

## Genesis 3

The first two chapters of Genesis tell us about the creation of the universe. When God created the world, it was absolutely perfect in every way. There was no sin, or sorrow, or death. Everything in the world was good – in fact, God Himself pronounced it as being “very good” (Genesis 1:31).

Sadly, the paradise that God created did not remain unspoiled for very long. Sin would soon enter the world and bring with it an enormous amount of misery and pain. The lives of everyone in this world was about to become a whole lot harder. All of the problems that we face today – sickness, disease, death, war, famines – can be traced back to that first sin in the Garden of Eden. Why is the world such a bad place? It's because mankind sinned and turned the world into a bad place. Why do so many terrible things happen? It's because mankind chose to reject God and embrace a life of sin. God created a perfect world, and mankind broke it. People like to blame God for the evil that takes place in this world, but the truth is *we* are the ones who are responsible. Mankind chose sin over God, and this world is the result.

But the good news is that God will one day create a new and better world, where there will never again be any sickness or pain or death. The cost of our salvation, though, was very high. It took the shed blood of God's perfect Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the ransom for our sins.

Let's take a look at the Fall of Man and see what happened.

### ***Before the Fall***

Genesis 3 starts out with the serpent tempting Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. That isn't actually the beginning of the story, though. The real story actually starts before this, with a different fall into sin by a very different creature.

You see, in the beginning God created a being named Lucifer. This being was perfect in beauty. In fact, he was the highest ranking angel:

**Ezekiel 28:12:** “Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

13 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 and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

14 Thou art the anointed cherub 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.”

Even though this passage seems to be talking about the King of Tyrus, it is actually referring to Satan, not to a human king. After all, no human king in Ezekiel's day had ever set foot in Eden! This passage is talking about what Satan was like *before* he fell and became the devil. As you can see, God created him as a perfect being. He was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, and he was arrayed in

precious stones.

Verse 14 tells us that he was “the anointed cherub that covereth”. Now, cherubs are one of the different types of angels. All of the other cherubs were stationed below the throne of God, except for the covering cherub. That angel was stationed *above* God's throne and acted as a covering. This means that the covering cherub was the highest rank of cherub – which means that Satan was created to be the highest ranking angel.

At first Satan was perfect, but then he became proud. That led to his downfall:

**Ezekiel 28:15:** “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”

His beauty led to pride, and he decided to exalt himself still further:

**Isaiah 14:12:** “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

The devil (who was originally called Lucifer, which according to Strong's Concordance means “light-bearer”) decided that he wanted to be God. The gifts, beauty, position, and wisdom that God had given him were not enough; he demanded more. His pride led to his rebellion, and one third of the angels joined him.

No one knows when this happened, but it was apparently pretty soon after the angels were created. There doesn't seem to be much time between the creation of man on day six and Satan's temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden. By the time that happened, Satan had already fallen and become the deceiver.

The devil was not content to just corrupt one third of God's angels, though. He was also determined to corrupt mankind as well – which brings us back to the Garden of Eden.

## ***That Old Serpent***

Genesis 3 begins with a villain entering the picture:

**Genesis 3:1a:** “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made...”

We see here that Eve was tempted by a serpent. The Bible tells us that the serpent was the most “subtil” beast that God had created. The word “subtil” is Strong’s #6175. It means “cunning (usually in a bad way)” and “crafty”. Since the serpent tempts Eve and persuades her to eat the Forbidden Fruit, we can see that this really was a very crafty and cunning animal.

However, we also know that this was more than just an animal. The book of Revelation tells us exactly who this serpent really was:

**Revelation 12:9:** “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

There's some interesting things going on here. First of all, when God later punishes people for their participation in this sin, God punishes both the serpent *and* the devil. Since the Lord held them both responsible, it would seem that the two actually worked together in order to deceive mankind. Although the devil is a deceiver, it would appear that the serpent willingly helped him accomplish his goal.

Now, it is a bit strange that the serpent could talk to Eve. After all, snakes don't usually do a lot of talking! However, it may be that the serpent allowed itself to become possessed, and it was actually the devil himself who was speaking to Eve. That could explain his ability to talk. One might wonder why Eve didn't run off screaming when a snake tried to talk to her, but remember that the whole world was brand new. *We* know that snakes don't talk, but remember that Eve was literally just a couple days old. Would she really have had enough experience with animals to know what they could and couldn't do? Besides, she lived in a world where as far as she knew there was no danger. No one ever got hurt, or died, or was horribly injured. Why should she have been afraid of anything? Fear wasn't even a part of life.

## ***Hath God Said?***

The serpent began by asking Eve a question:

**Genesis 3:1b:** “...And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

The devil wanted mankind to fall into sin. In order to do that, mankind needed to do the one thing that had God forbidden: eat of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. So the devil begins by seeing if Eve has really been paying attention. “Did God *really* say that you can't eat of every tree?”

Satan was probably hoping that Eve had forgotten about the commandment. Then his job would be easy: Eve would just say “Oh, no, I guess He didn't”, and eat it, and it would all be over. You see, God is quite clear that He still holds people responsible for sins committed in ignorance. Even if you didn't realize that what you were doing was a sin, *it is still a sin*. In the Mosaic Law there was actually a special sacrifice required for sins that were committed in ignorance:

**Leviticus 4:27:** “And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while

he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.

29 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.”

That's right: if you sinned in ignorance, you were required to make a sin offering in order to cover your guilt. Even though you had no intention of sinning, you were still guilty in the eyes of God. Even though you didn't even know that what you were doing was a sin, you were still guilty. God does not say “Well, you didn't know any better, so that's fine. We'll just pretend it never happened.” Nope. Instead God required a sacrifice in order to purchase forgiveness for what you had done.

If you think about it, this makes a great deal of sense. If ignorance really *was* an excuse then we could all escape blame by burning all the Bibles in the world and making sure no one has any idea what God's commandments are. After all, if we're all completely ignorant then we can't be held responsible for anything we do, right? But *that's not how it works*. Sins committed in ignorance are still sins.

So if Eve had forgotten the commandment and eaten of the fruit, it would still have been a sin. Eve, though, knew what God had commanded, so the devil's first ploy failed.

This is a principle that we need to take to heart. The devil has not changed his approach to temptation. He will still come to us and say “Hath God said...?” That is why it is so important to know what the Word of God actually says. That way when the devil tempts us to sin, we can say “Absolutely not; the Bible forbids that”. We can defeat the lies of the devil with the Word of God – but that's only possible if we know what the Word of God actually teaches.

## ***Neither Shall Ye Touch It***

Eve knew that God had commanded them to not eat that particular fruit:

**Genesis 3:2:** “And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

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.”

However, we can already see that there is a problem. Not only did Eve say that they weren't allowed to eat from the tree, but she added that they couldn't touch it either. This is bad news, because that is *not* what God actually said. Let's go back and take a look at His exact words:

**Genesis 2:16:** “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely 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.”

Did God say they could not touch it? No, He did not. That was *not* a part of the commandment.

Touching the tree would *not* bring death. Touching its fruit would not bring death either. Death would only come if you *ate* of the tree. The Lord was very specific about this.

Now, this actually matters more than it seems. Later in this conversation the serpent will say that God lied to her, and Eve won't die after all. Eve will then touch the tree and its fruit, and she will see that the serpent was right – touching it did not make her die. Since the serpent had been proven right about that, she went ahead and ate of the fruit – and that is when everything went bad.

Someone modified God's commandment and added additional restrictions to it. This was *not* a good move. If you go back and read Genesis 2 you will see that God gave this commandment after placing Adam in the Garden of Eden, but before He created Eve. This means that Eve was not there when God told Adam not to eat of the Tree. Now, it may be that Adam was the one who added to God's commandment, or it may be that Eve did that. Since the Bible doesn't tell us how that conversation went, there's no way to tell. But we do know that someone added to it.

The tendency to add to God's commandments in order to make them even more strict is still with us today. For example, in the Ten Commandments God told the Israelites this:

**Exodus 20:7:** “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

That's pretty simple, right? No blasphemy. Do not use the name of the Lord as a swear word. Treat the Lord's name with the reverence and respect that it deserves. For the Jews, though, that was not enough. They decided the only way to keep that commandment was to never, ever say the name of the Lord under any circumstances. So to this day when they write God's name they write G-d. That way they're not actually saying God's name at all.

Now, did God say “Don't ever, *ever* say My name?” Of course not! God commanded men to treat His name with respect, but instead the Jews have treated it as some kind of unspeakable word that must not be uttered under any circumstances. That's not respect; that's madness. Refusing to call someone by their name, and going to great lengths to corrupt that name whenever it is written down, is not *remotely* respectful to that person. Would you want someone to treat *you* that way? God never required anything like that. In fact, He never even suggested it.

Time and space does not permit us to explore the ways that the Pharisees of Christ's day took the Law and added endless absurd restrictions to it. It is so easy for us to do the same thing. There are times when we're not content to simply abide by the commandments; instead we expand them to outlaw things that God never forbade at all. But that is a discussion for another time.

## ***Ye Shall Not Surely Die***

When Eve told the serpent that the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden on pain of death, the serpent told her that she was simply wrong:

**Genesis 3:4:** “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:  
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.”

Now, the devil doesn't provide any evidence that what he is saying is true – he simply asserts it!

He basically asks Eve to trust him instead of God. He is claiming that God actually lied to her – that He is denying her something that is really good and beneficial, and if she just disobeys God then her life would become so much better. Disobedience, he claims, is the path to enlightenment.

The reality is that God never lied to Adam or Eve. In fact, God *never* lies:

**Numbers 23:19:** “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

People lie all the time, but God *never* lies. Adam and Eve had no reason not to trust Him, and they had no reason to not obey Him – and yet they decided to heed the words of the serpent anyway. Even though God had never withheld any good thing from them, Eve still believed the lie that God was somehow mean, cruel, and out to get her.

The devil is still telling the same lies today. We are still told that God is holding out on us, and if we are just willing to sin then everything in our life will get better. It often seems that disobedience and sin is an easier road to take, but the truth is that sin is devastating. The wages of sin is *death*. Eating the forbidden fruit did *not* make things better; instead it destroyed the whole world. It brought sin, death, pain, and incredible misery to *billions* of people. It was a terrible decision. It literally brought misery upon all of creation:

**Romans 8:22:** “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

If Adam and Eve had just obeyed God then they really *would* have had peace and happiness. If they had just trusted God then all would have been well – but they didn't. They instead chose to go their own way and do what they thought best.

We are faced with the same decision in our own lives. What are we going to do? Are we going to trust God and be obedient, or are we instead going to sin? Do we trust God's judgment and faithfulness? When hard times come into our life and we are faced with difficult choices, are we willing to simply have faith in God and see things through to the end?

Part of what the devil said was true – if they ate of the fruit then they would indeed have their eyes opened. However, that was a *bad* thing, not a good thing. The devil didn't tell them about the consequences, or about what they would lose, or about all of the pain they would experience. Instead he lied about it all and said that they wouldn't die – but they *did* die, didn't they?

When temptation comes into our own lives it is often quick to tell us about the supposed benefits that we're going to get out of sinning, without mentioning the terrible, life-altering consequences. The truth is that sin carries a very high cost. We would be far, far better off to simply obey God and do what is right.

## ***She Took The Fruit***

This is where Eve made her fatal mistake (and I do mean *literally* fatal). Instead of telling the serpent that God said not to eat of the fruit and that she was going to obey God, Eve disobeyed. She gave in to temptation:

**Genesis 3:6:** “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.”

Eve saw that the serpent was right: the food was edible and looked appealing, and eating it would make one wise. So she disobeyed God and did the one thing God told her not to do. Eve ate the fruit, and then she gave it to her husband who ate it as well. Both of them had now sinned – but the consequences were more far-reaching than they ever could have imagined. They had brought death into the world, and turned God's paradise into the planet full of sorrow that it is today.

Eve could have said no, but she didn't. Adam could have said no, but he didn't. Eve focused on the temptation instead of the commandment, and listened to the lies of the devil instead of the truth that came from God. That was her downfall. If she had just clung to the commandment and obeyed God in spite of what the fruit looked like, she would have been well. If she had just trusted God's judgment instead of her own then none of this would have happened. But she didn't. Instead she followed her own desires, and that destroyed everything. Now things would never be the same – not for her and not for anyone else.

## ***Their Eyes Were Opened***

Now that Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit and fallen into sin, everything was different. Instead of enjoying fellowship with God, Adam and Eve tried to hide from Him:

**Genesis 3:7:** “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.

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.

9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

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

First they made clothing for themselves. That is always our first instinct – to seek to cover our sin with our own efforts and fix the problem ourselves. They didn't run to God when they had a problem; no, instead they trusted in themselves to find a solution. However, sin is a problem that no man can fix. Only God can resolve the sin in our lives. Our own efforts will fail – just as Adam and Eve's efforts did.

Next, they tried to hide from the Lord. In the past they had not been ashamed to be in the presence of God because they were innocent. Now that they were stained with sin, they fled from the Judge of the universe. There was no fear before, but there was fear now. When God came into the Garden they did not seek Him out; instead they hid from His presence. Since they were in darkness they could not abide the light:

**John 3:19:** “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and

men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”

When Adam and Eve were innocent they had no reason to hide. Now, though, they tried to hide from the light so that the light would not expose what they had done.

But there was no hiding from God.

## ***What Have You Done?***

God immediately asked them what they had done:

**Genesis 3:11:** “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?”

Now, the Lord was not asking them this question because He was somehow confused and wanted to be brought into the loop. You see, God knows all things. He knew exactly what Adam and Eve had done. When God asks questions it is for *our* benefit, not for His. God already knows what has happened and He even knows what we are going to say before we say it.

Adam, though, could not bring himself to admit what he had done. Instead he tried to place the blame on Eve:

**Genesis 3:12:** “And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

Not only does he blame his wife (instead of owning up to the fact that he chose to eat of the fruit), but he even tries to lay some of the blame on God. “Why, God, it's that woman you gave me! If you hadn't given her to me then I would have been fine. This is all your doing.”

This was a really terrible accusation to make, for a number of reasons. First of all Eve was a wonderful gift to Adam. She was not a curse; she was a blessing. Second, God did not tell her to sin; instead He told both of them *not* to sin. What Adam and Eve did was in direct violation of God's commandments. They didn't get into this mess by obeying God and doing what He said; no, they fell into sin because they chose to sin. Thirdly, Adam did not have to partake of the fruit. When Eve offered it to him he could have said no, but he didn't. Adam is not the innocent party that he is claiming to be. (After all, it's not like Eve cut it up in his salad and fed it to him secretly or anything.) Adam could have resisted the sin but he chose not to.

Next, God then asks Eve what she had done. She also refused to take any personal responsibility and instead blamed someone else:

**Genesis 3:13:** “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.”

Eve did not own up to the sin or apologize for it. Instead she just blamed the serpent. There is no trace of personal responsibility here at all – just more blame-shifting. If either of these people were actually sorry for what they had done, neither of them showed it by apologizing. Instead all they did was blame other people for their own actions.

If they were hoping that this would get them out of trouble, they were about to be disappointed. You cannot escape punishment for your sin by blaming someone else. God will always hold each person responsible for the things they had done, and will hold them accountable for it.

## ***Judgment***

Since a sin was committed, God passed judgment upon it and cursed each of the guilty parties. The Lord started with the serpent:

**Genesis 3:14:** “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 how the serpent was said to be in the same category as cattle! No one today would mistake a snake for a cow; after all, snakes have no legs and slither along on the ground. It would seem that's *not* how they were originally created, though. There was a time when snakes were quite different from the way they are today. It would appear that their modern design is a result of the curse that God placed upon them. They were no longer to be with the other cattle; instead they would slither along the ground. (If this all seems a bit strange to you, then you may have missed the parts in this story where there was a literal Tree of Knowledge, an immortality-granting Tree of Life, and a talking snake. This story is full of really odd things that don't exist anymore. Calling snakes “cattle” is *not* the strangest thing that happened.)

The Lord then cursed the devil who was behind the snake:

**Genesis 3:15:** “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.”

This is actually a Messianic prophecy – the first one in the Bible. The phrase “her seed” is singular. It is talking about one specific offspring – an individual, not a line of people. The individual God was talking about was, of course, Jesus Christ. There would come a day when the Messiah would come into this world and be crucified on the cross. On that day He would indeed be “bruised”; in fact, He would actually die. However, Jesus would then be raised back to life again – freeing men from sin, defeating the devil, and conquering death itself. There would indeed be enmity between the devil and the people of God, but in the end Satan would be defeated. The devil might be able to injure God's people, but he could not overcome them or defeat God's plan of redemption.

Next, God cursed the woman:

**Genesis 3:16:** “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”

This was a very personal thing to curse, that struck at the heart of who Eve was. Only the woman could bring forth children, and Eve would be responsible for starting the human race (since all of mankind would be descended from her). Before this curse that would have been a source of joy; now, however, giving birth would be intensely painful. Women would still continue to have children, but now it would be a very difficult process. It would no longer be what God had originally designed it to be.

But that was not all. In the future the husband would rule over his wife. In the past there was perfect harmony, but now that harmony was broken. The wife would desire to usurp power over her husband, and the husband would be forced to rule over his wife. Eve was created to be a helper who was suitable for Adam, but now she would seek to dominate him, not help. In the future Adam would find it very difficult to get any sort of help out of her at all. Marriages were no longer a perfect union; now they would be filled with trouble.

Finally, God turned to Adam:

**Genesis 3:17:** “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;

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

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.”

The Lord put Adam in the garden to tend it and keep it. This was originally not intended to be a difficult job – but that had changed. Now Adam would have to work the ground in order to get food, and the ground would not cooperate. In the future the ground would bring forth thorns and thistles. The ground would fight him and bring him pain, and he would be forced to sweat for his food. Life would not be easy; instead it would be very difficult, with problems on every side. His ability to support himself and feed his family was severely diminished.

But there was one last curse, and we see it in verse 19. God warned them that the wages of sin was death, but the serpent said God was lying. They should have listened to God instead of the serpent, because God was right: because of what they had done, they would now die. God created Adam from the dust, and he would now die and return to the dust. Adam lived a long time (which should not come as a surprise; after all, God originally intended for Adam to live *forever*), but in the end he died just as God warned him:

**Genesis 5:5:** “And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.”

In fact, *all* would die and return to the dust. Mankind was no longer immortal; instead man would be faced with sickness, pain, and death. Death had now entered the world, and it would claim the life of him and his descendents.

## ***The Mother Of All Living***

Adam and Eve did indeed go on to have children. In fact, the entire human race can be traced back to those two people:

**Genesis 3:20:** “And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”

This is actually a critical theological point. You see, the reason that we are born with a sin nature is because we are all the children of Adam. We inherit his sin nature, which means we also inherit the penalty of death that comes with it:

**Romans 5:12:** “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:”

Sin entered the world through one man – the man Adam – and through him all are born with a sin nature. Since we are all sinners, we are all worthy of death. But since sin entered the world through one man, that made it possible for the sacrifice of one man to save the world:

**Romans 5:18:** “Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

This is one of the key truths in the Bible. The reason you are a sinner is because Adam was a sinner. You not only inherit Adam's sin nature, but you also inherit his guilt. From the moment you are conceived you are already guilty in the sight of God. All it took was the sin of *one man* – our forefather Adam – to condemn the entire human race. It is true that we have sins of our own, but we are already *born* guilty thanks to his sin:

**Psalms 51:5:** “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

This verse is true for all of us. We are sinners from the moment of conception because we inherit Adam's sin. As it says in Romans 5:19, Adam's disobedience turned *all* of us into sinners.

Because of this dreadful fact, it is possible for Christ to save us. Since we were all made guilty by the sin of one man, we can all be saved by the obedience of the man Christ. Since we all inherit death from Adam, we can all inherit eternal life through Christ. The fact that *one man's sin* makes us all guilty is what makes it possible for one man's obedience to make us all righteous.

That is why Christ came: to take on Himself the form of a man and die in the place of men. Since He was fully man (while still being fully God), and since He had no sins of His own to suffer for, He could die in our place. Therefore, His death on the cross could be the atonement for all of our sins. His death paid the price and set us free. When we repent and believe in Christ, God gives us His righteousness. God no longer sees our sins and wickedness; instead God sees the perfect righteousness of His Son.

## ***The First Sacrifice***

Adam and Eve were no longer innocent. Their eyes were opened, and they tried to cover themselves – but their efforts were badly flawed. They could not cover what they had done (just as we cannot cover our sins). Since Adam and Eve were helpless and in need, God made them clothing:

**Genesis 3:21:** “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

There is deep meaning here. Who covered them? God did. God stepped in and took care of the problem. You see, in the Bible clothing is always symbolic of righteousness:

**Revelation 19:8:** “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

It's easy to see why. Just as clothing covers the body, so righteousness covers our sin. Where does our righteousness come from? It has to come from God. When we repent of our sins and believe in Christ, the Lord gives us the perfect righteousness of Christ, which covers our sin. If we reject that righteousness and try to handle the problem ourselves, we become like Adam and Eve who tried to make clothing out of a few leaves. It just doesn't work – and God doesn't accept it. God requires total perfection. The only way we can achieve that, and become holy enough to enter into His presence, is by partaking of the flawless righteousness of Christ.

Another thing: notice that these garments were not made out of fig leaves. These were “coats of skins” - in other words, coats made out of animal skin. Where do you get animal skin? From animals. And how do you get the skin off the animal? Well, you have to kill it first.

In other words, we see here that Adam and Eve's sin was already bringing death into the world. In order to provide this couple with something to wear, God killed an animal and used its skin as a covering. That means that an animal had to die – and nothing had ever died before. This is pointing to the sacrificial system, where animals would be sacrificed so that their blood might cover the sins of men. The sacrificial system, in turn, points to Christ, who shed His blood to cover our sin.

We can clearly see that the wages of sin was death – and that it would take the death of an innocent party in order to cover the sin of the guilty. God was giving mankind a preview of what their future held.

## ***The Tree of Life***

The Tree of Knowledge was not the only tree in the Garden. There was another tree – the Tree of Life. If one ate of that tree then they would live forever. God had not forbidden Adam and Eve from eating that tree's fruit, but now that they had sinned things were different:

**Genesis 3:22:** “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:

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

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."

God did not want mankind to eat of the Tree of Life and live forever in their sinful condition. So, instead of destroying the Tree of Life, God evicted mankind from paradise. They could no longer live in God's perfect garden; now they were evicted from it. God stationed an angel (a cherubim, to be precise) and a flaming sword to guard the Tree of Life to make sure that no one ever ate its fruit.

The way to immortality was now forbidden to Adam and Eve. The wages of sin was death, and there was nothing mankind could do to escape that fate. The situation was hopeless – and it would have remained hopeless forever had it not been for the amazing love and grace of God.

You see, God made a way where there seemed to be no way. Thanks to the amazing sacrifice of Christ, we can now obtain forgiveness for our sins. Those who repent and place their faith in Christ will not only be forgiven, but will be resurrected as well. God will translate them and give them perfect bodies. They will finally regain the immortality that was forbidden to them all those long millennia ago:

**1 Corinthians 15:51:** "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In fact, not only will they be given immortality, but God will also give them the right to eat of the Tree of Life – the very tree that was once in the Garden of Eden:

**Revelation 2:7:** "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The Tree of Life is not gone; it is still there, "in the midst of the paradise of God". All those who overcome will be given the right to eat of its fruit and live forever. So who are the "overcomers"? Well, this verse answers that question:

**1 John 5:5:** "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus

is the Son of God?"

As you can see, Christians are the overcomers! Those who repent and believe in Christ, trusting Him to be the Messiah, have overcome the world – and will be given the right to eat of the Tree of Life. Isn't that amazing?

The grace of God is truly astounding. God did not have to save us; after all, we were the ones who sinned against Him. Yet God chose to save us. Even though it cost the life and blood of His precious Son, God still chose to save us. The perfect God died to save sinful and wicked men. He died so that we might be forgiven (when we had no right to expect forgiveness at all) and so that we might live forever. Truly the love of God is surpassingly great! Who can measure such an astounding love as that?