

ANTHROPOLOGY AND HAMARTIOLOGY:

The Fall of Man

A Study for Bible Institute of Gulf Coast Baptist Church - Spring 2026

INTRODUCTION

After He made man on the sixth day of creation, God stated that all He had accomplished “*was very good*” (Genesis 1:31). Adam and Eve, as well as the entire created world, was free from sin. The first couple were placed in the Garden of Eden, a beautiful location in which God had provided for all their needs while also having access to enjoy fellowship with their Creator. While we do not know how long Adam and Eve enjoyed these conditions in the garden, we do know that all of this changed as the result of sin. Sin and death entered the world as a result of Adam’s disobedience. Scripture described Adam’s action as a trespass, sin, and transgression (Romans 5:12-15). These three similar yet distinct terms will be given further treatment later in the course. Satan, God’s adversary, disguised himself as a serpent, sidled himself next to Eve and pitched a twisted version of the truth. Satan’s deception caused Eve to question whether God was truly good and whether or not He had provided them everything they needed. The New Testament states twice that Eve was thoroughly deceived and as a result her disobedience was described to be in a transgression (1 Timothy 2:14; 2 Corinthians 11:3). On the other hand, when Adam knew what he was doing when he took and ate of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam sinned when he knowingly and purposefully “missed the mark”. The Fall ushered in the harsh reality of both spiritual and physical death (Genesis 2:17). The sentence of this “double death” was pronounced upon the first as well as all mankind. Man in this hopeless estate was and still is in need of a Redeemer.

SATAN’S SUBTILITY

How did Satan, the fallen cherub originally known as Lucifer, come to be in the Garden? Lucifer’s fall and subsequent adversarial relationship with God seemingly occurred prior to the creation of man. During His earthly ministry, Jesus described Satan as, “murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8). This quote is likely reference to the beginning of Creation. In the Old Testament, Isaiah and Ezekiel both describe Lucifer as wise, beautiful, and emanating brilliant light (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19). This created spirit being became enamored with himself and determined that he was on par with God. Paul’s letter to Timothy supports the observation that Lucifer fell as a result of pride when warned church leaders from being filled with “conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Timothy 3:16). When Satan spun his web of deception, he tempted Eve with the possibility that she could be “like God” which is strikingly similar to the thoughts that led to his original rebellion against the Creator. Satan’s lie bred doubt and discontentment in Eve’s mind leading to her taking the fruit. “Satan’s questioning of God’s word in this passage gives the believer a pattern by which Satan has been tempting man from the beginning. Satan deceived the woman into thinking that God had not provided everything they needed. The fruit appealed to the body and soul of Eve.”¹ Eve failed to consider the command

¹ Thomas, Steve. Notes. *Anthropology and Hamartiology: The Fall of Man*. 2022;

and promise of God and instead relied upon what she could see and how she felt about it. When she gave the half eaten fruit to her husband Adam, he knew full well what he was doing and still chose to disobey God.

God had previously warned Adam that eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil would result in death. Since these instructions came before the Fall, Adam would have had no experiential knowledge of death. Nevertheless, God's command was clear, "Don't eat!".

"ADAM, WHERE ARE YOU?"

Sin's affects on Adam and Eve were instantaneous. As previously mentioned, Adam's sin brought about both physical and spiritual death. "*For, since by the trespass of one, the death reigned through the one...*" (Romans 5:17). Paul stated that man has been in bondage to the curse of spiritual and physical death since that moment. God has credited all mankind as having participated in Adam's sin (Romans 5:12). "Adam's trespass consisted of his choice to disobey God. Adam's transgression brought the curse of corruption upon the earth. A transgression requires the existence of law (Romans 4:15). God commanded Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:11, 17). Since Adam had a commandment, a law, he transgressed when he sinned (Job 31:33; Romans 5:14), Eve also transgressed (1 Timothy 2:14). She broke a rule, but was completely deceived by Satan Therefore God counted her act to be transgression."²

The first couple immediately recognized that they were in a state of shameful nakedness. The image was marred or lost and Adam was now in his own image which mankind shares today (1 Corinthians 11:7; 15:49). Adam and Eve had enjoyed fellowship with God prior to the Fall but were now filled with trepidation. This fear stemmed from their guilty consciences and resulted in them hiding from God. The same is true of mankind today as Scripture states that there are "*none that seeketh after God*" (Romans 3:10-12). Man would be in a hopeless estate if it were not that God, in His lovingkindness, seeks out man for salvation. God approached Adam and Eve as they cowered in guilty shame but instead of taking responsibility for their disobedience they deflected and cast blame at Satan, one another, and even the Creator Himself.

JUDGEMENT

Having heard Adam and Eve's efforts to brush off their sin, God pronounced curses upon Adam and Eve. Each of the curses shares a common theme. What God had originally intended to be a blessing had now become a harsh, painful reality. After addressing Satan, God stated that Eve and her female descendants would experience both pain in child birth and would be now be in a place of subjection to their husbands. These curses demonstrate that women did not experience "birth pangs" before the Fall. Death had become a real possibility for women while giving birth. Paul made an interesting statement to Timothy that believing women might survive child birth "*...if she continues in faith and love and holiness with self-control*" (1 Timothy 2:15). God

² Ibid.

also stated that women would also conceive more children in the post-Fall world than before.

Another aspect of Eve's curse related to her marriage relationship (Genesis 3:16). Prior to the Fall, Eve was Adam's perfect complement. This complementary relationship took on a new nature. Eve and all her female offspring were punished by being brought under their husband's authority which has been at the heart of marital tensions throughout the centuries.

Adam also experienced curses that made his labor both exhausting and painful (Genesis 3:17-19). This curse has remained for all of his male descendants. This is a sad reversal of fortune as God had originally made Adam's work in the garden to be restful (Genesis 2:15). Not only did Adam experience physical hardship while laboring but the ground also had become difficult to work.

God provided the first couple with an eviction notice and thereby ended their stay in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). The entrance was also guarded by armed cherubs so that Adam and Eve, nor anyone else for that matter, would ever enter the garden again. As hard as it may sound this action by God was a gracious provision so the no one could reenter the garden and eat from the Tree and thereby go on living in a state of sin.

GOD AND MAN

Throughout the centuries, God has progressively revealed more and more about Himself to mankind. He has also been teaching mankind more about itself. These lessons occur over a period of time which always ends in man's failure to live by the rule of life that God has put in place.

God's perfect creation was no longer "*very good*". Sin has reeked havoc on creation. Part of God's progressive revelation includes his plan to restore His creation. "*...God sent forth His son, made of a woman, made under the law, so that he might redeem them that were under the law*" (Galatians 4:4). Romans 5 puts in clear the contrast the "*first*" Adam and the "*second*" Adam, showing plainly how God orchestrated His plan to fix what was broken. Death in Adam, because of sin, and Life in Christ, because of the free gift (Romans 5:16-19)."³

CONCLUSION

"Mankind had been placed in a paradise, with everything provided that they could possibly need. They failed to follow the simplest of directives, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan deceived the woman into thinking that going outside of the boundary that God had set for them would benefit them. She then was deceived into breaking God's established law, transgressing. She offered the fruit to Adam, who made a clear choice to follow his wife's behavior instead of trusting that God could continue to provide for his every need. This decision had lasting effects upon him, his wife, their children, and the entire human race. Sin had now separated man from his Creator. What was going to be the solution for this sin problem?"⁴

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

