

INTRODUCTION - Genesis 1:1-2



1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

This is the beginning of God’s work as it pertains to us, and so we must take care to get off on the right foot. *Beginning* speaks of the first things; therefore, what is described here is the start of what we see around us today – this would be the *Alpha* when the Lord says, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last ...” (Revelation 1:11). Inasmuch as God is eternal (without beginning or ending), this does not describe God’s beginning, but rather the beginning of matter as we know it; in this *beginning*, God was already there.

The word *God* used here is from the Hebrew *Elohiym* (*el-o-heem*’); it is masculine (as opposed to feminine or neuter) and is plural in form. The Apostle John wrote, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, [God] the Father, the Word [Jesus Christ – John 1:1], and the Holy Ghost [or Spirit]: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7). Through the work of men like Westcott and Hort (and their Greek translation of the New Testament), this witness to the tri-unity of God has been removed from all modern translations that make use of their faulty Greek text. Although the word *trinity* does not appear anywhere in Scripture, the concept of plurality in unity is very clearly taught and is alluded to in the very first verse of the Bible in the name *Elohiym*.

Created, as it is here, is only used with God as the One doing the creating¹ and speaks of making something that did not exist before. In this case, the act of creation produced the heavens (plural) and the earth (singular). *Heaven* comes from a Hebrew root word meaning lofty, while *earth* is from a root that means firm.² In this act of creation, God made, from nothing, all the substance of what makes up our universe – space and matter. What cannot be missed is that God is the Creator.

Those scientific “minds” who promote the concept of gradual development over billions of years show their disdain for the Word of God from the very first verse. There was no “big bang,” simply, God created.



2. *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

This begins with the word *and*, which could also be translated as *so* or *then*,³ thereby tying verses one and two tightly together. God created, and now we have a description of what has been created. It is described as being *without form, and void*. In essence, the material for the earth was created but it had not been formed yet; it was formless and empty.⁴

The word *was* is a true representation of the Hebrew. Those who hold to what is called the Gap Theory like to think that this word should be *became*. Within their thinking, God created a perfect world in Genesis 1:1, then Satan was cast out of heaven and that perfect world was destroyed or it

¹ Keil & Delitzsch (K&D), Commentary on the Old Testament.

² Strong’s Online.

³ Brown, Driver, Briggs (BDB), Hebrew and English Lexicon, *Bibleworks 8*.

⁴ Strong’s Online.

became formless and void. They believe that this permits them the luxury of accepting the evolutionist's concept of an ancient earth while still holding onto the literal six days of creation (or, for them, re-creation). They view the perfectly created world as containing all of the animals, which were fossilized, thereby providing them with an "explanation" of how all of the various layers of rock strata contain fossils of all kinds of creatures. However, they still face the huge problem of having death before sin entered the world – since death is a consequence of sin, then for there to be death in a previously "perfect world" would require the presence of sin. Their theory no longer sounds so perfect. To destroy their flimsy case further, the text does not support their conjecture,⁵ and so we must limit the previous verse to the creation of matter and space with the further explanation, here, that the matter was still unformed.

Darkness was upon the face of the deep – we are told by the Apostle John "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). How did this *darkness* come to be? Let's digress and see if we can shed some light on this matter.

In Ezekiel's prophecy against the king of Tyre, we catch a brief look at Satan as he was created by God: "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets [tambourine] and of thy pipes [jeweller's word for the settings for gems] was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou *art* the anointed cherub [angelic being] that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezekiel 28:13-15).⁶ Even though this prophecy is spoken concerning the king of Tyre, from the description given we realize that the picture drawn is greater than just this one king. Likewise, in Isaiah's pronouncement against Babylon we find a glimpse of what transpired with Satan; again, the language used goes well beyond the arrogance of the king of Babylon. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer [light bearer], son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground [same Hebrew word translated as *earth* in Genesis 1:1 and 2], which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven [plural], I will exalt my throne above the stars of God [a reference to the omniscience of God]: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north [remotest parts of the earth⁷]: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:12-14).⁸ We see several things here. Satan was created by God as an angelic being, formed in perfection and great beauty. However, it is also evident that God made the angelic beings with the ability to choose; we read that although Satan was perfectly created, his beauty resulted in pride, and he sought to exalt himself above the God Who had made him.

Since we have a great deal of detail in Genesis 1 regarding the creation of the world and the heavenly bodies, we must conclude that the angelic hosts were created by God outside of time, and since we find darkness present as God created space and matter, it would be appropriate to conclude that Satan had already lost his exalted position in God's presence. *Darkness*, within Scripture, is never viewed as being positive; it is negative or, at best, neutral. As we've already

⁵ BDB; the Hebrew word can mean *become* in some cases, but this is not one of them.

⁶ BDB.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Strong's Online.

seen, there is no darkness in God; therefore, it is safe to conclude that the darkness, which was upon the surface of the deep, or the abyss, is not a reflection of God.⁹

We know that the angels, who remained true to God, do not marry and, therefore, do not procreate. When Jesus dealt with the unbelieving Sadducees, He explained that in the resurrection, the righteous “neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven” (Matthew 22:30). When God created the hosts of angels, that was it – there would be no more, not that the number of angels is small. When Daniel had his visions of the Lord, he described the number of angels as a “thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand [literally: *myriad myriads* (a *myriad* being defined as ten thousand¹⁰)] stood before him” (Daniel 7:10); clearly the angelic hosts after Satan’s departure are innumerable.

Satan and the hosts of angels who followed him in rebellion against God, are always characterized by darkness, and for good reason: “...God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment...” (2 Peter 2:4). The fallen angels are bound with darkness, not as a means of restraint (as we would consider chains), but rather to demonstrate their exclusion from the light of God. However, we are also warned that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light (he can appear to be someone who teaches the truth), and his demons into ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:14-15); albeit, even in this, their darkness will reveal itself to the discerning, for their works will betray them (Matthew 7:15-16a).

There are some passages in the OT that translate the Hebrew as “thick darkness” in relation to God and may raise a question in our minds about whether there is some correlation between God and darkness. When Moses and the children of Israel came to Mt. Sinai, we read, “And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the **thick darkness** where God *was*” (Exodus 20:21). When Solomon dedicated the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, he prayed, “... The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the **thick darkness**” (2 Chronicles 6:1 and 1 Kings 8:12). In both of these instances, the *thick darkness* needs to be understood as being a heavy cloud, with no concept of darkness included.¹¹ When Israel came out of Egypt, God went before them in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; the cloud was a sign of the presence of the Lord, but there is no impression of darkness associated with it. When the Egyptians pursued Israel, “... the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night” (Exodus 14:19-20). This *cloud was darkness* (or obscurity, same Hebrew word as used in Genesis 1:2) to the Egyptians, but was a *light* for the Israelites.

Paul writes of this same principle to the Corinthians: “For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life” (2 Corinthians 2:15-16a). In Christ, we are a sweet fragrance to God; to those around us who also believe, we are a fragrance of life, while to the unsaved we bear the scent of death. The presence of God will appear as light to the redeemed, but as condemnation to those who refuse His gift. For the Israelites, God’s presence was evidenced by a thick cloud; it was His presence as He led them out of Egypt, and when the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the completed temple “the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the

⁹ Strong’s Online.

¹⁰ <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/myriad>

¹¹ BDB

priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD” (2 Kings 8:10-11). It was a heavy cloud, and it was the glory of God – there was no darkness there! *Darkness* was on the face of the deep – Satan and his fallen angels were the reason.

The Hebrew word translated as *deep* speaks of an abyss or sea; it comes from a root word that carries the idea of a great noise or a roaring.¹² If we bring what we have just reviewed about Satan and his fallen hosts together with this, then we can understand the darkness that appears on the surface of this great abyss, and the connotation of noise would fit with the presence of those angelic beings who are in rebellion against their Creator.

Then we read of the Spirit (singular) of God (plural) hovering (*moved*) over the waters, which gives a sense of expectancy¹³ – God is about to act!

DAY ONE - Genesis 1:3-5



3. *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

God spoke the worlds into existence. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Jesus is that Word (*Logos*) and was the active participant in the creation of the world (Ephesians 3:9). “All things were made by him [the *Logos*]; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). The eternal Word, Who became Jesus, the incarnation of eternal God within the body of a man, created all things. While on earth, Jesus walked in the midst of His creative acts; the waves of the sea, the ravages of disease, the demons, and even Satan realized Who He was, but His own people, the Jews, refused to acknowledge Him, for they longed for a deliverer from Rome and not a Savior of their souls. He created the waters of the Sea of Galilee and, when He spoke, they recognized the voice of their Creator (Mark 4:39).

Working the *formless* matter begins with God adding light. If we recall the Apostle John’s words that God is light, this would then indicate that the formless matter, that was earth, came under His influence. *Let there be* comes from the Hebrew *hayah* (*haw-yaw*), which here means *come to pass*.¹⁴ This is the same Hebrew word (different tense) as used in Genesis 1:2 where it can only be taken as *was* or *to exist*.¹⁵

What we might find a little difficult to comprehend is that God added light to the unformed earth, but not by the sun. We think of the sun as being our light, although scientists have discovered that the sun is actually quite dark – the light that we attribute to the sun comes from the atmosphere around it.¹⁶ The Hebrew word used here for *light* speaks of the illumination, whereas the sun, moon and stars are described as being sources of illumination, or luminaries.¹⁷ God, in His marvelous wisdom, can separate light from what we would understand to be its source. Likewise, consider Revelation 21:23, “And the city [the New Jerusalem] had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.” In the new

¹² Strong’s Online.

¹³ Matthew Henry Commentary, Genesis 1:2.

¹⁴ Strong’s Online.

¹⁵ BDB.

¹⁶ http://www.windows2universe.org/sun/solar_atmosphere.html

¹⁷ Strong’s Online.

heaven and new earth, there will be no need of the sun or moon, for Jesus Christ will be its light (the Luminary), and His glory will provide the illumination. In exactly the same way, God added His light to the empty mass of matter that would become the world as we know it. The heavenly lights had not yet been created but the earth already had light from God.



4. *And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.*

God observed the light that was added to the earth and the heavens, and it was excellent. God not only brought light to the matter that He had created but He looked at it to ensure that it was the way that He desired it to be.

Once He had confirmed that the light met with His approval, God then separated the light from the darkness – He made a distinction between the two. We don't have any details as to what this might mean, but we do know that God implemented a means of separation.

Here, on day one of creation, we have a demonstration of one of the fundamental reasons why we must practice Biblical separation – God separated the light from the darkness. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote, "... what communion [*koinonia* – fellowship or joint participation] hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14b).¹⁸ The answer to this rhetorical question is very obvious when we consider day one of creation: God separated the light from the darkness; therefore, they are to have no *communion* – there is no overlap. Paul's conclusion is, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17). We can easily recognize that the *darkness* parallels the *unclean* in the very clear charge to separate ourselves from all that is not of God. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light..." (Ephesians 5:8).

Jesus taught regarding light. In Luke 11:34-35 we read, "The light [lamp] of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single [whole], thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil [when used physically, it speaks of blindness – metaphorically (as here) it refers to evil], thy body also *is* full of darkness. Take heed [direct one's attention to, contemplate] therefore that the light [illumination] which is in thee be not darkness."¹⁹ We might well wonder at this thought – how can light actually be darkness? The reality is that this is more common than we might first consider. When Paul wrote his corrective letter to the Galatians who were being convinced that they needed to add Jewish traditions to the Gospel message for salvation, he very specifically said that this was a perversion of the Gospel. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him [God] that called you into the grace of Christ unto another [a different] gospel: Which is not another [of the same kind as Paul gave them]; but there be some that trouble you [the Judaizers who sought to meld Jewish traditions and the Gospel for salvation], and would pervert [change into something that is the opposite] the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel [any message different from what Paul taught] unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [*anathema* – a person doomed to destruction]" (Galatians 1:6-8).²⁰ The Gospel is a message of life; the Judaizers, by adding Jewish traditions to the Gospel, turned it into a message of death (a perverted gospel) – they had lost the saving element of the Gospel

¹⁸ Strong's Online.

¹⁹ Friberg Lexicon.

²⁰ Strong's Online.

through compromise. However, these Judaizers would have vehemently claimed to have still held a message of light, but that *light* was really *darkness* – through tainting the truth of the Gospel, they had extinguished its light. Fast forward to the twenty-first century: The Ecumenical movement, which has pervaded most Protestant, Evangelical and Baptist denominations today, presents a modern version of the Gospel message that they consider to be light but really is darkness (forced to accommodate many perversions of the truth, the Gospel has been reduced to an empty shell). Through a refusal to separate from error (darkness), the Ecumenist departs from what God has prescribed for His children (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). Inasmuch as their light (their lamp, the Word of God [Psalm 118:105], the pure Gospel message) has been corrupted and, thereby, reduced to darkness, they are in darkness – the spiritual blackness that binds Satan and his demons (2 Peter 2:4). The message of Ecumenical compromisers like Billy Graham, Rick Warren, Robert Schuller, Joel Osteen, and James Dobson is to be avoided; however, the problem is not limited to these high-profile Evangelicals. In our own little town of Three Hills, Alberta, the corrupted message is being presented by Mt. Olive Evangelical Free Church, Bethel Missionary Church, and Prairie Tabernacle Congregation, all of which are active members of the local ministerial association and co-participants with the Catholics, Anglicans, the United Church and Charismatic groups in “meeting the spiritual needs” of the local community. We must be discerning, realizing that not every word from the representative leaders will be wrong, but they are sufficiently compromised that they can no longer be called pure – we are called to holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:7) and warned to avoid impurity (Romans 16:17-18).

Jesus goes on to say, “If thy whole [complete] body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark [*full of darkness*, same Greek word as in v.34; those caught up in the Ecumenical movement cannot claim to have no part of their understanding in darkness, for they have compromised with error], the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle [lamp] doth give thee light” (Luke 11:36).²¹ The separation of light from darkness in our lives will ONLY come through Biblical separation from the world, from doctrinal error and from those who compromise with error (John 14:15; 1 John 2:3-6).

The reason for this separation becomes more evident as we consider the primary characteristic of God – His holiness. Twice we read of heavenly creatures declaring God to be, “Holy, holy, holy” (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). The essence of this word *holy* is separation.²² John declared, “... God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5); this is another way of proclaiming the holiness of God – He is pure light; there is no tinge of darkness in Him. Satan and his angels sinned against God and they are bound with chains of darkness (2 Peter 2:4); man was created in light, but he exchanged that light for darkness by sinning. When we come to Christ by faith, we replaced our sinful darkness with the light of Christ – therefore, it is critical that we walk in His light. “If we say that we have fellowship with him [God], and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not [absolute negative] the truth: But if we walk [*are walking* – present tense] in the light, as he is in the light, ... the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth [*is cleansing* – present tense] us from all sin” (1 John 1:6-7).²³ “And he that keepeth [*is keeping* (attending to carefully), present tense] his [God’s] commandments dwelleth [*is dwelling*] in him [God, Who is light!], and he in him” (1 John 3:24a).²⁴ If we desire to experience the cleansing of Jesus Christ and what it means to walk in His light, then we must be very careful to do what God has commanded us. Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15); continual obedience to the God of light is vitally important

²¹ Friberg Lexicon.

²² Strong’s Online.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

to proclaiming our love for Him. Unless our declaration of faith in Christ is followed by a life lived in obedience to His Word, our faith is empty and will not bring us into His eternal kingdom (James 2:17; Matthew 7:21). God separated the light from the darkness in creation; we must be careful to do the same in our spiritual walk with Him.



5. *And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

By speaking light into the heavens and the earth, and then separating the light from the darkness, God put into place the beginning of time: Day and Night. *Day* comes from an unused Hebrew root word meaning to be hot; *Night*, similarly, means to fold back.²⁵ The fundamentals of our world, as we know it, were beginning to take shape.

We read that *the evening and the morning were the first day* – literally *day one*.²⁶ Just as *dusk* and *dawn* do not describe a complete day, but express the beginning of the night and the beginning of daylight, so *evening* describes the beginning of the night-portion of day one, and *morning* describes the beginning of the light or day-portion of the day. In fairness to the text, this can only be understood to be what we now call a 24-hour period. This is also the reason why some cultures, like the Jews, count the day from sundown to sundown (as opposed to our more arbitrary midnight to midnight).

DAY TWO - Genesis 1:6-8



6. *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

The *firmament*, or the vault of heaven, was established by God in order to create our atmosphere, and to form a separation of the waters.²⁷



7. *And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.*

It is interesting that God *made* the firmament; He did not create it. This is a manipulation of what was already there rather than creating something new out of nothing. *Firmament* means an expanse or an extended surface or support, and comes from a Hebrew root word that means to beat out, to spread out or to stretch.²⁸ The Hebrews regarded the firmament as being solid; it kept the

²⁵ Strong's Dictionary, *ESword*.

²⁶ Young's Literal Translation.

²⁷ BDB.

²⁸ Strong's Online.

waters, which rested upon it, from rejoining the waters beneath.²⁹ God spoke this change into being, and *so it came to pass*.³⁰

The author of Proverbs personified wisdom, and wrote much on our need to seek it – declaring that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). In the midst of his writings on wisdom, we find this: “I [wisdom] was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When *there were no depths*, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when **he set a compass upon the face of the depth**: When he established the clouds above: when he **strengthened the fountains of the deep** ...” (Proverbs 8:23-28). Wisdom is applied knowledge; the world was created in God’s wisdom. Wisdom was there when there was no deep (the Hebrew word for *depths* is the same as that translated as *deep* in Genesis 1:2). The phrase *face of the depth* is the same phrase as used in Genesis 1:2 (where it shows as *face of the deep*); here we are told that God set a compass upon the face of the deep. The word *compass* in our English language has lost the meaning that it held when used in the translation of this text; at one time it meant to stretch, and that is the exact expression of what God did in making the firmament.³¹ The Hebrew word translated as *compass* speaks of a vault and is used only of the vault of heaven.³² We are also told that God *strengthened*, or made strong, the fountains, or the springs of water, of the deep.³³ When God divided the waters above from the waters below, He placed restraints on them – He divided them, and so they were.

Today, we do not have that same canopy of water, only clouds of water vapor. When Noah stepped into the ark that he had built, we read, “... the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the **windows of heaven were opened** [perfect tense – it only happened once]” (Genesis 7:11).³⁴ God released the waters from above the firmament and those held below and, thereby, destroyed the earth as it was; the fountains of the deep (*deep* comes from the same Hebrew word as used in Genesis 1:2) were split open and the heavens let loose.³⁵ The flood was a time of massive destruction; until the canopy of water was opened at the time of the flood, there had been no rain (Genesis 2:6) and the whole earth enjoyed a tropical climate because of the greenhouse effect.³⁶ With the release of the waters above, the greenhouse effect was ended, or became drastically compromised, and brought into effect the freezing in the Polar Regions and the excessive heat in the tropical areas.



8. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

²⁹ BDB.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/compass>.

³² BDB.

³³ Strong’s Online.

³⁴ BDB.

³⁵ Strong’s Online.

³⁶ <http://www.present-truth.org/3-Nature/Evolution%20of%20Creationist/Chapter%2007.htm>

Although the idea of *firmament of heaven*, or *sky*, as it is used here, speaks specifically of the atmosphere surrounding the earth (which we can understand from the context), we will come to see that it is also used to speak more generally of space.

This completes day two.

DAY THREE - Genesis 1:9-13



9. *And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.*

God now turns His attention to the waters that are *under the heaven*. On day two, He placed the waters above the firmament, separating them from the waters with which He is now going to work. He commands the waters to be collected into one spot in order to permit the dry land to appear. In Proverbs we read that Wisdom was present when God “gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment” (Proverbs 8:29); God gathered the waters into one place and decreed that they should not pass beyond that. This would indicate that there were no oceans or seas as we have them today, but simply a mass of water and a mass of dry land. This, again, is not a creative act (as in creating something from nothing) but a reorganization of what was already present – and so it came to pass.



10. *And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.*

God called the *dry, Earth*, or Land (singular), and the gathered *waters* He called *Seas* (plural).³⁷ In verse 2 we saw that the word *abyss (deep)* also means *sea*, and that it comes from a Hebrew root word carrying the idea of roaring, or a great noise. We also related the *abyss* to Satan after he sinned against Jehovah and was cast out of heaven (through the presence of the darkness that was upon the surface of the deep). Then we saw the waters, where the Spirit of God hovered, separated into those above and those below by the firmament – separated by the sky, or atmosphere. God now calls the gathered waters (below) *Seas*, which comes from a Hebrew root word meaning roar (a similarity to *abyss*) and speaks of a large body of water.³⁸ Revelation 21:1 tells us, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” The Greek word for *sea*, as it is used here, is the same as that used in the Septuagint (a Greek translation of the Old Testament) to translate the Hebrew word for *Seas* in Genesis 1:10. Much to my delight as a confirmed landlubber, the new earth will have no large bodies of water. However, could that be another indication of Satan’s presence in the *deep*, or seas, and the new earth, having no seas, affirms that Satan has been dealt with forever? This is a point for contemplation only.

We mustn’t think of God forming continents as we have them today – the world as we know it has been subjected to the flood, and so it is much different from before. Therefore, when we read

³⁷ BDB.

³⁸ Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary, *ESword*.

of God telling man to fill the earth, it would have been a relatively simple task to move about on the land mass that was there – there would have been no mountain ranges to cross, no oceans to navigate. The waters were gathered unto one place and so the available land would have occupied the place that the waters left behind. God beheld the separation, and it was good, or excellent.



11. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.*

God now turns His attention specifically to the *earth* (the dry land that appeared after the waters were separated), and He speaks. God calls forth the grass, the plants that bear seed and the trees, which bear fruit containing their seed. These were all called into existence in maturity, not having to wait the usual process of growth for the seed and fruit. We have all the varieties of plants and trees immediately called into existence (*after his kind*). Superficially, we might look at this as simply the creation of all green things, yet plants are immensely complex. Each species of plant has its own DNA, and every variety within each species has its own unique biological markers. Modern plant forensic science can identify specific plant molecular information, which is also unique by region. This is used routinely in solving criminal investigations and is commonly accepted evidence in the courts of law.³⁹ God spoke, and all of this microscopic detail came to be, and the ability of the plants to pass this depth of detail along to the next generation through a tiny seed is truly a marvel.



12. *And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

This is confirmation that what God called for, came into being – all created in their maturity, yielding seed and bearing fruit. All flourished in the light and warmth of God for the sun had not yet been created. This will be paralleled in the new heaven and earth, for God will be the light, and there will be no need of the sun or moon (Revelation 21:23; 22:5).



13. *And the evening and the morning were the third day.*

DAY FOUR - Genesis 1:14-19

³⁹ http://www.nfstc.org/pdi/Subject09/pdi_s09_m01_04_c.htm



14. *And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:*

God now creates the lights, or luminaries, in the great expanse of the heavens (plural). In verse seven, we saw *firmament* used in reference to our atmosphere (the firmament was placed in the midst of the waters); now the same word is used to speak of the great expanse of space, and it became the home for the lights of the heavens. These lights are used to bring a separation between day and night, which confirms the rotation of the earth upon its axis and the rotation of the moon around the earth. Even though day and night were established on the first day, the lights, created now, provided a clear division between the two. From this time forward, the evening would be marked by the going-down of the sun, and the morning by its rising. The accuracy of the intervals of time, marked by the lights scattered throughout the heavens, was now in place.

God made the lights to be *signs*. When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees and Sadducees for a sign from heaven, He told them, “When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather*: for the sky is red. And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to day*: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:2-3). The religious elite of the Jews could predict the weather but could not fathom the signs that indicated the coming of their Messiah. Perhaps the most significant sign of all was the star that appeared in the east to lead the wise men to Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-2). Balaam, when called to curse Israel, declared, “there shall come a Star out of Jacob” (Numbers 24:17), and Isaiah said, “the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising” (Isaiah 60:3); both of these refer specifically to the Messiah to come, but there could also be a secondary application to the light that God sent to guide the wise men to the Savior. There are some, like Rick Larson (in *The Star of Bethlehem* DVD), who go to great lengths to provide an explanation for this star as being a natural phenomenon, a coming together of stars to make what appears to be a single brighter-than-usual star; because of some glaring errors in Larson’s presuppositions, it is far easier to see this as a miraculous sign from God Who created all things.⁴⁰ “When they [the wise men] had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was” (Matthew 2:9). It would seem clear that this star will not be found by Larson using computers to reverse the movement of the billions of stars back to the time when he thinks that Christ was born.⁴¹

The *seasons*, or appointed times, were now carefully marked off.⁴² This word is often used to refer to sacred times, and the moon was used to determine sacred festivals within the Jewish culture since their months were based on the phases of the moon (each month began with the new moon).⁴³ The Psalmist said, “He appointed the moon for seasons ...” (Psalm 104:19). All of these were created and set into place before man was there; this is an indication of God’s omniscience – He is all-knowing. He knew that man would keep track of time, as a matter of fact, He would use time in His dealings with mankind, and so He created all of the tools that would be needed to do it.

Consider this in light of the modern heresy of open theism, which holds that God cannot know what hasn’t happened because it hasn’t happened yet; the claim is that God is learning (along with

⁴⁰ For more details on this, see <http://www.thenarrowtruth.com/the-star-of-bethlehem.html>

⁴¹ <http://www.bethlehemstar.net/stage/stage.htm>

⁴² Strong’s Online.

⁴³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_moon

man) as time progresses. Open theism would demand that God create all of these means for tracking time only after man thought that it would be a nice thing to do – after all, how was He to know that man would want to do that since he had not yet been created. Open theism reduces God to the level of the Mormon god – “As man now is, God once was.”⁴⁴ Despite being an unmistakable heresy, open theism is gaining acceptance by Evangelicals; it is not considered to be a problem at Bethel University where Greg Boyd, a leading proponent of this heresy, still teaches.⁴⁵ This “Christian” seminary evaluated Boyd’s understanding of open theism and found that it was “within the bounds of evangelical Christian orthodoxy and compatible with the theological commitments expected of faculty members at Bethel.”⁴⁶ Likewise, the Evangelical Theological Society⁴⁷ would not discipline those within its membership who promoted this heresy.⁴⁸ The clear teaching of Scripture has been muddied by the philosophical reasoning of men with much learning but without the Spirit of God; “... ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 3:7).



15. *And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.*

The lights were created to shine upon the earth. The vastness of these created lights, scattered throughout the heavens (plural), had two purposes – to provide light for the earth (as stated here) and to provide a means for tracking time (the *days* and *years* from the previous verse). Although God could have created a stationary universe, He didn’t; He put everything into motion, and, although He created all of these lights for the benefit of the earth, He did not make the earth the center of all of this created motion.



16. *And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.*

This describes the creation of our sun, moon and all of the innumerable stars, which are scattered throughout a massive universe. Of this immense created complexity of light and motion, Jesus said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away [perish, disappear⁴⁹]: but my words shall not pass away” (Mark 13:31). The One Who created the vast universe said that it would all perish, but His words are eternal. The destruction of all that we see around us has been spoken of many times in Scripture. “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them [for the better], and they shall be changed [pass away]...” (Psalm

⁴⁴ Stephen Covey, *The Divine Center*, p. 81.

⁴⁵ <http://www.bethel.edu/news/clarion/articles/2012/may/spiritual-warfare>

⁴⁶ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2001/february19/3.42.html>

⁴⁷ The ETS describes itself as “a professional, academic society of Biblical scholars, teachers, pastors, students, and others involved in evangelical scholarship. We serve Jesus Christ and his church by fostering conservative, evangelical biblical scholarship” (<http://www.etsjets.org/>). Clearly, despite calling themselves *conservative*, they have no problem harboring heresy.

⁴⁸ <http://www.baptistpress.org/printerfriendly.asp?ID=17132>

⁴⁹ Friberg Lexicon.

102:25-26).⁵⁰ “And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved [decay], and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll ...” (Isaiah 34:4).⁵¹ By contrast, we find the immutability of God’s Word proclaimed: “For ever [translated elsewhere as *everlasting*], O LORD, thy word is settled [that which stands firm] in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). The Word of God is not only eternal, it is unchangeable. Man, through the years, has done much to the text of the Bible: he has changed it, added to it, and discarded some of it, but the promise is that God’s Word has not changed – the numerous Bibles that man has molded and reshaped no longer present the forever-settled Word of God in purity, but that has not changed God’s Word!



17. *And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,*

God made the sun, moon and stars and set them in space (heavens – plural); He placed them very specifically – hence the precision with which our universe functions. We are somewhat familiar with the earth, since it is our ride through space. By comparison, our sun is over 100 times as large as the earth, weighs 330,000 times as much, has a surface temperature of over 5,500°C and is suspended in space about 150 million kilometers (93.7 million miles) away from the earth (the distance varies because the earth’s orbit is not circular, but elliptical).⁵² God established all of these details in order to provide the earth with the light and heat that it would need for life.

The moon is one-quarter the size of the earth, acts as a reflector of the sun’s light and revolves around the earth in an elliptical path about 375,000 kilometers (234,000 miles) away.⁵³ Its axial rotation corresponds to its orbit around the earth; therefore, we basically always have the same surface area facing us. God placed the moon with the correct orbital speed so that it could provide reflective light throughout the night.

No one knows how many stars there are; some estimate that there are more than 100 billion galaxies, and that each of these galaxies contains more than 100 billion stars – by comparison, on a clear night we can see about 3,000 stars with the naked eye. Scientists tell us that the stars vary in size from as small as 25 miles across up to 650 times larger than our sun.⁵⁴ All of these stars, and the galaxies that they are in, are in motion, and God set them in perfect order on the fourth day of creation. Included in the creative acts of this day would be the creation of the planets within our solar system, which appear in our night sky along with the stars. The creative power, precision and imagination of God are beyond comprehension.



18. *And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.*

⁵⁰ Strong’s Online.

⁵¹ BDB.

⁵² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun>

⁵³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moon>

⁵⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star#Diameter>

God placed the sun and moon so that they would dominate as the light source for the day and the night respectively. They serve to make a distinction between the day and the night. God looked at the sun, the moon and the far-flung planets and stars and saw that it was good.



19. *And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.*

This is the fourth day of creation – three days have passed without the presence of the sun, by which we determine our day. Yet we read here that the *evening and the morning* (no change from the previous three days) made the *fourth day* (no change in the designation of the time that had passed). On the fourth day, God created all of the elements that we use to track the passing of time, and He did it in a way that was perfectly synchronized with His creative work from the first three days.

DAY FIVE - Genesis 1:20-23



20. *And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

God now turns His attention to the waters that were separated from the land and gathered into one place. *Bring forth abundantly* means to teem, or to swarm; God called the waters to be filled, or crammed, with teeming, or swarming, creatures (*moving creature*).⁵⁵ These are verb and noun forms of the same Hebrew word. When you consider the waters of the earth today, they are still teeming with living creatures. God spoke, and the waters abounded with all kinds of life from the microscopic to the humungous – all created in maturity.

In the same creative moment, God made all flying creatures – the word *fowl* actually includes all creatures that fly – from the tiniest insect to the largest birds.⁵⁶ These were created to fly about in the atmosphere, that open expanse between the waters above and the waters below that was created on day two.

Once again, we must consider the tremendous complexity of this life – down to the molecular DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), which carries the specifics of each creature, all created in an instant.



21. *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

⁵⁵ Strong's Online.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Whales is from a Hebrew word that is most often translated as *dragon*⁵⁷ and refers to the large sea creatures. Every living thing within the oceans that glides about (*moveth*) was created by God. Every species of life was called into being; there is no evolution of different kinds of life over billions of years – God created each species immediately.

The same took place with the *winged fowl* – the winged flying creatures. Each flying species was created by God – there is no gradual development of wings and feathers. A careful reading of this first chapter of Genesis should forever remove from the minds of Christians, who have eyes to see, any concept of creatures evolving over billions of years.



22. *And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.*

For the first time we read that God blessed what He had just created. His blessing was this: reproduce and become numerous, in the waters and in the earth (the flying creatures). This is confirmation that God created mature creatures.

We've probably all heard the saying, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" If we accept the Biblical account of creation, the answer is obvious; however, man is generally not so willing to believe what God has said. Aristotle, that admired philosopher of the third century BC, refused to acknowledge the creative acts of God. He believed that the world was eternal – it has always been the way that it is. He couldn't conceive of anything else, and so, in his mind, it was impossible "that there could have been a first egg to give the beginning to birds, or that there should have been a first bird which gave the beginning to eggs, for a bird comes from an egg."⁵⁸ His conclusion was not that God had created, but that what he saw had always been; we can see, within his thinking, the ancient roots of naturalism (a belief in natural causes, not God) – when scientific discovery made it evident that everything has not always been as it is now, then other philosophers were on hand to add the billions of years needed to "explain" the fossil evidence and rock strata. Since man succumbed to the alluring arguments of Satan, he has always had a propensity to pattern his thinking after him. Satan fell because of pride – his desire to become like unto God (Isaiah 14:14); man suffers from the same delusion today – an unwillingness to acknowledge his dependence upon God, and an esteem for his own intelligence that is far too high. With God out of mind, man has no option but to create theories and philosophies grand enough to try to explain the universe in all of its complexity.



23. *And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.*

DAY SIX - Genesis 1:24-25

⁵⁷ Strong's Online.

⁵⁸ M. De La Motte Fenelon, *Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, p. 202.



24. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.*

God now turns His attention to the earth (the dry land that He created on day three), and makes everything that is alive on the earth according to their species (*living creature*). Three kinds of creatures are mentioned. The *cattle*, or the larger beasts that were later domesticated, the *creeping thing*, which would include the bugs, worms, and reptiles that move about close to the ground, and then *beast of the earth*, which would seem to include the animals that roamed freely. All of these were created down to the intricacies of their unique DNA.



25. *And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

Here is a carefully laid out emphasis that all of the animals were created according to their own species. Men will spend their lives searching for the hypothetical, evolutionary missing-link – that one fossil that will bridge the gap between the species. God has given us His Word that they will never find such a fossil. There have been numerous occasions when so-called scientists have found a small bone from which they will create a complete creature that fits their scheme – only to find out later that the bone is not what they thought.

In 1912, the discovery of a skull and jawbone in a gravel pit near Piltdown, England, appeared to be from an unknown early human and caused a great sensation within the evolutionary community. For forty years, the Piltdown Man hoax continued until it was discovered that it was really a human skull and the jawbone of an orangutan that had been deliberately buried together in order to deceive.⁵⁹ It is amazing to see the godless scientific community's zeal in using anything that comes along as support for their teetering religion of evolutionism – anything, but God, is acceptable.

DAY SIX – CREATION OF MAN - Genesis 1:26-31



26. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

At this point in time, the earth is full of vegetation and animals, the waters are teeming with life, and the skies are being enjoyed by flying creatures – there is life everywhere. Now God turns His attention to the creation of man.

⁵⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piltdown_Man

The Hebrew word for *God* (as is consistent throughout this narrative of creation) is *Elohiym* – a plural form of a word that means god or God.⁶⁰ The words *make* and *image* are both in plural form in the Hebrew, which corresponds perfectly with *Elohiym*.⁶¹ By contrast, *man* (*adam*) is singular, as we would expect.⁶² Rather than simply addressing the earth and calling man forth, God demonstrates a distinction when it comes to the creation of man by, first of all, declaring His intent to make a creature who will bear a resemblance to His tri-unity. However, He goes on to declare His plan for this created being – they (He will, from this single creation [*adam*], bring plurality) will rule over the rest of the creation that He has just made. He speaks of the fish, the flying creatures, the large animals, the vegetation and the creeping land creatures and places them all under the control of the man whom He will create in His image. The word *image* speaks of a likeness or a resemblance;⁶³ there is a uniqueness to man that reflects God in a way that no other part of creation does. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psalm 19:1), but they do not reflect His image.



27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

So far, this is only the third time that we have seen the word *created* (also in verses 1 and 21), and it describes an activity attributable only to God.⁶⁴ He carries out the described creative intent from the previous verse. Interestingly, the words *image* used here, are both singular, without the plural suffix as carried in the previous verse. God (plural) created (singular) man (singular) to bear His image (singular); although we do bear His image, it is clear that even in Adam, it is but a glimpse of Who God is. It is a little bit like a photo taken of a vast scene as you compare it to the natural view; the view might include miles of scenery that has been reduced to a two-dimensional image on a piece of paper. No matter how good the replication in the photo, it will never be the same as the original. Man is that photo – a mere two-dimensional image of a multi-dimensional God. Man as being God’s image-bearer, is emphasized (it is repeated) so that we do not miss this important truth.

Within the New Age philosophy and Mormon theology, just being an image-bearer is not sufficient (the same attitude as Satan – being created in great beauty was not enough). The Mormons believe that man is on a journey to godhood, and God, once being a mortal just like us, is what we can become. They have a little couplet that summarizes this concept: “As man now is, God once was; As God now is, man may become.”⁶⁵ The New Agers are just as willing to show their hand in this matter. Marianne Williamson, a very popular New Age figure, has said, “We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone.”⁶⁶ They view man as being a little God, filled with limitless good and potential – hence, the popular philosophical concept of “looking within” in order to find guidance and strength for life. Unfortunately, this error is no longer limited to cultic thinkers but is finding its way into

⁶⁰ Strong’s Online.

⁶¹ Leningrad Hebrew OT, *Bibleworks* 8

⁶² *Ibid.*; Strong’s Online.

⁶³ BDB.

⁶⁴ Strong’s Online.

⁶⁵ Covey, *Divine*, p. 81.

⁶⁶ Marianne Williamson, *A Return to Love*, p. 190-191.

Evangelicalism. The very popular Max Lucado has said, “You have one. A divine spark.”⁶⁷ However, Lucado does not stop with that simple statement; he goes on to quote favorably from Martin Buber, a Hasidic Jew:

The world is an irradiation of God, but as it is endowed with an independence of existence and striving, it is apt, always and everywhere, to form a crust around itself. Thus, a divine spark lives in every thing and being, but each such spark is enclosed by an isolating shell. Only man can liberate it and rejoin it with the Origin ...

... in every man, is a force divine.⁶⁸

A writer for the *Times of India*, Karan Singh says,

There is within each individual a spark of the divine, call it the atman, the soul, the Bodhichitta or by whatever name.

It is this spark that energises [sic] human consciousness... Every individual has a unique value, because he represents a special correlation of forces revolving around a spiritual core of which he may or may not be conscious. Yoga helps us join this inner spiritual core with the all-pervading divine. (Italics in the original)⁶⁹

Lucado, Buber and Singh use the same words; even though Lucado might speak of God and Jesus Christ, the foundation for his teaching finds its basis in the lies of Satan and not the Word of God. It is little wonder that we now hear of “Christian Yoga,” a somewhat sanitized (and thus, more dangerous) form of paganism, which is wending its way into Evangelicalism.

Both male and female were created by God and in His image. Even before the fall, man reflected only an image of God; after the fall, man continues to retain that image of God even though it is stained by sin (Genesis 9:6; James 3:9). However, nowhere within Scripture do we find the concept of a spark of God being within each person; that is not the image of God referred to here. When we come to faith in Christ for salvation, the Spirit of God comes to abide within us (1 John 3:24) – but that is not a piece of God that abides in all of mankind, rather it is all of God abiding in those who have been redeemed and continue to walk in His light.



28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

God blesses His image-bearers and then declares His desire for them. Adam and Eve were to be fruitful, to increase in number so that they might fill the earth. Our English word *replenish* gives the idea of filling again, which is a mistranslation of the original. Those who like to place a gap between some of the texts of Genesis 1 in order to make room for the millions of years of evolution, might like the word, but the Hebrew word means to fill (not re-fill).⁷⁰ God then places upon man

⁶⁷ Max Lucado, *Cure for the Common Life*, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Martin Buber, *The Way of Man: According to the Teaching of Hasidism*, p. 5-6; Lucado quotes this and more in his book, *Cure for the Common Life* (p. 215), but leaves off the final portion, which appears directly following the passage that he quotes.

⁶⁹ http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2008-10-03/holistic-living/27897075_1_yoga-karma-spiritual-core

⁷⁰ Strong's Online.

the responsibility to rule over, or to subdue, the fish, flying creatures and every moving creature.⁷¹ In keeping with man being God's image-bearer, He gave him responsibility – something that was not given to any other part of His creation. Man was the capstone of God's creative acts, and He shows this by placing all of the other living creatures under his oversight and control.



29. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

God now specifically outlines man's diet – that which is to be his food (*meat*).⁷² Seed-bearing grass (*herb* – the Hebrew root means to be green⁷³) and seed-bearing fruit from the trees formed man's diet. Even though God identified that the seed-bearing fruit was to be food, modern man has been doing his utmost to remove the seeds. We now have seedless bananas, grapes, watermelons, tomatoes, and the list will undoubtedly continue to grow. Through genetic manipulation, man is capable of many things; what we don't know is what has happened to the fruit thus produced, since, evidently, it is not how God created it. Before the fall, man was a vegetarian but, obviously, would not have had to eat to maintain life, since death is a result of the fall.



30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

To all of the creatures on the earth and in the air, God gave all of the green plants for food. This is different from the food given to man in that there is no mention of the plant bearing seeds.



31. And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

God viewed all that He had made and saw that it was very good – and so closed the sixth day of creation.

DAY SEVEN - Genesis 2:1-3



1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

⁷¹ BDB.

⁷² Strong's Online.

⁷³ Ibid.

Like Genesis 1:1, this is a summarizing statement showing that the active works of creation were complete; in the former, God created the materials for the heavens and the earth from nothing – now, His work of forming and creating the universe, the earth and everything in it has been finished. In these six days, He not only created His image-bearers, the plant life, all living creatures and the massive galaxies (both visible and invisible), but He also put the marking of time into place: days, seasons and years. Physically, creation was finished, and it was pronounced as being *very good* (exceedingly excellent)⁷⁴; however, the verb *finished* in the Hebrew is in the imperfect tense, which speaks of an incomplete action. Even though God’s creative acts were ended (in that all species of all life had been made), this would indicate that He would still be involved in the perpetuation of His creation. He did not create life and then step back and let it take its course; rather, He continues to be involved with sustaining all that He has made. “For by him [Jesus Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist [continue, or endure]” (Colossians 1:16-17).⁷⁵



2. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

However, God did not stop creating after defining six days; He went on to identify a seventh day, a day of rest – a day when there was no more work. *Ended*, in Hebrew, is the same word (different form) translated as *finished* in the previous verse; it confirms that God’s creative work was now finished on the seventh day (this word, too, is in the imperfect tense – God had created and ordered all things within the seven-day period, but He would continue to be involved in His creation). Six days were past and, in that time, God had created all things; now we are told that God *rested*, the Hebrew word (*shabath*) means to desist from labor.⁷⁶ God did not rest because He was exhausted from six days of creating; “Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:4). What God established by His example, is the seven-day week; every culture works and has worked within a seven-day week; God set the pattern at this time. The only thing that God created on the seventh day was the day of rest. He worked at establishing creation, in all of its minute details, for six days, then ceased His work for a day (the same 24-hour time frame) thereby making this last day of rest an integral part of the seven-day week.



3. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

However, we soon recognize that the seventh day was much more than simply a day of rest, for God *blessed* it and *sanctified* it. The word *blessed* speaks of approval – within the creative process, only three things received God’s special approval (His blessing): the creatures of the water

⁷⁴ BDB.

⁷⁵ Gingrich Lexicon.

⁷⁶ BDB.

and the air, man, and the seventh day. Uniquely with the seventh day, God also *sanctified* it; in other words, this seventh-day of rest (*shabath*) was set apart as sacred, or holy – it is more than simply set apart; it is holy.⁷⁷ What we must not miss is that both the blessing and the sanctification were not a one-time act of God; i.e., He did not just bless and sanctify that first seventh-day of creation. The verb tense used makes the action recorded here incomplete (imperfect mood) – in other words, not only did God bless and sanctify that first seventh-day, but the seventh day of every week going forward would carry the same blessing and sanctification. In the same way that God did not create the entire physical world and then step away from it, so this seventh-day, uniquely part of the seven days of the creative acts of God, bears a perpetual blessing and identification of holiness by God.

We would expect that something sanctified by God would receive special honor and respect, and would not be regarded as something ordinary by those who consider themselves to be God’s children. However, despite God’s particular attention to the seventh-day as a sanctified day of rest, our western “Christianized” culture holds no regard for this day. Today, there are very few groups with roots in Christianity who keep the seventh-day Sabbath. In broad terms, there are the Seventh-Day Baptists (who are convinced of the need to keep the seventh-day holy, and have merged keeping the Sabbath with traditional Baptist practices), Messianic Jews (who have merged Evangelical teaching with Jewish traditions and practices – despite claiming that they do not impact salvation, they are still keeping traditions that the Scriptures identify as being *abolished* [Ephesians 2:15]), and the Seventh-Day Adventists (who are considered to be a cult because of their secure foundation upon the visions and teachings of Ellen G. White). Besides these, there are small groups of those who have become convinced of the necessity of showing regard for what God specifically declared to be holy. God established the pattern at creation, and there has been nothing since that time to indicate that He has changed His mind on this matter. Evangelicals and most Baptists today may well promote various excuses for disregarding the seventh-day Sabbath, but the essence of their error is that they are following a tradition created by the pagans, incorporated into “Christianity” by the Roman Catholics, and continually affirmed by our western tradition. However, in God’s eyes, error does not lose its identity even if we accept it as truth for millennia.

A common error is to view the Sabbath as something that began with the children of Israel and that it is somehow uniquely Jewish; out of this misconception has come the equally false claim that we are under grace and not the law, by which it is understood that we have the freedom to live as we please (a gross misinterpretation of Romans 6:14 and a contravention of Romans 6:1-2). Due to God’s grace extended toward us through Christ, we are no longer under the condemnation of the Law of God (Romans 8:1), but that in no way means that we are no longer required to keep the commandments of God (as Evangelicals take that to mean). Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep (attend carefully to⁷⁸) my commandments” (John 14:15), which is a very straightforward statement that cannot be easily misunderstood, nor can it be brushed off as being irrelevant. John wrote, “And hereby we do know [are knowing – present tense] that we know him [have known Him – perfect tense (an action completed once, and only once)], if we keep [are attending carefully to] his commandments. He that saith, I know [perfect tense] him, and keepeth [present tense] not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not [absolute form] in him” (1 John 2:3-4).⁷⁹ This is a sobering word from God! Evangelicals today say that they know God, but they show disdain for doing what He has asked them to do – including keeping the Sabbath holy, which is our present

⁷⁷ Strong’s Online.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

consideration. Within creation, God established the pattern of the seventh-day of rest; why should it be so difficult for us to perpetuate what God created? Here is God's word regarding the new heaven, new earth and New Jerusalem: "Blessed *are* they that do [present tense] his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without *are* dogs [morally impure], and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Revelation 22:14-15).⁸⁰ In his letter, John defined a liar as someone who says that he knows God but does not do what He says. This is in keeping with Jesus' words, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth [is doing – present tense] the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-23).⁸¹ To profess to know God is not enough to open the gates of heaven; obedience is not optional – it is the essential product of a living faith! Obedience is not legalism; it flows out of our love for the Lord Jesus Christ – the One Who redeemed us from our sins. Legalism says, "I will do these things that God has asked so that I can gain merit with God"; obedience says, "I will do these things that God has asked because I love Him." Faith in Christ forms the foundation for obedience; without faith it is impossible to please God, no matter what we do (Hebrews 11:6).

As we can easily see, God established the seventh-day Sabbath at creation and, therefore, it is uniquely universal. He set the example for us by resting from His labor of creation on this seventh day of the week, thereby setting the pattern of six days for work and a final day of rest. This pattern was skewed by Constantine (in AD 321) as the head of the rapidly-forming, idolatrous Roman Catholic Church; he shifted the day of rest to the first day of the week to coincide with the pagan practice of keeping the day of the Sun – a pragmatic decision to bring unity within his jurisdiction, and to separate from anything remotely Jewish (indication of a growing anti-Semitic attitude).⁸² What we must determine is this: will we walk in obedience to the commandments and example of God, or will we comply with the tradition established by pagans who refer to themselves as Christians? What God established as a holy day of rest (*shabbath*), man has turned into a day for pursuing his own pleasures. The capstone of God's creative genius is this final day of rest – all that was created was declared to be very good (1:31), but this day was set apart by God as being holy. How can we do less than bow before Him in humility and, out of a heart of love, obediently follow His perfect example by resting on the Sabbath?⁸³

CREATION HIGHLIGHTS - Genesis 2:4-25



4. *These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,*

The word *generations* is one that generally refers to man and his descendants, but here it is applied to the *heavens and the earth* and, thereby, speaks of the begetting of the heavens and the

⁸⁰ Strong's Online.

⁸¹ Friberg Lexicon.

⁸² History of the Christian Church, Volume III, Chapter III, p. 75.

⁸³ For a more detailed study of this matter, see <http://www.thenarrowtruth.com/what-of-the-sabbath.html>

earth and what transpired afterward.⁸⁴ This takes a step back, having just completed the creation narrative, in order to provide some very specific details pertaining to the creation of man. We have here the backdrop of the creation of the heavens and the earth very quickly sketched, and then we are taken to the specifics regarding the creation of man.

Day is from the same Hebrew word that was used for each of the seven days of creation; however, context tells us that it does not refer to a 24-hour day, but to the *time* that God made the heavens and the earth.⁸⁵ This is a reminder that context is so important in communication. The first six days are all defined by *the evening and the morning* – clearly making the 24-hour day the only plausible interpretation. Although the seventh day does not carry this limiting definition, its placement within the confines of God’s creative acts demands that the 24-hour time frame applies.

We have here a new word used of God – *LORD*. Up to now, each time that *God* is used in our English, it comes from the Hebrew word *Elohiym* (which we noted as being plural in form) and a noun form of a word meaning fear, hence the idea of fear or awe – the God Whom we are to fear.⁸⁶ *LORD*, as it appears in the KJV in all capital letters, is from the four Hebrew letters shown as *Y-H-W-H* in English and is generally pronounced *Yahweh*. Inasmuch as the Jews considered the name of God to be too holy to pronounce, they substituted the name *Adonai*, or Lord. It is the combination of *YHWH* (which has no vowels) with the vowels from *Adonai* (in Hebrew) that gives us the name, *Jehovah*, or, more accurately, *Yahweh*.⁸⁷ The meaning is the existing One,⁸⁸ the One Who is,⁸⁹ or, as Moses heard, the *I AM* (Exodus 3:14) or ever-present One. This is the one-God of the Hebrews. However, in its first appearance in the Scriptures, *Jehovah* (*LORD* in the KJV) is coupled with the word *Elohiym*; in a very unique way, this expresses both the oneness and plurality of God. John explained this for us: “For there are three that bear record in heaven [*Elohyim*], the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one [*YHWH* or *Jehovah*]” (1 John 5:7).

It is interesting to note that in the second instance, the earth is mentioned before the heavens – unlike other cases so far (Genesis 1:1, 2:1). What follows focuses specifically on the earth.



5. *And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.*

The overall impression of this verse might lead one to say that the earth was barren before the creation of man, which would be in contradiction to the narrative in chapter one – so that cannot be the explanation. This seems to be an allusion to the Garden of Eden, which God specifically created for man (verse 9). The Hebrew word for *till*, as used here, is the same as for the word *dress* used in verse 15 where God describes the activity that man would have in the Garden of Eden. The thought expressed here would apply specifically to the Garden that God would provide for man.

⁸⁴ BDB.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ K&D.

⁸⁷ <http://carm.org/dictionary-jehovah>

⁸⁸ Strong’s Online.

⁸⁹ BDB.



6. *But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.*

There was no rain (falling water), as we know it, but only a mist that formed over all of the ground to provide the moisture needed for the growth of the vegetation. This is in keeping with the firmament established by God to separate the waters above from the waters below (1:7). This separation would remain in place until Noah entered the ark.



7. *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

Here is the description of the creation of man (*adam*) carried out by *Yahweh Elohiym (LORD God)*. *Formed*, as used here, comes from a Hebrew word that, when used in relation to divine activity, speaks of original creation. The word carries the concept of squeezing,⁹⁰ much like a potter would squeeze the clay that he is working on to form the desired vessel.⁹¹ God used an existing material but He created something new; He formed the loose material of the ground (*adamah*) into man (*adam*).⁹² Much like the creation of the birds and animals, man was made from the earth; however, for the former, God simply spoke them into existence.

Then we read that the LORD God *breathed* into the nostrils of man *the breath of life*. This is also unique – all of the birds and animals were called into existence from the earth, and all breathe in similar fashion to man, but they did not receive their breath in this manner. Nevertheless, inasmuch as animals and humans both breathe the air in order to live, there is similarity. We must be careful not to read more into man being described here as being a *living soul*, for the same Hebrew phrase is used to describe all of the *living creatures* that Adam named (verse 19). It is not that man became a living being that makes him unique among all of the other creatures, but rather that God created him in His own image. Sinful man considers the similarity of design between humans and animals and envisions billions of years of progressive evolution – the truth is that we all have a common Creator.

God spoke the animals into existence from the earth *after their kind*. There was a multitude of species created with a single utterance by God; with man, God initially made only one. This creation was to be His image-bearer.



8. *And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

Jehovah Elohiym now prepared a place for the man whom He had created – He *planted*, or established, a *garden*, or enclosure.⁹³ We are told that this garden was *eastward in Eden*. The Hebrew word for *eastward* means the front or before, and, hence, the idea of being eastward

⁹⁰ Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, *ESword*.

⁹¹ BDB.

⁹² Strong's Online.

⁹³ *Ibid*.

(toward the rising sun).⁹⁴ *Eden* means pleasure; it was in this region that God prepared the garden specifically for Adam (we are told that it was placed *in Eden*).⁹⁵ Therefore, we must understand that Eden was not the garden, but was the larger area where God placed the garden. It is interesting to think that until the flood came, everyone would have known where this beautiful garden was, and many would have seen the guard whom God positioned there to keep them out (3:24). God had already created all plants and declared them good (1:12), but He now prepared a unique place just for man.



9. *And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

Within this special garden, God caused every tree to grow that was desirable, or *pleasant*, to look upon and provided pleasant, or *good*, fruit.⁹⁶ Of all of the species of trees that had been created, God brought the most enjoyable into this garden for man or, perhaps, He created special ones just for this sanctuary.

However, God also brought two unique trees into the garden – the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Earlier (1:2) we saw the presence of Satan in the darkness that was upon the face of the deep (the abyss or deep seas), and now we see one place within creation where God uses Satan to test man. One of the ways that man bears the image of God is through his ability to make rational choices; he can look at various options that may present themselves and then choose one based on the perceived merit of each alternative. Man has always had a choice, and Adam was no exception. Although God created man to be a physical being, He also desired to have fellowship with him (after all, he was His image-bearer), but, of greater importance, God desired that man should **choose** to fellowship with Him. Adam was not created like a robot, but rather with a mind and a will – with both a physical body (part of the physical creation) and a spiritual dimension (a need to associate with his Creator). We cannot pretend to understand the plans of God, our Creator, but what is evident as time unfolds, is that, beginning in the Garden of Eden, God requires man to make choices. For a choice to be genuine, it must provide more than one option. When pride entered Satan’s heart, evil was born; when God created man, evil was already in existence, therefore, the choice options for Adam were very significant.

As we noted in looking into Genesis 1:2, Satan’s fall took place before God created the earth and the heavens. Therefore, man, created with the ability to think and to reason, would have to choose whether to follow his Creator or to permit the pride of Satan to lead him away from God. As we look at the Garden of Eden, we see the tree of life placed in the middle, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was close by.

If we look ahead to the end of time and the installation of the new heaven and new earth, we again see the presence of the tree of life (Revelation 22:2), but what is conspicuously absent is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan, by this time, has received his punishment in the lake of fire, and this new place will be inhabited only by those who have chosen God and lived in obedience to His ways in this life (Revelation 21:27). Sinless Adam was forced to choose, and we,

⁹⁴ Strong’s Dictionary, *ESword*.

⁹⁵ Strong’s Online.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

his sinful descendants, all face a similar choice – our judgment is sure if we do not choose the righteousness of God in Christ. “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*” (Romans 8:1, 4). Faith in what Christ has done to redeem us is the initial step; obedience to what God requires of us is essential to retaining our position in Christ (not works of the flesh but a heart of obedience under the guidance and enablement of the Spirit of God). “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). We are saved by faith alone in Christ alone; however, if this faith does not result in a life of obedience to the commands of God, then it is dead (James 2:26).

This is the error of many modern Evangelicals – they think that they can have saving faith in Christ and still live like the world; anyone who suggests otherwise is considered to be a narrow-minded legalist. The late Billy Graham, the “pope” of Evangelicalism, was guilty of setting the example in this regard. Throughout his crusade career, he encouraged people to place their faith in Christ – and then he would send them back to their compromised, worldly denominations for spiritual instruction. Graham blatantly violated the clear teaching of 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 from the beginning of his work, yet he remains highly acclaimed within Evangelical circles. It is the narrow-minded, obedient servant of Christ who will enjoy the assistance of the Spirit of God to walk the “narrow ... way which leadeth unto life” (Matthew 7:14). By contrast, Jesus said, “... broad is the way, that leadeth unto destruction ...,” and it is on this path that the broad-minded will find their fit.



10. *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.*

A stream, or river, came out of the region of Eden and watered the garden that God had made for man. We noted earlier that there was no rain at this time, only a mist watered the face of the earth. Here we have a supplementary source of water used for this special Garden – flowing water provided an additional means of nourishing the vegetation.

After watering the Garden of Eden, this river divided (*parted*) and became the source for four streams.



11. *The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;*

We are now given details regarding the four rivers that found their source in the land of Eden. There are many theories about the rivers and land descriptions given here and where they might be in reference to today’s geography. The description given on what took place during the flood would indicate to me that the land, as it was, has disappeared. Noah and his sons would have known the land where they lived before the flood, and it would only be fitting for them to name landmarks and rivers after the flood according to names with which they were familiar. Therefore, even though God has given us details regarding the land of Eden, we should not look at our modern geography and speculate as to where these might have been.

The first river is Pison (*pee-shone*’ – meaning increases⁹⁷ or dispersive⁹⁸) and we are told that it circled (*compasseth*) the land of Havilah (*circle*) where there was gold.



12. *And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.*

The gold is described as being of good quality, and the presence of two other precious stones is noted. There is no agreement as to what these two stones actually are. We are told that the color of the manna that God sent for the Israelites was the color of bdellium (Numbers 11:7) – the Hebrew word is the same for both but it doesn’t give us any further idea as to what this might have been.



13. *And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.*

The Hebrew name of the second river means bursting forth, and it surrounds the land of Cush (meaning black).⁹⁹ The Hebrew word is *Kuwsh* (*koosh*); it is the translators who have turned it into Ethiopia.



14. *And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.*

The name of the third river means rapid (the Septuagint calls this river the Tigris) and it ran east of *Ashshur* (*ash-shoor*’).¹⁰⁰ The fourth river is simply called the Euphrates, or fruitfulness.¹⁰¹ Although we are given these details concerning the four rivers originating with the waters that flowed out of the Garden of Eden, the reality is that these do not correspond to any rivers today.



15. *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

The Lord took man and placed him, or settled him, in the Garden of Eden.¹⁰² The word *dress* is from the same Hebrew word as *till* used in verse five; Adam was placed in the Garden to work. We cannot imagine what kind of work this would be for there were no weeds yet; what we cannot miss is that man was created to work – that is not part of the curse of sin.

⁹⁷ Strong’s Online.

⁹⁸ Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary, *ESword*.

⁹⁹ Strong’s Online.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰² Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary, *ESword*.

Another part of man's responsibility in the Garden was to watch over it (*keep it*).¹⁰³ Although God had given him dominion over all of His creation (1:28), the Garden was uniquely man's domain.



16. *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*

Immediately, upon placing man within the Garden of Eden, God provides him with instruction. The Hebrew word translated as *commanded* is just that – this is a command from God, something that He required man to give attention to, and to obey. This is significant. Obedience to what God has commanded is not something that we were burdened with after sin entered – it is what God required of sinless Adam. God has always called for obedience from man, and He has ensured that we know what He expects – something that is very evident when we look at the lives of Cain (Genesis 4:6-7), Noah (Genesis 6:22), and Abraham (Genesis 26:5). The Ten Commandments, which God wrote upon two tables of stone and gave to Moses at Mt. Sinai, were a written confirmation of what God had taught to all of His saints, beginning with Adam. As we come to faith in Christ, it is these same Ten Commandments that God now writes upon our hearts by His indwelling Spirit (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Luke 22:20; John 16:13; Hebrews 10:15-16).

God indicates to man that the whole Garden is full of trees bearing fruit for his eating pleasure (2:9); the very best trees had been placed in the Garden just for him. The phrase *freely eat* comes from a repeated word in Hebrew (although in different tenses); Robert Young translates it as “eating thou dost eat.”



17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Here is God's command to man – a restriction placed upon him as to what he is not to eat; keep in mind that the Garden is teeming with trees bearing fruit that is good for food. In the midst of this plenty, there is one tree that is restricted by God. The commandment of God is clear, and the consequence for not doing what He commanded is equally clear. At the time (*in the day*) that the fruit of this forbidden tree is eaten, “dying thou dost die.”¹⁰⁴ Even if Adam may not have understood the full implications of what it meant to die, he would have known that it was something undesirable.

Man has always faced a choice of eternal consequences, and it has always come down to either obedience or disobedience to what God requires of us. For Adam, the choice was simple – not eat (in obedience) or eat (in disobedience); unlike us, at this time he did not have a sin nature that would have prodded him to eat.

When Moses and the children of Israel came to the Jordan River and saw the Promised Land just across the waters, he took the opportunity to challenge the Israelites to walk in obedience to what God had commanded them. “Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the

¹⁰³ BDB.

¹⁰⁴ YLT.

judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (Deuteronomy 4:1-2). Two things are noteworthy here: 1) if Israel wanted to possess the land that God had promised to give them, then they would have to do what He said, and 2) changing the words of God would not alter their responsibility to do what the Lord had commanded. The challenge is to leave God’s Word alone – don’t add to it, don’t take away from it, just do it! Today we face a multitude of mangled Bibles in which man has added to and taken away from God’s Word with reckless abandon. My adherence to the King James Bible is not because it is a superior translation, but because it is based upon superior texts; all modern translations proceed from corrupted texts so that even a translation that might be superior to the KJB still bears the marks of the corrupt text from which it springs. If we are to do what God has said, then we must also know what He has said.

Adam knew God’s command, and the result of disobedience – there was no ambiguity. Here is a comparison of Adam’s situation and ours:

For Adam	For us
- Created spiritually alive.	- Born spiritually dead.
- Subject to the Law of God.	- Subject to the Law of God.
- Disobedience will lead to death.	- Faith in Christ leads to spiritual life.
- Unbelief/lack of faith will lead to death.	- Obedience to God is a result of faith; no obedience – no faith (James 2:17).



18. *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*

God saw that Adam was separated from all of the rest of creation (*alone*), and so He purposed to make him a help.¹⁰⁵ The Hebrew word for *meet* primarily means in front of, and, here, it specifically means to correspond to; this *help* would be someone who was equal to and adequate for Adam.¹⁰⁶



19. *And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.*

This is a reiteration of the fact that God created the beasts and the flying creatures from the soil (*adamah*), the same thing that He used to create Adam (v.7). Adam and all of the animals have

¹⁰⁵ BDB.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

this in common – they are all made of the same “stuff.” Man, in his fallen genius, sees this commonality and says that we must have all evolved from a common ancestor, rather than recognizing that we all have a common Creator and were created in the same world.

God brought all of these creatures to Adam to see what he would name them. Part way through the sixth day of creation, Adam named all of the animals and flying creatures. Evolutionary science tries to convince us that man’s intelligence has been increasing the longer that he has been on the earth, and although man’s achievements have ebbed and flowed throughout the years, there has been no steady increase from a state of no intelligence, as they would have us believe. The phenomenal intellect that early man had was lost with the entrance of sin, but there have been glimpses of genius throughout the millennia when man has been able to multiply sufficiently with a common language. The Tower of Babel would have been an impressive structure, the top of which “*may reach* unto heaven” (Genesis 11:4). The only surviving architectural wonder of the ancient world is the Great Pyramid, which stands over 455 feet tall (taller than a 45 story building) and contains blocks of stone weighing as much as 80 tonnes (176,000 pounds) each.¹⁰⁷ It is estimated that the construction of this massive building was completed within 20 years, and that some of the enormous stones were brought from 500 miles away.¹⁰⁸ Despite the phenomenal growth in the capabilities of man during the last century, we still do not have equipment that could move such a tremendous weight, let alone the expertise to carry it over such a great distance and then install it with precision. Adam’s achievement in naming the animals gives us a glimpse into his intellect.



20. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Adam named all of the animals and flying creatures on day six; this required great intelligence, imagination and vocabulary. Modern science would have us believe that all animals were first known as “ugh” – fitting their hypothesis that man’s intelligence began at zero and has been growing ever since.

Of all of the creatures that God brought to Adam for naming, there was not one found that was comparable to Adam. At this point, Adam was unique and alone, but God was about to take care of that.



21. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

Jehovah Elohyim put Adam into a deep sleep and extracted one of his ribs. God is identified in the same way as when He created Adam from the dust of the earth. We are told that He took the rib, then closed the place where it had been, with flesh.

¹⁰⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.



22. *And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

From the rib, which *Jehovah Elohyim* removed from Adam, He built (*banah, made*) a woman; this is the only time that this Hebrew word is used in all of the creative acts of God. God then brought the woman to the man; Adam was fully healed and functional after God's surgery. The Hebrew word translated as *brought* is exactly the same as that used in verse 19 to describe how God *brought* the animals to Adam to be named.



23. *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

Now comes from a Hebrew word meaning now at length,¹⁰⁹ or this time.¹¹⁰ Jehovah had brought all of the animals and flying creatures to Adam to be named; now, finally, here was someone for him. After realizing that he was unique in all of creation, Adam now had a helpmeet who, like him, had been created in the image of God (1:27). Adam's words, *bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*, are his expression of the close relationship that he knew was there with God's newest creation. Many years later we read, "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh" (2 Samuel 5:1); they were stating that their allegiance was with David because he was their kin – there was a close relationship.

Adam calls his helpmeet *woman* (*'ishshah*) because she was taken out of *man* (*'iysh*). The Hebrew verb for *taken* is in the perfect tense – describing a completed action, never to be done again.¹¹¹ This is the only time that woman was taken from man.

We have here a new word used for the man. Up to this point, the Hebrew word translated as *man* is *adam*, which is a general term meaning a human being. Now we have *'iysh*, which speaks to Adam being a male, as contrasted with Eve as *'ishshah* (female).



24. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

Inasmuch as the book of Genesis was written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit many years after the events this appears more as a parenthetical comment to explain a situation at the time of its writing, based upon a known past action. Adam had no father or mother; therefore, it would seem evident that this was not directed specifically to him. However, several important points are made here that we must be sure not to miss, particularly in our day when the breakup of marriage relationships is soaring, even among those who profess to be Christians.

¹⁰⁹ BDB.

¹¹⁰ Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, *ESword*.

¹¹¹ Strong's Online.

The Hebrew word translated as *leave* means to abandon, or forsake.¹¹² We must understand this to be the establishment of a new family unit based upon a newly formed relationship between a man (*iysh*) and his woman (*ishshaw* – the same Hebrew word is used for *wife* and *woman*) – there is to be an independence from the man’s family. We know that this does not mean that the man turns his back on his parents; the fifth Commandment tells us to honor our father and mother (Exodus 20:12), and this is completed with the declaration that whoever reviles or speaks evil of his father or mother is to be put to death (Exodus 21:17). Jesus made it clear that the Pharisees were in error in their practice of committing something to God so that they were then unable to be of help to their parents who were in need (Mark 7:10-11). The relationship is not to be severed, but it must become secondary to the relationship that is established between the man and his wife. This *leaving* confirms the importance of the husband-wife relationship for the establishment of a new home and family entity.

The man is to leave his parents, and he is to *cleave* to his wife. In Hebrew, it means to cling to, and includes the concept of loyalty and affection, without neglecting the idea of physical closeness.¹¹³ The Hebrew word is also in the perfect tense, which means it is a one time, completed action; there is to be a one-time cleaving to your wife. When Jesus quoted this verse (in Matthew 19:5), the Spirit used a Greek word that means to glue;¹¹⁴ there is to be a permanent bond between the husband and wife. God’s design for the marriage relationship is permanency.

With the leaving and the cleaving comes a mystical union – the two (man and woman) *shall be one flesh*. Out of two, God creates one – it is important that we understand something of this mystery so that we hold a right attitude toward marriage. In Romans 11:17, Paul explains the grafting that God does in order to bring us into the righteousness and holiness of the Root, so that we might be branches drawing from the life of the Vine, Jesus Christ (John 15:4). As we abide in the Vine, we are in unity, or oneness, with Christ and God the Father through the abiding Holy Spirit (John 17:21; 1 John 3:24). By placing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we forsake the world of sin of which we have been a part (the *leaving*), and are glued to Him by faith (the *cleaving*) – a bond that will withstand any outside assault (John 10:28-29); however, what we must guard against is a heart of unbelief (Hebrews 3:12). When he wrote to the Ephesians, Paul used the illustration of marriage to shed light upon our relationship with Christ (Ephesians 5:31-32); the parallel is significant both in its physical and spiritual applications.

To the Ephesians, Paul clarified the roles of the husband and wife in the marriage bond and likens them to the relationship between Christ and His *ekklesia* – His called-out ones. The wife is to submit to the husband even as the *ekklesia* is submissive to Christ as the Head (Ephesians 5:22-24). This will raise the hackles of any woman who has fallen victim to the liberation philosophy, but, as they say, this is only half of the story. The husband is not told to lord it over his wife but rather to love her even as Christ loves His *ekklesia* – those whom He has redeemed (Ephesians 5:25-28). If the husband shows forth Christ’s love to his wife, submission will become much easier for her. These are the roles to be filled by the man and the woman as they *cleave* to one another in this union called marriage.

The Pharisees presented Jesus with a question concerning the breakup of marriage, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every [or, any] cause?” (Matthew 19:3).¹¹⁵ What we cannot miss from the verse that we are looking at in Genesis is that to *cleave* does not make provision for

¹¹² BDB.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Strong’s Online.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

divorce. Physically, it is God's desire that the marriage commitment would hold for all of life; likewise, it is His desire that we hold fast to our faith in Him unto the end, and that we not depart from Him (Hebrews 3:6). However, because man was created with a will to choose, divorce was permitted ("... because of the hardness of your hearts [Moses] suffered [allowed] you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so," Matthew 19:8¹¹⁶); for the same reason, all of the provisions that God has made in order to protect the Vine-branch relationship can be set aside by the wayward, unbelieving heart of man (the branch). He has done everything to guard our relationship with Him **except** remove our ability to choose.

Recognizing the permanency of God's design for marriage, and that it was only through the hardness of man's heart that divorce was permitted, let's take a brief look at the Biblical attitude toward divorce. Jesus, in Matthew 19:9 says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Here we have a clause (*whosoever shall put away his wife*) with a modifying phrase, *except it be for fornication*. If we removed the phrase and consider the import of the statement made, it is this: if someone divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery. If we now reinsert the phrase noted, it then seems that we have a situation that if the wife commits fornication (any sexual sin), then this is the one time when it is permitted to divorce her and remarry without bearing the guilt of adultery (and there are many who take this position). However, we must also allow Scripture to interpret itself.

If we consider Deuteronomy 24:1 (where the principle of divorce is laid down), it is clear that the permission for divorce applies when a man takes his wife to himself and then finds in her some "uncleanness" (of a sexual nature); it would seem that this would be a preexisting condition, something that she brought into the marriage. Keep in mind that during the betrothal period in the Jewish custom, the man and woman are considered to be married and the betrothal can only be broken by divorce. This is not a case where after ten years the husband is tired of his wife and decides to divorce her because she was unfaithful before they were married; nor does it mean that he can divorce her for any petty excuse when they come together (as the Pharisees had come to practice, and as we see it today). Additionally, we must keep in mind that the Hebrew does not have Deuteronomy 24:1 as a complete thought, rather, the sentence continues on through verse four. The more complete thought is that if a husband finds some "uncleanness" in his new wife, he may immediately divorce her; however, if another marries her and likewise divorces her or even if her second husband dies, her first husband is not permitted to take her again as wife. There is a warning here to not be hasty in drawing up a divorce lest, after the divorce, regret sets in.

So, adding the context and warning of Deuteronomy 24:1 to Jesus' words, it would seem that the exception of divorce for fornication must be for something that was preexistent to the marriage, and this divorce would not be permitted to take place years after the marriage. In other words, the husband cannot use his wife's previous sexual failures as a threat over her until he is finally tired of her, and then use it as the basis for divorce years later; nor is he to use her failure during their marriage as an excuse for divorce.

Another approach to this "exception" clause in Matthew 19:9 is 1 Corinthians 6:16. If the wife was guilty of fornication before marriage, then, based on this text, she was already one with the other man. Therefore, the husband who takes a wife who has already been made one with another man, is automatically guilty of adultery before God; in which case, he would not have to remarry in order to be guilty of adultery.

¹¹⁶ Strong's Online.

The last statement (Matthew 5:32; repeated in Matthew 19:9) makes it clear that anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. The word *adultery* means, “to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife,” or more generally another's spouse.¹¹⁷ We might question how this could be considered unlawful since they are married to each other. It is clear that when God said that a man is to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and they will be one flesh, He meant just that – **they will be one flesh**. Divorce does not nullify what God declares to have taken place. Mark's Gospel carries a comment that Jesus makes on this subject: “And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mark 10:8-9; repeated in Matthew 19:6). It is absolutely clear that the two are made one, and Jesus ends with a command that what God has yoked together, let no one divide. Therefore, in God's eyes, marriage is for life – only death can sever the obligation to the other person. Romans 7:2-3 confirms this: “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.” Death is the only Biblical release from marriage.

Just in case we may have missed this, or rationalization sets in, Jesus explained the matter further to His disciples: “... Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery” (Mark 10:11-12). The same principle applies to both men and women: marriage is for life; the principle of *cleaving* has not been set aside. God's intent is to protect the marriage relationship; however, we recognize that Christians today are destroying their marriages.

If, for a moment, we hold in our minds the marriage relationship as being a metaphor for Christ's relationship with us, His redeemed ones, and realize that the marriage bond within God's economy is not to be broken, we then have a picture of the security that we have in Christ. However, even as we realize the reality of divorce within the Christian community, we must accept the reality of possibly turning our backs on Christ and being joined to another, spiritually (i.e., committing spiritual adultery, namely, apostasy). A falling away is possible; we are fully protected from outside attack, but we must guard against an “evil heart of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:12). We read in Hebrews 6:4-6: “For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.” This is in keeping with the principle of divorce as it is laid out in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 – after a falling away and being joined to another, there is no returning. Realize, too, that you cannot fall away (apostatize) without being joined to another – there is no middle ground between a living faith and apostasy. Second Peter 2:20-21 reiterates this thought and adds that it would be better to have never known the truth of Christ, than to have known and cast it aside (if you have never known, then there is hope; if you've known and apostatized, then there is no hope); Romans 11 warns the grafted branches against being “high-minded” lest they be cut off (v. 20-21). God's desire is for the marriage bond to remain for life; in the same way, He has done all that He can to protect our relationship with Christ – we must guard against a wayward heart.

¹¹⁷ Strong's Online.



25. *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

This is a description of the innocence that existed before sin – they were not ashamed before one another.¹¹⁸

SIN ENTERS - Genesis 3:1-6



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

We must remember that the creation that God had made was pronounced *very good* (1:31), and this would have included the serpent as one of God's created creatures. We are told that this creature was more crafty (*subtil*) than any other living thing (the Hebrew word for *beast* is translated as *living thing* in 1:28) on the land (*field*).¹¹⁹ How this presented itself, we are not told. We must also recognize that the serpent was not the devil, but the devil occupied, or used, the serpent – and God judged the serpent for being used in this way (3:14).

When God gave His command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17), His instructions were specifically given to Adam (it appears to have taken place before God made Eve) – the word *man* used in 2:16 is singular. However, it is also very evident (from Eve's response to the serpent) that Adam had given Eve clear instructions regarding this particular tree.

Illustrated in this verse is something of the tactics of the devil. As he worked through the serpent, he came to the woman, Eve. Adam had received the instructions from God regarding the forbidden tree; Eve, on the other hand, knew what God required but had probably received the commandment through Adam – a relaying of God's command, but it was not received directly. The devil targeted the one who might be more susceptible to concession.

God has given us protection from the devil but we must avail ourselves of what He has provided. "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). The words *put on* are a command and describe an action that we are to do for ourselves – God has prepared armor for our protection but we must put it on.¹²⁰ The word *may* (*that ye may be able to stand*) in our English translation would seem to introduce an element of doubt, or uncertainty, as to our ability to stand against the craftiness of the devil after we have donned the armor that God has prepared for us. However, the Greek does not contain this element of doubt: **put on** the full armor of God (this is in the imperative mood) and He will **enable you** (passive mood) to stand against the devil's ploys.¹²¹ This is a command with promise – don the full armor of God (the command) and you will be able to stand against the devil (the promise). We must also be aware that the armor of God is defensive, not offensive, in nature. The emphasis in the Ephesians passage is that once we are dressed in the full armor of God, we are to **stand** in His

¹¹⁸ BDB.

¹¹⁹ Strong's Online.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Stephanus 1550 NT.

protection. We are not to take the offensive against Satan as some Evangelicals counsel today; we are promised all of the defensive protection that we will need if we simply permit the Spirit of God to be our guide. The first item of defensive armor is truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth ..." (John 14:6); He identified the Scriptures as being truth (John 17:17); He promised that the Spirit would come to guide us into all truth (John 16:13). If we would withstand the onslaught of the devil, then we must know God's Word; we live in a day of horrendous Biblical apathy and confusion, therefore, we must study His Word so that we will not become spiritual casualties.

The devil may well realize that he has lost the battle with God, but that does not mean that he has given up or that he is stupid. The tactic that he used to draw Eve into considering the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is one that he has used many times since. He used four seemingly innocent words: "Yea, hath God said?" If we give place to this question, then we have permitted the devil to raise doubt about what God has said and he will immediately provide us with numerous excuses for not taking God at His Word. Consider the Fourth Commandment, for example. The devil's, "Yea, hath God said?" has proven sufficient for man to rationalize his departure from what God has clearly delineated; those who show integrity of mind will admit that there is no Biblical reason to ignore the seventh-day Sabbath, yet they choose to continue doing so. Another example is New Evangelicalism: when it was launched by Harold J. Ockenga, it was declared that Biblical separation is anathema, and their intention was, instead, to seek to dialogue with the heretics of the day. The devil's question to them was, "Yea, hath God said to avoid those who teach false doctrine?" Despite God's words of warning in this regard (Romans 16:17-18; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1), Evangelicals have rationalized their departure from this command and have leaped onto the slippery slope of compromise and error, which ends in apostasy.

It is interesting to note how the devil phrases what God instructed Adam. God said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ...," and then went on to outline the one restriction. When the devil comes to Eve, he makes God's one restraint into a very negative thing – "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." God said, "You can eat of every tree, except this one"; the devil says, "God said that you can't eat of every tree." The devil was not wrong in what he said but he put a negative twist to the one limitation that God had placed upon Adam and Eve, thereby making it appear larger than it was. God proclaimed to Adam all that he could do; the devil drew Eve's attention to the one thing that they were not to do.

The Spirit of God through the Apostle John says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). As we adhere to the Message of Truth (the Word of God), we have fellowship with one another based upon a living relationship with God, the Father, and Jesus Christ! However, this is not an unrestricted fellowship; we are also told to "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). The devil, in the ecumenical movement, says, "Has God said that you cannot have fellowship?" Indeed, God has said that we are not to have fellowship with those who teach doctrine that is not in line with His Word, but that is a small restriction compared with the fellowship that we can have with others of like mind and with God, Himself! Ockenga felt that he was unnecessarily hemmed in by God so he willingly took of the proffered fruit of ecumenism. In truth, he and his following were soon dialoguing with the Liberals, but what they didn't realize is that they were no longer having fellowship with the God of truth. Like Samson of old, the New Evangelicals rose up to do what they had purposed and "wist not that the LORD was departed" from them (Judges 16:20). Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep [attend carefully to] my

commandments” (John 14:15).¹²² John wrote, “... he that keepeth [present tense – attending carefully to] his commandments dwelleth [present tense – is abiding] in him [God], and he [God] in him” (1 John 3:24a).¹²³ Fellowship with God will only come through dwelling in Him; dwelling in Him only comes through obedience to His commandments. Who will be invited into the kingdom of God? It will be those who are doing His will, those who are walking in obedience to His commands (Matthew 7:21). The devil will seek to entice us to compromise, perhaps just a little here or there – to do so is to permit his claw to penetrate our hearts. Be wary of the devil’s negative twist to God’s unalterable truth; we must not allow the slimmest wedge of compromise to taint our adherence to God’s truth.



2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

Eve responds to the devil’s question and endeavors to tell him exactly what God had declared. She knows (and states) that the trees of the Garden provide them with fruit that they may freely eat.

James warns us that we are to “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7b). Unfortunately, Eve took the time to have a conversation with Satan, and the result was that she was deceived by him. It is through conversation that the devil is able to plant the seeds of doubt and the many “good reasons” for not doing what God has said. Ecumenism is filled with “good reasons” for compromising, yet none of them are acceptable to God; Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Jesus was also very clear that there is no fence between the world and Him for us to straddle: “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matthew 12:30). The ecumenical crowd shows disdain for God’s Word, yet prides itself on being loving and spiritual. Evangelicals have discovered a better way – accept Jesus as Savior from hell, but deny Him as Lord so that you can live like the world. It will be too late when they discover that they have been on the broad road to destruction and their modified gospel cannot save them from hell (Matthew 7:21). We are not to “give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27), which excludes engaging him in conversation (as Eve did) and hearkening to his “justification” for compromising God’s instructions.



3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Eve goes on to tell the devil about the restriction that God had placed upon them. She identifies the tree *in the midst of the garden*; the words used here are the same as those used by God in 2:9, however, God uses the words to describe the specific placement of the tree of life (against which there was no restriction – 2:17), whereas Eve applies the description to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Undoubtedly, these two trees were in close proximity to one another, but the tree of life is specifically given that central position within the Garden. She then goes on to say that they were to neither eat of its fruit nor *touch it*, for then they would die. Perhaps in Adam’s

¹²² Strong’s Online.

¹²³ Ibid.

enthusiasm to ensure that Eve did not eat of the forbidden tree, he added the concept of touch, or Eve simply added it at the moment.

Eve's response makes it evident that, although she did have some of the basic facts right, she was somewhat off in the details. This, undoubtedly, was a sign to the devil that he was talking to the right person; here was someone who did not comprehend the matter completely. An understanding of the basic concepts of Christianity is oftentimes insufficient to guard against failure or compromise. Evangelicals today have a general idea of Who God is and what He desires, but they are sufficiently lacking in details in order to live in obedience to God's commands. The devil is content to leave them with an incomplete understanding of God and His Word because it provides him with enough latitude to ensure that they will never walk the narrow road that leads to life. They hold some knowledge of what God has said, and the devil provides them with plausible reasons to believe that they are eternally saved; therefore, they are satisfied, albeit deluded, because they neither know, nor love, God's truth. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth [is doing] the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).¹²⁴ Evangelicals may well believe that God exists but they continue to live like the world; by contrast, we read that the devils "believe, and tremble" (James 2:19) – the devils understand Who God is and respond accordingly; on the other hand, Evangelicals have created a pseudo-god who does not impact their daily living. The Psalmist wrote, "The fear [reverence, respect, piety] of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever" (Psalm 111:10)¹²⁵; notice how the Psalmist draws together the fear of Jehovah, wisdom, and obedience to His commands. For the most part, Evangelicals have lost their reverence for God, and along with it has gone their inclination to obey His commands. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15); despite their excessive emphasis upon God's love, Evangelicals show little love for Him because they refuse to walk in His ways.

What is our first defense against the devil? – God's truth (Ephesians 6:14)! We see in Eve's response to Satan that she did not have God's truth firmly in mind; she had some of the basics but was wobbly on the details. It is important that we strive to know God's Truth (His Word, John 17:17; 2 Timothy 2:15), for this is our first line of defense against the wily attacks of the devil; it is as we know God's Word that we will be able to stand against Satan. Unfortunately, we live in a day when Satan has effectively compromised what people look to as the Word of God. Virtually all of the modern translations are based upon a corrupted text, so that often the Bible being used is no longer reliable; even referring to the original languages needs to be tempered with caution, for the corrupt texts are also in those languages. If the devil can skew our understanding of the truth of God by keeping us in a Bible that no longer expresses the complete truth of God, he has us right where he wants us – we will soon hear him whisper, "Yea, hath God said?"

When God pronounced the penalty for disobedience regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He stressed the consequence of death – "dying thou dost die."¹²⁶ Eve's *lest we die* is an anemic paraphrase of what God had declared; she may have used the same word, but her version did not hold the same punch as the pronouncement that God gave. Rest assured, the devil did not miss any of the signs that Eve was not strong in God's truth – she had the basics, but lacked a heartfelt conviction of the truth.

¹²⁴ Strong's Online.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ YLT.



4. *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

Once the devil is convinced that we are wobbly on the truth, he will launch his attack for the kill, even not fearing to deny God's own words. God told Adam, "... in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (2:17). The consequence for disobedience to God's command is very clear. Satan does not question it, he simply contradicts it.

We might think that such a direct contradiction of what God has said would never be accepted among today's Evangelicals; if the devil launched such a direct attack, surely he would walk away in defeat. Harold J. Ockenga's initiation of New Evangelicalism is a classic example that clearly illustrates that Satan's denial of the Word of God can still find acceptance among those who should know better. We read in the Word of God (the Truth): "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore **come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord**, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you ..." (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). Elsewhere, the Spirit of God declares: "... mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to [the Greek word is *para* and means alongside of] the doctrine which ye have learned; and **avoid them**" (Romans 16:17).¹²⁷ What cannot be missed is that God has called us to a life of separation from the faithless as well as from those who teach doctrine that is not in keeping with the Scriptures. The movement that Ockenga began in 1948 "differed from fundamentalism in its **repudiation of separatism** and its determination to **engage itself in the theological dialogue** of the day" (emphasis added).¹²⁸ Even though Ockenga wrote these words about twenty-eight years after his initial proclamation, he had not wavered in his determination to strike out in a direction that was contrary to God's Word. Satan came alongside of him to provide whatever "reasons" were needed to continue to fuel the wildfire that this started. You might think that such a direct denial of Scripture would have failed, but modern Evangelicalism is living proof that this contradiction not only survived, but grew to take over the whole Evangelical movement (what began as New Evangelicalism is now, simply, Evangelicalism). Out of this rationalized desire to develop a rapport with liberal theologians (and the corresponding necessity of abandoning Biblical separation) has grown the modern ecumenical movement – it all began with Bible-believing Christians sitting down with Bible-doubting professors of Christianity. Like the rotten apple in the barrel of good apples, the result of this discourse was not a new crop of Biblical Christians (good apples), but a multitude of skeptics who professed some things but denied many others (rotten apples). Why must we avoid the hint of ecumenism? It is anti-Biblical, and the brainchild of Satan himself.

It would seem that these words of Satan are just as effective today as they were on Eve: *ye shall not surely die*. I'm sure that we've all seen Christians who once stood strong in the faith but, with the passing of time, began to let their walk slide – here a little, there a little. For example, attending movies was once understood to be something that Christians did not do; today, it seems to be a common form of entertainment. Perhaps the slide began this way: a Christian, thinking about attending a movie, hears, "Ye shall not surely die," from the devil. He goes, and, when he doesn't see the devil in the theatre and God does not judge him immediately for his compromise,

¹²⁷ Strong's Online.

¹²⁸ Harold J. Ockenga, *Foreword* to Harold Lindsell's 1976 book, *The Battle for the Bible*.

the rational conclusion is that the devil was right – he didn't die, and so his guard is let down. Very quickly other areas of his life will follow suit (Satan will see to that) and soon his conscience is no longer pricked about many things; much to the devil's delight, he has embarked on the broad road to apostasy. Today, the conviction of worldliness does not even enter the minds of average Evangelicals – they began their "Christianity" in the world and Satan will entice them to never move from it.



5. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan is not only so bold as to contradict what God has said but he will lie to us and provide us with all kinds of "good reasons" to do his bidding. Perhaps this is why the first protection against the wiles of the devil is God's truth (Ephesians 6:14); Satan is immersed in lies, he is called the father of lies (John 8:44), and all that he proposes will include the ingredient of deceit. Our protection from his lies is a thorough knowledge of the truth of God's Word (1 Timothy 2:4): "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Satan will only use truth in combination with a lie in order to make it seem more palatable to those who still hold some desire for the truth.

We are told that those who will capitulate to the rule of the Antichrist will be those who "received [or accepted] not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie..." (2 Thessalonians 2:10b-11). Not only do those who have succumbed to Satan's ploys reject the truth of God, but, because they have refused to embrace a love for His truth, He has given them over to the lies of Satan through which comes ultimate condemnation by God (2 Thessalonians 2:12). "... the fearful [cowardly], and unbelieving [unfaithful], and the abominable [detestable], and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and **all liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).¹²⁹ We might wonder at such a harsh judgment of liars, but we must keep in mind that Satan is the father of lies and so liars are really only walking in the way of their father, the devil. Once again, the first item of the armor of God, in our protection against the devil and his ways, is truth; we must cultivate a love for God's truth, which will find expression in our obedience to His commands.

Satan begins his explanation as to why he would be so bold as to contradict God's words, by accusing God of not telling Adam and Eve all that they needed to know about the forbidden tree. He tells Eve that their eyes will be opened if they eat of the tree, thereby presenting a "good reason" for disobeying God. Once again, we must be aware that Satan will twist the truth to make it appear as something that it is not. First, he made God's one restriction, which He placed upon Adam and Eve, appear to be much more negative than it was in actuality. Now he makes it seem that God has withheld something from Adam and Eve that could permit them to see things more clearly; God has denied them something that would serve to increase their abilities. Satan's proposal is that he can improve on what God has created and declared to be very good (1:31).

It is noteworthy that the word *opened* is in the perfect tense, expressing an action that is only done once but with continuing effects. The truth of this is undeniable, for the sin of Adam has been passed along to all generations since; it was a single act that led to a perpetual condition of sin.

¹²⁹ Friberg Lexicon

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ...” (Romans 5:12). Satan was right; a single opening of their eyes would lead to an ongoing sin-nature for all subsequent generations.

Satan then unveils his promise for giving heed to his deceit: *ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*. God also gave Adam a promise for disobedience but His was: “... in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Satan’s promise was that they would be as *elohiym*, having knowledge of both good and evil. We are not told by what name Adam and Eve knew God, but Satan uses *Elohiym* to refer to the creator God (v. 1) – therefore, what he is offering to Adam and Eve is a status similar to God’s. The herring that he tosses before Eve is clearly from his own pride and longing to exalt himself above God; he seeks to undermine what God has in store for those created in His own image. Satan told Eve that they would be promoted from humans to gods – which, if you forget that it requires disobedience to your Creator, might sound like a good thing. When the Mormons hold out godhood to their adherents, they are following the pattern of their father, the devil; perhaps if Joseph Smith had read his Bible instead of the golden plates, he would have recognized who was presenting these new doctrines. The Mormons speak of the divine within, which, if we favor it, will flourish to bring us to godhood. Evangelicals, unfortunately, have bought into the same manner of thinking. Max Lucado, a popular writer within Evangelical circles, has said, “You have one. A divine spark. An uncommon call to an uncommon life.”¹³⁰ In his endnote for referring to a *divine spark*, Lucado quotes from Martin Buber (a Jewish philosopher and existentialist¹³¹): “Thus, a *divine spark* lives in every thing and being, but each such spark is enclosed by an isolating shell. Only man can liberate it and re-join it with the Origen ...” (Lucado’s emphasis).¹³² Evangelicals are quickly joining the cults in their view of man, and are only a small step away from the spirituality of the world, which proclaims “I am god,” after the pattern of their father, the devil. When such error is already well within the Evangelical camp, only a thorough understanding of God’s truth will protect us – a truth that declares: “... come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you ...” (2 Corinthians 6:17). We must realize that this is a separation **from** those whom God has told us to avoid, and a separation **unto** the Lord in obedience.

Here is the sliver of truth in the web of lies that Satan spun for Eve – they would know good and evil. Since God created Adam and Eve in purity, innocence and sinlessness, they would only have known *good*. Satan presents Eve with the seemingly great opportunity to know both good and evil, but he does not elaborate on the terrible price that she and Adam would pay for this knowledge. God said that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die – Satan omitted the consequence for disobedience in his sales pitch, and made the result of sin appear to be a wonderful thing. Moses took the long view and chose to suffer with the children of God rather than to bask in the pleasures of Egyptian royalty for a time (Hebrews 11:25). Jeremiah was puzzled and inquired of the Lord, “Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?” (Jeremiah 12:1b). We must understand the will of God and be wise. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving [leading away from the truth], and being deceived [being led away from the truth]. But continue [abide (*meno*)] thou in the things which thou hast learned [through use and practice] and hast been assured of [firmly persuaded of]

¹³⁰ Lucado, *Cure*, p. 3.

¹³¹ By definition, existentialism does not leave room for objective truth (God’s Word); all such things are arbitrary and have no meaning. Everything is individualistic, and destiny is controlled by the decisions made. Man determines his own destiny.

¹³² Lucado, p. 215.

...” (2 Timothy 3:12-14).¹³³ If we would live godly in Christ, then we must resist the devil and his tales of pleasure and prosperity in this life and hold a firm grip on the truth of God.



6. *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

As Eve took in the devil’s words, she saw the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in a whole new light. The tree was now good for food (this would indicate that Eve had been convinced that God’s restriction was wrong, for this was in direct contradiction to God’s command), nice to look at (a delight to behold) and, best of all, it would provide that promotion to godhood (increase one’s intelligence).¹³⁴ All that Satan spun was the lie that the tree would promote them to being like *elohiym* – from this, Eve could now see the beauty of the tree and how delectable its fruit was. Eve’s focus had shifted from all of the trees that God had given to them in the Garden, onto the one tree that He had forbidden.

This is not a tactic that Satan has only used on Eve; rather, it is another of his effective tools used to draw those who should know better into compromise (i.e., disobedience). One of the most prevalent and overlooked errors today is that of ecumenism. The heart of the ecumenical movement is unity – a drawing together of individuals, churches and organizations of all religious stripes to carry out all kinds of good deeds (that is the “hook”). Although there might still be some desire to keep this among “Christian” groups, a much broader view shows that it is growing to include everyone, “Christian” or not. Within our local communities, this will show itself most evidently through the working of the ministerial associations. Such an association is often comprised of Roman Catholic, Anglican, United, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Reformed, Baptist and independent churches; it is an alliance of all kinds of different groups in order to share in the “ministry” within their community. God has very clearly forbidden associating with those who hold teachings that are not in keeping with the Bible, and such an association is definitely contrary to God’s instructions (Titus 3:10; Galatians 1:6-9; Romans 16:17-18). However, Satan has accomplished a great deal by turning the focus toward the “fellowship” enjoyed by all who claim the Bible as their guide, and all the “good” that is accomplished. Just as with Eve, the forbidden fruit has taken on a whole new appeal – we can have “good” fellowship, it is such a “pleasure” to see ministry in the community going forward and we can grow in our “understanding” by learning from one another. God’s command is that we *avoid* these people (Romans 16:17) – we are not to join with them in “ministry,” we are not to seek out their fellowship, nor are we to sit under their teaching. The ecumenical fruit has been clearly forbidden by God, yet Satan will do his utmost to draw our attention away from God’s command and highlight the apparent advantages of such associations. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7); if you sow in disobedience (the proper word for compromise), you will reap death – “For the wages of sin is death ...” (Romans 6:23). Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15) – disobedience is our declaration that we do not love the Lord. We must not permit Satan to divert our attention away from obedience to what God has commanded,

¹³³ Strong’s Online.

¹³⁴ Strong’s Dictionary, *ESword*.

lest we succumb to a heart of unbelief (Hebrews 3:12); this unbelief can be either of God or His Word (knowing His truth but not being willing to do what He commands – James 4:17).

Two “reasons” that the devil loves to use in an effort to convince those who should know better than to compromise their understanding of God’s truth, are these: 1) other good Christians are doing it, and 2) I can be a light to those who are living in error. To the former, Paul declared, “For we dare not ... compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise” (2 Corinthians 10:12). Although Paul did call on others to follow or imitate him (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1), it was only in the sense that he was a follower of Christ. He also commended the Bereans for taking his message of the Gospel back to the Scriptures to ensure that what he presented was in keeping with God’s truth (Acts 17:11). What other Christians do is not to be our standard, for they might well be acting out of ignorance of the truth. For the sin done in ignorance, cleansing is available; however, for the willful sin, there is no remission (Numbers 15:27-31; Hebrews 10:26). The Scriptures must be our guide – not the actions of those who claim to be Christians. The second “reason” is a blatant violation of God’s Word, which, if it is accepted, requires repentance. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to [*para* – alongside of] the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17).¹³⁵ God has warned us to stay clear of those who do not hold to the full truth of God’s Word (like the ecumenical crowd and those who participate with them); if we do not heed His warning, then we can rightfully expect to grieve the Spirit of God – another violation of His Word (Ephesians 4:30). If we find ourselves struggling spiritually, then perhaps we need to evaluate how we are living in light of the Scriptures. God has called us to holiness (Ephesians 1:4; 4:24); we have been saved through the blood of Christ to walk in accordance with God’s desired purpose for us (Ephesians 2:10). We are to be a light to the world (Matthew 5:16) but never in violation of God’s Word (when we violate His Word, our light is gone!). We have been called to separation for our own spiritual welfare and purity; we ignore God’s warning at our own peril. We can never be a witness, or a light, while disobeying God’s commands; repent before God for desiring your own way, and follow Him.

The Apostle John declared this: “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” (1 John 2:15-16). He has clarified for us exactly what took place within Eve’s mind while she permitted the devil’s claws to penetrate her heart. Eve saw that the tree was *good for food* (the lust of the flesh), it was *pleasant to the eyes* (the lust of the eyes), and it was *desired to make wise* (the pride of life). Eve’s temptation was designed specifically by Satan to catch her in her area of vulnerability; the principles underlying her deception are the same as those that he continues to use today. By permitting her focus to be turned away from God’s command, Eve became prey to Satan’s smooth words as he extolled the benefits to be realized from doing his bidding. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour [destroy]: Whom resist [oppose] stedfast [immovable] in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions [sufferings] are accomplished [endured] in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Peter 5:8-9).¹³⁶ Satan still desires to bring those who know God into subjection to his deadly ways, but we are called to stand firm in the faith of Christ and to oppose the devil by living according to God’s commands. “For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for

¹³⁵ Friberg Lexicon.

¹³⁶ Strong’s Online; Friberg Lexicon.

evil doing” (1 Peter 3:17). Whatever we do, we are to do in the name of the Lord (Colossians 3:17) – compromising the Word of God is one thing that we can **never** do in the name of the Lord.

Satan convinced Eve that the forbidden fruit was really the best thing for her, and she ate. However, she not only set God’s command aside but gave the fruit to Adam and he ate as well. What we can be sure of is that Adam knew that it was the forbidden fruit that he took; as a matter of fact, it seems that he was not far from Eve – he was *with her*. Eve did not have to scour the Garden looking for Adam; he was right there – he may have heard some of what Satan said through the serpent. He did not think that Eve was giving him fruit from one of the approved trees of the Garden; he knew that it was the fruit of which God had specifically said, “... thou shalt not eat of it” (Genesis 2:17). In his letter to Timothy, Paul openly declared, “Adam was not deceived ...” (1 Timothy 2:14). When Adam reached his hand out to take the forbidden fruit from Eve, he knew exactly what he was doing; he chose, being fully aware of the consequences. Perhaps his reasoning went something like this: I’ve seen all of the animals and birds on earth, and there is nothing there for me – Eve is the only one who is like me; I cannot jeopardize my fellowship with Eve. Adam sinned by choice, whereas Eve was deceived and then sinned; Adam, without the deception of Satan, chose to disobey God. Despite hearing the very words of God explaining that one commandment, Adam sinned.

What we must not miss is that Adam bears the responsibility for plunging mankind into sin. To the Corinthians, Paul declared, “... in Adam all die ...” (1 Corinthians 15:22); all who are born of Adam are born in sin. The Psalmist wrote: “Behold, I was shapen [brought forth] in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5).¹³⁷ It is not what we do that makes us sinners, it is who we are – what we do (sin) merely confirms who we are; we are of our father, Adam, who knowingly disobeyed the command of God. Herein is the reason that Jesus was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit; He could not have been conceived by man for then He would have been saddled with the same sin nature that we all bear. However, Jesus (Who is the eternal Word) was conceived by the person of the Holy Spirit, and born of Mary – this brings together the eternality and purity of the Godhead with the physicality of man; “For in him [Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). In His high priestly prayer, Jesus prayed for us that we would be one in Him, “... as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee ...” (John 17:21). Jesus was completely God and completely man, qualifying Him to become the final sacrifice for sin.

CONSEQUENCES OF SIN - Genesis 3:7-8



7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Just as the devil had promised, the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened. Along with their opening came man’s first glimpse of the evil that the devil promised that they would know. The devil is not always wrong in what he says, but nothing that he promises will ever bring us closer to God; everything will be to lure us into his snare.

With the violation of God’s commandment came their realization that they were naked. We just read (2:25) that, as God created them (man and woman), they were naked but were not

¹³⁷ Strong’s Online.

“ashamed before one another.”¹³⁸ The innocence that they had enjoyed before the fall was immediately destroyed. The shame that they felt was not a product of the fruit, but rather a result of their disobedience to God’s commandment.

As this new understanding of evil washed over them, they set to work trying to cover their nakedness; it was the tangible result of their sin that drew their attention – they were more aware of their nakedness than of their sin against their Creator. They set about trying to attend to their feelings of shame without any thought, at this point, of their relationship with *Jehovah Elohiym*. It is interesting that they sewed fig leaves together to make their loin coverings (*aprons*).¹³⁹ Although fig leaves are typically the size of a hand or bigger, they are not large when it comes to making clothing.¹⁴⁰ A banana leaf would have been much more efficient but for some reason they chose the fig leaf, and somehow joined them together to make coverings. This was their solution to their sin problem.

As a matter of interest, the coverings that Adam and Eve made to cover their sin and shame, covered the same area of their bodies as the first item in the armor of God (Ephesians 6:14). The truth of God provides a sure protection against the devil; the fig leaves were a feeble attempt to hide the impact of taking the devil’s bait. God’s command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was part of His truth to Adam; as Adam and Eve continued to abide in that truth, they were safe from the lure of the devil. However, the very moment that they permitted the truth to droop, they became vulnerable to the devil’s reasoning. “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men [be brave], be strong [be strengthened (passive voice) – something that is done for us by the Spirit of God]” (1 Corinthians 16:13).



God told Adam that he would die at the time that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, yet here were Adam and Eve desperately making coverings out of fig leaves – it appears that they did not die. However, they did immediately die spiritually, and they were fully aware of this death; they did not ponder whether Satan had been right that they would not die but knew that death had entered their world. Born-again Christians today often fail to recognize when they have grieved the Spirit of God; we are so much more aware of our physical life than our spiritual life that we are capable of maintaining a façade of spiritual life even when we are spiritually dead! Satan will use this physical orientation against us; he will convince us to compromise, and when we do not see immediate, physical consequences from God for our failure, we assume that it must not be as bad as we once thought – so begins the downward spiral. As with Adam, we know from God’s Word what He desires of us (or, at least, we have no excuse for not knowing); we must learn to simply **do** what God has said. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever” (Psalm 111:10). This means that we must have a greater fear of disappointing God than we do of criticism from others who observe us obeying His commands. Our fear for God must be greater than our longing for what He has forbidden; too often we desire to blend-in lest we offend – we must learn to don God’s armor (beginning with His truth) and stand (Ephesians 6:11). “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect [complete], throughly

¹³⁸ BDB.

¹³⁹ Strong’s Online.

¹⁴⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_fig

furnished [finished out] unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).¹⁴¹ Jesus promised that when “the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth ...” (John 16:13); if we are truly born again by the Spirit of God, then we have no excuse for not doing what God has commanded. We must not attempt to mask our disobedience to God’s commands by sewing excuses together; there is no covering for sin (the reality of disobedience) except the blood of Jesus that was shed as the final offering for our sins (Hebrews 10:12,14). There is no justification for disobedience – not even if we call it accommodation or love; we must repent and fear God more than man.



8. *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

We have no idea when Adam sinned – whether it was the day after God had completed His creative acts (day one of the new week), or if it took place after several days. Of one thing we can be sure – Satan would not have let much time pass by before presenting himself to Eve. The moment that we relax and let our guard down, you can be assured that Satan will be there to offer us some tempting morsel of sin. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour ...” (1 Peter 5:8) – Satan is looking for the vulnerable, those who are weak, sickly, or who stray from the flock – the same tactics that a wolf uses when following a herd of caribou.

We have here confirmation of God’s desire to have fellowship with Adam and Eve, who were created in His image. *Jehovah Elohiym* came to the Garden where He had placed them in their sinless innocence. How God came to them, we do not know.

Voice comes from a Hebrew word that primarily means sound, but especially the sound of a voice.¹⁴² The Hebrew word translated as *walking* means to walk to and fro, or to walk around.¹⁴³ The *cool of the day* is literally the *day wind*, which might carry some thought of the cool breeze of an evening.¹⁴⁴ This tells us that the sound of God’s voice went about through the Garden as a breeze, as He looked to have fellowship with those who were created in His image.

What we do know is that Adam and Eve knew that it was God Who had come to be with them, and, because of their sin, they sought to hide themselves from the face (*presence*) of the Lord.¹⁴⁵ They may have made themselves coverings in an effort to hide their shame from one another, but they also realized that these coverings were inadequate before God – hence, they hid among the trees (an effort to conceal all of themselves). The sin of Adam and Eve broke the fellowship that they had had with God; when they ate of the forbidden fruit, they died spiritually – that part of them that could freely communicate with their Creator was now dead. Adam and Eve were “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1), separated from God by their disobedience. It’s interesting to note that we do not read of the presence of the serpent (the devil) at this time; Satan will entice us to sin but then he’s gone and leaves us to face God alone. The same will be true at the end of time when God calls forth the unrighteous dead to stand before Him – Satan will already be in the lake of fire and brimstone before God’s judgment of wicked men (the spiritually dead) begins

¹⁴¹ Strong’s Dictionary, *ESword*.

¹⁴² BDB.

¹⁴³ W.L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, *Bibleworks* 8.

¹⁴⁴ BDB.

¹⁴⁵ Strong’s Online.

(Revelation 20:10-13). Satan will not be there to plead the case for those who have rejected what God has declared; they will stand alone before God to be judged according to their works, knowing full well (at this time) that no one is ever justified **by** their works (Galatians 2:16). We might argue that James declared, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24); however, the context of James’ declaration is that if faith in the Lord Jesus Christ does not produce righteous acts of obedience (what he calls *works*), then it is a dead faith (2:26) and not a saving faith. Our faith in Christ must be proclaimed through a holy life lived in accordance with God’s Word (Ephesians 4:24; Romans 8:4); works alone will save no one, no matter how great those works might be (Matthew 7:21-23). As the unrighteous dead are raised-up to stand before God to be judged, their works, without faith in Christ, will not save them, but will see them united with Satan in torment.

Adam and Eve realized that they stood condemned before God.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SIN – Genesis 3:9-13



9. *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

God called to Adam, not because He did not know where he was hiding himself, but rather so that Adam might have the opportunity to confess his failure and seek God’s mercy. Taken together with the previous verse, it would seem that the *voice* of God, that first announced His presence to Adam and Eve, was not an audible voice.

When Jesus called Zacchaeus out of the tree, he assured him, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost [literally – to save *the destroyed or ruined*]” (Luke 19:10).¹⁴⁶ The word *lost* bears the perfect tense, which means that it is a onetime action – in this case, it goes right back to the sin of Adam. After sin entered the world through Adam’s disobedience, God came looking for him; Jesus said that He was come into the world to look for lost ones who were willing to be redeemed – He found one in Zacchaeus. In Matthew 19:16-22 we read of someone who was not willing to pay the price to be Jesus’ disciple (the rich young ruler). We live in a day when Jesus has departed and, as He promised, He has sent the Spirit of God (John 15:26).

In Genesis 1:2 we read of the Spirit of God hovering over the surface of the waters; is this how we envision the Spirit today – hovering over the world, looking for those who might desire the redemption of God? Paul asked the Corinthian believers this question: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16, and 6:19). If you have placed your faith in the redemption accomplished by Christ upon the cross, then the Spirit of God is residing (*dwelleth* – *oikeo*, from *oikos*, house) in you.¹⁴⁷ The Apostle John wrote about the Spirit dwelling in us and how we can be assured of His presence: “And he that keepeth his [God’s] commandments dwelleth [*meno* – abide, remain] in him [God], and he [God] in him. And hereby we know that he [God] abideth in us, by the Spirit which he [God] hath given us” (1 John 3:24). It is through our careful attention to the commands of God that we are assured of His abiding presence in our lives – not only residing, but abiding/remaining. What we must acknowledge is that the Spirit of God will not abide in a life that is not obedient to His Word. “And what agreement

¹⁴⁶ Stephanus 1550 NT.

¹⁴⁷ Friberg Lexicon.

hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you ...” (2 Corinthians 6:16-17). Inasmuch as we are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit of God, we are to separate from all that would contaminate.

When Jesus spoke of the coming of the Spirit, He said, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you [to your advantage] that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come [unto you], he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged” (John 16:7-11). From what we have seen, we (those who have claimed Christ’s redemption of our souls) are the temple of God and the Spirit of God abides within us; now we see that the Spirit will convict (*reprove*) the world (those who are not *in Christ*, including those who may call themselves Christians) through us in three areas: 1) concerning sin, because they are not believing on the name of Christ, whereas we are believing and have the assurance of His life, being made free from the condemnation of sin (Romans 8:1), 2) concerning righteousness, because we are *in Christ* and are expressing the righteousness of God by walking according to the Spirit (Romans 8:4), and 3) concerning judgment because Satan’s defeat has been confirmed through Christ’s victory over death, and we can live in the righteousness of new life in Him (Romans 8:1) – our righteous living will be a witness to Satan’s condemnation. “Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and **maketh manifest the savour** [fragrance, sweet smell (and so throughout)] **of his knowledge by us** in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved [being saved], and in them that perish [are being destroyed]: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life” (2 Corinthians 2:14-16a). If we are living victoriously in Christ, then, everywhere we go, we exude a fragrance of God’s presence. This is not something for which we can take credit; this is nothing other than the working of the Spirit of God within us so that we live out His righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24) and exhibit His fruit to those about us (Galatians 5:22-23). How critically important it is that we walk in accordance with the leading of the Spirit! Those who are part of the family of God will be strengthened and encouraged through our faithful walk; those who are not in Christ will be convicted by that same faithful walk – therein is the work of the Spirit of God through us in the world today. As we ponder this, we can only begin to understand the tremendous significance of Jesus’ words: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come [unto you – from the context], he will guide you into all truth ...” (John 16:13); Jesus is that truth (John 14:6), and the Word of God is that truth (John 17:17). Jesus said, “If ye love me [the Truth], keep my commandments [also Truth]” (John 14:15), and His righteousness will be expressed through us (Romans 8:4). It is so very, very important that we remain steadfast in Christ; “Watch ye [be vigilant], stand fast [firm] in the faith, quit you like men [be brave], be strong [be strengthened]” (1 Corinthians 16:13).¹⁴⁸ These are all commands, with the first two in the active voice, which means that they are things that we are to be doing all of the time (present tense); the second two commands are in the passive voice, which means that we must permit these characteristics to be worked into our lives by the Spirit of God (it is He Who is working in us – Philippians 2:13). God is still not willing that anyone should perish (2 Peter 3:9), but we bear a tremendous responsibility to be obedient to His commands, to be vigilant, and to stand firm in Christ for we are the dwelling place of His Spirit in this fallen world.

¹⁴⁸ Friberg Lexicon.

However, the Spirit of God has another avenue through which He can work – still through us, but less directly. “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17); the *hearing* is that which is detected by the ear; the sound is audible.¹⁴⁹ The Greek word translated as *word* is not *logos*, as we might expect, but *rhema* (*hray’-mah*), which means an uttered or spoken word.¹⁵⁰ Living faith in God (which requires the working of the Spirit of God) can come through hearing God’s words; it is the Word of God that contains the words of God, therefore, it is the smaller portions of Scripture that can be used by the Holy Spirit to bring faith to the hearer. “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth [the spoken words of God]: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). The words of God are powerful, for they can be used to instill faith in the heart of the hearer; therefore, we must be sure that the Bible that we have is as accurate as possible. Satan has done much to dilute the words that God spoke through the writers of the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:21) – through their differences, modern translations and paraphrases often bring the authority of God’s Word into question. We must be vigilant so that we do not fall for a watered-down version of the Truth.

As with Adam, God is still calling out to people today – we must be careful that we reflect His righteousness through the working of His Spirit in us, and we must be sure that His preserved Word finds expression through us.



10. *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

The indication would be that Adam and Eve did not come out of their hiding place to speak with *Jehovah Elohiym*, but remained hidden. Adam does not answer God’s question as to where he is; rather, he explains why he’s not welcoming His visit. Adam says that he is afraid of God’s presence in the Garden; this would have been something new for Adam. Although he should have had a reverence for his Creator (as in *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* – Psalm 111:10), this fear was because of what he had done in violation of God’s commandment. Our reverence for the Lord will motivate us to abide by His commands; if we break a God-given commandment, then we should experience a fear like Adam’s, which is the product of disobedience. If our heart is right before God, we will then be motivated to seek His cleansing for our failure and restore our relationship with Him (1 John 1:9).

It is interesting that it was not his sin against God that was foremost in Adam’s mind, but the symptom of that sin – his nakedness, which he had done his best to cover up. Not much has changed since Adam. When man sins today, whether it is something as common as theft, or as extreme as murder, he does his best to hide his actions and then disappear from sight.



11. *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

¹⁴⁹ Strong’s Online.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

God's questioning of Adam takes him from the symptom of his actions (his nakedness) to the cause of the problem – his disobedience to the one command that God had given him. A thief, or murderer, when he is caught, may show some remorse for the crime that he has committed against his fellow man, but there is seldom an acknowledgement of the sin that has been committed against God. When the wicked stand before God on that final judgment day, their attention will be drawn to their violation of God's commandments; their works will provide them with no support on that day, for they will all be guilty of violating God's first commandment – "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). By rejecting the One Whom God promised would come to provide redemption, they have sought salvation through another means; by turning away from God, they have inadvertently embraced another god, possibly one of their own making.

What would God's question be to us? Where have our lives been tainted by sin – perhaps even sin that we excuse because other "Christians" are doing it? Could His question be: why do you participate in pagan celebrations when I have told you "Learn not the way of the heathen ..." (Jeremiah 10:2)? Or, why do you desecrate my Sabbath, when I told you to keep it holy? None of us is perfect in our walk with God but that is not an excuse to deliberately disobey His commands. If we know what His command is for us and we do not do it, that is sin (James 4:17). Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15); conversely, if we are not keeping His commandments, how can we claim to love Him?



12. *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

This is the beginning of man's attempt at self-justification; if it does not bring justification, then perhaps it will at least deflect some responsibility. As Adam begins his defense, he points the finger at both God and the helpmeet whom God had created for him. This is the same helpmeet who brought Adam such delight when God brought her to him (2:23); now, she has become his excuse for failure. However, notice that Adam places some of the blame on God – it was the woman whom **He** had given him. As we have already seen, Adam was not deceived (1 Timothy 2:14); he willingly took of the forbidden fruit – he might well have attempted to deflect responsibility but he was without excuse; "... in Adam all die ..." (1 Corinthians 15:22).



13. *And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

Jehovah Elohiym now asks the woman what she has done. This is explicit confirmation that Eve knew what the Lord required regarding the forbidden fruit; whether she knew God's command through Adam, or if God had told her directly, the Lord is holding her responsible for what she did. She may have been wobbly on the details but she knew enough to not have succumbed to the devil's deceit. Eve did not throw any blame God's way (unlike Adam) – if she'd followed Adam's lead, she would have referred to the serpent that God had created. However, she did get in on the blame-game and pointed to the serpent as having deceived (*beguiled*) her, and so she ate.

Here is the expression of how sin entered into the world: simply disregarding God's command and giving heed to the words of Satan. This one act plunged all of creation into death, decay, and destruction; it was one small step for man, but a giant slide downward for all of creation. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:20-22). *Creature*, here, speaks of that which is created;¹⁵¹ the deliverance of creation will come when the new heaven and new earth are brought into being by God (Revelation 21:1).

Satan drew Eve into sin through deceit; he is no different today. There are many "ministers" within Christianity who have taken the place of the serpent. They might well speak some truth, but their words are thoroughly mixed with error: Robert Schuller, Rick Warren, James Dobson, and Billy Graham are all purveyors of this deadly potion. However, we must not limit this manipulation of the truth to these highly visible and influential men; all those who support their local ministerial association are no different. This comparatively innocuous expression of Ecumenism is just as wrong as that expressed through the leaders of the movement – whether that is Schuller, Warren, Dobson or Graham. Low profile Ecumenical compromise and accommodation is just as sinful before God as the high profile variety. Satan loves to use a tainted form of Christianity to deceive those who are ungrounded in the truth of God's Word; he will abide only as much truth as he needs in order to draw the unsuspecting in. Inasmuch as he is the father of lies (John 8:44), he abhors the truth but will use it to accomplish his purposes. He knows that it works, because it worked the first time when he tried it on Eve.

GOD'S JUDGMENT - Genesis 3:14-19



14. *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:*

Notice that the serpent is not given an opportunity to explain why it set out to deceive Eve; perhaps it would be of greater interest to know why the serpent permitted Satan to use it to bring such devastation upon all of creation. The Lord simply begins by pronouncing His judgment upon the serpent for allowing Satan to use it – *because thou hast done this*. That crafty animal, part of God's creation that was declared to be very good (1:31), now felt God's judgment for being Satan's mouthpiece.

As we scan the landscape of what is considered to be the "Christian" world today, we can see many mouthpieces used by Satan. Billy Graham has done untold harm by demonstrating an open acceptance of the Roman Catholics and their faith; Rick Warren is doing similar damage through his willingness to redefine Who Jesus truly is in order to win favor with the Muslims. Jack van Impe has undoubtedly drawn many Christians into compromise when he turned his back on Biblical separation and embraced the heretics against whom he once taught. Anyone, and everyone, who teaches a message that is not in complete accordance with the Scriptures is being

¹⁵¹ Gingrich Lexicon.

used by Satan to dilute the impact of God's holy Word in the hearts and minds of his hearers. This is why, if we have a love for the truth of the Scriptures, we cannot sit under the teaching of anyone who is even tolerant of Ecumenism. The Ecumenical philosophy runs in opposition to many, many Scriptures and carries the devil's special potion of truth thoroughly mixed with a generous helping of lies. Inasmuch as the Lord had a word of judgment against the serpent for being used of Satan, we can rest assured that the multitude of Ecumenical teachers, who herald a message replete with deception, will not escape His judgment. It is our responsibility to be vigilant and not expose ourselves to such teaching.

Jehovah Elohiym then declares that His judgment upon the serpent will be unique. Although all of creation felt the impact of Adam's sin, the serpent is singled out for a very special curse because of its part in the fall. The phrases *above all* and *above every* could also read as *out of*: *out of all of the cattle* or larger beasts, and *out of every living creature (beast) of the open area (field)*, the serpent received God's particular judgment.¹⁵² God spoke to the serpent – the Creator spoke to His creation and, undoubtedly, the message was received.

God's judgment is clear: *upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat* We do not know what the serpent looked like (nor does it really matter); what we can be assured of is that slithering along on its belly is a sharp contrast to how it moved about before. It was identified as being among the cattle and beasts, which all get around on appendages. The phrase *dust shalt thou eat* causes some people some consternation since snakes have an appetite well beyond dirt. With their mouth now next to the ground, it would be inevitable that the snake would ingest more dirt than before. Additionally, the snake uses its tongue to sample the air in front of it and, from the analysis of what it brings in (which would include dirt), it "smells" what's ahead. This is used to speak of those who have been brought low (Psalm 72:9; Micah 7:17) and emphasizes the serpent's fall under God's judgment. The word *dust* used here comes from the same Hebrew word that is used in Genesis 2:7 and constitutes the "stuff" from which man was created; the serpent was the instrument used to cause the fall of mankind into sin; its curse was to crawl on, and ingest, the dust from which God had made man.



15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

The previous verse spoke of the judgment of God upon the serpent, the animal that Satan used to spin his deception to Eve; here we have God's judgment on Satan, the one who had entered the serpent in order to bring disarray to the "very good" creation of God. The thrust of the two verses is very different, and that is understandable from this perspective.

Jehovah Elohiym declares that He will put hostility, or hatred (*enmity*), between Satan and the woman.¹⁵³ The reality of sin (the disobedience of Adam and Eve to God's command) begins to take shape. Through the medium of the serpent, Satan's approach to Eve was one of apparent friendliness – the evil-one feigned concern for the innocent and pure; that was now ended, for God placed hatred between them. Eve, because she could now see both good and evil, would have recognized what the devil had taken from her and, although she was subject to his corruption, she undoubtedly despised him for what he had done. The words of the Lord are like a declaration of

¹⁵² Strong's Dictionary, *ESword*.

¹⁵³ BDB; Strong's Online.

war between the devil (representative of all that is evil) and the woman (representative of all that is pure and holy – as she was before the devil deceived her).

The phrase *between thy seed and her seed* speaks to the perpetual conflict that is raging between those who follow the devil and those who desire to align themselves with what is right and pure. The devil does not have children (he does not procreate), but those who do not place their faith in God for salvation are accounted as being his children. “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is [absolutely] **not** of God, neither he that loveth not his brother” (1 John 3:10).¹⁵⁴ Note – the children of the devil are those who do not do the commandments of God, those who do not walk according to the Spirit of God so as to demonstrate His righteousness (Romans 8:4). This fits perfectly with Jesus’ words, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21) and “He that is not with me is against me ...” (Matthew 12:30). The kingdom of heaven is closed to those who do not live in obedience to God, to those who are, by birth, the children of the devil. What we must comprehend in this is that there is to be a separation between the devil and the saints of God (His holy ones); *between* these two is the hatred that God placed there. It is this *enmity* that is missing from the Ecumenical mind (in other words, they do not have a love for His truth); they do not hold a hatred for those things that are not in keeping with God and His Word. Understand that there are only two options in this life – we are either for God or we are for the devil; there is no fence to straddle (Luke 11:23). Again, we are reminded of the first day of creation when God placed a separation between (*divided*) the light and the darkness (1:3), and the necessity for us to diligently practice Biblical separation from the world and error. Many Evangelicals demonstrate a love for the world and its allurements (the domain of the devil), even though we are told, “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is [absolutely] not in him” (1 John 2:15b)¹⁵⁵; many more hold no sense of revulsion against the error that is being propagated as Christianity today. If we do not feel, within ourselves, a contrast between our convictions and the world’s pleasures and practices, or if we are accommodating of those who practice error, then perhaps we need to examine ourselves whether we are truly in Christ (2 Corinthians 13:5). Are there commands from God that we refuse to obey? Do we compromise our stand for Christ in order to save face? Are we filling our minds with the teachings of those who are in error (like the Ecumenists, or those who abide the Ecumenists)? “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deuteronomy 6:5); “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15) – our love for the Lord will be expressed through obedience to His Word.

Within the latter part of this verse, we find the first hint of the Messiah to come – the One Whom God knew, before the world was created, would bring the final redemption for mankind (1 Peter 1:17-20). Although this might appear to be a bit of a mystery to some, if you look carefully at this part of the text, then you will begin to see the forward-look that God included here. The word *it*, in Hebrew, is actually a masculine pronoun (as opposed to neuter, which would call for *it*) and, therefore, would be better translated as *he*.¹⁵⁶ *Bruise* comes from the Hebrew word meaning to “rub off, away, grind,”¹⁵⁷ or to crush.¹⁵⁸ Within the context of the animosity that is promised to exist between the posterity of Eve (those who seek God) and the children of the devil, it seems clear that this must refer to a coming Seed of the woman. He (this coming One) will bruise, or

¹⁵⁴ Strong’s Online.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ BDB; this is a carry forward from the Bishop’s Bible.

¹⁵⁷ BDB.

¹⁵⁸ Strong’s Online.

crush, the head of the devil – this signifies a death-blow. As this takes place, Satan will bruise, or crush, the heel of the Promised One; this shows that the One Who deals this death-blow to Satan will suffer even while defeating him. The price that Christ paid on Calvary not only completed the redemption of mankind, which was promised here in the Garden, but it also confirmed the defeat of Satan. Here is the first promise of our Redeemer Who would come to conquer the devil. Even in the midst of God’s judgment on Satan, there is a ray of hope for mankind.



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.*

Jehovah Elohiym now directs His attention to Eve. We must consider this with the understanding that what is pronounced against Eve is the fate of all women to be born as time unfolds. Even though the pronoun *thy* is singular, and thus the judgment is specifically directed at Eve, the passage of time has clearly confirmed that the consequences of this judgment were not limited to Eve.

The phrase *greatly multiply* is translated from an emphatic Hebrew form where two words of the same meaning (but different grammatical forms) are placed together. We saw this earlier in Genesis 2:17, where the Hebrew word for *die* is repeated – our English translation includes the word *surely* to give the thought of emphasis. Here the Hebrew word translated as *multiply* is repeated for emphasis, and the translators have included the word *greatly* to provide the sense of emphasis in English. We can be assured that what follows will be greatly increased.

Sorrow is translated from a Hebrew word meaning toil, or pain.¹⁵⁹ The modern definition of *sorrow* centers on feelings of sadness; at the time of the KJV translation, it was defined as being pain of mind because of loss.¹⁶⁰ The Latin Vulgate showed this as *thy sorrow (aerumnas tuas)*,¹⁶¹ whereas John Wycliffe, in his translation of 1395 (based primarily on the Latin Vulgate), showed this as *thi wretchedness*.¹⁶² An English translation of the Septuagint shows this word as *pains*, even though the Hebrew word is translated as *lupas (λύπας)*, which is more closely aligned with *sorrow (lupe – λύπη)*; perhaps the swing toward *sorrow* came into English by way of this Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, the Hebrew word speaks of toil, or labor, and pain.

The word *conception* is what we would think of as *pregnancy*; the Hebrew word is singular so we cannot take it that God will greatly increase Eve’s pregnancies (which would require plurality).¹⁶⁴ The Hebrew word for *and*, as it appears here, is used in an unusual way and means *and specially*.¹⁶⁵ It seems that the multiplied toil, or pain, is being carried forward to the specific area of pregnancy. This would flow right into the next judgment: in *pain (sorrow – same Hebrew*

¹⁵⁹ BDB.

¹⁶⁰ <http://www.studylight.org/dic/kjd/view.cgi?number=T5313>

¹⁶¹ <http://www.studylight.org/desk/?l=en&query=Genesis+3§ion=0&translation=vul&oq=Genesis%25203&new=1&nb=ge&ng=3&ncc=3>; <http://translate.google.com/#la/en/aerumnas%20tuas>

¹⁶² <http://www.studylight.org/desk/?l=en&query=Genesis+3§ion=0&translation=wyc&oq=Genesis%25203&new=1&nb=ge&ng=3&ncc=3>

¹⁶³ <http://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/physics/septuagint-genesis/3.asp?pg=2>; Vine’s “sorrow.”

¹⁶⁴ BDB.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

word as before) shall children be born. This is all new; this is part of God's judgment on Eve and so to all women. When God created the man and woman and told them to fill the earth; there was no pain or labor, and so childbirth would have been without the misery that was now added because of sin. As Eve would also learn (through Cain), children can bring more pain than simply the pangs of childbirth. This concludes God's physical judgment on woman, and He now turns to the woman's relationship with man.

When God created Eve, He made a *help meet* for Adam (2:20), someone who could relate to him and also be his helper.¹⁶⁶ Eve was created from Adam to be with him; they were created equally in the image of God, yet, even then, they had distinctive roles in their relationship. When Satan came to Eve to tempt her into disobedience, Eve did not discuss his proposal with Adam; she simply went ahead with what she had been deluded into believing as being wonderful, and she gave Adam some of the forbidden fruit as well. In this deception, Eve took the lead role and Adam submitted to her leadership by knowingly taking the fruit from her. Eve was created to be Adam's helper, the alongside-one who would follow Adam's lead; however, in this matter, she stepped out of her God-given role.

As God continues to pronounce judgment upon Eve, He specifically deals with this error. He declares that her longing, or craving (*desire*), will be directed toward her man (*husband*), and he will have dominion (*rule*) over her.¹⁶⁷ This is an interesting combination – the woman will have a longing, or a passion, for her husband and he will have dominion over her. Notice that this is directed to the woman, not the man; the thrust of this is that, if the blessing of God is desired, then the wife will submit to the one for whom she craves – her husband. God created the woman for the man – the woman was to be a help to him, not the other way around. It was through the deception of the devil that Eve lost sight of this God-given order. Now, God is intent on restoring this order, and He does so by directing Eve to her proper place under the authority of Adam.

The feminist movement has done their utmost to undermine this God-ordained order, and even within so-called Christian marriages you will often see the roles blended or reversed. However, as we have already seen, marriage is to be a picture of the relationship between Christ and His redeemed ones (Ephesians 5:22-27), and as such, the roles have been carefully defined by God. If we desire His blessing, then we must give heed to His Word in this matter as well.



17. *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

Jehovah now turns to Adam. Thinking of the judgment that Eve received, what is very notable about God's words to Adam is what He does not say. We might expect that, since Eve was told that Adam would have the rule over her, God would now instruct Adam on how to be the lord within his marriage. It's not here!

God underscores that Adam followed Eve's lead; he obeyed (*hearkened unto*) her.¹⁶⁸ What is reiterated here is that God specifically told Adam not to eat of the forbidden tree; this is another

¹⁶⁶ Strong's Online.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

indication that Eve probably heard about God's commandment from Adam. We must recognize that the command of God is equally in force whether you hear it directly from Him or through another source. Today we have God's Word, written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) and preserved by God through the ages (Psalm 119:89); contained within it are many commands from God – we would do well to give heed to them for we will be held accountable. Even as Eve did not escape the promise of death for disobedience, so we can rest assured that God will not overlook our compromise of His truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Again, it comes down to whether or not we fear the Lord God sufficiently to do as He has commanded; Adam feared losing his relationship with Eve more than he feared his Creator, and so he sinned.

We might think of compromise as a minor infraction that is not worthy of God's attention or condemnation; after all, we read, "For he [Jehovah] knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust" (Psalm 103:14). However, we must be careful to read further and permit His Word to enlighten us more fully. "As for man, his days are as grass ... But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that **fear him**, and his righteousness unto children's children; To **such as keep** [to observe in unbroken continuity] **his covenant**, and to **those that remember** [to recall in unbroken continuity] **his commandments to do them**" (Psalm 103:15-18).¹⁶⁹ In like manner, Paul wrote, "*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who walk** not after the flesh, but **after the Spirit**" (Romans 8:1). If we walk according to (*after*) the Spirit of God, then compromising the Word of God will not happen; it is when we think that we have a better idea, or when we fear the criticism or condemnation of friends or family more than the judgment of God, that we falter. Jesus assured us that the Spirit of God would come to guide us into all truth (John 16:13), but if we ignore, or marginalize, His guidance in the paths of truth, then we can only expect God's condemnation. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep [attend carefully to] my commandments" (John 14:15); however, on the heels of this challenge, He went on to say, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he **may abide with you** for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you [the Spirit is present in Christ], and shall be in you [the Comforter, when He came at Pentecost for the disciples, and when He enters the believer at the time of his spiritual birth]" (John 14:16-17). There is a correlation between our careful attention to the commands of Christ and the continual abiding presence of the Spirit of God in our lives; we cannot persistently grieve the Spirit of God by ignoring His leading, and expect Him to put up with it forever. Ezekiel warned, "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, *and* doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned [be remembered]: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die" (Ezekiel 18:24).¹⁷⁰ The reality of apostasy is taught in the Scriptures, and it can begin with something as innocuous as compromise.

We might hear much about apostasy today, but, like so many others terms, it has been redefined to speak of those who pretended to believe but have now suddenly stopped pretending. For an example of redefinition and confusion in this matter, we need look no further than John MacArthur. He is horribly confused in his teaching on apostasy (a sign that he is more intent on protecting his theology than in discovering the truths of God's Word through the guidance of the Spirit of God). He begins by defining apostasy as being related to the word *divorce* and that it "speaks of abandonment, a separation, a defection – the abdication of truth altogether";¹⁷¹ all of this sounds

¹⁶⁹ Strong's Online.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ John MacArthur, *The Truth War*, p. 43.

reasonable and acceptable. However, he then goes on to subtly rework this by saying that those who are apostate are really “people who profess faith in Christ and identify themselves as disciples but who never genuinely embrace the truth.”¹⁷² Notice the shift away from any thought of *defection* (from his own definition). Except, he’s not finished yet; he then goes on to say that “an *apostate* is therefore a defector from the truth – someone who has known the truth, given some show of affirmation to it, perhaps even proclaimed it for a while – but then rejected it in the end” (italics in original).¹⁷³ First it is those who merely profess faith in Christ who are apostates, now it is those who have turned away from their own false profession – MacArthur is sowing confusion in his efforts to preserve his theology in this matter. The theology that he is trying to protect is his Reformed position on eternal security, which excludes any concept of apostasy, or falling away. The pinnacle of his confusion comes when he says that Jesus likened apostates to wolves dressed in sheep’s clothing, and attempts to use Matthew 7:15 as his support.¹⁷⁴ Unfortunately for MacArthur, Jesus made no such comparison; He warned us to “beware of **false prophets** which come to you in sheep’s clothing ...” (Matthew 7:15). Notice MacArthur’s subtle bending of the Word of God to support his teaching. Does that mean that apostates are really only false prophets – those who appear to speak forth God’s truth but actually teach falsehood or a bent version of His truth? In his efforts to circumvent the truth on this matter, MacArthur is sounding a lot like a false prophet – seeking to present himself as a sound Bible expositor (in his eyes, a shepherd), yet sowing confusion and heresy like a wolf. A simple definition of apostasy (which MacArthur would clearly reject) is: “It is a revolt against the truth of God’s word **by a believer**” (emphasis added).¹⁷⁵ It is easy to see where the root of apostasy can begin to grow by a seemingly innocent, and often intellectually defensible, departure from God’s truth.

You will recall that when God placed Adam into the Garden of Eden, He told him to “dress it [to work in it] and to keep it [to watch over it]” (Genesis 2:15).¹⁷⁶ This was a task specifically given to Adam, and, with the entrance of sin, this responsibility suddenly loomed much larger – *cursed is the ground*. The ground, out of which God caused every tree to grow that was “pleasant to the sight, and good for food” (Genesis 2:9), was now cursed on “account of man.”¹⁷⁷ Man, created by God from the ground, now brought a curse upon that from which he was made. Once again, we have the word *sorrow*, which more properly must be understood as *toil*.¹⁷⁸ Whereas God had provided man with all of the trees producing food for him, now he would have to labor (work) to get the required food.



18. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;*

Not only would the ground no longer freely produce an abundance of food, it would now grow plants that would increase the difficulty for man to cultivate the land and gather his food. This

¹⁷² MacArthur, *Truth*, p. 43.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ <http://carm.org/dictionary-apostasy>

¹⁷⁶ Strong’s Online.

¹⁷⁷ BDB.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

stands in stark contrast to the Garden where God caused to grow “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food” (Genesis 2:9).

Then God says, “Thou shalt eat of the herb of the field.” Earlier we read, “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat” (Genesis 1:29). In the Garden, we saw that God provided Adam and Eve with every tree that was good for food – it would seem that their primary source of food was from the trees. Now God specifically identifies the herb, or grass, as being the primary source of nourishment. Where would the thorns and thistles be prevalent? – among the grasses of the field! Man would now be laboring to provide food where the noxious weeds would be growing, which would only increase the labor required to produce enough food to eat.



19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

In keeping with the labor that would now be required to provide food, God introduces something new – *sweat*. A life of toil is promised to the man until he dies (*return unto the ground*); Adam lived 930 years, and he would have become very familiar with the labor required to provide food for his family. How many times would he have reminisced about the way it was in the Garden?

Here is the physical death that God promised for disobedience (2:17) – man will return to the ground from which God had created him. Spiritual death took place immediately; the promise of physical death included a more lengthy process of labor and learning obedience to God, which in itself would be laborious because of the ever-present sin-nature. Although man now knew both good and evil, it was the latter that would be dominant; evil would have to be continually suppressed (reckoned as being dead in Christ – Romans 6:11) in order to live in obedience to God (Romans 7:18-19).

What we must not overlook is that God placed upon Adam (man) the responsibility for working to provide for those for whom he was responsible, beginning with his wife, Eve. To Eve, God spoke of pain in childbearing and of being led by her husband, but nothing of laboring to provide food. Within our society, it is almost understood that the wife will work to supplement the income of the husband, even if it means having someone else care for the children in order to make it happen. That is not how God prescribed the roles for marriage.

GOD’S MERCY – Genesis 3:20-24



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

The name that Adam gives to his help meet, Eve, means *life*.¹⁷⁹ Eve is the mother of all human beings.



21. *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

A literal rendering of the Hebrew reads as follows: *And made Jehovah Elohiym for Adam and for his wife tunics of skin and He clothed them.*¹⁸⁰ As we ponder the actions of God described here, the overwhelming reality is that the fig-leaf aprons that Adam and Eve made were entirely inadequate. Here is the first reality that we must understand regarding our inherent sin nature – there is nothing that we can do to cover our sin before Jehovah. If Adam and Eve, who were created by God as sinless beings, could not cover themselves adequately for Jehovah, then we, who are born in sin, certainly have no hope. “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Romans 3:10-12; cp. Psalm 14:1-3). This describes every one of Adam’s descendants, but it also includes Adam and Eve after they sinned – there is no difference. They hid from the presence of God when He came to the Garden to commune with them; they understood, to some degree, their sinfulness before their Creator.

An age-old spiritual deception tries to convince man that he is really a good person. The famous 19th century literary, Ralph Waldo Emerson, stated, “What lies before us and what lies behind us are small matters compared to what lies within us. And when we bring what lies within us into the world, miracles happen.”¹⁸¹ Although he worked as a clergyman for a few years within the Unitarian group, he soon left religion behind, being deeply impacted by the deaths of his younger brothers and his young wife from tuberculosis. The summation of his creed was “the infinitude [limitless potential] of the private man.”¹⁸² His philosophy has found prolific expression today, often being mixed with a concept of God. For example, the Center for Mind Body Training declares faith as “a belief in the inherent goodness of every person which is given by God.”¹⁸³ They go on to quote 1 Corinthians 6:19¹⁸⁴ and apply it to all people. Oprah Winfrey has been a catalyst for mixing faiths of all stripes to produce a spirituality that is all her own. One of her contacts, Ed Bacon, rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, California, sees “spirituality as a meaningful connection. ‘It is about our being connected with one another and connected with the cosmos.’”¹⁸⁵ In a 2001 interview with Winfrey, the Dalai Lama said, “We can develop our minds infinitely -- there is no limitation”¹⁸⁶ (something that Oprah heartily endorsed). In 2002, *Christianity Today* named Oprah as one of America’s most influential spiritual leaders.¹⁸⁷ What comes through so clearly is that, down through the centuries, there have always been those

¹⁷⁹ Strong’s Online.

¹⁸⁰ Leningrad Hebrew OT, *Bibleworks 8*.

¹⁸¹ <http://thegoodwithin.com/index.html>

¹⁸² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Waldo_Emerson

¹⁸³ <http://thegoodwithin.com/index.html>

¹⁸⁴ 1 Corinthians 6:19 reads: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*”

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Your-Spiritual-Journey/1>

¹⁸⁶ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/24/oprah-religion-spirituality_n_866230.html

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

who deny the sinfulness of man's heart. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

When Paul wrote to the Roman believers explaining their (and our) relationship to the spiritual Root of Israel (namely, that we have been grafted into the Life by faith), he included a warning: "Well; because of unbelief they [the natural branches (Israel)] were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee" (Romans 11:20-21). If we have placed our faith in the redemption accomplished by Christ for all of mankind, then we stand as those who have been grafted into Christ by faith – the warning is that if we become faithless, we will then be removed just like the original branches. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief [want of faith], in departing from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12).¹⁸⁸ What form can this *unbelief* take? Yes, it could be a full denunciation of God and a denial of His very existence, but it can be much more subtle than that. If we understand the commandment of God regarding a particular matter and, for whatever reason, refuse to be obedient to that commandment, we will then find ourselves in the position of being in *unbelief* regarding that particular command. If we stubbornly refuse to obey God in a matter that He has placed before us, then we are faithless at that point – either because we do not believe Him, or we do not have faith that He will see us through any difficulties that may arise because of obedience to His command. Whatever our excuse, we are demonstrating that we do not accept God at His word – this is *an evil heart of unbelief*. We must not become careless and arrogant concerning our faith in Christ; what we must not forget is that our life in Him began by faith, and it is sustained by a continued faith in Him. Our willingness to obey His commands is an indication of our living faith (James 2:17); in like manner, our unwillingness to be obedient is a sign of our unbelief, or faithlessness – a symptom of apostasy.

In Romans 7, Paul declared that we still bear about with us the body of sin, which we are to reckon as dead in Christ (Romans 6:11). Inasmuch as we still have a sin nature, we are not perfect, and so Paul encourages the Galatians to come to the spiritual aid of someone who falters in their walk in the Spirit (Galatians 6:1). Note: this is a misstep in our walk with God, not a lifestyle of disregard for God's commands – we must not miss the difference.

Adam and Eve recognized that they had disobeyed God, they had received His judgment and they were repentant (they willingly accepted God's covering). Ezekiel declared to Israel: "Repent, and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30b); repentance is the beginning of a restored relationship with Jehovah. We also read that "without shedding of blood is no remission [cleansing from sin]" (Hebrews 9:22b).¹⁸⁹ As God prepared tunics of skin for Adam and Eve, the first sacrifices for sin were made by God, Himself; He provided full coverings of skin (the tunic is much like a long shirt), thereby shedding the blood of animals to cover their sins. The promise of a coming Redeemer was made to Satan (3:15), and now we see the necessity for blood to be shed in order to provide a covering for sin. These two things come together in Christ at the cross: the fulfillment of both the promise and the shedding of blood.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified [rendered righteous] in his [God's] sight: for by [through] the law *is* the knowledge [precise and correct knowledge] of sin. But now the righteousness of God without [apart from] the law is manifested [shown – perfect tense, done only once, i.e., in Christ], being witnessed by [giving testimony to] the law and the prophets [the OT gave evidence of the coming Messiah/Redeemer, even if the prophets sometimes

¹⁸⁸ Strong's Online.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

did not understand God's revelation to/through them]; Even the righteousness of God *which is* by [through] faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe [are believing – present tense]: for there is no difference [or distinction, v.9]: For all have sinned, and come short [are lacking] of the glory of God; Being justified [rendered righteous – passive mood, it is done for us] freely [as a gift] by his grace through the redemption [deliverance] that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation [appeasing, or placating, God's righteous requirements; means of forgiveness¹⁹⁰] through [the] faith in his [Christ's] blood, to declare [to demonstrate or prove] his righteousness for [through] the remission of [to pass over] sins that are past, through [by] the forbearance [tolerance] of God [speaks of the OT sacrifices that provided temporary relief from sin until Christ should come to be the final Sacrifice¹⁹¹]; To declare [demonstration, proof¹⁹²], *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of [verb – pronouncing righteous] him which believeth in [who *is* of the faith of¹⁹³] Jesus" (Romans 3:20-26).¹⁹⁴ Christ is the Redeemer for all of mankind, from Adam in his initial sin through to the end of time (1 Timothy 2:4); His atonement is sufficient for everyone.

With the coats of skin for Adam and Eve, God set His plan into motion for the redemption of those who would accept His provision for the covering of their sins (His provision is made for ALL, but NOT all will accept it). Adam and Eve, and their second-born son, Abel, accepted God's provision; on the other hand, their first-born, Cain, did not (Genesis 4:3-4). The necessity of a blood sacrifice when coming to God, was demonstrated in God's rejection and acceptance of Cain's and Abel's offerings. Man is sinful (Romans 3:23), unable to remedy his situation before God – our only hope for allaying God's condemnation is found in Christ (Romans 8:1). From Adam to the last man to be redeemed, our salvation comes only through faith in God's provision for covering sin, and only through the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22).



22. *And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

This is another confirmation that not everything that the devil says is a lie; he promised Eve that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, then they “shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (3:5). God states that man has become like as We are (the plurality of the Godhead – *Elohiym*), able to discern between (*to know*) *good and evil*. However, there is a notable difference (something on which Satan did not elaborate when he spoke with Eve).

The heavenly creatures declare, “Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts” (Isaiah 6:3); the very essence of Jehovah is His holiness. “For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell [temporarily] with thee” (Psalm 5:4).¹⁹⁵ “For thus said the high and exalted One, Inhabiting eternity, and holy *is* His name ...” (Isaiah 57:15a). God's ability to discern evil is that it is contrary to the very essence of His being; when Satan's heart was lifted up in pride (Isaiah

¹⁹⁰ Friberg Lexicon.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ YLT.

¹⁹⁴ Strong's Online.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

14:12-15), God recognized it immediately and the devil lost his exalted position in His presence. Evil is easily identified in contrast to the holiness and righteousness of God.

For Adam and Eve, who had just made themselves subject to Satan and, therefore, evil, they would be able to discern what is good because of its contrast to what they were now. Although man is often able to differentiate between good and evil, because of his inherent sin nature (his natural bent toward evil) *good* is tainted in his eyes (*better* than evil, but not *good* as God is good). “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; **there is none that doeth good, no, not one**” (Romans 3:11-12). Natural man may well be able to discern that which is good (or contrary to his evil nature), but he is not able to live there; it is only through faith in Christ that we can become new creatures and, by the power of the Spirit of God, live in “righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24).

We do not go so far as to say, as the Calvinist does, that man is totally depraved, incapable of accepting the free gift of salvation, which God offers. Rather, we follow Scripture which declares that whoever is believing in Jesus Christ may not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:15). Jesus reproved the Jews of His day: “And ye will [present tense, active voice] not come to me, that ye might have life” (John 5:40); it was the exercising of their wills that prevented the religious Jews from coming to Jesus for *life*; this would be a meaningless statement if the Jews were incapable of making a choice to follow the Lord. The Scriptures make it clear that fallen man still bears the image of God; “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6). Man is indeed helpless to restore his relationship with God, or even to contribute to a restored relationship (symbolized by the totally inadequate aprons constructed by Adam and Eve), but that in no way renders him unable to respond to the wooing of the Spirit of God and exercise his will to accept God’s proffered gift of salvation. The fact that we exercise our will and say, “Yes” to the gift of God, does not in any way make us contributors to the salvation that God has prepared for us.

Here we see a tremendous expression of God’s mercy; He knew that the tree of life was still available in the Garden, and His desire was that man should not live forever in his sin.



23. Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

In His mercy, God sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden, or enclosure.¹⁹⁶ If man no longer had access to the tree of life, then God could extend His grace to him and bring those who were willing back into fellowship with Him. Adam’s occupation was not changed, only now he would be working the land outside of the Garden of Eden.



24. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

¹⁹⁶ Strong’s Online.

Man did not voluntarily walk out of the Garden, but God forced him out (*drove*); this is not surprising, really, since the Garden would have been a beautiful sanctuary. It was God's mercy upon sinful man that He turned them out; a way was already established for man to again have fellowship with his Creator (through repentance and the shedding of blood). The promise of a future Redeemer was already in place; God was not caught off guard by the sin of Adam – the way of redemption was already established (Micah 5:2; Ephesians 1:4;3:11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Revelation 13:8).

At the front of the Garden of Eden, God placed angelic guards to ensure that man did not sneak back in to take of the tree of life. God could have simply removed the tree, but He chose to place this much more evident reminder of what man had lost through his sin. It says that He *placed* them there – this signifies a permanency; they were there for as long as the Garden was there.¹⁹⁷ In addition to the angels, God placed a flaming sword, which seems to be in perpetual motion, at the entrance to the Garden. Clearly, anyone who would have attempted to enter would have been stopped or killed. Direct access to the tree of life was cut off, but the reminder of eternal life was still there. How many of the early descendants of Adam would have seen the angels and the sword, and been reminded of God's desire for them? However, as we see within the first two children of Adam and Eve, sin is a powerful force within the heart of man.

We hear nothing of this tree of life again until we come to the last book of the Bible.¹⁹⁸ To the *overcomers*, Jesus promises to “give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7). In the New Jerusalem: “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life ...” (Revelation 22:2). Access to the tree of life comes only through faith in God's promised Redeemer, Jesus Christ. We must come to Him in faith with repentance (turning from sin to God), believing that He has purchased us out of slavery to sin so that we might be slaves to His righteousness (Romans 6:17-18).

¹⁹⁷ Strong's Online.

¹⁹⁸ Solomon, in writing the Proverbs, refers four times to *tree of life*, but it is used metaphorically.