

Lesson 3

Creation and Fall: God's Provision

Introduction: In the last two lessons, we have established that God prepared an eternal plan of redemption before time began. This is congruous with His nature, as first and foremost He is love. He is also all-powerful, all-wise, and outside of time. We also saw that before creation, God's desire was for relationship with His creation, and that pattern continued throughout time. Today, we will look at the creation of the world and how God's nature and heart can be seen in it.

We know that the Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write the Pentateuch while Israel was in the wilderness and headed to inhabit the land of Canaan. In Canaan, they would be surrounded by people worshipping false gods. Therefore, it would be imperative for them to be convinced Who their God is, Yahweh, the Great I am. The need for us as believers today to be absolutely convinced of Who God is and what He is like is no less important than it was for the Israelites going into Canaan. The Christian life is meant to be a relationship. Without a deep intimate knowledge of Him, we will inherently live the Christian life as a religion and not as a relationship. If we don't know God, we won't trust Him. If we can't trust Him, then we won't walk in and appropriate truth in our lives. Growing in the knowledge of God is THE foundation for the whole Christian life.

- **Read Genesis 1:1.**

The very first phrase of the very first verse of the whole Bible, gives us two very important truths about the attributes of God. First, is His Name.

- The Hebrew name for God in Genesis 1:1 is “*Elohim*.” The “*im*” ending is the plural form which means three or more, and thereby making reference of the trinity.
- The name “*Elohim*” expresses that God is the mighty and glorious Creator who governs the universe in omnipotence, sovereignty, and faithfulness. Therefore, He is to be revered and feared (**Daniel 6:26-27**). This is how God has revealed Himself in the very first sentence of the Bible! Do you think He wants us to know Him?
- The importance of the doctrine of God’s “*aseity*.” This means independence and self-existence. It is His existence that originates from and has no source other than itself.

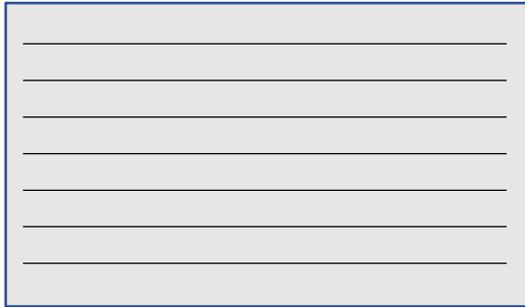
One commentary wrote, “*In our life of faith, we easily impoverish ourselves by embracing an idea of God that is too limited and small, and again the doctrine of God's aseity stands as a bulwark to stop this from happening. It is vital for spiritual health to believe that God is great, and grasping the*

truth of his aseity is the first step on the road to doing this.”

Discussion:

Remember- God’s “aseity”, or the fact that He is self-existent and not dependent upon anything.

1. How is this fact significant for us today in our Christian lives?



2. Discuss some of the specific promises are for us today as the children of God.

The very first sentence of the Word of God sets us immediately in the presence of Him Who is the infinite source of all true life and blessing. Notice that it all just begins with the state of His existence. There is no argument for it’s proof, for God reveals Himself through His own revelatory acts and interactions with mankind.

His existence compared to our existence are exact opposites. We, His creation, exist in dependence, finiteness, and fragility; but God's existence is eternal, independent, infinite, all powerful and He is the sovereign giver and sustainer of all life. All things are dependent upon Him. He is dependent upon nothing.

God does not have it in Him to go out of existence, just as we do not have it in us to live forever. We age and die, because it is our present nature to do that; God continues on forever unchanged because it is His eternal nature to do that. This is one of many contrasts between creature and Creator.

- **Read Genesis 1:1-5.**

God is the Creator. The first day God created the heavens, the earth and light.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth without any preexisting material, but it was His WILL that these things should exist ("Let there be..."). God formed all things in order with an existence that depended on His will.

Some notes to consider here:

- There really is a whole lot more to the creation account than we can understand. We cannot create a single thing without using some already existing material, and we can't fully understand how God can.

- To state that God creates out of nothing only confesses the mystery, it doesn't explain it.
 - Space and time are dimensions of the created order and God is not "in" either, nor is He bound by either.
 - The world order was not self-created, nor is it self-sustaining. Only God is.
 - The stability of the universe depends on constant divine upholding. Without it, every creature of every kind would cease to exist.
- **Read Acts 17:25, 28.**

We need to pray that God will open our eyes to begin to grasp the wonder and greatness that He has revealed about Himself through His creative acts. For only then can we sincerely and wholeheartedly praise Him as the Almighty Creator.

God is to be trusted as the sovereign Lord, with an eternal plan that covers all events and destinies without exception. He has power to redeem, re-create and renew. The more we grasp and view Him as the Almighty Sovereign Creator, the more we will trust Him in our own daily lives. *(Discuss the above paragraph).*

For us today as Christians, this is where godliness begins, with God the sovereign Creator as the first focus of our thoughts.

“The earth was formless, void, and darkness covered it.” This phrase gives us the world's condition when God created it. It was covered with water, covered in darkness, and had no life on it. It

was without form because the water was not separated from the land, which would give it form, and this did not happen until day three.

It's interesting to note, too, that this previous condition of the earth is an accurate physical depiction of our spiritual lives before coming to Christ. We were “spiritually darkened” and void of any relationship with God and hope. Our lives were spiritually without the life God. **1 John 1:5** says that “*God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.*”

God created light.

It is no coincidence that before God creates anything, He includes the phrase “then God said...” He wants to make it crystal clear that He and ONLY HE is the all-wise, almighty, and LIVING God and that it was He who deliberately created all things by His own sovereign will and plan!

Again, Moses was writing Genesis to the Israelites just before they entered the Promised Land where they would be faced with many, many dead false gods. In this one act of creating light (not the sun, but light), God revealed His power, wisdom, knowledge, life, and love.

This physical act also acts as a picture of spiritual truth that God is also the source of all truth! For “light” is often used to symbolize truth in the scriptures.

Notice in verse 4 God states that the light was “good.” God is of such supreme moral

excellence and holiness that what He created was correct in every detail. What He did was based on who He is! Look at **Psalm 18:30**.

In verse 5, then, we see the fact that God made the day and the night. God divided the light and darkness on the earth so that, while half of the partially formed earth was in darkness, the other half was bathed in light. This began the cycle of day and night which we experience every 24 hours. This cycle of “day and night” will continue on to the end of time, for God is faithful and He is the sustainer of all things.

- **Read Genesis 1:6-8.**

The second day, God created the atmosphere.

God created the firmament. The firmament in these verses refers to the atmospheric space surrounding the earth. What we can see is only a fraction of the vast atmosphere that surrounds it. By merely speaking, God created earth’s atmosphere and it was perfect.

- **Read Jeremiah 10:12; Psalm 19:1.**

Another thing that really stands out in the creation account is the wisdom of the order in which God created all things. It was appropriate and logical for God to first create light followed by the atmosphere—two of the main things that all living things would need in order to survive.

- **Read Genesis 1:9-13.**

The third day, God formed the dry land and created all plant life.

On the third day, God caused some of the water that still covered the earth to recede and dry land was exposed for the first time. This was when the original oceans were formed. God commands and the waters and the oceans obey Him (**Job 28:23-28; 38:4-6, 8-11; Psalm 33:6-9; 74:12-17**).

Not only did God prove His power and sovereign control over water in the beginning, but He continued to do so throughout scripture.

- He used the flood to judge the earth during Noah's time.
- He turned water into blood to prove His power to Israel and Egypt when they were slaves in Egypt.
- He parted the Red Sea and provided water from a rock in the wilderness.
- In Elijah's day, He withheld rain for two years and then allowed rain again at the appointed time for His glory.
- Jesus turned water into wine and calmed the raging waves in a storm.

God has used water over and over to reveal His power and might to mankind. Also on the third day, God created ALL plant life. God created a great variety of plants, trees, and fruit with an incredible diversity of color shape and size. It is

estimated that there are over 500 categories of fruit alone.

In doing an online search to get a number for how many different kinds of vegetables exist in the world and we got this quote: *“Currently, due to their sheer number there is no official list as to how many vegetables there are in the world. For instance, there are approximately 10,000 varieties of tomatoes alone.”*

Then you have a whole host of non-edible vegetation and vegetation that you can see and vegetation that you can't see. And each variety was created with the ability to reproduce after its own kind. Apple seeds will only produce apple trees. They will never produce corn stalks. God has never once had to go back and upgrade or repair any part of the plant life that He created.

God existed before any plant life existed, so we know He didn't create these for Himself. God was preparing the earth for the human race.

He created a huge variety of plants that He knew we'd need to use for food. He also created a huge variety of plants and trees that He knew we'd need to depend upon for other things—heat, building homes, etc. Then there is another huge variety that He created for the simple reason that He knew that we'd enjoy the beauty and fragrance.

All that God created was good and perfect because He is good and perfect, and everything He does is a reflection of Who He is and what He is like.

- **Read Genesis 1:14-19.**

The fourth day, God created the sun, moon, and stars.

Let's add some perspective to this. If we were traveling at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second), we could make seven trips around the world in one second. At that speed, it would take four years to get to the closest star and 59,000 years to get to the end of our galaxy, and then another 750,000 years to get to the next galaxy.

The galaxy that we are in has more than 200 billion stars in it. One million of them are the size of the sun, which is just a medium sized star.

Astronomers estimate that there are as many galaxies outside the Milky Way as there are stars in it. The Hubble Ultra Deep Field, taken in 2004, imaged 10,000 galaxies in a cone of space so slim you could cover it with a grain of sand held at arm's length. Integrated over the entire sky, that would mean there are more than 100 billion galaxies in the visible universe, many with more than 100 billion stars each.

According to **Psalm 147:4**, God calls them all by name. Keep in mind that not only has God created this immense universe, but He also created all of the laws and physics that govern the universe.

The sun, moon, and stars also continue to follow their orderly patterns that God created them

to follow from this fourth day of creation. See **Psalm 104:19**.

- **Read Genesis 1:20-23.**

The fifth day, God created all marine life and birds.

God created numerous kinds of aquatic creatures and birds of countless designs and shapes. The more man searches the ocean depths and the remote places of the earth, the more kinds of marine life and birds are discovered. Regarding the seas, a quote I found stated, “*Over one million known species of plants and animals live there and scientists say there may be as many as nine million species we haven't discovered yet.*”

God created each living thing so it could only reproduce “*according to its kind.*” The phrase “*according to its kind*” is repeated ten times in the first chapter of Genesis. The DNA of each organism was created and programmed by God so it can only guide in the reproduction of the same kind. Although great variations within each “kind” are possible, the evolution of new “kinds” is impossible.

Even the tiniest, most ordinary creatures are God’s creation and are incredibly complex. Listen to this quote: “*Molecular biology has shown that even the simplest of all living systems on earth today, bacterial cells, are exceedingly complex.*”

Although the tiniest bacterial cells are incredibly small, weighing less than 10-12 grams, each is in effect a veritable micro-miniaturized factory containing thousands of exquisitely designed pieces of intricate molecular machinery, made up altogether of one hundred thousand million atoms. They are far more complicated than any machine built by man and absolutely without parallel in the living world.”

Our God is ALL POWERFUL and He made everything by His own great understanding.

- **Read Genesis 1:24-25.**

The sixth day, God created the animals.

God created an inconceivable number and variety of animals and He created each kind with unique characteristics and with the capability of reproducing only other animals of its own species. For a little more perspective, note this: The animal kingdom is divided into about 30 phyla. The nine largest phyla contain the majority of species. One phyla, the arthropods, which includes insects and spiders, constitutes about 75 percent of all known animal species. More than 900,000 arthropods have been described, and according to some estimates there may be more than five million more. The largest group within the phyla of arthropods and the most diverse class in all kingdoms is insects. Over 750,000 have been described. Some suppose that

there are perhaps as many as three million different species of insects in the world. The most diverse family of insect is beetles, with over 375,000 types identified.

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Other large families of insects include butterflies and moths (more than 100,000 species), bees and wasps (more than 20,000 species), and ants (about 10,000 species).

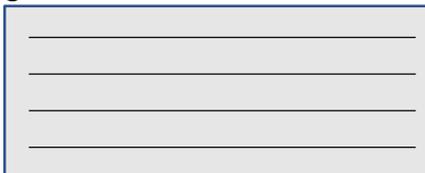
With over 30,000 known species, spiders, which are not insects, constitute one of the large families of other kinds of arthropods.

Only two other phyla within the animal kingdom, the roundworms and the mollusks, are known to contain more than 100,000 species. All other phyla generally have far less.

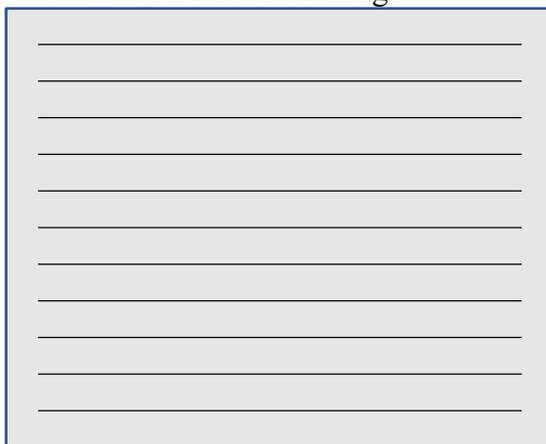
Discussion:

Before we move into the last thing that God created, mankind, let's discuss what is revealed about God's heart and character through the details of what He has created so far.

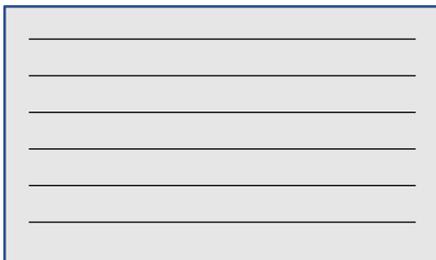
1. On the one hand, God created all that mankind would need in order to survive. What are some of those things?



2. But, on the other hand, He also created way way way more than we would ever need in order to survive. Name some of those things.



3. What do these facts reveal to us about the heart of God?



2. So, how are these truths important for us today?

God creates Humans with purpose

- **Read Genesis 1:26-28**

Last week, we looked at God's creation of man and how it reveals His desire for relationship. We saw that in being created in God's image, man was given a mind, will, and emotions to understand God; approach Him freely; and connect with God's emotions.

Additionally, of all of God's creation, man would have a unique position: He was to be God's representative on earth. He was to be the caretaker of the earth, even with authority over the animals. Man

would be able to carry out this role, for he was created with a mind, will, and emotions.

This again testifies to the wisdom and orderliness of God. Just as He created everything that man would be dependent upon before creating man, so He also created man with faculties he would need in order to carry out what God wanted him to do.

We have seen in this lesson that even before Man was placed in the garden, God had already created a perfect and habitable venue for man to live and for God to carry out His plan of redemption. He created a world with the beauty of stars, the safety of land, and a variety of plants and animals – all of which were created to reflect God and cause man joy. Man was created with the faculties to relate to His creator – a mind, will, and emotions. God provides everything, as He did in the garden.

For a deeper study of this and other topics, check out lesson 4 in the full Knowing God book.

Lesson 4

Creation and Fall: Man's Contribution

Introduction: In the past three weeks, we have looked almost entirely at God – His attributes, His plan, His sole role in creation. This week, we will look at humanity and the beginning of their participation in God's plan – rebellion. This rebellion will define humanity's relationship to God, expressing man's unyielding need and utter inability to fulfill that need. Ultimately, this will be satisfied in a Deliverer. This deliverance was planned before time began, as God is not surprised by man's rebellion.

In order to understand this lesson, we need to remember the original instructions and warning that God had given to Adam when He put him in the Garden of Eden.

God planted two special trees in the middle of the garden.

- **Read Genesis 2:9.**

Among all the trees God created – flowering, shade, and fruit - we know that there were two special trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I believe there are three main reasons why God placed those two trees there and gave the command to not eat from the one.

- First, God created man to be dependent upon Him. He didn't create man to be independent. They would have had to keep eating from the tree of life to live forever, and God wanted them to remain dependent upon Him to show them what was right and wrong.
- Second, remember that God created man in His image with a mind, will, and emotions in order to be able to have a relationship with man. Along with that comes the ability to choose to obey or choose to sin. In the true sense of being created in God's image, man had to be given the ability to choose.
- Lastly, remember God's plan from before the foundations of the earth that would be carried out through Christ. Without sin and a fall, there would be no need for a Savior.

Discussion regarding this last statement:

Remember- God is all knowing. He knew full well all that mankind would ever do and ever become long before He created us.....hence 2 Tim.1:9

1. So then, since God knew full well that mankind would indeed choose to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, why didn't He choose to NOT create it? Why was His solution an eternal plan of redemption by grace and through God the Son instead of just removing the opportunity to become sinful?

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- **Read Genesis 2:16-17.**

God warned Adam that disobeying Him would result in death.

Until this time, everything that Adam had experienced was only good for God had provided everything he needed. He had never seen death before. However, at this time, God made it clear that if Adam wanted to be independent of God and

disobey Him by eating the forbidden fruit, then he would die.

Discussion:

What do you think it meant when God said Adam would die?

- First, Adam would be _____ from having a spiritual _____ with God. This means that Adam would become “corrupted” and would move from being God’s friend to becoming God’s enemy. His _____ with God would be broken. The very reason God had created Adam in His own image was so that man could _____ a relationship and fellowship with God. But if Adam disobeyed Him, that part of Adam that was made in God’s image, his _____, _____, and _____ would become marred and corrupted and thereby separated from God. Adam would _____ spiritually, and the wonderful relationship he had with God would come to an end.
- Secondly, Adam would die _____. This did not mean that Adam would die immediately that very same day. It meant that Adam would be _____ from God, his source of life, and he would eventually experience physical death. When Adam’s body would come to the point of physically dying, his _____ and _____ would become separated from his body. It’s a going back to what he was before God breathed life into his body.

- The final aspect of death that Adam would experience would be _____ death. Having first died spiritually and then physically, Adam would then be _____ from God forever and would never again have an opportunity to enjoy God’s love and friendship. In and of himself, there would be no way for Adam to escape this _____.

Now God had placed everything in the garden that Adam and Eve would ever need.

More important than all of the vast variety of fruit and vegetables that God had created for man was the fact that Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with each other and with God.

Though Lucifer’s effort to rebel and take God’s place resulted in judgment, being cast from heaven, and becoming Satan, it didn’t stop his efforts to try and become “like God”. His next attempt at trying to become “like God” would be through his effort to cause mankind to become sinful.

- **Read Genesis 3:1.**

The text seems to imply that Satan chose the serpent because of its appearance—that a talking serpent may have had a greater impression upon Eve.

And that is the real issue here, the fact that Satan disguised himself as something other than what he is in order to make his lies more believable. Eve was unaware that it was really Satan who was talking to her. Actually, at that point, Adam and Eve only knew what was good. They probably didn't even know that Satan existed!

Today, Satan is the same and his intentions are still the same also. Namely, he still seeks to deceive people by disguising his lies to make them believable.

- **Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.**

It's the degree of our knowledge of God that determines how deceivable we are. To the degree that we don't know God, to that degree will we have an inflated view of ourselves and our desires; i.e., we will want what WE want even more than what God may want for us.

This is the height of pride. We end up thinking that we know what is better for us than God knows. We become self-sufficient and trust in our own understanding. Was this how God first created Adam and Eve to be? To be self-sufficient, trusting in themselves? No, He created them to be dependent upon Him.

So, let's read **Genesis 3:2-6**. There are a number of things going on here from Satan's perspective and that from Eve's.

- As far as Satan was concerned:
 - He still wanted to be God.
 - He wanted man (the object of God's love) to sin so that God would have to punish him.
 - He disguised himself, deceived Eve, and outright lied to her. He lied to her about God and also called God a liar!
- As far as Eve was concerned:
 - She didn't really know or believe what God had truly said.
 - She doubted God's goodness and love
 - Because she doubted God's goodness, this caused her to doubt his word, which led to believing Satan's lies and committing sin!

Notice that Satan didn't grab a hold of her and force her to eat the fruit. It was her lack of confidence in God and His goodness that made her deceivable, which led to her sin. Had she not doubted God's goodness, she wouldn't have eaten the fruit and there wouldn't have been anything else that Satan could have done about it.

Discussion:

How are these facts regarding Satan and Eve's interaction significant in our own lives today?

Notice that Eve was deceived by Satan, but Adam outright chose to disobey God's direct command.

It's also interesting to note that the nature of Adam and Eve's sin was the same as Lucifer's: wanting to be their own God, their own authority, and not live in dependence upon God. It's also in us today!

When you were kids, did you ever find it difficult to obey your parents or teachers? This comes from wanting to be your own god, just like Lucifer wanted back then.

Why is it that we often disobey the word of God? It comes back to not really being confident in who He is and what He is like. To the degree that we don't know God, to that degree will it be impossible for us to walk in truth. For we can't TRUST God if we don't know Him!

- **Read Genesis 3:7-8.**

Now God had said that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that they would die. So, did Adam and Eve die? YES! Was it immediate? YES! Physical death wasn't evident in Adam and Eve immediately upon committing their sin. They were still breathing and walking around. But that very moment they had died spiritually. Their souls and spirits, which were made in God's image, had become corrupted and separated from Him. They were no longer able to know, love, and obey God.

Also, at that very moment they did die physically in the sense that the process of aging and death began to take place in their bodies. Then, upon their physical deaths, they would also become separated from God eternally with Satan in the lake of fire.

God always carries out and fulfills His promises. Adam and Eve had become enemies of God. God cannot have fellowship with those who disobey Him because He is holy and righteous. For that reason, Adam and Eve would no longer be able to enjoy the friendship they once had with God. They were originally innocent, pure, following the Lord. Now they had become corrupted and were under Satan's control.

Verse 7 proves this. Originally, they were naked and unashamed. They were pure and innocent. They did not have any evil or sinful thoughts. However, once they had sinned, their minds became corrupted and for the first time they

began to “know evil” and were therefore embarrassed.

The second proof is that they had tried to provide for their own needs. They were created to depend upon God for everything. Now they were depending upon their own ideas and abilities to cover their own nakedness—just as Adam and Eve depended upon themselves to clothe themselves and “fix” their problem.

Today many continue to try to make themselves acceptable to God through their own efforts, to fix their outward appearance. Can you think of ways that people try to do this today?

- Going to church
- Being baptized
- Giving money to church
- Doing something good for someone else
- Praying
- Reading the Bible

As hard as some people try to make themselves acceptable to God, all our attempts are useless!

The third proof of their becoming corrupt and separated from God was the fact that they tried to hide from God. This also is another proof of their not being confident in who God is and what He’s like.

When God had first created Adam and Eve, were they afraid of anything?

They definitely weren't afraid of God—He was their friend. Everything in the world was good and beautiful. Sickness and death did not exist, and they had no fear of any animals, for they were all tame and none would harm them.

But after Adam and Eve had sinned, they became afraid. Was it right or wrong for them to be afraid at this point? I think it was both. It was right in the sense that they had committed the one thing that God had warned them not to do. The thing which He said they would die for.

God always does what He says. He punished Lucifer and the angels for their rebellion against Him, and He also punished Adam and Eve for their disobedience. God is faithful.

Look at all the fear that exists in the world today. It's all the result of sin and disobedience against God. Have you ever done anything that you've tried to hide and keep others from knowing about? That's fear from disobedience.

On the other hand, I also believe it was wrong for them to fear, though, in the sense that I believe their fear of the punishment was a continuation of the doubting of God's goodness. Even though they had sinned and forced God to have to punish them, it didn't change the fact of Who God is and what He is like. He was still good, merciful, gracious, and loving even in punishment!

- **Jeremiah 23:23-24**

When we sin, our natural tendency is to fear and try to hide it just like Adam and Eve did. But once again, we do this because we don't know God and we doubt Him, Who He is, and what He's like!

Just as God knew where Adam and Eve were in the garden, so He also knew that they would rebel against them. He even planned for this. After discussing fault, God called out Adam, questioned Adam, and explained the consequences of sin for individuals and the world around them. Finally, God references the remedy for that brokenness – the crown jewel of the eternal plan of redemption.

- **Read Genesis 3:15.**

Along with giving the hope and promise of a coming Deliverer here, God also begins to point out some of the characteristics of His coming. God only gives a reference to Him being of the seed of a woman. He does not say the seed of the man and woman but only the woman. This is a reference to the virgin birth. The Deliverer would have to be born free of the seed of the man; otherwise, He too would be born with a sin nature.

God also gives the promise that the Deliverer will overcome Satan. God said that Satan would bruise the heel of the Deliverer, but ultimately, He would crush the serpent's head. The "head" symbolizes authority. When Adam and Eve sinned, Satan gained power, authority, and influence over them. But here God is giving the promise that the

coming Deliverer will overcome Satan, deliver people from his control, and restore them to oneness and harmony with God.

God also said that the Deliverer's heel would be bruised in the process. During the process of the Deliverer overcoming Satan, pain and suffering would be inflicted upon the Deliverer. Yet a bruise on the heel is not fatal; and, therefore, Satan won't win in his battle against the Deliverer.

Discussion:

Name some of the things we have learned about God, His character, or His attributes thus far.

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What characteristic do we see in the fact that God promised to send the Deliverer? God is loving, merciful, and gracious. Adam and Eve had disobeyed God and deserved hell. He didn't have to promise a Deliverer. But, again, GOD IS LOVE, and even His judgment and punishment is carried out in love! There could be no greater manifestation of the love, grace, and mercy of God all wrapped up in one event!

Also, we can never forget that He had planned to carry out His plan of redemption through Christ before time began. God showed His love and kindness for Adam and Eve by giving all that they would need and more through creation. When they sinned, they deserved to go to hell; but instead of just sending them to hell, God gave the promise of a Deliverer. God showed His mercy by not sending them immediately into the lake of fire. He didn't give them what they deserved. Then God showed His grace by giving them what they didn't deserve, a Savior.

Did God lose Adam and Eve once they sinned? Did they drop off His radar? No! Just as He was aware of their location, He also intimately knew their makeup and the eventual manifestation of their desire to become God. God was not surprised by their sin, and even in explaining the consequences of it, He referenced the plan that was on His heart before time began - a salvation that comes from Him.

To go deeper into this topic, read through lesson 9 in the full Knowing God book.