

Lesson 2: The Fall of Man

Introduction: An Enemy Comes

Adam taught Eve about God's gift of choice. Now both were given the opportunity to choose to obey God or to serve Self. Adam and Eve enjoyed a relationship with God that was based on choice and motivated by love. Away in the spirit realm, God had created heavenly beings to minister and help Him. One of these spirits soon chose to obey Self over God. The consequence of this choice corrupted his heart. He deceived many angels into serving him instead of God. There was a great war in the spirit realm. The corrupted one and his followers were cast out of heaven. He soon found his way to the Garden of Eden.



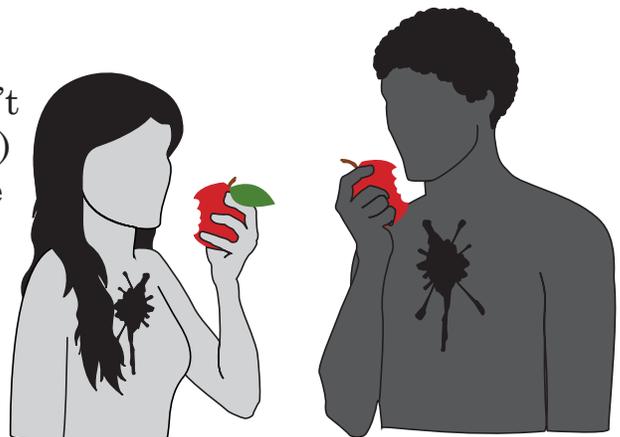
Temptation

This enemy's name was Satan. In the Biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek, Satan means *adversary* and *lying in wait*. Satan is also called the devil which means *false accuser*. The Bible reveals the devil's nature and motivation.¹ He chose to be an adversary who lies in wait to tempt humans into denying God and obeying Self. Satan's temptations take God's gift of choice and corrupts it. Temptation makes denying God appear more attractive or satisfying than obeying Him.²

After being banished from Heaven, the devil looked for a way to retaliate against God. He decided to lie in wait and spoil the perfect fellowship between man and God. One day, Adam and Eve were near the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. The devil took the form of a snake and approached Eve. He said, "Did God really tell you that you should not eat from the fruit of this tree?" Innocent Eve told the snake about God's command for them not to eat from the tree or they would die. The devil lied by saying she would not die but would be like God.³ In essence, Satan falsely accused God of being selfish by not allowing Eve to enjoy the "knowledge of good and evil."

Sin

Eve took some fruit and ate it.⁴ (She wasn't forced to take it. By her own free-will she ate.) Then, she gave some to Adam, and he ate too. With this choice, Adam and Eve decided that they could determine what was "good" by rejecting what God had commanded. In essence, their actions denied God and obeyed Self.



¹ See *Christian Basics: Satan: Mankind's Great Enemy*

² James 1:13-15

³ Genesis 3:1-5

⁴ Genesis 3:6

Discussion Questions:

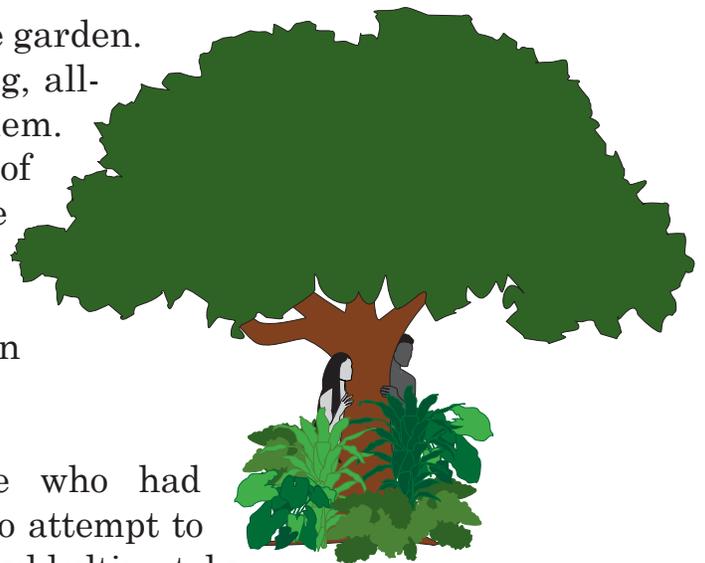
- *What is a temptation?*
- *How is Satan a "false accuser?"*

The Bible provides a special word for when someone disobeys God. It is called *sin*. Sin is any action or attitude that disobeys God's authority or law.⁵ When someone sins, they seek to please Self apart from God while denying God's good ways. This is a rebellion against the love and harmony God designed for man.

Perfect Fellowship Lost

Adam and Eve did gain knowledge of good and evil when they ate from the tree. Instantly, they realized that what they had done was wrong and sinful. They realized that they were naked and became ashamed. They tried to cover their nakedness by sewing fig leaves over themselves.⁶ This was a silly idea because the leaves could not cover their nakedness properly. It also represented a bigger problem. No matter how they may try to cover their sin, they could not solve the problem on their own.

God found Adam and Eve hiding in the garden. He asked, "Where are you?"⁷ An all-seeing, all-knowing God had no problem locating them. God was asking Adam to give an account of his actions. In essence, God said, "Where are you in your relationship with Me?" Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the snake. No one accepted responsibility even though they had chosen to sin.



God pronounced judgment on those who had disobeyed Him. The devil would continue to attempt to ruin mankind's relationship with God, yet would ultimately fail (more on that in a moment). Among other punishments, God cast Adam and Eve out of the garden.⁸ Their perfect relationship with God was broken by sin.

The Choice of Sin Brought Consequences

Eve's choice would have consequences for all time. Because of sin, Adam and Eve would grow old and die. This is the first death warned about: physical death (separation of body from spirit). We all face the problem of death because of sin.⁹ As a result of sin, all evil became possible: such as pain, suffering, and disease. Sin also leads to a greater destruction: *spiritual death* (the separation of the spirit from God). This is an eternal damnation in Hell.¹⁰ If we do not find a way to remove sin from our spiritual body, we are doomed to an eternity of pain and suffering away from God. Sin is mankind's greatest problem.

⁵ See *Christian Basics: Sin & Spiritual Death*

⁶ Genesis 3:7

⁷ Genesis 3:9

⁹ Romans 6:23

⁸ Genesis 3:21-24

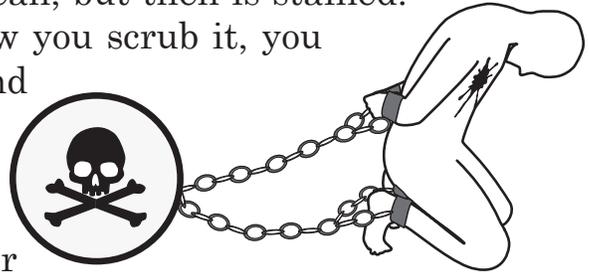
¹⁰ Matthew 25:41

Discussion Questions:

- *Why is sin a spiritual rebellion?*
- *Do you feel as though you have sinned? Why or why not?*

One might wonder how a God of love could banish the ones whom He had created to love. We must realize that as much as God loves us, He is also holy.¹¹ To be holy means *to be sacred or set apart*. God is set apart from sin. He desires us to live eternally in Heaven, an eternal reward of life without sin and its consequences: pain, suffering, and death. Would God really love us if He turned a blind eye to sin and allowed Heaven and all the saved to be once again corrupted by sin? God's love for one will not jeopardize His love and reward for others.

The sad truth is that there is no way to remove sin by ourselves. Sin is like a disease. Once we disobey God, it is like being infected. There is no cure once the "infection" sets in. It is like a shirt that was clean, but then is stained. Once the shirt is stained, it doesn't matter how you scrub it, you cannot get the stain out. Everyone of age and understanding has known the right thing to do, and one way or another, we chose the wrong thing. For this reason, sin affects us all.¹² Some may think that sin is only for Christians or people who believe in God. The truth is that all people have sinned, regardless of our culture or beliefs. Humanity stands in need of relief from this great problem.¹³



But God Had a Plan

Before the creation of the world, God had a plan.¹⁴ His love for mankind motivated such a plan. Knowing that man would fall if given a choice, God took steps to secure fellowship with His image bearers again. Even though He is Holy and cannot fellowship sin, God planned for a sacrifice that would take away the sins of all who have faith. Through the willing sacrifice of someone innocent, the guilty could be redeemed. This plan was for Jesus Christ to come to this world. He alone would live a life without sin, and He alone would be the perfect sacrifice to take our sins away.

Genesis reveals God's plan in a prophecy. A prophecy is a prediction or foretelling about something or someone in the future. While dispensing judgment to the devil, God declared Satan would be the enemy of mankind. He would continue to attempt to ruin mankind's relationship with God, yet would ultimately fail.

*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will **crush your head**, and you will **strike his heel**.*¹⁵

¹¹ 1 John 1:5

¹² Romans 3:23

¹³ See *Christian Basics: Who Has Sinned?*

¹⁴ 1 Peter 1:20

¹⁵ Genesis 3:15 (Emphasis Added)

Discussion Questions:

- *What are some ways that people have tried to remove their sin?*
- *Please explain God's plan to redeem sinners in your own words.*

Some people might think that God was telling the devil that a man and a snake would get in a fight. Perhaps the snake would bite the man on the heel and the man would step on the snake's head. What God was really saying was that the seed of man, Jesus Christ, would eventually come.

The devil would try to defeat Him by crucifying Jesus on a cross. Although this act would appear to work, it would turn out to only *strike His heel*. Jesus' death and resurrection would redeem man from sin, and in this figurative way, Jesus would *crush the head* of the devil. When Jesus returned from the grave triumphant over death, the defeat of Satan was overwhelming.



In Review: The Fall of Man

One of God's created spirits, Satan, chose to deny God and obey Self. In his corruption, the devil decided to *lie in wait* and tempt Adam and Eve to sin. When temptation came, Adam and Eve sinned by choosing to deny God and seeking to become *like* God themselves. God's holy judgment cast Adam and Eve out of the garden and the perfect fellowship between God and man was lost. With sin in the world, the consequences soon followed: pain, suffering, sickness, and death. But God had a plan. He prophesied that a time would come when Satan would be defeated.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

We have had our first glimpse of the need for Jesus as a sacrifice for sin. Now, we can begin to see how great God's love for mankind is! Even as man rebelled, denying God and obeying Self, God's love would motivate a continual reaching out to restore man to his place as God's children and image bearers.