

Text: Genesis 3:1-24

Section 1

1Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" 2The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3but 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.'" (Genesis 3:1-3)

First of all, the Scriptures are plain in teaching that the Serpent in this case was, if a real serpent at all, one possessed by Satan himself.

7And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon The dragon and his angels waged war, 8and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.9And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Revelation 12:7-9)

Seeing a serpent talking would have been an amazing and unusual sight even for Eve, who was not likely to have been naïve enough to think that ordinary serpents talk. In fact, it is possible that she recognized that the serpent speaking was a supernatural event of some kind. If that is the case, having had no contact with supernatural beings other than God Himself and possibly good angels, she may not have been on guard at all against the Devil's evil intent. Even now, disguise as a good being is often Satan's "M.O."

14No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14)

As with the Serpent, Satan and his minions are often endowed with limited miraculous powers, which make it more difficult to ascertain their evil source.

8Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)

23"Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24"For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. (Matthew 24:23-24)

So, how do we tell if we are being addressed by good or evil? Listen to the message! If it is in line with the Word of God, believe it. If it is contrary to the Word, dismiss it. (This, of course, requires that we read and study the Word so that we can know and do what it says!)

6I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! (Galatians 1:6-9)

1Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. (1 John 4:1-3)

Notice how Satan begins his temptation: not by encouraging open defiance of the Law, but by simply questioning its Source and the validity of its limitations. Satan, and/or simply our own sinful nature, can pervert the requirements of the Law into a motivation for sin, as Paul discussed.

7What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET." 8But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. 9I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; 10and this

commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; 11for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. (Romans 7:7-11)

Section 2

4The 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." 6When 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. 7Then 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. (Genesis 3:4-7)

Besides openly lying to Eve about the results of disobedience, Satan appeals to her pride to entice her to sin, at this point, her own lusts “kick in” and she relents and eats. John warned us about such behavior and motivation, as do the Proverbs.

15Do not love the world nor the things in the world If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

**18Pride goes before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before stumbling. (Proverbs 16:18)**

Upon eating the fruit, Man knew good and evil—not as God knows them, for He understands evil but does not know it experientially—but instead in a sad and perverted way Man now knows evil as his present condition, and good as a painful memory of something lost. As I mentioned in my notes on Genesis 2, Man now saw his nakedness—namely, his organs of procreation—as something shameful and needful of covering. These organs would now be the means by which a sinful and rebellious race would be propagated, contrary to God’s intent of filling the earth with good and obedient worshippers.

27God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28)

Through Adam’s disobedience, sin and death became part of Man’s nature and existence. Thousands of years later, Man is still trying to recover the goodness lost through various means—we seem to know instinctively that something is wrong, that a goodness intended for our existence has been lost. As Christians, we know that this can never be recovered through our own efforts, but only through the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

12Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—(Romans 5:12)

21For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

Section 3

8They 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. 9Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 11And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." 13Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:8-13)

In his new, fallen, sinful state Adam and Eve dreaded the Presence of God, which they had heretofore enjoyed. They initially hid themselves, but notice what they did when finally confronted—they confessed all. I and others have often been guilty of saying that both Adam and Eve tried to pass guilt off on others, but in reality they told the entire truth—both mentioned being incited by others to sin, but both confessed that “I ate.” A true encounter with the Lord God always brings about a keen awareness of our unworthiness, with the only possible response being worship and confession.

**1In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3And one called out to another and said,
"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts,**

The whole earth is full of His glory."

4And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

5Then I said,

"Woe is me, for I am ruined!

Because I am a man of unclean lips,

And I live among a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

6Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. **7**He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." (Isaiah 6:1-7)

36"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified." **37**Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" **38**Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39**"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." **40**And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" **41**So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:36-41)

The following story is a testimony I often share during Gideon church services. This man was, like Paul, a former persecutor and even murderer of Christians. But, he had a vision of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, and just like Isaiah, the Jews at Pentecost, and even Paul himself, he reacted in the only possible way: worship and confession.

I was a boy soldier at the age of nine years, and I had already learned to use deadly high-powered Russian weapons by that time. At the age of 15, I had become a target shooter and executor without mercy. By the age of 16, I became an army officer, and I was appointed to attend a military course in Russia for four years and then spend two years in Cuba. When I returned to my country I was filled with new ideas because of the idealists from whom I had learned in those two Communist countries.

One of the most radical and dramatic actions carried out by me was when I had an evangelical pastor under my control. He was condemned to death for treason against the authorities and the laws of the country. Just before he was to be executed by me, the pastor asked if he could pray for me. I didn't mind, so I allowed him to do so. After the prayer he gave me a Gideon New Testament, and then he exhorted me to read Romans 10:20. I read it as he asked, but it did not make sense to me. I wanted to get back to my mission and execute him.

Since I had begun to execute Christian people, I had never before seen anyone begin singing, so glad because he was ready to die for Christ. This man was actually prepared and willing to die. I started feeling confused as I remembered the words he had prayed before I carried out his execution. He said, "Father, forgive this young man, for he does not know what he is doing." After that night, I felt a great fear inside of me, and I carried this Testament with me for many years.

After 20 years, I found myself very sick and nobody could understand the cause of my sickness. Even with a doctor's care, I could not sleep for six months without hearing in my mind the voice of that pastor and the words he had prayed on my behalf.

One Sunday, I decided to go to the church. I was refused entrance because I was known as a killer, and I was very sad and very disappointed. When I went back home, I took out my mother's Bible and I began to read it. I continued reading it all week, and then I decided to go again to the same church. This time I was accepted.

When the church service began, I was stunned to realize that the words and the verses cited in that sermon were exactly those words given to me by my victim. At that moment, I could not see anybody else in that church, but I could see the man that I had killed telling me that he was going to introduce me to someone very important to help me. I could not see the one to whom he was referring because he was too tall and very strong. When he approached me, I could see fire in his eyes. I was horrified, and I could not move because my body was prostrate on the ground. I cried out in repentance of all the things I had ever done in my life. When I came to my senses, I was down on my knees and the pastor who had been leading the service asked me if I was willing to receive Jesus as my Lord and my Saviour. I told him I needed to do that as soon as possible.

At that very moment, I confessed and received Jesus as my Lord and my Saviour. But I felt it was not over yet, because I was still feeling an emptiness inside of me.

By the grace of God, I traveled to the Democratic Republic of Congo for my military duties and stayed at the Continental Hotel in Kinshasa. Much to my surprise, I found in the hotel room a Gideon New Testament identical to the one the pastor had given to me 20 years earlier. With tears in my eyes, I knelt down and thanked God for that moment and prayed that He would let me learn about the Gideon ministry.

The next week, as I was leaving the hotel, I asked the owner to let me take the New Testament. He not only let me take it, but he did not charge me for my hotel bill. He recommended that I get in touch with the Gideons in my country. In 2001, I applied for my membership, along with my wife. Today, as a Gideon and as a senior officer in the army of my country, I testify to my colleagues and my soldiers by giving them New Testaments and leading them to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Section 4

14The LORD God said to the serpent,

*"Because you have done this,
Cursed are you more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you will go,
And dust you will eat
All the days of your life;*

15And I will put enmity

*Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel." (Genesis 3:13-15)*

In verse 15 we have what is sometimes called the "protevangulum," the first promise of Messiah in which the "seed of the woman" would defeat Satan. This was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, Who was born of a woman, but no earthly father.

18Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. 19And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. 20But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." 22Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23"BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." 24And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, 25but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus. (Matthew 1:18-25)

All that believe in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, have the ultimate penalty of sin removed, replaced with eternal life through Him.

23For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Section 5

16To the woman He said,

*"I will greatly multiply
Your pain in childbirth,
In pain you will bring forth children;
Yet your desire will be for your husband,
And he will rule over you."*

17Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

*Cursed is the ground because of you;
In toil you will eat of it
All the days of your life.*

18"Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;

And you will eat the plants of the field;

19By the sweat of your face

*You will eat bread,
Till you return to the ground,
Because from it you were taken;
For you are dust,
And to dust you shall return."*

20Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. (Genesis 3:16-20)

Everyone involved in this sin received a curse. The serpent lost whatever glory it had formerly and was doomed to crawl on its belly. Woman received greater pains in childbirth, and a subservient relationship to her husband (in Christian marriages this should not be the case—the man is to be the head of the family, but not a dominating master over the woman). The man's work, which before the Fall was a joyful and always productive endeavor, would now be marred by toil, sweat, obstacles, and failure. These curses have continued throughout all generations since that time, something completely in keeping with God's character. He is indeed a God of love, but He is in equal measure a God of wrath, righteously punishing a disobedient race for its rebellion.

6Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." (Exodus 34:6-7)

Section 6

21The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. 22Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:21-24)

An animal of some kind was undoubtedly killed to create coverings for Adam and Eve. This begins the system of animal sacrifices which were used to make atonement for sin, but which ultimately foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ Himself, who gave His life so that the sins of all that believe would be forgiven.

22And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. (Hebrews 9:22)

1Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

God now guarded the way to the tree of life, from which before this point Man could apparently eat freely. This tree apparently possessed healing and perhaps even life-sustaining properties, as will a tree mentioned in the last chapter of Revelation.

1Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2in the middle of its street On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:1-5)

God placed cherubim and *the flaming sword* at the entrance to the Garden of Eden. The word used in referring to this flaming sword has the same root as the word SHEKINAH, which refers to the visible manifestation of God's glory. In other words, at the entrance of the Garden now stood the glory of God Himself enthroned between two cherubim. Does that sound at all familiar??

10"They shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. 11"You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it.12"You shall cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on its four feet, and two rings shall be on one side of it and two rings on the other side of it.13"You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. 14"You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them. 15"The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it.16"You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. 17"You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. 18"You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19"Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. 20"The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. 21"You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. 22"There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (Exodus 25:10-22)

Assuming this interpretation is correct, the entrance to the Garden was now a "mercy seat" not unlike that upon which God appeared in the Tabernacle (and later the Temple) of the Children of Israel. Tradition holds that the entrance to the Garden was where the

antediluvian peoples offered their sacrifices and worship to God, so it appears that God was worshipped in this manner ever since the fall. Such worship continues even now, as Jesus Christ has entered into the heavenly Holy Place with His own blood, making atonement for all that repent of sin and believe on Him.

1Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. **2**For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. **3**Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, **4**having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; **5**and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. **6**Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, **7**but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. **8**The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, **9**which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, **10**since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. **11**But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; **12**and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. **13**For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, **14**how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **15**For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. **16**For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. **17**For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. **18**Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. **19**For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **20**saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU." **21**And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. **22**And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. **23**Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24**For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; **25**nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. **26**Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. **27**And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, **28**so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Hebrews 9:1-28)

God does not change, therefore neither does His mode of worship.

6"For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. (Malachi 3:6)

Sacrifices and temple worship have not ceased—they have been moved to Heaven itself, where Jesus Christ has made atonement for all that believe as both our great High Priest, and the sacrifice on our behalf. All that repent and believe on Him have the sentence of eternal torment commuted, instead enjoying the promise—and the reality—of eternal life.

9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. **11**For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." **12**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13**for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)