



Part Two

By

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Chapter Eight

The great **eternal plan** of God is established. God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – determined in eternity – “before time began, before the foundation of the world” – that the Father would send the Son and the Son would send the Spirit into the *world* they would create together.

The Father would love the *world* so much that He would give “His only begotten Son” so that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:15).

The Son would “glorify” the Father on the *earth* by finishing “the work” which the Father had given Him to do (John 17:1-5), which was to die on the Cross and rise from the dead.

The Holy Spirit would convict the *world* “of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” and would guide the Son’s disciples “into all truth.” The Spirit would not “speak on His own authority,” but would speak “whatever He hears” and would tell the followers of the Son “things to come.” The Spirit of God would “glorify” the Son by declaring to the followers what belonged to the Son and the Father (John 16:5-15).

Reveal One

The first step in the *great reveal* was the creation of **angels**.

“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: Who *is* this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. ‘Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?’”

God spoke to the suffering man Job and asked him a number of questions. The first questions dealt with where Job was when God laid the foundations of the earth, who determined its measurements, to what were its foundations fastened, and who laid its cornerstone. An important reveal is the last part of the question:

“When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

God made that declaration about the morning stars singing together and the sons of God shouting for joy at His laying the foundations of the earth without giving any further identification. We don't know if Job understood who they were or not. However, those of who have read the Book of Job know that the “sons of God” were identified at the beginning of the story –

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ So Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Job 1:6-7

The “sons of God” presented themselves “before the Lord.” Satan was also there. Where is *there*?

The same thing happened a short time later –

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Job 2:1-2

The “sons of God” came to present themselves “before the Lord” and Satan also came among them to “present himself before the Lord.”

As we read the first two chapters of Job, it becomes clear that the “sons of God” and Satan are beings who are different than the **Supreme Being** and *human beings*. They “present” themselves “before the Lord” and receive permission from God to do things on earth. It becomes apparent that *there* is Heaven.

Satan is an “angel” (e.g. 1 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:7-9) and joined other angels in Heaven presenting themselves “before the Lord.” It’s interesting to note in Job chapters one and two that God spoke first to Satan, then Satan spoke. That seems to be the order of things in Heaven.

As we read through the Bible we are introduced to many types of “Heavenly” beings. The largest group we know by number are angels. John the Apostle saw a vision of Heaven –

“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.”

Revelation 5:11

Multiplying ten thousand times ten thousand (10,000 x 10,000) equals one-hundred million (= 100,000,000). John’s description of the additional “and thousands of thousands” might be a multiplying factor and take that large number much higher – possibly into the billions of angels.

Jesus’ disciples attempted to protect Him from being arrested, but Jesus told them –

“Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”

Matthew 26:52-54

A Roman legion during the 1st century AD numbered about 5,500 and there were 28 legions in the Roman army. That meant Jesus was saying He could call on His Father to provide Him with about 66,000 angels – a small number compared with the hundreds of millions (or billions) of angels Jesus had created – but certainly enough to deal with the small band of soldiers attempting to arrest Jesus. If Jesus didn't want to be arrested, He would not have been arrested. However, being arrested was part of the **eternal plan**. Angels are not the only Heavenly beings that God created, but they seem to be the most involved in helping with God's **great reveal**. Here are some examples –

“Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.’” Matthew 1:19-21

“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!’ But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to

her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.'" Luke 1:26-33

"And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth ... And the angel answered and said to him, 'I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.'" Luke 1:12-14, 19-20

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:8-14

As I mentioned earlier, angels came into existence when God created them

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"Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created." Psalm 148:2-5

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." John 1:1-3

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Colossians 1:15-17

God created angels to be His “messengers.” The word “angel” is מַלְאָךְ (*mal'āk*) in Hebrew and ἄγγελος (*angelos*) in Greek. Both are translated into English as “messenger.” They perform many functions in their role as God’s messengers. Here are some examples –

“Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” Hebrews 1:14

“Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, ‘See *that you do not do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.’” Revelation 22:8-9

“Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.’” Daniel 6:21-22

“And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, ‘Arise quickly!’ And his chains fell off *his* hands. Then the angel said to him, ‘Gird yourself and tie on your sandals’; and so he did. And he said to him,

‘Put on your garment and follow me.’ So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.” Acts 12:6-10

“I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy *is* the Lord of hosts; The whole earth *is* full of His glory!’” Isaiah 6:1-3

“Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all *you* His hosts, *You* ministers of His, who do His pleasure.” Psalm 103:20-21

“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.” Revelation 7:1

“Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, ‘Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ This is desert.” Acts 8:26

“About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, ‘Cornelius!’ And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, ‘What is it, lord?’ So he said to him, ‘Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.’ Acts 10:3-5

Angels and other Heavenly creatures sang and shouted when God laid the foundations and cornerstone of the earth. We don't know for sure how long before the creation of the earth that God created angels, but we do know they were present when time and space began.

Chapter Nine

Angels have played an important role in God's great **eternal plan**. In the last chapter we saw that angels were present when God created the earth. God created angels prior to that for the purpose of serving Him. However, not every angel did and that plays an important part in God's eternal plan revealed in *time and space*.

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:8-10

What forces would be necessary for Jesus to have to suffer and die for us? It's all part of God's **eternal purpose** determined *before time began*.

Angels

We know of many types of angels (e.g. archangels, seraphim, cherubim) and at least three names of leaders of the angelic host: Michael, Gabriel and Satan. We have already looked at the roles of angels who have remained faithful to God and now turn to those who didn't.

In our last study we met an angel named Satan –

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ So Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Job 1:6-7

Satan is also known as the ‘devil’ –

“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:9

Notice that Satan has a group of angels (“his angels”) that follows him. We’ll learn more about them in minute.

Jesus told the Pharisees that Satan has his own “kingdom” (Matthew 12:26) and called Satan “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31).

Satan is called “god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4), “prince of the power of the air,” and “the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2).

Those are interesting terms for just one angel among the hundreds of millions of angels God created. How did Satan get those titles and what part does he play in the eternal plan of God? Why would God allow a mere

angel to have a “kingdom,” be a “ruler of this world,” and the “prince of the power of the air”?

Remember the **eternal plan**? God the Father sends God the Son to suffer and die and rise from the dead. God the Son sends God the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and of judgment – “of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” (John 16:8-11)

Notice that – “because the ruler of this world is judged.” That means God is going to judge Satan! We see that judgment at the end of the Book of Revelation –

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while ... The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Revelation 20:1-3, 10

Sinning Angels

“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.” 2 Peter 2:4

You may remember from our last study that angels sang together and shouted for joy when God created the earth. So, when did the angels “sin”? When did God “cast them down to hell” and deliver them “into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment”? Are all of the “sinning angels” in hell now or are some of them still active in our world today?

From what the Apostle Paul wrote about Satan and his spiritual empire, some of the sinning angels are still active today –

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Ephesians 6:10-13

Jesus encountered *demons* many times during His ministry –

“Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.” Matthew 4:24

Demons are spirit beings who know they will suffer torment because of their sinning against God –

“When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!’ For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man ... Jesus asked him, saying, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.” Luke 8:28-31

Notice that many demons (legion) took up residence in one man. They responded to Jesus by name, knew that He was “Son of the Most High God,” knew that Jesus had the power and authority to torment them and sent them into the “abyss.”

We first learn about demons in the Old Testament –

“They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.” Leviticus 17:7

“They sacrificed to demons, not to God, *To gods* they did not know, *To new gods*, new arrivals That your fathers did not fear.”
Deuteronomy 32:17

Demons were connected to the worship of false gods.

Jews in the 1st century AD were well aware of demons and their connection to Satan –

“And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, ‘He has Beelzebub,’ and, ‘By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.’”
Mark 3:22

[Beelzebub is another name for *Satan* (e.g. Luke 11:18)]

Demons are mentioned four times in the Old Testament and almost 80 times in the New Testament. They are connected to sickness, suffering and evil (aka “evil spirits”) –

“As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!” Matthew 9:32-33

“Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.” Matthew 12:22

“And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.” Matthew 17:18

“... and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons.” Luke 8:2

“And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.” Luke 7:21

“Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.” Acts 19:11-12

“Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’ Then the man in whom the evil spirit was

leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.” Acts 19:14-16

The apostles warned Christians not to be involved in any way to worship of demons –

“Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons.” 1 Corinthians 10:20-21

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.” 1 Timothy 4:1

“Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.” James 3:13-16

When we use the terms “sinning angels” we mean all of the spiritual beings who disobeyed God.

Jesus said He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18). When did Satan fall like lightning from Heaven? We read earlier in Revelation 12 that Satan and his angels will be cast from Heaven to earth after losing a great battle with other angels –

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7-9

That speaks of a future event, so when did Jesus see Satan fall like lightning from heaven? Was Jesus looking into the future and seeing the battle of Revelation 12? or was Jesus looking back and seeing Satan’s fall in the past?

The words in Job 38 about the angels singing together and shouting for joy when God created the earth could be a clue that Satan may have been obedient to God on that day and that his fall happened later. However, it may also be that Satan fell prior to the creation of the earth. Whether before Creation or after, we will see that Satan had already sinned against God and was in place to become the adversary (e.g. 1 Peter 5:8) of the first humans.

Why God Created Hell

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

Matthew 24:41

The disciples approached Jesus privately as He sat on the Mount of Olives and asked Him two questions: “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3) Jesus gave them a lengthy answer that covered many important aspects of God’s eternal plan. One of His points concerned the origin of hell (“the everlasting fire”).

The Apostle Peter mentioned that God cast the angels who sinned into hell

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“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.” 2 Peter 2:4

“And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.” Jude 1:6

We’re not sure when God created hell, but it existed when the angels sinned and God threw them into it. Hell was part of God’s eternal plan.

Chapter Ten

In the first nine chapters of this special series we have shared about extraordinary events that occurred in **eternity** – prior to *time and space*.

We've seen that God is One and Three: One in Essence and Three in Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

“... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19

We have seen that God's existence is eternal and not limited by time or space –

“Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.” Psalm 90:2

We've seen that God developed a **grand plan** in eternity that would be revealed in time and space. That plan included the suffering, death and resurrection of God the Son –

“... the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the

appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:8-10

“... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” 1 Peter 1:18-21

We have seen the angelic host sing together and shout for joy at God’s creation of the earth (Job 38:4-7).

“To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

We have seen Satan fall from his privileged position in Heaven and become the origin of evil and suffering in the world.

“And He said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.’”
Luke 10:18

The stage is set for – **The Great Reveal.**

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

Time – “In the beginning”

Space – “the heavens and the earth”

The first sentence of God’s *great reveal* establishes four important facts that are vital to our understanding of everything –

1. God existed before time began
2. God created time
3. God existed before the foundation of the world
4. God created the world

There is no one else like God! He has no equal –

“To whom then will you liken Me, Or *to whom* shall I be equal?’ says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these *things*, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of *His* power; Not one is missing.” Isaiah 40:25-26

“Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For *there is* none like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.” 2 Samuel 7:22

So, if there is no one like God and He has no equal – why did the Father send the Son to suffer and die? For what possible purpose would the Almighty God have to endure rejection and pain in His own Creation?

We need to grasp the answer to this with all our heart and mind because it goes to the core of **reality**.

Why God Created Satan

We know from what we’ve read so far that God the Father sent God the Son into the world to save the world. Save the world from what?

“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8

The Son of God was manifested (φανερῶω – revealed) for the purpose of destroying “the works of the devil.” Satan “sinned from the beginning” and “he who sins is of the devil.”

Now we see the integral part Satan plays in God’s eternal plan. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was revealed to the world for the purpose of destroying the “works” of Satan.

Knowing that helps us understand statements like this –

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” John 3:14-17

[Read numbers 21:4-9 for background to Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness]

The word “serpent” is used more than 50 times in the Bible. Here’s where it started –

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made ... So the Lord God said to the serpent: ‘Because you have done this, You *are* cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” Genesis 3:1, 14-15

When we know that God's eternal plan was for Jesus to destroy the "works of the devil" and that the serpent in Genesis 3 was the devil, we understand the meaning of Jesus' words to Nicodemus. Christ's death on the Cross **destroyed** the "works of the devil."

We must not miss the part Satan plays in our epic journey through time and space. It is vital to our life that we grasp his role and respond to it correctly. We'll look deeper into the *works* of the devil in our next study, but let's look first at the *works* of God to see how things began.

The Works of God

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done." Genesis 2:2

Genesis 1 references the history of Creation. It begins with "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" and ends with "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Creation is the first of God's "works" revealed in the Bible.

Let's begin at the beginning – “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

God created the “heavens and the earth.” That includes the vast universe and everything in it. Scientists find it difficult to get an accurate measurement of the size of the universe for two primary reasons –

1. They can't see where the universe ends, so their estimates are based on what they can see (observable universe)
2. Some scientists believe the universe is expanding so rapidly that it may be at least 250 times larger than the observable universe – at least seven trillion light-years across. One light year is about 5.9 trillion miles, so multiplying 5,900,000,000,000 times 7,000,000,000,000 is an astronomical number.

Scientists estimate there are at least ten trillion (10,000,000,000,000) planetary systems in the known universe. The earth is one of them. To us, the earth seems very large, but it is an extremely small dot in an observable universe filled with an estimated 30-billion-trillion stars, 350-billion large galaxies (like the Milky Way) and ten-billion superclusters (like the Virgo Supercluster).

God created all of that! What we can and cannot see.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language *Where* their voice is not

heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, Which *is* like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *And* rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising *is* from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.” Psalm 19:1-6

GOD CREATES HUMANS IN TIME AND SPACE

Even though Earth is very, very, very, very small and seemingly insignificant in the vast and growing universe, most of the information we have in the Bible about Creation focuses on our tiny planet and human beings who are even smaller.

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet, All sheep and oxen— Even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, How excellent *is* Your name in all the earth!” Psalm 8:3-9

Imago Dei

Of everything that God created only one created being carries the name “image of God” –

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Genesis 1:26-28

Think about that for a moment. God decided “before time began” to create a spiritual Heaven and physical universe with millions of different types of creatures with only “one” of those creatures being in the “image of God.” That is remarkable! How special we are to our Creator –

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they

all were written, The days fashioned for me, When *as yet there were* none of them.” Psalm 139:13-16

As we’ve seen in earlier studies, God’s eternal plan is this –

“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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” John 3:16-17

We have no record of God creating any other creature “in His image” or loving them so much that the Son of God would suffer and die for them. Human beings are in a very special category.

God’s eternal plan appears to be almost entirely about “humans” who He made in His *image*, in His *likeness*. What is God’s image? What is His likeness?

The word “create” (אָרַץ – *bārā*) gives us some insight to be “like” God. The word *bārā* means “choose.” God created based on His choice. Choosing, deciding, determining, selecting – all of those are part of who God is and how humans are “like” Him.

That also means being **free to choose**. God is free to choose and so are we. That freedom to choose plays a central part in God’s eternal plan for our life. **God chose so we could choose**. More on that in future studies.

בְּצַלְמֵנוּ (*bəṣalmênū*) “in our image” .. *image* suggests a reproduction in form and substance (*Cambridge Bible*). God made the first human’s (*hā’ādām*) nature in the image of God. Humans have a unique connection to God’s nature in a way that no other physical or spiritual (e.g. angel) being possesses. Even after choosing to sin against God, humans continue to be the one creature made in the *image* and *likeness* of God.

כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ (*kidmūtēnū*) “according to our likeness” .. God made the first humans to resemble Him in a way that no other creature shared. Adam and Eve had the ability to think critically, reason, think, choose, judge, determine, love and hate in a way that no other created being could do. The first humans had a free will, even as God has a free will. The choice Adam and Eve made in the Garden of Eden impacted their *nature* and the nature of all their descendants.

“The image of God consists, therefore, in the spiritual personality of man, though not merely in unity of self-consciousness and self-determination, or in the fact that man was created a consciously free Ego; for personality is merely the basis and form of the divine likeness, not its real essence. This consists rather in the fact, that the man endowed with free self-conscious personality possesses, in his spiritual as well as corporeal nature, a creaturely copy of the holiness and blessedness of the divine life. This concrete essence of the divine likeness was shattered by sin; and it is only through Christ, the brightness of the glory of God and the expression of His essence (Hebrews 1:3), that our nature is transformed into the image of God

again (Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24).” *Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*

SHARED DOMINION

“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ Genesis 1:28)

Part of sharing in the *image* and *likeness* of God is **shared dominion**.

God created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. God had dominion over the universe and shared dominion of the earth with humans. God gave them the means and method to accomplish His goal –

Means – “Be fruitful and multiply”

Method – “Fill the earth and subdue it”

God created “man” (הָאָדָם – *hā’ādām*), male (זָכָר – *zākār*) and female (נְקֵבָה – *neqēbāh*). God made human beings (male and female) to be a vital part of His eternal plan. He made them in His image, His likeness, to be fruitful and multiply to fill the earth and subdue it.

Being *fruitful* and *multiplying* speaks to both the physical and spiritual nature of humans. Sexual union of a man and woman reproduces another human being who is also made in the image and likeness of God. Unborn children have their own unique DNA and soul (שֵׁנֶפֶשׁ לְחַיָּה – *lənepeš ḥayyāh* – soul living).

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7 (KJV)

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7 (NKJV)

God created that biological and spiritual process into the first humans when He made them. Sexual union of all other creatures (e.g. dogs, cats, cattle, birds, fish) reproduces another physical creature of the same kind.

Filling the earth and *subduing* it is the method God gave to humans to complete the work of sharing in **dominion** over the earth – “have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

The word **subdue** (שָׁבַע – *kibšuhā*) means “bring into bondage, subdue.” The word **dominion** (יָרַד – *ūrādū*) means “reign, rule.” That’s what God shared with humans – His reign over the earth.

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Genesis 1:31

When God finished His work of creating the heavens and the earth and everything in it, He saw that it was “very good.”

So, we have what appears to be the perfect plan. God created the heavens and the earth and everything in it, made humans in His image and likeness, and gave them the means and method for shared dominion.

Chapter 11

In the last chapter we learned about the “work” of God in **creating** “the heavens and the earth.” That work included God creating human beings in His “image” and “likeness.” When God finished creating He looked at what He had done and saw that it “was very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

If we stopped reading the Bible at the end of Genesis 1 and looked around at our neighborhood and community and watched an hour of the evening news, would we say that God’s creation “was very good?” I don’t think so. What happened? If God is Almighty and All-Knowing, how could His eternal plan have gone so terribly wrong? **It didn’t.**

What we see in the world today is part of God’s eternal plan – a plan He chose “before time began, before the foundation of the world.”

Let’s go deeper into this plan to see what He chose to do and why.

The Garden Reveal

“And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2: 8-9

Genesis 1 is a ‘broad’ view of God’s *work* over a period of six creative days. Genesis 2 is a ‘narrow’ view of one aspect of God’s creative work, specifically how He created human beings.

God “formed” the human *male* in Eden and took him to the garden that was located “eastward in Eden.” That’s where the rest of the events of Genesis 2 and 3 take place. It may be that Eden was where God ‘lived’ and ruled while He was on earth.

God planted a garden nearby for humans to begin the process of being fruitful and multiplying. Remember that the goal was to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28), so it doesn’t appear that the garden was the final home of humans. They had an entire planet to fill and subdue.

That process began when God brought animals and birds to the man to see what he would call them .. “And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field.” (Genesis 2:19-20)

Here’s what we know about the “garden in Eden” from the early part of Genesis 2 –

- It was a real place that existed on earth and it was “eastward in Eden”
- God put the man He formed in the garden
- God made every tree grow in the garden that was pleasant to the sight and good for food
- God placed the “tree of life” in the middle of the garden, along with the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”

Since the types of trees are not mentioned in Genesis 2, we can assume the trees in the garden that were pleasant to the sight and good for food included some of the trees we are familiar with today. Types of trees mentioned in Genesis and other Old Testament Writings include terebinth, poplar, almond, chestnut, acacia, palm, cedar, algum, cypress, pine, and box.

In Genesis 1:11 we read that God created “the fruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth’; and it was so.” The Old Testament mentions several fruit trees including fig, pomegranate, olive, and apple.

Trees of Life and Knowledge

What we want to focus on for a few minutes is the “tree of life” and the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” These trees play a significant role in the eternal plan of God and have been the focus of major concern and debate through the ages – “life or death.” Which will it be?

The “tree of life” that was in the Garden of Eden is mentioned in Genesis and Revelation –

“And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2:9

“In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations ... Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” Revelation 2:2, 14

The “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” that was in the Garden of Eden is mentioned twice in Genesis –

“And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the

midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”
Genesis 2:9

“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”
Genesis 2:17

We will learn more about the “tree of life” in future studies, but let’s start with the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

הַדָּעַת (*hadda‘at*) “of knowledge”

טוֹב (*tōwḇ*) adjective that means “beautiful, choice, good”

וַרְעָה (*wārā‘*) adjective that means “adversity, bad, evil”

The word *tōwḇ* is the same word used in Genesis 1 to describe God’s creative work –

“And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness.”

“And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good.”

“And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.”

“and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good.”

“So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.”

“And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.”

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good.”

As for the word *wārā'* (evil), it's not used until Genesis 2:9.

So, where did “evil” come from? It's not part of God's creative works in Genesis 1 because each day ended with the word *ṭōwb* (good). There is no hint of anything “bad, wrong, evil” until we see that God planted a tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden called the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

The word for “knowledge” is *hadda‘at* and means “to know” something that can be known. What was that *something* that could be known? Did God do something during His creative work that could be known as “evil?” Not that we can see from the first words “In the beginning” to the words “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.” Whatever was to be known as “evil” had to have occurred prior to “the beginning.”

That brings us to the **works** of Satan.

The Works of Satan

The Bible gives us many *reveals* about Satan and why he does what he does. One reveal is in Paul’s first letter to Timothy. It concerns qualifications for overseers in churches –

“... not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” 1 Timothy 3:6-7

It would appear that Satan’s “pride” led him into “condemnation.” Any other reveals about that in the Bible? Yes, several.

The first one is in Genesis 3 –

“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’” Genesis 3:4-5

Satan contradicted what God had told Adam about dying if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead of dying, Satan said humans could be “like God, knowing good and evil,” as if that was a *good* thing.

Think about that for a moment. Here is the angel Satan, disguised as a beautiful serpent, saying that God knew good and evil. How did God know about evil? We’ve already seen that everything He did in creating the heavens and the earth was “good.” How? Well, He’s God. He knows everything.

Here’s another question. How did Satan know that God knew about evil? Was Satan just a casual angelic observer who happened to be near God one day when God said something about knowing good and evil? Did Satan just overhear that conversation and pass along the information to the first humans as an interesting point of discussion?

Not at all. Satan is the one who **introduced evil** into the real world of the created angels and God condemned him for it. Did that surprise God? Did God find out about evil from Satan and then have to find a way to deal with it? Not at all. God knew about it in eternity, before He created the angels.

SATAN'S EVIL HISTORY

There is some disagreement among students of the Bible about whether the description of Lucifer in the Old Testament refers to Satan or the king of Babylon, but let's take a look –

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. ‘Those who see you will gaze at you, *And* consider you, *saying*: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, *Who* did not open the house of his prisoners?’ ‘All the kings of the nations, All of them, sleep in glory, Everyone in his own house; But you are cast out of your grave Like an abominable branch, *Like* the garment of those who are slain, Thrust through with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit, Like a corpse trodden underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, Because you have destroyed your land *And* slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. Prepare slaughter for his children Because of the iniquity of their fathers, Lest they rise up and possess the land, And fill the face of the world with cities.” Isaiah 14:12-21

The description God gave to Ezekiel does sound more like Satan –

“Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ‘You *were* the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone *was* your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. ‘You *were* the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. ‘By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. ‘Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And *shall be* no more forever.” Ezekiel 28:11-19

The reference to the “king of Tyre” being in Eden, the garden of God, and being the “anointed cherub who covers” doesn’t sound like a description for a human, but does fit the description of an angel.

However, even if these two references are about earthly human kings of Babylon and Tyre, we remember the words of the Apostle John – “He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has **sinned** from the beginning.” (1 John 3:8) All of the vast array of sinning we see in the world today is because of Satan.

That’s an interesting statement – “for the devil has **sinned** from the beginning.” Sinned from the beginning of what?

We saw in an earlier study that the angels sang together and shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth (Job 38:1-7). If Satan was one of the angels singing and shouting at that event, then the answer to our question might be that the devil may have sinned “from the beginning” of time.

However, if Satan sinned against God prior to Creation then the words “the beginning” may refer to the beginning of the devil’s pride and God’s condemnation.

Whenever it was, Satan’s sin brought “evil” into existence. It was because of the devil’s sinning “from the beginning” that the Son of God was revealed “that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

So, what are these “works of the devil” that the Son of God had to destroy? If it was only Satan’s pride, why didn’t the Son of God destroy Satan prior to creating the heavens and earth? Why wait until Satan had infected humans with his prideful rebellion?

If that was God’s eternal plan, that’s what would have happened. But that was not God’s plan, as we have seen before –

“... the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:8-10

The “good news” (Gospel) is that God has “saved” us according to “His own purpose and grace” which was given to us “in Christ Jesus before time began.” The great reveal was “the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

God had something much bigger in mind for His eternal plan than just dealing with Satan’s pride. He could have dealt with that as man might deal with an annoying gnat. No, God had something much, much bigger in mind; something of a truly **epic** nature.

Chapter 12

God created the heavens and the earth and proclaimed them as “good.” However, He had planted a tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden known as “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” How did **evil** show up on an earth He created and called **good**?

In our last study we saw that an angel named Satan brought evil into existence through his pride – “lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.” (1 Timothy 3:6) We also saw Satan enter the Garden of Eden and approach the first humans with a statement that contradicted what God had told them.

Why did God allow this to happen?

The Test

The next step in God's **great reveal** is the *first test*.

Keep in mind that this is truly a "life or death" test.

God planted two special trees in the Garden of Eden: "The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

God told Adam –

"Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

If we take God's statement at face value, it would seem that God invited Adam to eat from the tree of life ("Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but ...). The only tree mentioned as "forbidden" was "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." God told Adam that if he ate of that tree, he would surely die.

God invited Adam to make a decision – obey God and choose life or disobey God and choose death.

We mentioned in an earlier chapter about God making man in His own image and likeness. An important part of God's likeness is **freedom to choose**. He has the freedom to choose and so do we.

God chose in eternity so we could choose in time.

Freedom to choose goes to the issue of *free will*. God has a free will and so do we. That's the way God created humans – in His likeness and image. We are free to choose based on having a free will.

What we see in Genesis 3 are the first humans using that freedom.

This choice is based on a **test**. Testing is a vital part of God's eternal plan and we will see it many, many times in the Bible. Here are several examples –

“Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham.”
Genesis 22:1

“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.’”
Exodus 16:4

“And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.” Deuteronomy 8:2

“But the Lord said to Gideon, ‘The people *are* still *too* many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, *that* of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ the same shall not go.’” Judges 7:4

“I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these *things*; and now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You.” 1 Chronicles 29:17

“The Lord tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.” Psalm 11:5

“Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward.” 1 Corinthians 3:12-14

“But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.” 1 Thessalonians 2:4

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ concluding that God

was able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.” Hebrews 11:17-19

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” James 1:2-4

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.” 1 Peter 1:6-8

God testing His people is a central part of His eternal plan. If we understand that, we can appreciate His tests in our lives.

So, let's begin our **epic journey!**

The Lie

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’’ And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’” Genesis 3:1-5

Why is what Satan told the woman a lie? Because of what God told the man.

“Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2:16-17

God told the man that he **would** surely *die* if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan told the woman she **would not** surely *die* if she ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Both of those statements can't be true in the same way at the same time, so someone is lying. Who do you think was lying? God or Satan?

Jesus answered that question convincingly –

“You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.” John 8:44

That’s quite an accusation from the Son of God who came to earth to “destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John 3:8) According to Jesus, Satan –

- was a murderer from the beginning
- does not stand in the truth
- there is no truth in him
- he speaks a lie from his own resources because he’s a liar and the father of it

It would seem that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was about God (good) and Satan (evil). As we read through the Bible, we will see that opposition from beginning to end.

The Temptation

Part of God's **great reveal** concerns Satan and how he tempted Eve with his outrageous lie about God.

We first learn that Satan is cunning and that God created him.

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” Genesis 3:1a

The Hebrew word translated “cunning” is אָרֹם (*ārūm*) and means “shrewd, crafty, cunning.” Satan was and still is cunning. We see his cunning in his approach to Eve.

“And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” Genesis 3:1b

Satan was cleverly leading Eve into a trap she didn't see coming. Remember 1 Timothy 3:6 about being careful not to be puffed up with pride and fall into the same condemnation as the devil? Here's the next sentence

—

“Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” 1 Timothy 3:7

Paul wrote Timothy about Satan's snare in his second letter to the young pastor –

“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.” 2 Timothy 2: 22-26

Satan has many ways of trapping unsuspecting souls. Watch how cleverly Satan approached Eve and tempted her with his lie. Keep in mind that before Satan spoke to Eve, she was enjoying a perfect relationship with God and her husband in a perfect garden that God had created for them. Adam told Eve about God's warning concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but we have no indication that she was planning to eat from the tree. In fact, we have these words from Paul –

“For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” 1 Timothy 2:13-14

Notice that Eve was deceived by Satan. The word ἠπατήθη (*ēpatēthē*) means “led into error, cheated.” Satan led Eve into error (fell into transgression) through cunning and deceit.

Watch how Satan did it and keep in mind that he uses the same techniques today.

Satan – “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

[Satan misquoted God, so his question was a deception. Satan often misquotes God or takes what God says out of the correct context. The way Jesus dealt with Satan’s temptations in the wilderness is an excellent example of how to face Satan’s temptations in our life. Read Matthew 4 and Luke 4 to see how Jesus answered Satan.]

Eve – “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

[Eve got most of it right, but added to what God said. God didn’t mention “touching” the tree .. just not eating from it – “for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” She also didn’t mention which tree in the middle of the garden was off limits. God didn’t say humans couldn’t eat from the tree of life which was also in the middle of the garden, just the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We need to know God’s Word well enough that we use it correctly when dealing with Satan’s temptations and lies.]

Satan – “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
[Satan called God a liar and impugned His true intent for warning humans. Satan intimated that humans could be “like God” in having equal knowledge and that God didn’t want that to happen.]

Eve – “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”

Eve made her free choice based on three criteria –

- the tree was good for food
- the tree was pleasant to the eyes
- the tree was desirable to make one wise

Reminds me of what the Apostle John wrote in his first epistle –

‘For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.’ 1 John 2:16

Did you see how quickly Satan led Eve into error? If you time the conversation, it took less than 30 seconds for Satan to deceive Eve. It took only a few more seconds for Eve to turn to her husband who was with her and he also ate the fruit.

[Keep in mind that God placed Adam in the garden to “keep” it, which means “guard, protect, preserve” (שָׁמַר – *šāmərāh*). Adam failed in many ways that day.]

We also need to remember Paul’s words to Timothy about Adam – “Adam was not deceived.” Adam apparently knew what he was doing. Adam made a choice to disobey God. We don’t know why he made that choice knowing what God said would happen, but the results were catastrophic as we shall soon see.

The Shame

“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 coverings.” Genesis 3:7

The reaction to eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was **shame**.

The last verse of Genesis 2 is –

“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” Genesis 2:25

The Hebrew word for **naked** is עָרֹמִים (*‘ărūmmîm*) and comes from a word that means “exposed, bare.”

The Hebrew words for **were not ashamed** are יִתְבֹּשְׁשׁוּ וְלֹא (*yitbōšāšū wəlō*) and mean they *had no shame* (unashamed).

The first man and woman stood before God naked and were not ashamed – until they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That action exposed them and they felt shame for the first time.

Their response to *shame* is interesting to note – “and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.” Shame exposed them and they attempted to **cover** their nakedness. As far as we can see in the Genesis 3 text, no one told Adam and Eve to cover their nakedness with fig leaves. They somehow instinctively knew they were naked and ashamed and needed to cover up.

[Questions for consideration – Why do you think Adam and Eve chose to cover themselves with fig leaves? One thought is that a fig tree was nearby and the size of the leaves looked good for a covering. Another thought is that the fig tree may have been the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” and Adam and Eve used those leaves to cover themselves. Here’s another question – did the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil have some properties that caused Adam and Eve to realize they were naked and begin the death process or did they receive that knowledge when they disobeyed God? Was it something inside the fruit or inside their consciousness? One more question – how did the first humans know how

to sew? They had never covered themselves before, so interesting that they would have known how to sew leaves together to cover themselves. The Hebrew word *taphar* (תָּפַר) means “to sew together.” It doesn’t necessarily mean they used a needle and thread – just that they brought the fig leaves together in a way to cover themselves.]

The next thing Adam and Eve did was **hide** from God –

“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” Genesis 3:8

This was quite a scene and probably took only a few minutes –

- Satan deceived Eve
- She ate from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and gave some of the fruit to her husband
- He ate the fruit and their eyes were open to see that they were both naked (note: their eyes were not opened to see nakedness until after they both ate)
- They reached for fig leaves and sewed them together to cover their nakedness
- They heard the sound of God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day and hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden

God called out for them –

“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where *are* you?’”

Genesis 3:9

God knew where they were and what they had done. He wanted to hear their explanation because of what He had planned for them. God knew from eternity what was going to happen and what He would say to them.

Adam replied –

“So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’” Genesis 3:10

This is the first time we see “fear” in humanity’s relationship with God, and for good reason. Adam knew he had disobeyed God’s warning and knew God had said he would “surely die.”

[Note: we don’t know for sure whether Adam understood what God meant when He said “you will surely die” since no one had died before. What we do know is that Adam knew that to “die” was not a good thing and something God would reveal as punishment for disobedience.]

God responded to Adam through a process of probing for truth –

“And He said, ‘Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?’”

Genesis 3:11

God demonstrated through His response to Adam that He knew what they had done and that what Adam and Eve were experiencing (e.g. shame, fear) was part of the result of their disobedience. We might say that the process of *surely dying* had begun.

The Blame

What followed was the first version of the world famous **blame game** –

“Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What *is* this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” Genesis 3:12-13

It’s interesting to see how quickly the man threw his wife under the bus while throwing some blame at God as well – “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” The fact was that Adam messed up and began a coverup.

Eve replied quickly by blaming the serpent and what she said was correct – Satan did deceive her.

Next Ebook

In the next part of our study we will see how God revealed the “heart” of His eternal plan to Adam and Eve and how it impacts us today.

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