

A Broken Covenant

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Genesis 3:15 [NKJV]

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

This verse in Genesis 3 is the first recorded saying by God to Satan, who took on the form of a serpent in the Garden of Eden. This verse is perhaps one of the most significant statements of God in Genesis. What God said was that a man of Eve's posterity will come who will be an enemy to Satan; He will destroy Satan's purpose and goal (typified as 'head'), whereas Satan will hurt the Seed's work. This Seed (singular, capital 'S') refers to the Messiah, the Savior to come. This declaration from God of His plan to send the Messiah was spoken in the presence of the first couple and the serpent (Satan). God declared clearly that the coming Messiah will hate Satan and will nullify Satan's plan to destroy the humans. Since this declaration, Christ and Satan have been enemies to each other and Satan attempted over and over again to prevent the Messiah's coming and destroy His work of human salvation.

God announced this Messiah plan after Adam and Eve willfully broke the terms of their covenant with God. Through today's study we wish to present how Eve and Adam broke the covenant, what consequences came about because of this sin, how God dealt with the sin, and what significance this event has had to the humanity even to this day.

1. Covenant Violation by Eve and Adam

Satan was one of God's archangels who served God as one of His close assistants in the heavenly court. Satan made himself as a serpent in the Garden of Eden, approached Eve and tempted her to violate God's prohibition of the fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil [abbreviated here as 'TKGE']. Unfortunately, Eve succumbed to Satan's persuasion, took part in the forbidden fruit and persuaded Adam to join her in the same sin. As for Satan's motive of tempting Eve, some theologians say that Satan was jealous of Adam, who was created as a being above the level of angels, that he sought to spoil God's plan for the humanity. To many people the sin of the first couple was nothing more serious than eating fruits from a certain fruit tree in the garden.

However, when we meditate deeply on this incident in Genesis 3, it was not such a simple event. Rather, it was a very serious happening that has been impacting the entire humanity even until now. Eve and Adam violated their covenant with God out of their own free will, unilaterally without consulting with God or even between themselves. As a result, death came into the humans so that every child is borne to this world under the curse of death. So, we shall study in detail what happened in the garden, and see how God viewed it and what actions He took on account of this sin.

A. Terms of the Covenant

Before God created Adam, He prepared the Garden of Eden with all good things. Then, He placed Adam in the garden and gave him the responsibility of ruling over all living creatures on the earth. He gave all fruits in the garden as food for Adam but the fruits of TKGE was forbidden to him.

[Genesis 2:8-9] The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

[Genesis 2: 15-17] Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

There were many wonderful fruit trees with enticing shapes and delicious tastes in the garden. Of these the tree of life was the most precious tree, which bore fruits for Adam and Eve to take part and to live forever. However, TKGE was the only tree forbidden to them and eating its fruits would bring sure death to them, both physically and spiritually. Death did not come to Adam and Eve right away after the sin, but they died later and so did all of their posterity. Eternal life and eternal death were before Adam and Eve in the garden as physical entities of voluntary and willful choice, which would determine their future as either blessing or curse from God. God had prepared the perfect environment of blessings, wherein Adam and Eve could enjoy eternity with God while enjoying fruits of God's sustenance and life as long as they worshipped God and did their calling in obedience out of their voluntary choice.

Some people insist that the TKGE was God's trap, which He had set up knowing that they would fall into it. This is, however, a wrong, deranged logic. The TKGE was in the garden as a channel of voluntary choice of the first couple, a choice either to choose life and blessings of God or to forsake such a blessed privilege and to move out of the circle of God's blessings toward sin and depravity. Many centuries later Lord Jesus spoke the parable of the lost son to explain what happened in the garden in the beginning in an understandable way. The younger son enjoyed many good things and had all he needed along with the covenant privilege of inheritance from his father. All these he forsook and left his father's home to squander his inheritance and soon he reached the bottom of life in sin and misery. Such was the consequence of his willful choice.

B. Eve and Adam Fall to Satan's Temptation

Satan had the appearance of a serpent and approached Eve. As for their covenant with God, Eve heard about it from Adam but had not heard directly from God. God had spoken it to Adam before Eve was made from Adam's body. I wonder why Adam and Eve were not together when Satan came to tempt Eve. Perhaps if they had been together when the serpent came to tempt, they might not have fallen into the temptation. Unfortunately, Eve was alone when the tempter came and fell into his trap. Eve did not even consider talking to Adam about Satan's persuasion, but she went ahead and decided to take a fruit from the TKGE, ate the fruit, went to Adam with the fruit and persuaded him to eat it, too. As a result, both of them together committed the sin of willfully violating the covenant with God.

[Genesis 3: 1-6] Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

The apostle Paul pointed to this foolishness of Eve and laid down a lesson on the order to exist between husband and wife. The order is not one of who is superior and who is inferior but the counsel that the husband and wife must face all temptations and trials together while seeking God's counsel and help. This order and principle should be held by all married couples to ensure victories in their lives.

[1 Timothy 2:12-14] And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

C. Satan's Tactics

Now, let us review the tactics that Satan used to bring down Eve and Adam into sin.

The first tactic that Satan used on them was a lie, "You will surely not die," thus negating the truthfulness of God's word. Even unto today Satan has employed this tactic to cause spiritually weak theologians and non-believers to doubt the inerrancy and truthfulness of the Bible as God's word. Instead, Satan has been pulling

people's minds away from God by continually presenting to them the desirability of human reasoning, false evolution theory and other false scientific 'theories' that have no true foundations.

The second tactic that Satan used was another lie, *"Your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil,"* instigating them to take a step away from obedience to God. Even unto today Satan has caused many people to turn from worshipping the true God the Creator using this tempting logic, *"You can also become gods,"* and enticing them to Buddhism, Islam, New Age and various eastern meditation groups. Many young people today are being attracted to Satan's sweet words of enticement, *"Come away and become a god yourself"* into New Age false cultural anti-God traps, even among church-going youth groups. It is the same tactic that he used against Eve in the garden of Eden.

Some people protest, *"What is wrong with us knowing good and evil?"* God helps us to have true knowledge of the truths that He established in the universe through the Scripture and Holy Spirit. Bible tells us that the foundation of knowledge and wisdom is in fear of God. He has given many men and women the intellectual and spiritual capacities to discover and understand all wisdom, laws and orders in creation so as to contribute to the progress of human civilization. Most of the great scientists and engineers were either Jews or Christians who pursued their intellectual works in deep sense of wholesome respect and awe of God's infinite wisdom and intellect and were able to achieve great discoveries of God's truths, which He had implanted in His creation. And we have yet to find many more truths in this way. Let us remember that all true knowledge that we humans have come to possess has been given by God when godly men and women subjected themselves before God in awe and respect of His majesty.

[Psalm 111:10] The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

Search for knowledge without fear of God, however, yields wrong, faulty theories such as Darwin's evolution theory. Darwin was a non-believer. And what he proposed is only a theory without credible evidences. Today, the dominant trend of science is based on the evolution theory and the scientific rationalism, which lead many away from God. The so-called intellectuals and the educated elites who are filled with such wrong knowledge, are endeavoring to lead peoples of America, Korea, Europe and many other countries to forsake the free, democratic ideals and to turn to socialism and communism, which have been proven to be harmful to humanity as utter failures. We live in an era when the true intelligent people, who are equipped with true knowledge of science based on sound respect and awe of our Creator, are in full clash with the false intellectuals whose minds are warped and filled with hatred toward God. This clash started in the garden of Eden. Satan's argument promoting 'knowledge of good and evil' is the wrong type of knowledge that causes people to rebel against and disobey God and to heed Satan's voice that promotes self-indulgence and human rationalism.

2. Banishment from Eden

Some people protest, *"Just because Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the TKGE, wasn't it too harsh for God to kick them out of Eden?"* The answer that explains the justness of God's action is God's holiness. God loved Adam and Eve more than all other creation and He still extends His love and mercy toward the humanity. However, nowhere in the Bible you can find "God is love, love, love" or "God is mercy, mercy, mercy," whereas there are two instances where God is extolled as "holy, holy, holy."

[Isaiah 6:2-3] Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

[Revelation 4:8] The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

Lord God is the most holy Creator who is almighty, all-knowing and exists as He is without dependence or pertinence to any other being. God's words are absolute so that the words that come out of His mouth do not fall

void without His desired effects. When God said to Adam, “*When you partake of this fruit, you shall surely die,*” He meant it and the consequence of the sin proved the truthfulness of God’s statement. So, the first couple, who ignored God’s instruction, could not live any longer with God in the garden of Eden. They had to be banished out of God’s presence because sin could not dwell together with holy God. When I attended the U.S. Naval Academy in 1960’s, one of my classmates in our company was expelled from the academy because of violating an honor code. He lied about a couple of boxes of raisins he had taken from the mess hall. Likewise, the first couple willfully violated God’s honor code and had to be expelled from His presence.

What was so sad about their sin and its consequence was that through their willful sin they had to give up on all of the blessings from God they were enjoying in the garden and the privilege of living in the presence of the Almighty Creator God. We humans slight the value of such a privilege so easily because Satan makes us think that we ourselves are more important than God. So, the first couple’s banishment was not due to God’s fault or His mercilessness but the consequence of their voluntary disobedience and breaking of the terms of their covenant with God. The prodigal son, likewise, forsook all of his privileges in his father’s house and willfully chose the independent, wanton life of sin and depravity. We humans, as posterity of Adam and Eve, are all born under God’s curse of physical and spiritual deaths when we come into this world. But God extends His hand of mercy to bring us to Heaven where He resides.

3. God’s Promise of Messiah

Some theologians argue that God had to make an adjustment to His plan because of the fall of Eve and Adam so that the Messiah had to come as a cleansing agent of their sin. According to them, God’s plan turned awry when they sinned and it necessitated a modification, thus implying God is imperfect. Such an argument is totally devoid of true knowledge of who God is and is unscriptural. The apostle Paul explains that God’s plan for human salvation had been made ‘before the creation,’ that is, the Godhead of Trinity foresaw the human’s fall in Eden and had planned to send the Messiah as the Redeemer of their sins. Paul clearly explains this divine plan for salvaging Adam’s posterity from sin and death and providing a way for the saved sinners to become God’s children as below:

*[Ephesians 1: 3-7] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 **In Him we have redemption through His blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*

Also, some theologians posit that, since the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross occurred about 2,000 years ago, the people of the Old Testament era were not beneficiaries of His redemption. However, the apostle John states clearly that the Lamb of God was killed at the creation so that all repenting souls, including Adam and Eve, received the benefit of His redemptive sacrifice.

*[Revelation 13:8] All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**.*

Although Adam and Eve sinned, God showed mercy to them by clothing them with animal skin, thus providing for their physical sustenance outside of Eden. This animal skin must have come from sacrificed sheep, symbolizing the sacrifice of the Lamb who died for them. Furthermore, God taught them the way of coming back to His grace through the Lamb’s sacrifice. The slain Lamb was their only hope and channel of reconciling with God. What Adam learned from God he must have taught his sons, Cain and Abel. Of the two sons of Adam, only Abel feared God and offered a little lamb from his flock as the acceptable sacrifice to God as taught by his father. This worship act of Abel pleased God and he was regarded as a righteous person. We know this because Lord Jesus spoke about Abel as a righteous person some 4,000 years later.

[Matthew 23: 34-35] Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come

*all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from **the blood of righteous Abel** to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.*

Whereas God told Adam and Eve about the Messiah plan, which had been prepared before the creation, the details of this plan was not known to them during their lifetime. After the great flood in Noah's time, however, God opened more details of the Messiah plan to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We will come to learn about this in later studies.

4. Lesson for Us

Through this study we came to know in what special ways God created the man, what special calling was in the covenant between man and God, how Eve and Adam fell into Satan's trap of sin in spite of the covenant knowledge, and how Satan has been using his tactics effectively through the ages to bring humankind into and keep them in sin and darkness.

However, the most important lesson from our study is that, in spite of man's willful fall and disobedience and the consequential banishment from Eden, God taught them the way of salvation, had prepared the Redeemer, and announced them His plan of sending the Messiah to the world. This Messiah plan of God is a certain, undeniable proof of God's agape love toward the humanity. God extends His hand of love and grace to the perishing world even today, to all sinners who are outside of Eden. This is the heart of the father waiting for his prodigal son to return home, the heart of our Creator God. Let us turn from sin and misery to our Creator today. Amen!