

The Corruption of Sin

So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin. (James 4:17)

The Trees

After God created Adam, He placed him in a thriving garden that contained two uniquely special trees:

And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:8–9)

Eden means “delight” or “pleasure.” This garden was paradise on Earth.

God then proceeded to give Adam the following command:

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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 2:15–17)

God’s command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was for Adam’s protection. God withheld no good thing from him. Obedience to God is *always* the best choice for our lives. His commands are truly in our best interest because He loves us. God is love (1 John 4:8b) and His nature never changes:

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17)

The light of God's love does not cast a shadow because it will never change.

The backdrop of God's command included two important aspects.

First, the [Triune God](#) had created man in His image. In [Six Days](#), I explained: "when God created Adam and Eve in the image of God this means that He created the son and daughter of God to 'shadow forth' the likeness of the Son of God." Thus, God had created man to be the focal point of His creation.

Second, Satan is a cherub, not an angel. He is a unique type of celestial *creature*. He was the wisest and most beautiful creature of all God's creation. In [Satan](#) I explained:

Satan was originally anointed with a priestly type of role before the throne of God in heaven and possibly also on earth since we are told that he was in Eden. This correlates with the fact that he is a cherub and they are only seen covering the *Shechinah* Glory or carrying the throne of God in the Bible.

Satan was originally without sin or “blameless” in all his ways for a period of time. What caused sin to be found in him? We are told that he was filled with violence and profaned his sanctuaries through the unrighteousness of his abundant trade (or traffic). His magnificence caused him to become prideful and corrupt his superior wisdom in pursuit of his own glory. Revelation 12:4 tells us that one-third of the angels went with Satan when God banished him from His mountain so it was rebellion that he was trafficking in his sanctuaries. He desecrated the sanctuaries meant for the worship of God by using them as a marketplace to sell his plan of sedition to the angels. His prideful insurrection filled him with violence. This is where sin began (1 John 3:8). God cast him out of His heavenly sanctuary. ...

A prophetic insight from Isaiah concerning Satan’s fall revealed his motivation:

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, '**I will** ascend to heaven; above the stars of God; **I will** set my throne on high; **I will** sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** make myself like the Most High.' (14:12–14)

... Satan’s five “I wills” reveal that he was consumed with selfish pride. It is safe to say that pride was the first sin.

Notably, in his pride, Satan declared: “I will make myself *like* the Most High.” He did not say, “I will make myself the Most High God.” When God created man in His own image, *He essentially made man like Himself*. Perhaps Satan’s pride began with the recognition that man was the focal point of God’s creation, created in His own image, and not him. *The goal of his seditious plan may have been to make as many of the angels in his own image as he could.*

A God of Freedom

An obvious philosophical question that arises when studying Genesis is, why did God even put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden? More pointedly, why did He create a scenario where man was given a command that he could potentially disobey? In other words, why did He even allow for such a devastating outcome (from man's perspective)?

The path to answering this begins with the reality that God is love, He desires to reveal His fatherly love to man, and He desires that every person love Him above else. True love requires freedom of choice. A person cannot love God if there are no alternatives.

God's desire for an environment of freedom where mutual love and friendship could truly flourish was revealed in the following two passages—the first coming soon after He created Adam and Eve and the second coming after the fall:

Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens **and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.** And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:19–24)

And **they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,** and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

In the first passage we are told that God brought the animals and birds to Adam to "see what he would

call them” and “whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.”^[1] Then after creating Eve from one of Adam’s ribs, God ordained marriage between a man and a woman. Referring to Genesis 2:24, Jesus noted: “So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6). This tells me four things:

1. Man was truly the pinnacle of Creation—demonstrated by the fact that God enjoyed giving him the freedom to steward the earth.
2. God did not override or control man’s decisions. He gave him an environment of freedom.
3. God desires a Fatherly relationship with His children.
4. The attribute of God’s love is seen in His ordination of marriage. A man and a woman now validate their true love for one another through their devotion and loyalty—love not in word only, but in deed and truth (1 John 3:18).

The second passage builds upon these points as it reveals that God had a habit of fellowship with Adam and Eve. They recognized the sound of Him walking in the garden because He would visit them and spend time with them.

God is a Heavenly Father who instructs His children to protect them. He gives them freedom to blossom. He spends time with them and reveals His love to them. Jesus declared: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27).

The Answer to the Ultimate Why

Still, the question remains, why did such a God still put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil right there in the midst of the garden? In other words, why did He bother to run the risk if He loved man so much? The answer to this became crystal clear to me one evening years ago when dealing with my daughter, my oldest child. I became frustrated at the inability of my little girl to understand how deeply I loved her through the instructions that I had given her. I vividly remember the powerful revelation the Holy Spirit gave me as I stood in the kitchen doing dishes. Like a bolt of lightning this all became clear as I saw a picture of Jesus Christ on the cross. *God allowed this to happen so that He could ultimately take the most extreme action to demonstrate to us just how much He truly loves us.*

Adam & Eve were ignorant of God's love because they had no alternative context. From the depths of this (now) fallen world where sin rages, it is easy for us to see the depths of God's love through what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. From the vantage point of darkness, the light of life becomes exceptionally brighter. God will create all things new for those who truly love Him. For all eternity, we will now have the full context of God's love. One million years from now, life will be far richer for those of us in the new heaven and new earth with the benefit of this perspective. God knows what He is doing. Sin deceives man and makes him think he knows better.

A question arose for me? If sin could strike the human race once, could it happen again in the future *after* God makes all things new? Revelation addresses this:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.**"

And he who was seated on the throne said, "**Behold, I am making all things new.**" Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. (21:1-5)

Before I expound upon this, it is essential to point out what happened immediately prior to this:

And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. ...

And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:7–10, 13–14)

After one thousand years of world peace under the reign of Jesus Christ and His saints, Satan will be released from prison and gather a massive hoard of people (“like the sand of the sea”) to his side to attack the headquarters of Christ’s kingdom in Jerusalem. For one thousand years sin will be subdued while Satan is in prison, however, once he is released it does not take long for him to once again deceive the remaining non-believers and lead them to a quick annihilation. *This makes it clear that sin is entirely a spiritual problem and the extinguishment of Satan for all eternity will eliminate the spiritual source of sin.* John reminds us here:

You know that he [Jesus Christ] appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ... The reason the son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:5, 8b)

Jesus Christ will *permanently* remove sin when Satan is thrown into the lake of fire “forever and ever.” Satan brought sin to humanity, Adam & Eve allowed it into humanity, the Son of God joined humanity and conquered sin, Jesus Christ will extinguish Satan for eternity and with that sin will be forever removed.

Satan is a cherub, a type of [celestial being](#). There could be something having to do with the celestial order that made the testing of Adam & Eve a preferable outcome from the standpoint of removing sin permanently. I expect that there is more to this that we will discover in eternity.

Satan Attacks the Command

Man was created in the image of God which means man was designed to reveal the Son of God. Satan was envious of man's position. He wanted to be like God and have man reveal his image. He desired to replace the nature of God, as revealed by the image of God, with the nature of sin, as revealed by his image of sin. Notably, some Bible versions refer to the antichrist as the "man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Man's spirit was originally united with the Holy Spirit so the image of God could be revealed in man as the Spirit empowered his soul. Sin would destroy the spiritual union with God that man was originally created with and degenerate his spirit. The access point for Satan to initiate this conversion was to get man to disobey God:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Genesis 3:1-7)

To be sure, we know that the serpent here was Satan from the following description of him near the end of the Bible:

And the great dragon was thrown down, **that ancient serpent**, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Revelation 12:9)

Satan framed his deception on the lie that God's command was somehow holding back some good thing from man. Such a notion is a Biblical impossibility and I am reminded of the following

declarations by Jesus:

He [Satan] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because **there is no truth in him**. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44b)

The thief [Satan] comes **only** to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

Eve entertained the lie. When you entertain sin, it begins to communicate to you all of its deceptive worldly benefits. The apostle John categorized these as (1) the desires of the flesh, (2) the desires of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (1 John 2:16)

These three layers of deception were at work on Eve. We are told that she “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.” Here we have them as follows:

1. Desires of the flesh = “good for food”
2. Desires of the eyes = “a delight to the eyes”
3. Pride of life = “desired to make one wise”

On the surface, there is nothing wrong with good food, delightful art, and wisdom, however, because there so-called realization was contrary to God’s command, it was sin to her. When “good” things try to get us to supersede God’s command they become selfish ambition.

The common thread of the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life is selfishness. Sin drives us towards self and selfishness unleashes deception. Consider the following:

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. (James 3:13–16)

He [God] will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. (Romans 2:6–8)

Here, both James and Paul (the latter writing to the Romans) described selfishness—“selfish ambition” and “self-seeking”—as being against the truth. The truth is God’s righteous path confirmed by the word of God. Selfishness unleashes deception that can blind us from the truth. Many people assess the current world they were born into through a selfish lens, making false judgements about God through their own deception because things are not the way that they think they should be. Their words and deeds confirm the existence of their selfish deception and they remain in darkness.

The Typology of God’s Greater Purpose

We are told that after Eve ate the fruit “she also gave some to her husband *who was with her*, and he ate.” There are many incorrect teachings about this event. Let us consider the additional insight that the apostle Paul provided here:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, **who was a type of the one who was to come.**" (Romans 5:12–14)

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown in perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written. "The first man Adam became a living being"; **the last Adam** became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:42–49)

For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and **Adam was not deceived**, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. **Yet she will be saved through childbearing**—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control. (1 Timothy 2:13–15)

These Scripture passages reveal several things that are not easily apparent from strictly the Genesis account.

First, Paul made it clear that Adam "was a type of the one who was to come," which is to say that Adam was a type of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, Paul also referred to Jesus Christ as "the last Adam," reaffirming what he wrote to the Romans.

Second, the Genesis account makes it clear that Eve was deceived by the serpent, however, Paul made it clear that "Adam was not deceived." You can shred all those incorrect teachings about Adam's lack of spiritual leadership.

How exactly was Adam a type of Christ?

All the Genesis account tells us is that Eve “took of its fruit, and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” It does not tell us that the serpent spoke to Adam. It does tell us that the serpent spoke to his *bride*. The key that unlocks this typology is Paul’s mysterious phrase, “Yet she will be saved through childbearing.” Let me explain.

After Eve ate the fruit, it was too late for her. Her spirit became corrupted by sin. Adam, who was with her, had a decision to make. If he did not eat the fruit, his wife would eventually die in her sin without ever having a savior. I cannot say this affirmatively, but I believe if they would have had children without Adam having sinned, their children would not have been spiritually corrupted. I say this because I believe the father determines the spiritual nature of the children since Jesus’ Father was God and His mother was spiritually corrupted yet He was without sin. Adam’s Father was God and if he would have not eaten the fruit, remaining spiritually uncorrupted, I think the human race could have continued on spiritually uncorrupted in which case Jesus would have never had to come and die on the cross. Adam loved his wife. He ate the fruit and willingly joined her in her fall so that she could be saved. *He was a type of Christ because he sacrificed his own life so that his bride would (eventually) be saved.*“ Adam discerning this whole situation as he did reveals a level of spiritual wisdom that is hard to comprehend from our fallen perspective, but remember, at that instance he was still spiritually perfect. By eating the fruit, becoming spiritually corrupted himself, and thus guaranteeing that he would eventually die, Adam ensured that God Himself—the God-man—would have to come to save them. This is how Eve would “be saved through childbearing.” A male offspring would (eventually) come through her who would die not only for her sin, but the sin of all men.

In light of this revelation, reflect upon the following New Testament command to husbands:

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. [Genesis 2:24]” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:25–33)

Here we are told that Genesis 2:24 is a mystery that refers to Christ and the church. Notably, this verse appeared before Adam & Eve ate the fruit. This reaffirms what I declared earlier: God allowed all this to happen so that He could reveal His great love through Jesus Christ.

Endnotes

[1] Since God created animal and bird kinds—probably just one male and female of each at the beginning—this would actually not have been that many animals. For example, it would have just been the bear and not the Grizzly, the Black, the Polar, the Panda, etc.