

**Introduction**

What we have looked at so far is the period of history called the “Age of Innocence.” That is, Adam and Eve were innocent in that they had not sinned, but they had not proven that they were above sinning as of yet. Early in world history, presumably not long after the seventh day of creation, they faced the test of the ages when God allowed the serpent, energized by Satan, to test them as to their obedience.

**A. The Fall Itself, v. 1-7**

A trap to avoid in this section is the trap of reading too much into what it says. Some interpreters say that Adam did not give Eve good instructions as to what the prohibition was; others say that Adam was right there when the serpent was talking to Eve and did not say anything; others suggest that Adam felt sorry for Eve and took the poison too in order to join her in death. The Bible says none of this. What it does say is as follows.

1. The serpent was the most cunning of all the animals.
2. The serpent talked to the woman. We might wonder if an animal speaking would raise a red flag with Eve, but apparently it did not.
3. The question of the serpent is about “every” tree of the garden, indicating that he understood that there was at least one tree that was forbidden, but was suggesting that this prohibition was not fair. Why not “every” tree?
4. The woman replied that they could eat from the trees, but the special one in the middle of the garden they could not eat lest they suffer death. From what is said in 2:17 she adds “nor shall you touch it.” This would be a reasonable extension of the command—in order to avoid the temptation, but it is not told us infallibly that she actually sinfully added this phrase. The actual sin comes next.
5. The serpent replied in verse 4 that death was not what God really meant. Rather, when they ate of it, they would become wise like God himself. He did not say all the other consequences that would come with the sin. Note that the serpent is empowered by Satan. Satan has already fallen (Isaiah 14:12-14, Ezekiel 28:12-15). Satan actually sins again in 3:4 when he lies about God’s word (John 8:44). So that sin is really the first one recorded in Genesis!
6. The woman became tempted. She saw the tree looked good, she saw that it gave pleasure to her eyes, and she thought that it would make her more wise, so she took (touched) and ate. You can see how lust conceived and gave birth to sin, and sin gave rise to death (James 1:14-15).
7. Eve also gave some to her husband and he ate it without any recorded hesitation.
8. Part of the “wisdom” gained by Adam and Eve was a new self-awareness in which they realized they were unclothed. They became embarrassed about this and tried to cover themselves with makeshift clothing.

**B. God’s Inquiry, v. 8-13**

1. God apparently walked in the garden on a regular basis and had fellowship with his creation. This time, however, Adam and Eve fled from God’s presence.
2. Obviously God knew precisely where Adam was and what his condition was because He is omniscient, but he was patient and asked the question.
3. Adam admits his fear and why he hid himself. At this, God asks him who informed Adam of his nakedness. This was the clue in Adam’s answer that gave away the fact that Adam had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
4. The man should have replied, “Yes, I did, and I was wrong to do so.” Instead, he played the blame game, which every sinner has been playing for ages ever since. Adam blamed his wife and indirectly blamed God, who had given him his wife. How audacious!
5. God turns to the woman and asks her what happened. She blamed the serpent. There was no one for the serpent to blame.

**C. God’s Curse, v. 14-24**

1. The curse on the serpent and the proto-evangelium, v. 14-15
  - a. Some supernatural changes to the serpent’s anatomy apparently occur. He will crawl on his belly now.
  - b. The woman will not like the snake, in general.
  - c. But the main point is that God is turning to the empowering agent behind the serpent, that is, Satan, and saying that the offspring of Satan will be enemies of the woman. The “seed of the woman,” ultimately referring to Jesus Christ, would crush the head of the serpent, but not before sustaining a blow to his heel.
2. The curse on Eve, v. 16
  - a. Childbirth is supernaturally changed to become a more painful process.
  - b. The phrase “your desire shall be for your husband” has been interpreted in various ways. One way is that she will want a husband. This could be, but the phrase “and he shall rule over you” probably is determinative in helping us understand what the earlier phrase means. This means that the husband will generally have the authority and ruling power in the home. The woman will naturally not want to subject herself to that because of her sinfulness.
3. The curse on Adam, v. 17-19
  - a. The ground (creation, the world) is cursed because of Adam. It will sprout thorns and thistles—it will be choked with weeds unless sweaty labor is put in to avoid this.
  - b. This toilsome labor, which was not present in the garden (labor was, but not with this amount of toil), will continue until the man dies. He was formed from the dust and his body will return there.
4. The provision of coats of skin, v. 20-21
  - a. Adam names his wife. Remember that this indicates the authority of Adam over Eve (2:16).
  - b. God made coats of animal skins for Adam and Eve. This had two purposes. The first and most obvious is that the skins functioned as clothing. The second, implied purpose is that God made an animal blood sacrifice for them to atone for their sin. Besides spiritual death, which occurred immediately upon the sin of Adam and Eve, this is the first death mentioned in the Bible.
5. The expulsion from the garden, v. 22-24
  - a. An act of judgment and mercy is shown here—God ensures that mankind will not be able to eat of the tree of life (one of the other trees in the garden) and so prolong his sinful state forever.
  - b. He was sent out of the Eden paradise and had to fend for himself. The beauty and perfection of the garden had to be left behind.
  - c. The cherubim at the east end of the garden indicates that this was the only way in or out of the garden, and God was ensuring that while the garden existed (until the flood?) that no one could enter.

**Conclusion: The Importance of Adam**

The remainder of the Bible lays the blame for the fall upon Adam. Notice **Rom. 5:12**: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned...” The blame for sin entering the world is laid at the feet of Adam, not Eve! Why is this? The next verse tells us. **1 Tim. 2:14**: “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived....” In other words, the woman was tricked by the serpent. Adam had no such excuse, i.e., he was not tricked at all. He knew full well what he was doing. He understood that he would die when he ate. He probably also knew something of his representative role for all of mankind and that his sin would plunge the whole race into a sinful state not only by the inheritance of a sin nature, but also because of imputed guilt. In other words, God had assigned Adam a special representative role as the first human being. This role was not assigned to Eve. MAP