal had to die to provide Adam and Eve with garments, which is a picture of

the Lamb of God who would cover our sin and nakedness so that we don't have to be afraid to stand before God.

There are only two choices: the religion of fig leaves and the religion of God's perfect provision through Jesus. Covering ourselves with our good works is like Adam and Eve trying to cover themselves with fig leaves. But think of this; God clothed Adam and Eve with a garment that was purchased with the life of another. And we are clothed with a garment of righteousness that was purchased with the life of another, Jesus Christ.

Adam and Eve were rescued from their sinful condition by their faith in God's promise of a Savior. We will see Adam and Eve in heaven if we choose God's provision for sin by accepting Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

In verse 22, God sends Cherubim to guard the Tree of Life.

"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"— therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 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." ([Genesis 3:22-24 NKJV](#))

In mercy, God protected Adam and Eve from the horrible fate of having to live forever as sinners by preventing them from eating from the Tree of Life. We don't know if Adam and Eve *wanted* to stay in the Garden of Eden, but God knew they couldn't stay. If they ate of the Tree of Life, they would live forever as fallen humanity.

Perhaps they felt that if they left the garden, they might never see God again because it was the only place they met Him. The scripture says God drove them out, and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden to keep them out. It was crucial to send Cherubim with a flaming sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life. This is the Bible's last historical mention of the Garden of Eden.

There are always consequences to sin and disobedience to God's commands. Our only hope is Jesus.