

Genesis Chapter 3– John Karmelich

1. Chapter 2 was the good news, the story of Adam & Eve falling in love.
 - a) Chapter 3 is the bad news. The story of the first sin and the “fruit incident”.
 - b) The interesting thing is that Chapter 3 also has good news.
 - c) For those who don’t know, the word “Gospel” means good news.
 - d) The first hints of the Gospel story and the promise of a redeemer are written in Chapter 3.
 - e) So Chapter 3 can be called “The Bad News and The Good News”.
 - i) The bad news is sin. The good news is there is an escape clause. ☺
 - f) With that surprisingly brief intro, I’m going to jump right into Chapter 3 as we have a lot of ground to cover, and I want to hit the ground running.
2. Chapter 3 Verse 1: Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, `You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"
 - a) Before we get into the “whys” of this verse, let’s talk a little about the serpent.
 - i) There are lots of names for Satan/devil in the bible. We tend to use these two as they are the most common in our culture. We are speaking of this “entity” here.
 - ii) There is a strange story in Numbers 22 where we read of this non-Jewish prophet named Balaam. In it, God spoke, audibly through a donkey to Balaam. For one moment, God gave the special ability of speech to a donkey.
 - iii) The question is then, did Satan have the same power to use this serpent or did Satan literally become this serpent?
 - iv) The next question is, are all snakes cursed because of Satan? I argue yes as God designed it that way as a visual reminder to us of the curse and fall of Satan.
 - v) The next debatable issue is whether or not Satan “entered” this animal or actually “was” this animal.
 - vi) We don’t know is what the serpent was like prior to the curse.
 - vii) He may have been a beautiful animal prior to this event.
 - viii) Satan is described prior to his fall as the “anointed cherub” (Ezekiel 28:14).
 - a) This means he was the highest ranked of all the angels (more on this later).
 - ix) This story takes place sometime after the 7-day creation story. It could have days or been a hundred years later. We don’t know. I believe it was around this time frame that Satan saw how God cherished man, got jealous and lead this rebellion.
 - b) Let’s move on to the more important issue: Why did Satan say these exact words to Eve?
 - i) Satan’s strategies to lead you into temptation have not changed through the millenniums. The first thing he does is have you question God’s word.
 - ii) In this simple statement, Satan “questioned” whether or not God really said something. It is that reminder to us to stick close to God’s word and make it part of our lives. Those who don’t get “questioned” as to whether or not it is real.
 - iii) Let me give a modern paraphrase and expansion of what Satan said: “Hey Eve, you don’t really believe God word do you? After all, it’s so old and has been translated so many times, who knows what it really said and if it is true. After all, its just a bunch of fictional stories made up to teach us things...You don’t really believe this is true do you?”
 - a) That’s how the first temptation comes. Satan loves when people think of him as some sort of mythological creature with horns and a pitchfork. What Satan doesn’t want is to think any of this stuff is “real”.

3. Verse 2: The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "
 - a) Eve's big mistake in these verses is that she added to what God commanded.
 - i) God said that you may not eat of the fruit. (Genesis 2:17).
 - ii) God never said you must not touch it.
 - b) I wrote on the previous page on the danger of questioning if God's word is real.
 - i) There is an equal danger of adding to what God said.
 - ii) This is the beginning of "legalism". It is to take your interpretation of the bible, and making it equal with Scripture itself.
 - iii) God wants you take seriously what He commands us to do, but he does not want us to add to those commands.
 - iv) This is why Jesus condemned the Pharisees so much. It wasn't that they were zealous toward God, it was that they added rules and regulations based on their interpretation of the bible and made those rules equal in validation with the Scripture, and they didn't practice what they preached.
 - v) There is an interesting curse near the end of the book of Revelation that says in effect "cursed is anyone who takes away or adds to anything in this book" (paraphrase of Revelation 22:18-19). The point is you don't mess with God's word, by either adding or subtracting.
4. Verse 4: "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.
 - a) The second thing Satan does is actually deny God's word.
 - i) The first thing he did was question whether or not God's word is real.
 - ii) Now he goes to the second level and actually deny it is God's word.
 - iii) Jesus said about Satan "he is a liar and the father of lies". (John 8:44b)
5. Verse 5: "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
 - a) Now comes Satan's third attack on Eve.
 - i) He doesn't say, "Eat this because God's word is not true."
 - ii) He doesn't say, "Eat this because it is good for you".
 - iii) He says in effect, "Eat this and you will be more like God." In a sense he is saying "Hey Eve, if you really want to be spiritual, if you really want to grow in your personal relationship with God, if you want to be a mature believer, then you should eat of that tree."
 - iv) The point is Satan approached Eve on the desire to grow more spiritually.
 - b) Most of the "new age" movements use a similar type of appeal. The idea is to follow their methods and you will be "more like God". There is nothing "new" about "New Age".
 - c) Without getting too sexist here, why do you think Satan approached Eve and not Adam?
 - i) I believe the answer is that God put into women, more than men the desire to seek God on a spiritual relationship.
 - a) Statistically, more women go to church than men. Women, as a general rule, desire relationships more than men. Men are "conqueror's" while women desire to "connect" with people.
 - b) Satan went after Eve because in the next sentence the temptation has to do with "being more like God". Satan approached here in the spiritual sense.
 - d) What did Satan mean by "knowing good and evil?"
 - i) In a sense, he was correct. The story line in Chapters 2 and 3 do indicate that once we ate of that tree we as humans are aware of "good and evil".
 - ii) I believe this means that we become conscious of sin. We have the willful desire to not do what God wants us to do and at the same time, feel guilty about it.
 - iii) We now have knowledge of "good" in that we can know God's will for our Lives.

- iv) Prior to the sin in the garden, Adam and Eve may not have been aware of what “sin” was. They just knew the one rule of not eating of that tree. Even with that one simple rule, they choose to disobey.
6. Verse 6: When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
- a) On the “surface” it does not sound like what Eve did was wrong.
 - i) She saw the fruit was good for food. There is nothing wrong with that.
 - ii) She saw the fruit was pleasing to the eye. There is nothing wrong with that.
 - iii) She saw the fruit would make her wise. There is nothing wrong with that.
 - iv) The only problem is that God said no.
 - v) Never, never underestimate the human ability to “logically explain” disobedience.
 - vi) It is amazing what the human mind can ration away when we are disobedient.
 - vii) The point is we don’t always fully understand why God says we can do and cannot do something. Sometimes one has to take by faith that what God instructs for us in his Word is because God knows what is best for our lives.
 - b) Next, notice that Eve gave some of the fruit to Adam, who was with her.
 - i) There is a classical debate in both Judaism and Christianity over whether or not Adam was present when during the dialogue between Satan and Eve. Most say “no”, but it is not provable by the Scripture. From this verse, it seems to be that Adam was “there” when she ate the fruit, but was Adam there during the whole time of the dialog?
 - a) If Adam was there, why didn’t he say anything to tell Satan to “buzz off”?
 - b) He may have been in the background just observing the conversation and not getting involved and seeing what Eve would do.
 - c) Let’s talk a little about this from Adam’s perspective.
 - i) Adam knew it was wrong to eat of that tree.
 - ii) He saw Eve take of the fruit and then willfully choose to disobey God.
 - iii) I personally believe that Adam loved Eve so much, he choose to be “in sin” with her than to stay in good relations with God. In a romantic sense, it is beautiful, but it does not negate the fact that Adam was willfully disobedient to God.
 - iv) There is a Proverb that is appropriate here:
 - a) “Do not give your strength to women, Nor your ways to that which destroys kings.” (Proverb 31:3 NKJV).
 - b) The point of the Proverb is that God called men to be the leaders of the family. This is not about ignoring your wife nor about the equality issue. It is about leadership. The only priority over husbands’ relationship with their wives is their relationship with God. You don’t listen to your spouse at the point of ignoring God’s word.
 - d) By the way, have you noticed there is no mention of the word “apple” in this text?
 - i) The classical artwork is always of Adam and Eve biting an apple.
 - ii) There is no mention that the fruit was ever an apple.
 - iii) Personally, I think it was a fig, as “fig leaves” are mentioned in a few verses, but who knows and what does it really matter anyway? ☺
7. Verse 7: Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.
- a) I’ve always wondered where Adam and Eve got the sewing thread and needles, but that’s another story. ☺
 - b) The idea of “eyes being opened” is that they were now consciously aware they had sin.
 - c) They were remorseful and needed to “do something to relive the guilt”. Thus, fig leaves.
 - d) The “fig leaves” represents the first attempt by man to please God on their own efforts.

- e) They tried to “cover” their sins. The word “nakedness” is a word-picture for sin as it represents shame.
 - f) We’ll read in a few verses how God made animal skins for them instead of the fig leaves. The point here is that fig leaf covering is not acceptable as a “covering” of one’s sins.
8. Verse 8: Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.
- a) First, let’s talk about the presence of God.
 - i) If God is perfect, then he knows all things. Therefore he is everywhere at once.
 - ii) There are times and places in the bible where God “manifest’s” himself at a certain location as to draw someone to (or from) that location.
 - iii) For example, when the Israelites were in the desert, there was a “pillar of fire” that rose above the tabernacle to remind the Israelites of God’s presence. (Ref. Exodus 13:21, et.al.) (This illustration was taken from the book: “When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties” by Norman L. Geisler.)
 - iv) Getting back to Verse 8, somehow God “manifested” himself in the Garden so that Adam and Eve became aware of God’s presence.
 - b) The idea of “God being around” either drives people to God or away from God, depending upon their state of being at any given moment.
 - i) When we do something we know is wrong, it drives us away. When we are aware that Jesus paid the price for all of our sins, past, present and future, it drives us to God the Father in gratitude of what Jesus did for us.
 - ii) This reminds me of one of my favorite proverbs about the bible itself. “Sin will keep you from this book and this book will keep you from sin”.
 - a) When you are seeking God’s will for your life you are running toward God. When you are willfully disobeying God you are running away whether you realize it or not at that moment.
9. Verse 9: But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"
- a) The good news of this story is that God is always calling you back just as God is reaching out to Adam and Eve.
 - b) You shouldn’t read this story as God being angry with them for sinning. You need to read this question of “Where are you” as a loving father, in sorrow, wanting his children to realize the errors of their ways.
 - c) Throughout the bible you read of God constantly trying to get people to repent and turn to him. Especially among the writings of the prophets, you see God pleading with people to turn from their wicked ways in order to avoid some punishment to come.
 - d) Notice that God called to the man. This is about the responsibility of leadership.
10. Verse 10: He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." ¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"
- a) In Verse 8, Adam “ran” from the presence of God, as if it were possible. ☺
 - i) “Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence? (Psalm 139:7, NIV)
 - b) Notice how God is working on making Adam aware of what he did.
 - i) God was well aware Adam ate of this tree. He was working on getting Adam to realize what he did was wrong.
 - ii) God does the same for us, through the Holy Spirit and through his Word.
 - c) Man will always be accountable to God.
 - i) That goes for believers as well as unbelievers.
 - ii) For believers, it should be when we become aware of our faults that we confess them to God.

- iii) Revelation Chapter 20 speaks of two separate judgments, a 1,000 years apart. One is for believers and one is for unbelievers. For believers, God will hold us accountable for whatever information we had about Jesus and what we did with that information.
 - a) For non-believers, God judges people fairly based on what information they did have about Jesus.
- 11. Verse 12: The man said, "The woman you put here with me--she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
 - a) Here we have the first recorded incident of "passing the buck". Nobody was ready to take the blame themselves, but pass it on to others.
 - i) Our egos don't want to apologize, so we make excuses and blame others.
 - b) In the next verse, God starts dishing out the punishments. What one has to notice is that God does not even comment on the excuses being given here. They are ignored as they have no meaning. When we confess our sins, God is not interested in excuses.
 - i) "The blood of Christ does not cover one excuse to God." Corrie Ten Boom
 - c) You have to find it comical what Adam says about Eve here.
 - i) Back in Chapter 2 Adam was "singing praises to God" about this wonderful woman that God had made for Adam.
 - ii) Here Adam said, "The woman you put here with me-she gave me some fruit...".
 - iii) Now that they sinned, it is more like, "Hey God, its partially your fault. You're the one who gave me this woman in the first place, remember?" ☺
 - d) Before we get into the next set of verses, which is the dishing out of the punishments, let's talk a little about sin and the devil's influence.
 - i) The devil cannot grab your arm and literally force you to commit some sin.
 - ii) I do believe that in the same way we have the free will to choose to obey or disobey God we have the same free will to choose to obey or disobey Satan. Satan can tempt us, but cannot force you to commit some sort of sin. Therefore, Satan gets punished in the next set of verses, but so do Adam and Eve. Satan is punished for causing temptation while Adam and Eve are punished for disobedience. My point is you cannot blame Satan as an excuse before God.
- 12. Verse 14: So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.
 - a) There is an old Peanuts® cartoon where Charlie Brown was reading the story of the "Prodigal Son" to Linus and Snoopy. Charlie Brown got the line where it says that the Father killed the fatted calf to celebrate the son's return home. (Luke 15:23). Snoopy then thinks to himself, "What did the fatted calf do to deserve that?" ☺
 - i) My point of that illustration is that not only is the serpent cursed, but all animals. Notice Verse 14 says, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and wild animals".
 - ii) The idea is that all of creation is affected by the curse on Satan.
 - iii) When Adam and Eve sinned, it changed everything. Not only were they affected and Satan affected, but also all of creation had to suffer the consequences of sin.
 - iv) God gave Adam dominion over all the animals of the earth. (Genesis 1:26, 1:28).
 - v) Therefore, since we now have this sin nature, we not only have the "power" to hurt God by sin, but also others and animals as well.
 - a) Paul said, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." (Romans 8:22, NIV)
 - b) In this Verse, we get the curse upon Satan. Somehow, he has to "crawl in the dust all the days of his life". What that exactly means we are not sure.

- i) We know in the book of Job, Satan still has access to the throne of heaven. (Job 1:16-12). Despite this curse, somehow, he can get from place to place, spiritually. Despite God's curse, he still has tremendous power.
- ii) Satan, even after the curse, is a far more powerful entity than you or I can withstand on our own. This is why God tells us to rebuke Satan "in Jesus name" (See Jude 1:9) as opposed to trying to do it on our own strength. God designed it this way to keep us dependant upon Him in fighting the forces of evil.
- iii) It makes you wonder about all snakes. I don't believe Satan is visibly presence in all snakes. I believe God made them that way as word-pictures to remind us of the curse upon Satan.

13. Verse 15, 1st Sentence: And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;

- a) OK, here is the important stuff. Time to really pay attention. ☺
- b) In Verse 15, God "declares war" with Satan.
 - i) The English word "enmity" is the same root word from which comes "enemy".
 - ii) Webster's® On-Line Dictionary describes "enmity" as "positive hatred which may be open or concealed".
 - iii) God is saying in effect, "I'm declaring war between Satan and Eve and between Satan's offspring and Eve's offspring."
- c) Here, God has a "problem".
 - i) He loves Adam and Eve and wants to spend eternity in a right relationship with them. At the same time, God cannot tolerate sin of any type. If God is perfect, he must be perfect in justice as well as perfect in forgiveness.
 - ii) Therefore some sort of solution is needed as to how to have both perfect forgiveness and perfect justice at the same time.
 - iii) The solution to this dilemma, of course, is to have a perfect God pay the price for that sin. This shows perfect love as only a perfect substitute can be used for sin. It shows perfect justice, as God does not forgive any sin without justice being done.
- d) In this sentence, is the first hint of the Gospel message. There is a promise being made by God here. God is saying he will do this.
 - i) By "God saying, "I'm declaring war between the offspring of Eve and the offspring of Satan" is a prediction of a bible-long war between the forces of God and the created forces of evil. Despite every effort by Satan to stop God's redemptive plan for mankind, despite every effort by Satan even to slow down God's redemptive plan for has failed, is failing and will fail miserably.
 - ii) In a sense, that is why the bible is "so long". That is why Jesus didn't die on the cross right after Adam and Eve sinned. God wanted to show that despite Satan's best efforts to stop's God's redemptive plan, despite man's free will choice to reject God's free offer to us, that God's plans do go through.
 - iii) If you are still confused, let me get into a few more specifics and that may help.
- e) When God is talking about the "offspring of the woman", he is not talking about all children born to Eve collectively. God is talking about a specific person that will come from Eve that will be the Savior for all of mankind.
 - i) That is why this sentence has the first "hint" of the Messiah.
 - ii) When God is talking about the "offspring of the devil", He is talking about the AntiChrist. This is a man who will one day walk on the earth. It is not Satan himself. There are lots of names and titles for this guy. The "AntiChrist" is not even the most common, it is just the one most recognized. I am positive that is what God is describing here and I'll discuss it more in the second half of Verse 15.

- f) The next thing that is important is to understand the concept of “seed”.
- i) Here is a case where the NIV Bible translation of over-paraphrased this sentence.
 - ii) The NIV Version translates this sentence: “ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;
 - iii) The New King James translates this sentence: And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed;
 - iv) The word “seed” is a better translation than the word “offspring”.
 - v) Here, God is saying, “I’m declaring war between the “seed” (or offspring) of the women (Eve) and between the seed or offspring of the devil.
 - vi) Let’s discuss the phrase “the seed of the woman”, from a biological standpoint.
 - a) The word “seed” refers to the sperm cell that comes from a man.
 - b) A woman doesn’t have the seed, a man does.
 - c) My point is that there is a hint here of a future virgin birth. God is promising Eve that one day, from here body, will come a descendant that will rule as the Messiah. It is specifically saying “your seed”. God himself plants that seed as she cannot produce that seed on her own.
14. Verse 15, Part 2: He (seed of woman) will crush your head, and you (seed of devil) will strike his heel.”
- a) OK, what does that mean? What does the “seed of the devil” striking the heel of the offspring of the woman mean?
 - i) We have here a word-picture of a future prediction. In view, we have the Messiah (Jesus) and the Antichrist. The “offspring in focus ” of each of these characters.
 - ii) Notice it is “his heal”. There is a male-offspring of Eve that Satan will strike.
 - iii) To strike somebody on the heel causes pain, but one can recover and live.
 - iv) To strike somebody on the head is a life threatening injury.
 - v) One can read this as the power of the devil and the power of Jesus. Satan will cause damage and pain to those who believe, but in the eternal-perspective, the damage is temporary as we are eternally saved. If one strikes one’s heel, it affects your walk. If one sins it affects ones “walk” with God.
 - vi) The power of Jesus will “crush” that of Satan. The word picture here is that to trust in the “offspring of the woman”, Jesus Christ, is a fatal blow to Satan.
 - b) Satan knows his time on earth is limited. Further, he knew from this point forward that some offspring of Eve was going to do him damage. What does he do? He tries to destroy the offspring of Eve. In the next chapter, we read of Cain murdering Abel. Who do you think is behind that murder? You can read through the entire Old Testament and see Satan’s efforts to wipe out the nation of Israel. Once Satan knew the specific line of the Messiah, he focused his attack on the specific target.
 - c) So why is Satan still so anti-Semitic in the post-Jesus world? The bible teaches that God still has a redemptive plan for the nation of Israel. We’ll get to that in Genesis 12. In the meantime, understand that attacks against modern Israel and the Jewish people have demonic forces behind it. There is no other logical explanation.
 - d) There is a second fulfillment of Verse 15. When the AntiChrist appears, he will have a head-crushing injury in which people will assumed he dies, but he recovers:
 - i) “One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed.” (Revelation 13:3 NIV)
 - e) As to a literal fulfillment of Satan striking Jesus’ “heal”, I can’t find any detailed predictions in a word-search of the word “heal”. The best one can see from the bible is that it represents Satan’s thwarted attempts to stop God’s redemptive plan. Satan does “some damage”, (bruise his heal), but no permanent damage.
 - f) Well, we actually made it to verse 16. ☺

15. Verse 16: To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."
- a) God is now through dishing out his punishment to Satan, and now it's Eve's turn.
 - b) When my sister-in-law was going into labor and started feeling the labor pains, she told me she yelled out to my brother, "This is your fault, we're never having sex again."
 - i) In a sense, she was wrong. It's God's fault. Whether you like it or not, God is the one who ordained strong labor pains. As a male, I can't fully relate to this, but I'm glad I only got the "work the land punishment" of Verse 17 instead. ☺
 - c) So the big question is "why". Why would God do this to women?
 - i) The answer, (which doesn't help when women go through this), is that God wants to remind women (and men) of the pain sin causes. Humans are born into the world with a "sin-gene", whether they like it or not. Let's face it, life is painful and it is caused by the sins of others being afflicted upon you and the sins one committed coming back to hurt their own life. In a sense, labor pains are a reminder to the parents of the "pain" that will come to our children later in life.
 - ii) In life, the things we value the most are often the ones we work the hardest to get. I may be wrong here, but I think those labor pains help women to appreciate their children more as they have to struggle during the labor time. It is a reminder of the sacrifice we have to make for our children to help them mature into adults.
 - d) Let's talk about the second part: The second part of the punishment is that women's desire will be for their husband.
 - i) In the same way we are born with a "sin-gene", I do believe women are born with a need to have a single intimate relationship with a male-husband.
 - ii) One can suppress that need, and some women are more disciplined than others, or some are born with a "gift" to ignore that need, but that need exists.
 - iii) God created that need in order to encourage marital relationships. If it wasn't for that need, people might never get married, because of course, men are clueless. ☺
 - a) Men are attracted to women, initially based on physical appearance.
Women desire intimate relationships because they are born with that need.
 - iv) Getting off topic here for a moment, I want to discuss American politics.
 - a) As of the time of this writing, one group, statistically that votes strongly Democrat is single-adult women. Statically, married adult women are more typically split along Democrat and Republican views. Why is that?
 - b) The Democrat party emphasizes redistribution of wealth. The idea is to take from those who are most affluent and give to those who have less.
 - c) With that said, I'm about to throw out a theory as to why single-adult women are predominantly Democrat. It goes back to Eve's punishment.
 - d) Women want to be dependant upon somebody. If there is no husband to fulfill that role, they turn elsewhere. Often it is to the government. They see the government as fulfilling that need of leadership in social responsibility. If I'm wrong here, you tell me, why this particularly group, more than any other, (single men, married men/women) vote this way!
 - e) The last part of this verse says, "he will rule over you."
 - i) This gets back to the idea I stated in the last lesson, that between men and women, "somebody has to lead". It isn't that either sex is superior to the other, but one has to have the final say. God created a "need" in the women to have men be that ruler. I know it sounds sexist, but God created women with this need.
 - f) Now it's the man's turn! ☺ Woman only get one verse of punishment, men get three!

16. Verse 17: To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.
- a) First of all, there is nothing wrong with listening to your wife. If anything, it is encouraged. A man's first sense of obligation is to God, and second to his wife.
 - b) Remember that Adam was present with Eve when he ate the fruit. The text doesn't say he did anything to stop her or even discourage her. In summary, he didn't take the lead.
 - c) So let's get to the "why". Why did God curse the ground for Adam's sake?
 - i) One reason is to remind Adam, and people of how temporary life is on earth. To see the ground (work for a living) is to remind us of how rotten this life can be because of sin-in-the-world and how one day our bodies will return to ashes.
 - ii) Another purpose is for us to understand that now that sin is in the world, God is sparing us the pain of living on earth-forever.
 - iii) In sense, allowing Adam to die of old age is a sign of God's grace. Life in heaven is going to be a lot better than life on earth. Therefore, it is out of God's love that he allows us to "get old" and die.
 - a) It's like the joke about the old Christian couple talking when they first get to heaven. The man turns to the wife and says, "Honey, this place is beautiful. If it wasn't for your bran muffins and making me go to the doctors we would have been here years ago." ☺
 - b) I'm not saying God wants us to commit suicide. Just the opposite. God wants us to make the best of our time on earth and live for Him. The point is simply to remind ourselves that a better life awaits us in heaven.
 - c) For further study on this point, see Philippians 1:22-26.
17. Verse 18: It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."
- a) God is telling Adam, "go work for a living. You wanted to know what good and evil is like, and now you're going to get it."
 - b) Sin has now entered the world, and God told Adam to go be a part of it.
 - c) From these verses, God put in men a desire to work and achieve goals. Few things in life can get a man more depressed than being unemployed. It isn't the financial hardship as much as the desire that "I need to do something".
 - d) These verses condemn laziness as it suppresses man's God-given desire to work.
 - i) In balance, one also has to remember the Sabbath concept that came before man's need to go work.
 - e) Verse 18 says "it will produce thorns and thistles for you".
 - i) Thorns throughout the bible are always a word-picture of sins. They "prick" and hurt when you touch them, just as sin hurts when we touch it.
 - ii) Jesus wearing a crown of thorns on his head (Matthew 27:29, etc.) was a symbol of Jesus taking the sins of the world upon himself.
 - iii) The word picture here for Adam, is that the world is a sinful place, and he must go enter it, and be God's representative in this world. We are supposed to be "in" this world, but not "of" this world. (See John 8:23, 18:36).
 - f) Let's talk about "plant eating". By the time we get to Noah in a few chapters, God allows us to eat meat (Genesis 9:3). It is only this short-term time between Adam and Noah where they were vegetarians.
 - g) These verses teach that we do physically die one day. There is no "fountain of youth" where one can live forever. One can do certain things to extend their life, but that's it.

- i) “The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.” (Psalm 90:10, NIV)
18. Verse 20: Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.
- a) You may not have noticed, but the word “Eve” never appears in the text until now.
 - b) Until now, Adam just called her “woman”.
 - c) Maybe it’s just me, but I see Eve in bad mood because of the guilt of what she did and the labor-pain punishment. Maybe she said to Adam, “Well Adam, this is your fault you know. God did call you to be a leader and you didn’t stop me. Besides I know you love the animals more than me. You took all that time to name all the animals but you never took the time to give me a name. You don’t really love me do you?” ☺ The argument then continued late into the evening until finally she gave her the name Eve. ☺
 - d) All joking aside, why does Adam name his wife Eve here and now?
 - i) The question to ask when reading this verse, is why did Adam stop at this point and name his wife Eve? Why not earlier in the text?
 - e) As the text implies, the name “Eve” means “the mother of all living”.
 - i) The answer is to go back to Verse 15 where God declares war on Satan and says that the seed/offspring of Eve will crush his head.
 - ii) The blessing Adam bestows on Eve with the name “mother of all living” is a direct reference to the promised Messiah. In the same way (Virgin) Mary was blessed as the being chosen the immediate mother of the Messiah, Eve is also blessed as the “original” mother of the Messiah.
 - iii) The key is to understand that the text says all living. Remember that Adam and Eve didn’t have any children yet. Adam understood she would have children based on the labor-pain curse. Further, I believe Adam understood that a redeemer would come from Eve’s decedents to take away the curse.
 - a) Further, I believe “all-living” refers to all living creatures, not just humans.
 - b) Paul said, “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.”
 - c) Paul meant that all of creation is waiting for the sin-curse to be lifted, which won’t happen till the end of this time era, at Jesus’ Second Coming.
 - iv) It’s a little tough to comprehend, but this verse tells me that Adam was “saved” in the Christian sense. From an Old Testament perspective, Adam got the fact that a future Messiah (Jesus) would come to redeem the world of the curse of sin.
19. Verse 21: The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.
- a) Remember that Adam and Eve clothed themselves with fig leaves. (Genesis 3:7)
 - b) Here is God saying in effect, “I’m not impressed with your fig leaves to make up for the sin you committed. However, I do have a “covering” for your sins. Here, put on these animal skins and see how they fit”. ☺
 - c) In order to wear animal skins, animals have to be killed. The Hebrew text implies that more than one animal is killed.
 - d) The lesson here is God instituted the requirement of the shedding of innocent blood for the forgiveness of sins.
 - i) “In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” (Hebrews 9:22, NIV).
 - ii) In the Old Testament, in order for God to forgive a sin, an innocent animal had to be sacrificed. It is a visual reminder to people that when we sin, innocent people get hurt. That is why innocent animals are killed to remind us of that fact.
 - iii) Jesus became the ultimate fulfillment of that sacrifice. The Bible tells us how those animal sacrifices are always temporary and must be done on a regular basis. They “cover” those sins. Jesus actually took away the sins. (See Hebrews 10:1-10).

- e) Notice it is God-himself who clothed Adam and Eve with the animal skins.
 - i) It is a word-picture of the future work of Jesus Christ.
 - ii) God-himself (Jesus) paying the price, for their sins.
20. Verse 22a: "And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.
- a) First, notice the word "us". For those who don't believe in the Jesus as God, ask yourself who is God talking to?
 - b) Prior to this event, we can't imagine what life was like for Adam and Eve in the sense they never knew what sin was like. By eating the fruit they comprehended that fact.
 - c) They also had some understanding of "good" as well as evil in the sense that God is beginning a redemptive plan for mankind.
21. Verse 22b: "He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."
- a) This part is interesting. This sentence seems to imply that if Adam and Eve just ate from the other tree in the Garden, they could live forever on earth.
 - i) It makes you wonder if they ate of the good-tree prior to eating of the bad one.
 - ii) This "good tree" also appears in the Book of Revelation and it is described as having healing powers. (Revelation 22:2).
 - b) Back to the "why" question. Why would God not want Adam & Eve to eat of the good tree and have them live forever? Is God being mean here?
 - i) For starters, sin entered the world. If God simply removed the "curse of sin" from the earth, Adam & Eve would have said, "well, eating that fruit wasn't so bad after all. Let's go do it again". God allowed sin to stay in the world as a reminder of the consequences of committing sin. In a sense, sin had to stay in the world until God himself could pay the price for sin. There is no other solution for sin.
 - ii) God did not want Adam & Eve to eat of the tree of life out of love for them.
 - a) The world is a rotten place. If this tree of life is a true "fountain of youth" that allows one to live forever, it would be a curse on Adam & Eve.
 - b) Most adults have seen movies about people who have a special power to live forever. The moral of the story is that these people want to die, as it becomes a curse to live forever. Life here just isn't that great compared to eternity with God. That is what God wants to us to see about life-on-earth. It has its moments of pleasure and joy, but communion with God and living with God is far more desirable than anything this world has to offer.
 - c) In that sense, God's grace is shown here by saying "I don't want Adam & Eve to live forever on earth because it's a miserable place. Therefore, I won't allow them to eat of the tree of life for their sake."
22. Verse 23: So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.
- a) Back in Chapter 2, it stated how God created the Garden of Eden "to the east".
 - i) My first thought was "east of what?" There was no other geographical reference.
 - ii) I believe I now understand the answer here in Chapter 3.
 - iii) In Verse 24, Adam and Eve were now banished to the east of this Garden.
 - iv) My point. This is a one-way road and there is no turning back.
 - v) Adam and Eve, prior to creation of the Garden of Eden had to go "to the east". Now they have to go "to the east" again when they are banished from the garden. It's a one-way road out of there and there is no going back to life before sin.

- vi) The word-picture also is in the fact that we associate the “east” with the rising sun (a new day) and the “west” with the setting sun (end of the old day). It is the idea that they are banished toward a new beginning.
- b) Lets talk about the Cherubim guarding the Garden of Eden. Who or what are they?
 - i) First of all “Cherubim” is the plural form. “Cherub” is singular.
 - ii) There are about 70 references to Cherub or Cherubim’s in the bible.
 - iii) They appear to be a senior-rank of angelic creatures that guard God’s throne.
 - a) Personally, I don’t think God needs guards for his sake, it represents that Gods power is and around His throne.
 - iv) When God instructed the Israelites built the tabernacle, the most important item in the tabernacle was the “arc of the covenant”. This is a gold and wood box, and represented the location where the high priest was to “meet” God. Over this box, the Israelites were instructed to carve two gold cherubim statues on top of the box. (Exodus 25:18, et. al.).
 - v) In several places, the bible states “God dwells between the cherubim”. (Examples: 1st Samuel 4:4, Isaiah 37:16, Psalm 80:1, et.al.) They represent the “honor guards” near the throne of God.
 - vi) We do know that Satan was referred to as the “guardian cherub” prior to his fall (See Ezekiel 28:14). Satan was the top-angelic creature prior to his fall.
 - vii) In Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4 are a vision of some creatures with 4 faces and lots of wings. Most suspect this is those cherubim’s.
- c) Ok, if these Cherubim’s are so powerful, we did God put them outside of the Garden of Eden to keep Adam & Eve out? Wouldn’t a barbed wire fence be sufficient? ☺
 - i) There is a story in the bible that one night, a single angel wiped out 185,000 Assyrian soldiers to protect the Israelites. (2nd Kings 19:35; Isaiah 37:36).
 - a) The point is you don’t mess with “ordinary” angels, let alone cherubim’s.
 - ii) My point is it seems cherubim’s are “overkill” to protect the entrance to Eden. Why did God place them there?
 - iii) If you read the text carefully, it doesn’t say anything about keeping Adam and Eve out, it just says to protect the way to the Garden of Eden.
 - a) Personally, I see this as mostly about keeping Satan and his forces out. Let’s face it, if Satan is/was a powerful cherub, God created something more powerful for us to understand the power God has and Satan has.
 - b) The “way back” to Eden is to live forever.
 - c) The problem is we are sinful. Eden was designed for a sinless life. We can’t go back. Are only solution is to go forward. (You can see where I’m going with this. ☺)
 - d) The only way “forward” is to put one’s hope in one who can perfectly remove our sins with a perfect substitution. There is no returning to the Garden of Eden on our own efforts. Sin now exists and we have to deal with it. Much of the remainder of the bible shows man’s failure to live up to God’s standards and how much we need a Messiah not only to take away our sins, but also to one day rule and reign over us.
 - e) The next step for Adam and Eve was to look forward to that day.
 - f) The first step for us is to acknowledge that Jesus paid that price for us and also live our life for God as opposed to our own desires.

23. Let’s pray. Heavenly Father, We live in a world corrupted by sin. There are times it is painful and difficult to cope. Help us to keep that eternal focus and remember that all of our lives are but a shadow of the wonderful things you have planned for us for time immortal. In the meantime, help us to be a good ambassador for you as we live to do your will. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.