

Session 02

# Creation CORRUPTED

**CENTRAL TRUTH** | God promised a Redeemer as a result of humanity's rebellion.

Embarrassment is a powerful feeling and can manifest itself in some sneaky ways. In fact, we go to great lengths in order not to feel its sting. Perhaps even hearing the word “embarrassment” conjured up some negative feelings or experiences for you. As we'll see in this week's teaching, Adam and Eve rebelled against the Lord's command which resulted in an awareness of their nakedness—and with it, shame and fear. The good world that the Lord created was corrupted, and Adam and Eve's relationship with Him was fractured. However, the Lord graciously moved toward them and promised that a male descendant who would come to defeat Satan—the one who used the serpent as an instrument. God promised a Redeemer as a result of humanity's rebellion.



## EXPLORE OPTIONS

### > ALL JUMBLED UP

Think of ten statements. Once you have thought of these ten statements, type each one out and switch the order of the words in each statement, making it difficult to read. After each jumbled statement, leave enough space underneath for students to write. After doing this for all ten statements, print this out on two separate sheets of paper and bring them to small group. Arrange students into groups of two. Setting a timer for two minutes, students will need to work together to unjumble the words of each statement and write them correctly underneath it in the space provided. The group who can complete this task in under two minutes or has the most completed after the timer sounds, is the winner! Students will see how difficult it is to decipher statements that are distorted! This week, we will see that Eve is confronted by a serpent who distorts God's command and instills doubt in her mind about His character, leading to the rebellion of her and Adam. However, we will also see that the Lord is a faithful God who promised a Redeemer to rescue humanity in its rebellion.

### > CONVERSATION STARTER

When have you done something that you thought you would enjoy and immediately regretted it after doing so?

**GENESIS 3:1-8**

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?’”

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. <sup>3</sup> But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup> “No! You will certainly not die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup>

The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

**GENESIS 3:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> So the Lord God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup> So the Lord God said to the serpent:

Because you have done this,  
you are cursed more than any livestock  
and more than any wild animal.

You will move on your belly  
and eat dust all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> I will put hostility between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and her offspring.

He will strike your head,  
and you will strike his heel.

**GENESIS 3:21-24**

<sup>21</sup> The Lord God made clothing from skins for the man and his wife, and he clothed them.

<sup>22</sup> The Lord God said, “Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” <sup>23</sup> So the Lord God

sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.

<sup>24</sup> He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

# Scripture COMMENTARY

## GENESIS 3:1-8

**3:1.** Though we know the serpent was an instrument of Satan (see Rom. 16:20; Rev. 12:9; 20:2), it was just a created being. Its description as cunning suggests it offered a wisdom not based on the fear of God. It tried to take Eve's focus off the abundance of God's provision.

**3.2-3.** The woman's claim that God said, You must not . . . touch the tree, or you will die, goes beyond anything recorded in God's instructions to Adam. Therefore it seems that Adam had given his wife an additional command beyond what God said, or else Eve herself exaggerated the command as Satan tempted her to view God as selfish and overly restrictive. If Adam added to God's command, he almost certainly had a good motive—after all, if Eve never touched the tree, she certainly would not eat its fruit. However, the sad truth is that when people add to the word of God, they create confusion and trouble.

**3:4-5.** The serpent, recognizing the woman's confusion, found a point of attack.

Knowing that the woman would not die by merely touching the fruit, he boldly contradicted what she had reported to be God's command. He then skillfully lied (see John 8:44) by distorting God's word (Matt. 4:6), implying that God had prohibited people from eating the fruit only to keep them from becoming as knowledgeable as he. The woman was now fully deceived (see 1 Tim. 2:14).

**3:6.** Since the woman did not die when she touched the fruit—in contradiction to what she had thought God said (v. 3)—she ate it. Though Adam was with her at the time, he did nothing to stop her. Perhaps he wanted to eat of it as much as the woman did, but fearing the consequences, used his wife as a “guinea pig” to make sure it would not cause instant death.

**3:7-8.** As the serpent had indicated, the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew, but instead of producing godlike power, the knowledge brought only a sense of human inadequacy, fear, and shame.

## GENESIS 3:13-15

**3:13.** The woman passed the blame to the serpent and admitted that prior to eating, she was deceived (see 1 Tim. 2:14).

**3:14.** Though accountability began with God's confrontation of Adam, judgment began

with the serpent. Because of the serpent's key role (being used of Satan) in bringing sin into the human experience, it would be permanently consigned to the position of ultimate shame, under the foot. Just as conquered kings were made to lie on the

# Scripture COMMENTARY *CONTINUED*

ground under the foot of their conquerors (see Josh. 10:24), so now the serpent would live under the feet of humanity.

**3:15.** Hostility between the first woman and the serpent would be passed on to future generations. This verse is known in Christendom as the protoevangelium, or “first good news,” because it is the first foretelling of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Using an emphatic Hebrew construction, God announced here that a male descendant—He—would someday deal the serpent (meaning Satan) a fatal blow.

The New Testament writers understood Jesus Christ to have fulfilled this prophecy (see Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8). In an extended sense, the NT also indicates that God would work through the church—those indwelt by the Spirit of Christ—to destroy the works of the devil (see Rom. 16:20). The assertion that the snake would only strike his opponent’s heel (as opposed to head) suggests that the devil will be defeated in the ensuing struggle (see Rev. 2:2,7-10).

## GENESIS 3:21-24

**3:21.** By making clothing from skins, the Lord God graciously provided for humanity’s need in a way superior to what Adam and Eve had done with fig leaves. The use of animal skins anticipates the Old Testament system of animal sacrifices (see Lev. 1; 3-7; Num. 15:1-31). In the New Testament, the apostle Paul spoke of a day when God would clothe his people with immortality (see 1 Cor. 15:53-54; 2 Cor 5:4), thus providing the complete undoing of the curse of humanity’s sin.

**3:22.** Because of sin, people now knew good and evil experientially. Since the gift of life was directly tied to obedience, man’s sin meant that the penalty of death must be enforced. Expulsion was at the same time an act of mercy. Banning the humans from the tree of life allowed for their redemption rather than for them to live a life of perpetual sin in an unredeemed condition.

**3:23.** As the Hebrew text ironically expresses it, the Lord God sent Adam from the garden so that he would not send forth (“reach out,” v. 22) his hand for the garden’s fruit.

**3:24.** Following their sin, the first couple went east, a direction associated with departure from God in numerous biblical examples. Other instances of eastward movement in Genesis include Cain’s journeys after judgment (see 4:16), humanity’s migration toward Babylon (see 11:2), and the migration of Keturah’s sons (see 25:6). Cherubim are used as an artistic motif in the tabernacle (see Ex. 25:18-22; 26:1) and are also mentioned in Ezekiel 10 and 11. The ironies continue as the man who was once commanded to “watch over” the garden (see Gen. 2:15) is now banned from the garden.

# Conversation QUESTIONS



Refer to page # for a description of the 7 Arrows of Bible Reading.

**CENTRAL TRUTH** | God promised a Redeemer as a result of humanity's rebellion.

## EXPLORE GENESIS 3:1-7

Last week, we explored the beauty and goodness of God's original creation—with the crowning achievement of that creation being human beings. Humans, as image bearers, were set apart from the rest of God's creation to have a unique relationship with Him and reflect His character into the world as His representatives. If Genesis 1:1-2:3 gives us a panoramic view of the creation story, chapter 2:4 picks up by zooming in and elaborating on some of the key themes that were introduced. It's in chapter 2 that we read more about the creation of Adam and Eve and the establishment of the Garden of Eden—a paradise that they were called to cultivate together. And it was in this garden that humankind enjoyed the Lord's divine presence.

### LeaderPACK

Item # | Leader Pack Item

Genesis 3 describes the corruption of God's good creation and begins with the abrupt appearance of "the serpent" (v. 1). As we see in this passage, the serpent is not merely a snake, but used as an instrument of Satan. And as tool of the enemy, the serpent asks Eve a question designed to instill doubt and skepticism: "Did God really say . . . ?" Now, you may be asking what the serpent is causing Eve to doubt exactly. In Genesis 2:16-17, Adam was given the freedom to eat the fruit of any tree in the garden of Eden. However, God also presents a limitation and boundary: Adam was forbidden to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with the consequence being death. This is a command that Eve is aware of (as seen in verses 2-3), but the serpent fires a question at her to spark doubt in her mind.


**01.**  **What does the serpent’s question reveal about how Satan operates?**

The crafty serpent captivated the woman’s attention. After she recited God’s command (though adding the portion about being forbidden from touching the tree), the serpent openly challenges God’s character and wisdom by distorting the command. Through this distortion, the serpent dangled in front of her what belonged to God alone—“knowing good and evil.” Though Eve was made in the image and likeness of God, the trap was laid for her to believe dependency on God’s wisdom and care was not enough. The cunning serpent suggested to Eve that God is a selfish, unwise, and unmerciful being who is, in fact, holding out on them. And if we’re honest, many of us can be drawn into this type of thinking when temptation arises.

**02.**  **What does the man and woman’s response to their rebellion teach us about sin?**


Verse 6 shows us the woman’s observation of the fruit: “good for food”; “delightful to look at”; “desirable for obtaining wisdom.” As an image-bearer in God’s good world, she and Adam were created to be dependent on God. Here, she is enticed to try and usurp God’s role as the definer of good and the ultimate authority. So, she ate; and her husband, who is revealed to have been “with her,” ate also. After doing so, their eyes were opened; but the wisdom they obtained brought an awareness of their nakedness—and with that, shame and a sense of human inadequacy. In response, they made coverings for themselves.

Perhaps “Did God really say . . . ?” is a familiar thought that has crept into your mind regarding something the Lord has said in His Word, and you’ve been led to believe that the Lord is holding out on you when temptation or difficult circumstances arise. It’s in these moments we must allow the truth of God’s character and promises to anchor us.

**03.**  **When temptation arises, what are we tempted to believe about God’s character? How can we combat this?**

**EXPLORE GENESIS 3:8, 13-15.**

**KEY QUESTION**

**04.**  **What does the Lord’s movement toward Adam and Eve despite their rebellion and shame reveal about His character?**



In the midst of Adam and Eve’s rebellion and shame, God took the initiative to move toward them—a theme that we will see continue to repeat itself throughout the story of Scripture. Why does the author highlight that God walked? While an interesting description, it indicates the personal relationship that Adam and Eve had with God in the garden.<sup>1</sup> However, due to their rebellion against Him, the relationship is now fractured. Their shame—or “disgust after having disobeyed”<sup>2</sup>—is revealed in the way they hid among the trees. Rather than freely enjoy their relationship with God, now they run from His presence. The “death” referenced in Genesis 2:17 entailed both physical death and spiritual death.

## 📍 BE VULNERABLE

Despite Adam and Eve’s rebellion and shame, the Lord moved toward them. How have you experienced the Lord’s initiating love in your own life? What did this teach you about the Lord and yourself?

After a brief conversation with Adam, which entailed blaming his wife for their rebellion, Eve passes the blame to the serpent after admitting that she was deceived. Now, you may be wondering why the Lord is asking a questions that He surely already knows. These questions are rhetorical—meaning, that God is not asking in order to obtain information that He doesn’t already have. Rather, like a parent who witnessed a young child do something rebellious, He is asking so that the man and woman reflect on their disobedience and confess.

05.

🔄 What is confession and why is it important? How can we make this a regular practice in our own lives?

With the blame being shifted to the serpent by the woman, God first judges the serpent. Verse 14 tells us that the serpent is cursed with being in the ultimate position of shame by being made to “move on [its] belly and eat dust.” The curse against the serpent has Satan in view—the one who wielded the snake as an instrument (v. 15). Though the promised male descendant would be struck, he would deal a fatal blow to the serpent (that is, Satan). This promise is often referred to as “the first good news” because it foretells the good news of Jesus and what He will accomplish through His life, death, and resurrection.<sup>3</sup>

## 📍 THEOLOGY | WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF SIN IN OUR WORLD?

Scripture reveals that the effects of Adam and Eve’s rebellion are not only spiritual, but physical. Sin has plagued God’s good world; and as we see in Romans 8:20-21, our corrupted world longs for the day

<sup>1</sup> K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), Logos Bible Software version, 239.

<sup>2</sup> Phillip Bethancourt, *Exalting Jesus in Genesis*, Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary, David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, eds. (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2024), Logos Bible Software version, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Robert D. Bergen, “Genesis,” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax, eds. (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 11. Logos Bible Software version.



when Jesus will fix what's wrong once and for all. Until then, sickness, disease, pain, broken relationships, and death continue to be a reality for us. None of us are spared. The hope found in Genesis 3:15 is that the Lord not only sees the corruption, but defeats the enemy, Satan, and will restore all that has been fractured. As we will see later in our study, Jesus is the promised One who has defeated Satan and will one day return to make all things new.

## EXPLORE GENESIS 3:21-24.

### LeaderPACK

Item # | Leader Pack Item

God's provision for Adam and Eve continues by making clothing of animal skins for them. Though the couple covered themselves with fig leaves, this would be insufficient, so the Lord graciously gave them something more sufficient. The use of animal skins as clothing suggests that one or more animals were probably killed for this provision to happen. In other words, the coverings that Adam and Eve were graciously provided came at a price. Just as God's initiating movement toward humanity after sin becomes a pattern in Scripture, so does this: the shedding of blood to cover sins.<sup>4</sup>

06.

🔍 How did the Lord graciously provide for Adam and Eve? How does it set up a major theme in the story of Scripture?

In addition to providing clothes for Adam and Eve God restricts their access to the tree of life. If Adam and Eve were permitted to eat from the tree of life, they would have continued to live forever but in a state of brokenness, under the rule of the enemy, with a fractured relationship with the Lord. So, in God's kindness, Adam and Eve are exiled from the garden. While the fruit of their disobedience was death, we also find God's mercy toward His image bearers. With winged angelic beings—called the cherubim—stationed at the garden, the couple are exiled.

07.

← Read Deuteronomy 30:16-18. How does Moses help the Israelites to understand the gifts of obedience and the penalty of disobedience? How can this help us understand this week's passage?

<sup>4</sup>Bethancourt, *Exalting Jesus in Genesis*, 44.

<sup>5</sup>Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 258.

<sup>6</sup>Andrew E. Steinmann, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale Commentary Series, vol. 1, David G. Firth, ed. (London: InterVarsity Press, 2019), Logos Bible Software version, 71.

