

# Genesis 3

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

## THE FALL OF MAN

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.

**Serpent** (O.T. trans *Nachash*) a hissing creature, snake (Gen. 3:1ff.; Ex. 4:3; 7:15; II Kgs. 18:4; Job 26:13). This is the most common word for a snake and is found thirty times in the Heb. O.T.

The Hebrew word translated "**crafty**" (*'arum*) does not mean wicked as much as wise.

**Beast** (O.T. trans *Chay*) this Heb. adj has several meanings: living, alive, have life, remain alive, sustain life, live prosperously, live forever, be quickened, livelihood, life.

**God** (*Elohim*) mas. noun, pl, in form, but it has both sing and pl. uses.

And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

### Observation

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_?
3. \_\_\_\_\_?
4. \_\_\_\_\_?
5. \_\_\_\_\_?

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; <sup>3</sup> but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

Eve's sin was not so much an act of great wickedness as it was an act of great folly. She already had all the good she needed, but she wanted more. She wanted to glorify self, not God.

3:2-3 Eve was vulnerable to this suggestion because she distorted the word of God. She added to it "or touched it" (v. 3).

"In her reply to [the serpent's] question, she perverted and misquoted *three times* the divine law to which she and Adam were subject:

(1) She \_\_\_\_\_

(2) She \_\_\_\_\_

(3) She \_\_\_\_\_

**4** The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!" **5** For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The next step in the serpent's temptation was to *deny God's word*.

What did denying God's word do?

What the serpent said about Eve being as God was a half-truth. Ironically, she was already as God having been made in His image (1:26). She did become like God, or divine beings (Heb. *'elohim*), in that she obtained a greater knowledge of good and evil by eating of the tree. However, she became less like God because she was no longer innocent of sin. Her relationship with God suffered. Though she remained like God she could no longer be with Him. The consequent separation from God is the essence of death (2:17).

**6** When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Having succumbed to temptation Eve *disobeyed* God's will. Whereas the serpent initiated the first two steps, he let Eve's natural desires (her flesh) carry her into his trap. All three avenues of fleshly temptation are present in verse 6.

1. She saw that the tree was "good for food" ( \_\_\_\_\_: the desire to do something contrary to God's will, i.e., eat the tasty fruit).
2. It was a "delight to the eyes" ( \_\_\_\_\_: the desire to have something apart from God's will, i.e., possess the beautiful fruit).
3. It was "desirable to make one wise" ( \_\_\_\_\_: the desire to be something apart from God's will, i.e., as wise as God, or gods). It was the quest for wisdom that led Eve to disobey God.

"There is nothing in Scripture to suggest that the woman was inferior to the man in any way or more susceptible to temptation than he was. The reason may have lain in this, that the woman had not personally received the prohibition from God, as Adam had."

Eve may have been deceived because God had given the prohibition to Adam (2:16); she may have received God's word through Adam. Perhaps Satan appealed to Eve because she was not only under God's authority but also under her husband's authority and, therefore, more inclined to think God was withholding something from her.

**7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.**

The separation that sin produces in man's relationship with God stands out clearly in these verses. Their new knowledge that the serpent promised would make them as God actually taught them that they were no longer even like each other. They were ashamed of their nakedness and sewed fig leaves together to hide their differences from each other (v. 7). Perhaps they chose fig leaves because fig leaves are large and strong. "A more complete transformation could not be imagined. The trust of innocence is replaced by the fear of guilt. The trees that God created for man to look at (2:9) are now his hiding place to prevent God seeing him."

Verse 7 marks the beginning of the second dispensation, the dispensation of conscience (or moral responsibility). Adam and Eve had failed in their responsibility under the dispensation of innocence; they were now sinners. They had rebelled against a specific command of God (2:16-17), and this rebellion marked a transition from theoretical to experiential knowledge of good and evil. Their new responsibility now became to do all known good, to abstain from all known evil, and to approach God through blood sacrifice, which anticipated the sacrifice of Christ. As a period of testing for humanity, the dispensation of conscience ended with the Flood. However people continued to be morally responsible to God as He added further revelation of Himself and His will in succeeding ages (cf. Acts 14:14-16; Rom. 2:15; 2 Cor. 4:2).

**8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**

The "cool" of the day is literally the "wind" of the day. God came to Adam and Eve in this wind. He came in a wind earlier in Creation (1:2) and later to Job (Job 38:1), Israel (Exod. 20:18-21; cf. Deut. 5:25), and Elijah (1 Kings 19:11).

**9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"** **10 He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."** **11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"** **12 The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."** **13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."**

### **God's confrontation of the sinners 3:9-13**

This section begins to relate the effects of the Fall. We now see the God who was creator and benefactor in chapters 1 and 2 as judge (cf. 1:3-4). He first interrogated the offenders to obtain a confession, then announced new conditions for life, and finally provided for the sinners graciously. The sinners' responsibility was to confess their sins and to accept and trust in God's provision for them (cf. 1 John 1:9).

Note that God took the initiative in seeking out the sinners to re-establish a relationship with them. Evidence of God's love is His unwillingness to abandon those He loved even when they failed to do His will. His approach was tender as well as gracious (vv. 9, 11,13).

"In . . . spite of the apparent similarity in expression to pagan religions the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament reveal all the more remarkably a sharply contrasting concept of deity."<sup>210</sup>

The text records several effects of the Fall on Adam and Eve.

1. They felt guilt and shame (v. 7)
2. They tried to change these conditions by their own efforts (v. 7).
3. They fled from God's presence out of fear of Him (vv. 8, 10).
4. They tried to blame their sin on another rather than confessing personal responsibility (vv. 12, 13).

The fact that Adam viewed God's good gift to him, Eve, as the source of his trouble shows how far he fell (v. 12). He virtually accused God of causing him to fall by giving him what he now regarded as a bad gift.