

# The Curse

## Genesis 3:7–24 (ESV)

**CONTEXT:** Thus far in our story, we have seen an all-powerful, all-knowing, and good Creator bringing creation into existence by the sheer force of his spoken word. The crowning jewel of His creation was called Adam, made in the very image of the Creator Himself. Yet, something was missing. Adam, in and of himself, could not accurately reflect the image of the Triune Creator - the 1 in 3. So, God made the woman of the man; she was to be a helper suitable for him.

The man and woman were naked and unashamed. They lived with perfect provision and an amazing mission—to fill and subdue the Earth. They were to have children; they were to expand the Garden of Eden into a global reality—the perfect blend of safety and challenge. Beyond all of that, they had direct access to the Creator. Nothing between each other, and nothing between them and God. That was all about to change.

You see, meanwhile, in the Heavens, a great rebellion had erupted. Lucifer, the glorious one, had become arrogant; he desired to be like God and ultimately usurp God from the throne. Suddenly, and dramatically, like lightning, he was cast down from Heaven, and 1/3 of the Angelic host with him.

Now, they were bound to earth until the time that they are cast into Hell forever and ever. Their time is short; they must do what they can to get vengeance on the Creator. What they do, they must do now. Where would they focus their attack? The decision was made to levy forces against the Creator's prized possession - the image bearers.

That is where we were the last time we were together - Lucifer, now Satan, had possessed the Serpent - an entirely different creature than the one that comes to mind - it was among the beasts of the field we are told.

One tree had been set in the midst of the garden, by a good God, for good purpose - we suggested that perhaps it was the fruit of that tree that enabled the animals to communicate with man. Whatever it did, its effects were connected to knowledge and wisdom. Yet for man it was deadly, thus they were forbidden to eat of its fruit. And that one rule, that law, that commandment, would be the very thing Satan would use to drive a wedge between the Image Bearer and the Creator.

He focused his efforts on Eve. She was not around when God first prohibited the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Perhaps he could deceive her.

Through cunning words, Satan convinced the woman that the forbidden fruit would not kill her; it would actually make her far superior to her current state - in fact, she would be like the Creator Himself. Her eyes would be open. Yes that's right. ***She would be woke.***

Eve believed Satan and she ate of the fruit. Then suddenly something changed, she saw the world differently, she saw herself differently. We are told Adam was there with her as all of this happened. God had given him dominion. He could have banished the serpent from the garden; he could have fought the dragon. Yet, for whatever reason, he took and he ate.

Immediately, they knew something was different - there was shame, embarrassment, new emotions for the image bearers. They had to cover themselves, so they began to sew fig leaves together to produce a pitiful wardrobe. This was the first man-made religion.

It was then they heard the sound—that old familiar sound. He was there, walking in the garden—God the Son, preincarnate. Previously, when they heard the sound of his footsteps, their hearts had leaped with joy. Not this time—this time, they were gripped with fear. For they knew.... This would not be a pleasant conversation. In fact, ***this would be a reckoning.***

## I. The Reckoning (vv. 7–13)

I was hesitant to use that archaic word, but I could not find a better word to describe what is about to take place. You see, in previous generations, there was this concept of unmitigated justice, free from passion or revenge. It was unstoppable, irresistible. When a reckoning was coming, everyone knew it, and no one could stop it.

In the words of **Doc Holliday** in that classic western Tombstone - *“Make no mistake... It’s not revenge he’s after. It’s a reckoning.”*

God came walking in the garden “in the cool of the day.” But this wasn’t a casual stroll. It was a confrontation.

God speaks - “Where are you?” —the question wasn’t raised for His sake, but for theirs. Knowledge is what they were after - surely they can answer this most profound of questions now that they have knowledge.

Yet, even now, over 6000 years removed, that same question echoes across time to each one of us. WHERE ARE YOU? I wonder if you can answer it any better than could.

How they respond is so familiar; it is the same way we respond to the fact that we have rebelled.

### a. They Run From God (w. 8-9)

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

I wonder if there is anyone hearing this message who is hiding among the trees?  
Now that we are out of Eden, there are so many other places to hide:

- Some hide in the most devious of sins.
- Some hide in a bottle.
- Some hide in silly hobbies, busying themselves with fruitless pursuits.
- Some hide in their work, numbing their minds to the reality of the eternal.
- Others hide in ideological forests and act as if God doesn't exist at all.
- Yet, perhaps the best of all places to hide from God is in religion itself. Busy oneself with the fig leaves of good works, hoping He will not notice.

But no matter where you have hidden, you will not escape... the reckoning. Our purpose here today is to bring you face to face with this reality in life, so you won't have to face it in death.

<sup>10</sup> And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

This is the first mention of "fear" anywhere in the Bible. You see, Adam is not yet sorry for his sin; he is sorry for the consequences that accompany his sin. That is very different.

If you are truly sorry for your sin - you should run to the only one who can do anything about your sin. The most offended party - God.

But instead, Adam and Eve hide. But the day is coming when you cannot hide anymore.

**Robert Louis Stevenson** said it well.

*"Someday, everyone must sit down to a banquet of consequences."*

*Not only do they run from God...*

## **b. They Shift the Blame (vv. 11–12)**

<sup>11</sup> He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" <sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

Notice what Adam does -

- First, he totally throws Eve under the bus. God, I know you said someone would die if we ate the fruit. I vote for her. In fact, I'm pretty sure I married the wrong woman anyhow. We just weren't a good fit.

- Second, he judges God. NOW, this is where it gets interesting. Satan said, The fruit will make you like God. Right? Well, Adam is taking Satan at his word, literally. He is now suggesting that God is the one who is the problem. He says, “The woman YOU made!” It is as if Adam, in his mind, is elevating himself to the place of judgement.

When you see it this way, you can see the insanity of sin. It perverts the perspective. It distorts reality. Suddenly, all of your sin is somebody else’s fault.

- It is the way you were raised.
- It is that boss.
- It is that co-worker.
- It is the church you grew up in.
- It is your siblings.
- Ultimately, it is God.

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Adam taught her well how to blame shift. And Eve is sharp - you see, she is the Charismatic of the family. She doesn’t blame it on her environment, she doesn’t blame it on her marriage, she doesn’t even blame it on God, she blames Satan and Demons. ***The Devil made me do it.***

*Well, not only the Reckoning... notice secondly...*

## **II. The Fallout (vv. 14–19)**

God speaks to the serpent, the woman, and the man.

### **A. Curse on the Serpent (vv. 14–15)**

#### **• Physiological Curse**

14 The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.”

Once a beautiful beast (perhaps upright, dinosaur-like), now the serpent would crawl on the ground. The change would be permanent —even in the Kingdom age we read:

**Isaiah 65:25 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the Lord.

In fact, the serpent is never used as a positive symbol in all of Scripture.

## • Prophetic Curse: Protoevangelium (v. 15)

<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

This is what Theologians call, the “proto-evangelian”.

Proto meaning first, Evangelian meaning good news.

In the midst of the terrible situation, God promises that one day the woman would produce an offspring - or as the KJV says, “seed”. Notice it is singular, not plural. Notice also that it is masculine. A male descendant would be born of the woman.

That son who is to come would crush the head of the serpent. But in doing so, he would undergo a bruising. A pain that would only be temporary.

There it is, the gospel cloaked in the mystery of silence for thousands of years until the silence was broken by the crying of a baby in Bethlehem.

We know who the seed of the woman is. That is clear in scripture. Who is the seed or the offspring of the serpent?

This can take you to some bizarre places on YouTube. But scripture tells us exactly who they are. Jesus spoke to a group of people who were opposing him in the NT and said, “You are of your father the devil.” Of that same crowd, John the Baptist said, “They are a brood of vipers,” which means a nest of baby snakes.

The offspring of Satan are those who reject God’s Messiah and continue to hide. The enmity we see around us today comes down ultimately to TWO GROUPS - those who believe and follow Messiah Jesus, and those who do not.

Not only the curse on the Serpent...

## B. Curse on the Woman (v. 16)

### • Maternal Curse

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children.”

Are there any moms here who can testify that this is true? I’ve witnessed it. The pain was unbearable. And I can’t imagine what Julie was going through. The Doctor came in and said, “I’m giving her drugs to ease the pain”. I said, “What about me?” They gave me a cigar, which didn’t help very much.

But motherhood will be painful.

## • Marital Curse

16b. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

Next week, we will see the same phrase used with Cain: “Sin desires you.” It means, “sin wants to control you.”

This passage says, “You will be drawn to your husband, but for some reason you will want to tell him what to do... yet he will still be the head.”

Now, this is the struggle with every marriage. The man is called to lead like Jesus, the wife is called to submit to his godly leadership. He messes that up and so does she.

## C. Curse on the Man (vv. 17–19)

### • Work Becomes Painful

Ladies, just consider, what you go through at childbirth is something like what men go through every Monday morning. Not exactly, but both were cursed.

17 And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

The Second Law of Thermodynamics begins—entropy and decay.

18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

### • Work becomes toil

Not cursed by work, you see work was there before the fall. There is something life-giving and wonderful about the ability to work. But we are told work would now work against us. Enjoyable work will become exhausting labor.

**This Curse will be Four-fold:**

- **Sorrow** (v. 17)
- **Pain** (v. 18 - thorns and thistles)
- **Sweat** (v. 19 - sweat of the face)
- **Death** (v. 19 - dust to dust)

*Well, not only the Reckoning...the Fallout...third notice...*

### III. The Hope (vv. 20–21)

<sup>20</sup> The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. <sup>21</sup> And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

Now, consider this - the first animal death. Here you see the prototype of the sacrificial system. God does for man what man could not do for himself, through the substitutionary sacrifice of another.

What man did, covering himself with fig leaves, was insufficient, even silly. God would do what man could not do.

Covering the shame of man would require death, blood must be shed.

And there you have it - the first whisper of the ultimate plan to redeem mankind.

They would be covered by the substitutionary blood sacrifice of the woman's male offspring. He would come a crush the serpents head, and be bruised in the process.

#### CONCLUSION/INVITATION:

Ironically, Jesus Christ would be called the Second Adam. For you see... he would bear the curse.

He would bear our **Sorrow**: Man of sorrows.

He would bear our **Pain**: Crown of thorns.

He would produce the **Sweat**: Great drops of blood in Gethsemane.

He would taste our **Death**: "Laid in the dust of death."