

Genesis 3:14-24 The Consequences of The Fall

I. The Curse is Decreed For Man's Rebellion (14-19)

A. God's Judgment On The Serpent (14-15)

1. The Announcement of The Curse (14)

a. The Serpent is Cursed Above All Animals

i. The serpent is given no opportunity to explain himself (v.14 focuses on the serpent, v.15 focuses on the power behind the serpent)

ii. Cursed "above all animals" implies that now all of creation will be under curse, but the serpent will be cursed above them

b. The Serpent is Cursed to Move On The Ground

i. The serpent will crawl on its belly and lick the dust

- Licking the dust is another example of phenomenological language
- The Hebrews would look at serpents moving "feeling" the ground with their tongues and it looks like they were eating the dust

ii. The implication is that the serpent did not move on its belly before the fall

- There is no use speculating about what the serpent looked like before
- Some believe it walked as other reptiles on legs
- There simply is no way to know

2. The Promise Foretold (15)

a. This Is The Thematic Statement of Scripture

i. This is the first statement looking forward to the gospel – called the "protoevangelium"

ii. The enmity God will put between humanity and Satan is the miracle of regeneration

b. God will Put Enmity Between The Seeds

i. The whole of Scripture presents the enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman

- We first see this enmity in the murder of Able by his brother Cain (who John says is Satan's seed in 1 John 3:12 - We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother.)
- We see it in the Egyptian Pharaoh's battle against Moses and the Israelites

- We see it continually through the line of God's promised seed until the coming of the Lord Jesus – the perfect seed
 - ii. The seed of the serpent does Not mean Eve had sex with the serpent (a common heretical position)
 - c. God Promises a Seed to Destroy The Serpent
 - i. God will bring forth a seed from the woman
 - Notice that it specifically says the woman and not the man
 - Jesus had no earthly father, but was conceived of the Holy Spirit through Mary
 - ii. The Seed will crush the head of the serpent but not without being damaged himself
 - This is a foreshadowing of the death of Christ – who will be bruised but by his death will destroy the works of the devil
 - 1 John 3:8 - The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.
 - Technically, the two words “crush” and “bruise” are the same word in Hebrew but the context makes clear the head wound results in death (the picture of stepping on a snake)
 - d. The “Seed” Promised to Come is the Source of Salvation
 - i. Even back in Genesis we see the promise of the Messiah
 - ii. This is how Abraham could see Jesus' day (coming) and Rejoice – Jesus said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” – John 8:56
- B. God's Judgment On The Woman (16)
1. Sorrow Will Accompany Bearing Children
 - a. The woman's role in bearing children will now be corrupted
 - i. Pain (sorrow) in conception and “bringing forth children” probably isn't just speaking of the pain OF childbirth (although that is certainly included)
 - ii. This pain and sorrow is associated with the entire process of pregnancy from conception to birth
 - iii. The term “pain” or “sorrow” here is not the usual word associated with labor pains. It is the exact

same word used of the man's toil and labor in working the ground

b. The "Sorrow" of Childbearing

- i. This would include anxiety about the child's health, the ability to conceive, and the anxiety of the coming birth (as well as many other things)
- ii. This would also include physical sickness, and all the physical discomforts of the pregnancy and birth.

2. The Marriage Roles Are Corrupted

a. The Woman's Role

- i. Your "desire" will be for your husband
 - The word translated "desire" here is very interesting
 - It is only used three times in the OT. Once in the Song of Songs which talks about sexual desire. Once is here and once in Gen. 4:7 where Cain is told that sin "desires" him
 - Gen. 4:7 - If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.
- ii. It seems that the word is being used in the same way here as it is in the next chapter (Gen. 4:7)
 - The woman's desire for her husband is the same as sin's desire for Cain
 - The desire is to "have" him – to rule over him
 - Because of the fall, woman will be bent toward independence and rulership over her husband – she will not readily accept the role of "helper"

b. The Man's Role

- i. The man will rule over the woman
- ii. This is part of the punishment announced to the woman – and therefore it seems that this refers to domination rather than loving authority
- iii. Both the man and woman's roles in the marriage union have been corrupted by the fall

C. God's Judgment On The Man (17-19) (the Longest)

1. Adam's Sin is Identified (17a)

a. Adam Obeyed His Wife Instead of God

- i. Adam's has neglected his role as leader in the marriage union

- ii. Notice that Adam was not deceived as the woman was, he simply obeyed “listened to” his wife rather than heeding God’s command
 - b. Adam Disobeyed God’s Direct Command
 - i. Remember that God gave the command not to eat directly to Adam before Eve was created
 - ii. It was direct speech from God to the man when the command was given. He has no excuses.
- 2. Man’s Role in Creation is Corrupted (17b-18)
 - a. The Ground Will Now Be Hostile to Man’s Dominion
 - i. No longer will the land be fertile, well-watered and readily bring forth provision for the man
 - ii. The creation’s role in providing for the man has been corrupted by the fall
 - b. Sorrow is Now Associated With Man’s Labor
 - i. The basic role of man as provider and keeper of the ground is corrupted
 - ii. The land itself will become hostile and undermine man’s dominion of it. The creation will no longer yield to him without toil.
 - Notice that work itself is not the punishment. There was work before the fall. Now man will work and the ground will only yield minimally for him.
 - iii. He will exist in this sorrowful state of labor and toil for the whole of his life (the hint that his life is not limited will be made explicit in v. 19)
- 3. Man’s Physical Death is Now Inevitable (19)
 - a. Man will Toil For the Entirety of His Life
 - i. Man will not escape the toil of the curse until his physical death
 - ii. Death is now the natural state of man and creation
 - b. Man will Return to The Dust of the Ground in Death
 - i. Death is common for us today, I wonder what Adam first thought when he was informed he would be returning to the ground
 - ii. Could it be that death here is actually a grace, seeing that it is a termination of his labor and toil?

II. Hope Persists In The Midst of The Curse (20-24)

A. A Picture of Man’s Faith in The Promise (20)

- 1. Adam names His wife Eve (“life-giver”) because she is the mother of “life” or “living things”

- a. Why would he name her mother of the living after she convinced him to eat and the whole creation is cursed to death?
 - b. After the judgment of God is pronounced Adam seems to take a very optimistic view of things
- 2. There are two Reasons
 - a. First, life would continue.
 - i. Although Adam was told they would die on the day they ate of the fruit, God has been gracious and spared their physical lives. (spiritual death?)
 - ii. The woman would indeed bear children and humanity would continue, although in the new state after the fall
 - b. Second, Adam believed the promise
 - i. In the midst of the curse God promised a seed from the woman who would crush Satan's power
 - ii. This shows that Adam and Eve have accepted their punishment and placed their trust in the promise of the coming "seed."
 - iii. "Life" would return to the creation through the seed of the woman.

B. A Picture of God's Atonement For Man (21)

- 1. God Clothes the Sinners Himself
 - a. Man cannot cover his sin or shame with leaves (or any other form of works) – the covering is inadequate
 - b. God removes their man-made coverings and Himself provides the only proper covering
- 2. God Deprives an Animal of Its Life to Cover The Sinners
 - a. A blood sacrifice is the only adequate covering for man's sins – this would continue by the Lord's command in the worship of the tabernacle and temple
 - b. This is the first symbol pointing toward the coming death of Jesus – the perfect and complete sacrifice

C. A Picture of God's Grace in The Curse (22-24)

- 1. God Decides To Prevent Man's Access To The Tree of Life (22)
 - a. This is actually an act of grace
 - b. What if man physically lived forever under the curse?
 - i. He would never be free of his toil
 - ii. He would never be free of the hostile creation
 - iii. He would never again have fellowship with his creator...forever!
- 2. Man is Banished From Eden (23-24)
 - a. God drives man from the garden (23-24a)
 - b. God placed an angel to guard the garden (24b)
 - i. The angel guards the garden – what the man should have done at the first sign of the serpent