

Chapter 3 records the fall of man from a state of innocence into a state of rebellion against God. The human race has inherited the sinful nature of our first parents and created our need for a Savior, as stated in 1 Cor. 15:22 - "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

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<sup>1</sup> 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?

**"Now the serpent was more subtil [shrewd; crafty] than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made"** – It's likely that before the fall of man the serpent was not the same as it is now. It was probably not the limbless creature that we recognize now since God's curse included it going upon its belly (v. 14). The Hebrew word for "subtil" could allow for the meaning of "intelligent" which may be why Eve does not seem to be surprised when the serpent starts speaking to her. Theologians debate whether the serpent as actually Satan appearing in the form of a serpent or if Satan merely possessed or influenced the serpent. Since God cursed the serpent and not Satan it seems unlikely that Satan impersonated a serpent. Instead the serpent must have played a cooperative role in Eve's temptation with Satan influencing the conversation.

**"And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"** - Satan's uses tactics that he has continued to use to this day: casting doubt on God's loving care and the integrity of His word. You can almost hear the scoffing tone in his voice as he asks "Has God really said that you can't eat from all the trees in the garden?" He turns Eve's focus from all the trees she is allowed to eat from and implies that God is depriving the couple of good things by forbidding them access to this one tree. Satan still tempts us to doubt God's love by whispering in our ear that "a loving God wouldn't have allowed this to happen."

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<sup>2</sup> And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: <sup>3</sup> But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Eve replies by repeating God's command concerning the trees of the garden: they are allowed to eat of any tree in garden except for the one that carries the penalty of death, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They are not to eat of it, but Eve adds another restriction not stated elsewhere: "neither shall ye touch it." Commentators differ on whether or not Eve is adding to the word of God or if perhaps the restriction was given but not written down. Another possibility might be is that she is innocently expressing her fear of the tree.

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<sup>4</sup> And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: <sup>5</sup> 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.

**"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die"** – The serpent goes from merely casting doubt on the legitimacy of God's command to an outright denial of it. He's basically saying that God lied when He said that they would die after eating the fruit and that the prohibition was not actually for their own good.

**"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened"** – Satan makes the accusation that God wants to suppress Adam and Eve, denying them of good things. It calls into question God's goodness and love for His creation, implying that God was being selfish to deny them the fruit of the tree.

**"and ye shall be as gods [eloheem], knowing good and evil"** – Satan fell when he wanted to be like God, and now he is tempting Eve with the same idea. The Hebrew word for "gods" is the same plural word used to refer to God, which is why some Bible versions translate this "you shall be like God." The allure of having abilities beyond our human limitations is tempting, which may explain why so many movies, books, and TV shows in recent years explore the idea of people having superhuman abilities. Satan is telling Eve that she can become enlightened like God simply by eating from the forbidden tree.

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

**"And when the woman saw..."** - John summarizes the sin of the world into three categories in **1 John 2:16** - "*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.*" Every sinful temptation we face has one or more of these components. Eve is confronted by all three of these categories when looking at the tree: **1) good for food** (lust of the flesh); **2) pleasant to the eyes** (lust of the eyes); **3) to be desired to make one wise** (the pride of life).

**"she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat"** – The triple temptation overrode God's command in Eve's mind and she succumbs.

**"and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat"** – Eve wanted her husband to also "benefit" from the fruit, so she gave some to him as well and he also ate of it. It doesn't say if Adam was a witness to the conversation between Eve and the serpent, but it does say that she gave to her husband "with her." However, it seems that scripture holds Adam responsible for the fall rather than Eve. The Apostle Paul says that Eve was deceived but Adam was not in **1 Tim. 2:14** "*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*" Therefore Adam is held responsible for the fall since he knew what he was doing when he ate: **Rom. 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.*" **1 Cor. 15:22** "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*"

<sup>7</sup> 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.

**“And the eyes of them both were opened”** – They had eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and as a result they understood what they had done. They saw their guiltiness before God for rebelling against His command. So did God lie and Satan tell the truth since Adam and Eve did not die but their eyes were indeed opened? Satan told a half-truth because their eyes were indeed opened but he never warned Eve of the consequences. God did not lie because even through Adam and Eve did not die physically, they did die spiritually, which is why we must be born again. The Holy Spirit must give birth to our spirit to make us spiritually alive (John 3:3-6).

**“and they knew that they *were* naked”** - Before the fall they did not know to be ashamed of their nakedness (Gen. 2:25 “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”). Just as a toddler can run around naked and not be ashamed because he/she does not know any better, Adam and Eve did not understand the significance of their nakedness. Once they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they understood. Some commentators believe that before the fall Adam and Eve were clothed with light from the glory of God, which disappeared when they disobeyed. However, that doesn’t seem likely since Gen. 2:25 calls attention to the fact that they were naked but not ashamed. They would not be naked if they were clothed in light and there would be no reason to mention that they were not ashamed.

**“and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons”** – A garment of fig leaves at best makes a temporary covering until the leaves wither and crumble. Mankind has been making similar feeble attempts ever since to cover our sin which are temporary at best. Even if we can temporarily hide our sin from man, God sees our sin clearly and only the blood of Christ can permanently cleanse us from our sin and restore our fellowship with God.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

**“And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day”** – Apparently God was calling for Adam and Eve (v. 9) and they heard Him. God seems to be walking in the garden as if nothing had happened to see how they would react.

**“and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden”** – Sin always separates us from God. We, as sinners, know we cannot stand before a holy God and so fear is the result. Isaiah had a similar reaction to the presence of God in **Isa. 6:5** “*Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*”

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou? <sup>10</sup> And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

**“And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?”** - Did God not know where Adam was? Of course He did. God never has to ask questions in order to gain information. He always asks them in order to evoke a desired response.

**“And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself”** – The awareness of our own guilt and that we are naked in the sight of God will make us afraid to face God. Adam knew he could not hide his sin from God but rather than confessing and asking forgiveness, he hid himself. Isn’t this the way our human nature tends to deal with sin?

<sup>11</sup> 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?

Adam would not have understood the significance of his nakedness had he not eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God is looking for a confession from Adam.

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

Instead of confessing and taking responsibility for the sin, Adam instead attempts to put the blame elsewhere. He blames Eve for giving him the fruit to eat and even blames God for giving him the woman. Human nature has not changed because people still try to shift the responsibility for their sin onto others. The people on earth during the tribulation will blame God for their suffering even though their own sin is the reason for their suffering (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21).

<sup>13</sup> 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 also passes the blame on to someone else, although her excuse is actually true. The serpent did deceive her but the deception would not have worked if Adam and Eve’s trust in God had not wavered. The serpent’s whole deception was based on casting doubt upon the goodness and trustworthiness of God. Had they trusted God, the serpent’s temptation would have fallen on deaf ears.

**Verses 14-24:** The consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin begin with the serpent, who is cursed to go on its belly and endure hatred between it and mankind. The curse on the woman is the pain of childbirth and submission to her husband. The curse on Adam is that he must work to support himself and his family. God did show grace to Adam and Eve by clothing them with animal skins, which may be an example of the first animal sacrifice. So that they would not eat of the tree of life and live forever in their sinful state, God expels them out of the garden of Eden, posting an angel with a flaming sword to guard the garden.