

GENESIS

Chapter 3

The Fall

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 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.” 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” 11 He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” 12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” 16 To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.” 17 And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” 20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. 22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

3:1 *serpent*. The great deceiver clothed himself as a serpent, one of God’s good creatures. He insinuated a falsehood and portrayed rebellion as clever, but essentially innocent, self-interest. Therefore “the devil, or Satan,” is later referred to as “that ancient serpent” (Rev 12:9; 20:2). (CSB)

This a common Hebrew word for “snake.” Snakes would have been among either the general group of “creeping things” or among the “beasts of the earth” (1:24) that God created. There is nothing inherently evil in snakes. In this instance, Satan has either possessed one of these animals or appeared in their form. (TLSB)

The devil, created good and perfect, was not tempted by anyone else, but the first thought of sin and rebellion against God originated in him. (1 John 3:8) How this could be, we do not know. He and his angels fell away from God sometime between the seventh day, when all things God had made were still “very good,” and the Fall of man. (Luther’s Small Catechism – Annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler)

crafty. The Hebrew words for “crafty” and “naked” are almost identical. Though naked, the man and his wife felt no shame (2:25). The craftiness of the serpent led them to sin, and they then became ashamed of their nakedness (see v. 7). (CSB)

In Proverbs this word is used with a positive connotation (“prudent,” Pr. 12:16, 23; 13:16; 14:8, 15, 18; 22:3; 27:12). In Job, it is used with a negative connotation (crafty” Job 5:12; 15:5). Here in Genesis, the usage appears to be neutral. The main reason for the choice of this word (‘arum) appears to be that it forms a play on words with the word “naked” (‘arom) in 2:25. (TLSB)

In Paradise man had everything that he needed for the proper development of his nature and for the fulfillment of his object in life. But now temptation came to him from outside. Just as in other parts of the Bible animals are characterized by certain physical or mental features, so the serpent is here described as being cunning or crafty by nature, this fact distinguishing it from the other animals of the field. (Kretzmann)

Did God actually say ... ? The question and the response changed the course of human history. By causing the woman to doubt God’s word, Satan brought evil into the world. Here the deceiver undertook to alienate man from God. In Job 1–2 he, as the accuser, acted to alienate God from man (see also Zec 3:1). (CSB)

This first temptation was (and remains) the temptation to doubt God’s Word. Satan implies God has selfish motives, but there is no hint from Moses that God had ill motives toward Adam and Eve or planned their fall. Moses makes clear that the destructive effects of sin only grieved God (6:6). The Smalcald Articles state, “[The devil] turned Adam and Eve into enthusiasts. He led them away from God’s outward Word to spiritualizing and self-pride” (SA III VIII 5). (TLSB)

Luther points out the temptation involved directs itself against God’s Word. More specifically, it seeks to make that Word doubtful to man. This Word was for Adam both law and gospel. Adam and Eve are to be led away from its truth according to the purposes of the tempter. In this respect the temptation is a type of all temptations which the evil foe presents. (Leupold)

Disorder has its steps of digression as well. Woman eats and sins and draws man into it because he has not been a spiritual leader. By his lack of leadership he has allowed his wife to be tripped up. The downward steps continue by covering this nakedness, hiding from God. The lack of truth and the consequences of disobedience continue about his nakedness before God. Things take another step downward with blame game Adam and Eve play. Bottom is hit when the punishment is meted out.

3:2 *woman said* – By permitting His highest creatures to be tempted to sin, God was once again providing another opportunity for them to glorify Him – in this case, by consciously choosing good where the possibility of choosing evil existed. (PBC)

As soon as one does not wholeheartedly and unreservedly trust God, mistrust is gain ground and sin has entered. (Leupold)

3:3 *neither shall you touch it.* The woman adds to God’s word, distorting his directive and demonstrating that the serpent’s subtle challenge was working its poison. (CSB)

Woman adds this provision to the instructions that God had given to Adam (2:16–17). (TLSB)

Already the attitude of the heart to God is clearly seen no longer to be one of perfect trust. The suspicion which Satan so cleverly suggested was allowed to take root. To have suspicions of God and His goodness is a wicked insult of His majesty. All this, it is true, does not at once appear in its most fully developed form. The first steps on the road away from God have been taken. Here the Fall took place. What follows is the further unfolding of what lay in this first act and the full evidence of it. (Leupold)

3:4 *You will not surely die.* The blatant denial of a specific divine pronouncement (see 2:17). (CSB)

Satan moves from doubting God’s Word to outright denial and rejection of it. Luther says: “When Satan sees these beginnings [of temptation], he now exerts himself with his utmost power, as though against a leaning wall, in order to overwhelm her altogether” (AE 1:155). (TLSB)

3:5 *God knows.* Satan accuses God of having unworthy motives. In Job 1:9–11; 2:4–5 he accuses the righteous man of the same. (CSB)

The serpent does not challenge the woman’s understanding of God’s instructions, but calls God’s integrity into doubt, suggesting that real reason God does not want them to eat of the fruit is that He wants to keep them from becoming like Him. (TLSB)

your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God. The statement is only half true. Their eyes were opened, to be sure (see v. 7), but the result was quite different from what the serpent had promised. (CSB)

Note the progress of temptation having begun with doubt about God’s Word, he then moved to rejection of it, and now the serpent offers Eve the power to establish her own standard of right and wrong, to define truth for herself. The temptation to which the serpent exposed the woman, and to which all humankind has been subject since the first disobedience, is the desire to become godlike, the desire to determine our own standards of good and evil and to direct our own affairs according to our will. (TLSB)

knowing good and evil. God does know evil, not because it is part of His character, but in the sense that He understands the destructive nature of evil. So far man and woman had known only the good of God’s very good creation. In view of this, the serpent spoke the truth: by disobeying God they will come to know evil as well as good. For the man and the woman, however, the only way to come to know evil is by doing evil through the breaking of God’s command. (TLSB)

3:6 *good for food ... delight to the eyes ... to be desired to make one wise.* Three aspects of temptation. Cf. 1Jn 2:16; Lk 4:3, 5, 9. (CSB)

In her desire to gain wisdom, the woman lost sight of the fundamental truth about wisdom: to be truly wise is to believe and trust in God and to obey His teachings. This truth is summarized in the OT saying that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Temptation frequently consists of desiring something that God says is wrong. (TLSB)

gave some to her husband – We notice that in the fall both Adam and Eve abandon their God-given roles. Eve, designed by God to be a helper for the man, presumed to act as leader of the family – and spiritual leader, no less. And Adam, designed to be the spiritual head of the family, abandoned his leadership role and listened to his wife instead of to God. (PBC)

To impart the new “wisdom” to him. (TLSB)

who was with her – The Hebrew for “with her” means right there, elbow to elbow. Adam isn’t away in another part of the forest, he has no alibi. He is standing right there, watching the whole thing unravel. What does he do? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. (Wild at Heart – Eldredge pp. 52-53)

Adam joined her in disobedience; she did not trick him into eating. It is not clear that he stood with her throughout the temptation. (TLSB)

he ate – Adam must have fallen exactly as Eve had, with as little excuse, with as great a guilt. The only difference appears to be that, as Eve had eaten and apparently had suffered no ill effect, this constituted an additional argument why Adam need not hesitate to adopt the same course. (Leupold)

3:7 *they knew that they were naked.* No longer innocent like children, they had a new awareness of themselves and of each other in their nakedness and shame. (CSB)

The immediate result of their disobedience was a new experience of self-consciousness that resulted from the breaking of the union that formerly characterized their relationship with each other and with God. This feeling of separateness produced a shame that had not been a part of their experience (2:25). Luther says: “It is as if Moses were saying: ‘Satan had closed not only the eyes but also the heart of Eve through the unbelief and disobedience of all her members within and without. But after sin was allowed to enter and was committed, he blithely allows their eyes to be opened that they may see what they have done.’ Here Satan seeks to make another gain, namely, that those who have sinned should perish in despair” (AE 1:164). (TLSB)

they ... made coverings. Their own feeble and futile attempt to hide their shame, which only God could cover. (CSB)

In their painful embarrassment they sewed together the large leaves of the paradise fig tree for aprons to gird about their loins. Modesty or bashfulness naturally centers in this part of the body, requiring that the organs through which the impurities of the body are expelled, and which are now defiled for the service of indecency, be covered. (Kretzmann)

3:8 *cool of the day* – Hebrew indicates that it was the time of the day when the breeze blows, probably evening. (TLSB)

hid themselves – Just covering themselves gave physical expression to their awareness of separation from each other, so their attempt to hide from God gives physical expression to their awareness of separation from Him (cf v. 10, Adam’s response to God). (TLSB)

the garden. Once a place of joy and fellowship with God, it became a place of fear and of hiding from God. (CSB)

3:9 *called to the man* – God addressed Adam. As the head and steward of God’s creation, Adam is responsible for what has happened, even though the woman was the first to disobey God’s command (cf Rm 5:12, 15-17). (TLSB)

Where are you? A rhetorical question (see 4:9). (CSB)

Rhetorical, as with the questions God later asks of Adam (v 11) and Cain (4:9). God knows what has been done in secret (cf Ps 90:8; Is 29:15; Jer 23:24). (TLSB)

A rhetorical question meant to make Adam think about what he and Eve had done and what it had led to at this point in time. It is also a reminder that we can’t hide from God and that he looks deeper than just earthly surface matters. The passages below confirm the saying, “You can run but you can’t hide from God.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 3)

Jeremiah 17:10 “I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a Man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.”

Jeremiah 23:24 “Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD.”

Amos 9:3 “Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt Them down and seize them. Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them.”

Zephaniah 1:12 “At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish those Who are complacent, who are like wine left on its dregs, who think, ‘The LORD will do nothing, either good or bad.’”

Romans 8:27 “And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”

3:10 I HEARD YOU IN THE GARDEN – Sound of God walking in the garden. (TLSB)

I was afraid – A dread came over Adam. When we are frightened by our own guilt we often fudge on the truth and begin to make excuses as Adam does in this verse. His shame at being naked, not guilt because of his sin, moved Adam to hide. This revealed a consciousness of self as a being separated from God, which was new to human experience, parallel to the experience of separateness from each other that man and woman experienced (v. 7). (TLSB)

3:11 *he said* - God is cross-examining Adam by asking questions that begin with the outward concern and moving to the real problem of disobedience (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 3)

Rhetorical. God already knows the answer, as the next question makes clear. (TLSB)

3:12 *The woman whom... gave to with me.* The man blames God and the woman—anyone but himself—for his sin. (CSB)

Adam's answer attempts to make both God and the woman responsible for his disobedience. (TLSB)

This excuse reveals the depravity of Adam's heart, even at this early stage. For he not only tries to place the blame upon the woman, but there is even a charge against God in the words: The woman whom Thou didst place at my side. He forgets that he had hailed her coming with delight, and herself as a gift of the Lord. He indicates that the entire matter might not have taken this turn if God had not made the woman as his helpmeet. Incidentally, the loss of love which followed the transgression is shown by the fact that Adam does not call her Eva, or wife, but only that woman by his side. (Kretzmann)

3:13 *what...done* – It is a call full of reproach: Wherefore hast thou done this? What a terrible thing to do! How couldst thou be so forgetful of the command! (Kretzmann)

The serpent deceived me. The woman blames the serpent rather than herself. (CSB)

There is indeed a confession of the fact, but not of the sin, just as in the case of the man. She placed the blame on the serpent as having deceived and seduced her. What was lacking was the smiting upon the breast and the humble prayer: God, be merciful to me, a sinner! We see here the unspeakable baseness of sin, also in its invention of lies and excuses, in order to place the blame on someone else. A proper realization of its power will enable us to understand all the better the glory of God's mercy in Christ Jesus. (Kretzmann)

Exodus 32:22-24 “Do not be angry, my lord,” Aaron answered. “You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.’ So I told them, ‘Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.’ Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 3)

1 Samuel 13:11-12 “Saul replied, “When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.’ So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.”

1 Samuel 15:20-21 “But I did obey the LORD,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the LORD assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal.”

Romans 1:20 “For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Deceived me - To delude and completely seduce. (QV)

Hebrew implies that the serpent had given her a false hope, an accurate description of events. (TLSB)

3:14 *Cursed.* The serpent, the woman and the man were all judged, but only the serpent and the ground were cursed—the latter because of Adam (v. 17). (CSB)

The serpent, which had placed its cunning into the service of the devil, was the first to receive its sentence, and with it Satan, who had hid himself in this form for the purpose of seducing man. The punishment which struck the reptile was only a type of the devil's punishment. The serpent's form and means of locomotion were changed in this curse which singled it out from all animals, both those that were eventually domesticated and those that would remain game and predatory animals of the field. (Kretzmann)

dust you shall eat. † Synonymous with groveling defeat and humiliation (Ps 72:9; 44:25; Isa 49:23; 65:25; Mic 7:17). (CSB)

Serpents do not eat dust, and the Scriptures do not mean to say that they do. Parallel to the expression "eat dust" is the other more common one in the Scriptures, "lick dust," (Mic 7:17; Isa 49:23; Ps 72:9) which in every case implies "to be humbled," "to suffer defeat." (Leupold)

Implies humiliation and defeat in an ancient Near Eastern context, where defeated rulers were often forced to do obeisance by placing their faces on the ground. (TLSB)

Instead of walking upright, the serpent was hereafter to wind itself along in the dust, which it could, incidentally, not avoid swallowing. (Kretzmann)

3:15 Note movement in the text, which begins with conflict between the woman and the serpent. It then moves to conflict between the descendant of the woman and the descendant of the serpent. But, usually, it includes with conflict between the woman's descendant and serpent himself. Clearly this verse is not simply about the origin of the conflict between humans and snakes, but about a conflict that will culminate with the defeat of the serpent by One who will descend from the woman. This points to Christ and His defeat of Satan on the cross, and for this reason this verse is often called the "protevangelium" (the first promise of the Gospel). (TLSB)

your offspring – Hebrew zera, "seed" (singular form can refer to one seed or to an entire group; e.g., English, "bag of seed," not "bag of seeds"). It refers to all the descendants of Eve, but most significantly to Christ as the Second Adam, i.e., all humanity reduced to one. (TLSB)

he – Presence of other masculine grammatical forms makes it clear that Hebrew intends the subject to be masculine, not feminine. Vulgate inaccurately translates this as a feminine form (she), leading some to interpret this as referring to the Virgin Mary. (TLSB)

he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. † Although no other offspring of the woman was able to overcome the tempter, One, "born of woman" (Gal 4:4), would come "to destroy the devil's work" (1 Jn 3:8). Mortally wounded in the conflict, he nevertheless inflicted the deathblow on demonic power. Jesus Christ, Executor of God's curse on Satan and man's Champion, enables man to look forward to a victorious end of his strife with his enemy because the "God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Ro 16:20). The curse on the serpent

constitutes the first gospel, the Protevangel (Jn 12:31; Ac 26:18; Ro 5:18–19; Heb 2:14; Rev 12:1–9. (CSB)

There would be everlasting and uncompromising enmity between the descendants of the woman, on the one hand, and the devil and all satanic powers, on the other. And this enmity, which would show itself in continual warfare, would finally have its culmination in the event that the one great Seed of the Woman, He to whom the entire Old Testament looks forward, would utterly crush the head of the serpent, of Satan, while the latter, in turn, would not be able to do more than crush the heel of the Victor. To overcome the devil, to annihilate his power, that is a feat beyond the ability of any mere man; only God is able to do this. Christ, the promised Seed of the woman, born of the descendants of Eve, and yet the almighty God, is the strong Champion of mankind, who has delivered all men from the power of Satan and all his mighty allies. True, indeed, in doing so His heel was bruised, He was obliged to die, according to His human nature. But deliverance was effected, salvation was gained by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, as the representative of all mankind. (Kretzmann)

The shuph decidedly means “crush.” Luther: zertreten vs stechen. This is explained; for when man steps on a serpent’s head, a crushing results; but when the serpent strikes while the contest is on, only a sting on the heel or a bruising results. A crushed head spells utter defeat. But the same time a bruised heal may be nursed till healed, and if the bite have been poisonous, the poison may be removed by sucking or cauterizing. (Luther)

bruise his heel - Shoof – A primitive root; properly to *gape*, that is, *snap* at; figuratively to *overwhelm*:—break, bruise, cover. (QV)

Some commentators argue that the two forms of the verb used of the seed and the serpent are actually from two different Hebrew words (e.g., crush...strike in NIV). While there is some support for this among languages related to Hebrew, most scholars prefer to take these two forms as being from the same Hebrew word. The difference in the degree of injury does not depend on having two different verbs here but on the differing parts of the body being struck. (TLSB)

Luther: “Satan understood this threat well; therefore he has continued to rage against human nature with such great hatred. Adam and Eve were encouraged by this promise. Wholeheartedly they grasped the hope of their restoration; and full of faith, they saw that God cared about their salvation, since He clearly declares that the male Seed of the woman would prostrate this enemy.” *AE 1:193) Chemnitz writes; “The Son of God announced to our first parents the mystery of the promise of the Gospel which had been hidden from eternity in the bosom of the Father, (when) He gave a brief summary of the doctrine of the Gospel in Gen 3:15” (LTh 1:37). (TLSB)

3:16 *pains in childbearing*. Her judgment fell on what was most uniquely hers as a woman and as a “suitable helper” (2:20) for her husband. Similarly, the man’s “painful toil” (v. 17) was a judgment on him as worker of the soil. Some believe that the Hebrew root underlying “pains,” “pain” and “painful toil” should here be understood in the sense of burdensome labor (see Pr 5:10, “toil”; 14:23, “hard work”). (CSB)

Entire pregnancy, not only giving birth. (TLSB)

This was the woman’s burden and punishment for her transgression. Whereas without sin the propagation of the human race would have been a welcome, joyful function and all the other work of life a pleasant burden, the troubles and burdens of woman, especially those connected

with pregnancy and birth, are most severe. So woman's nature was weakened as a result of the disturbance of the normal relation between body and soul by sin. (Kretzmann)

bring forth children. As a sign of grace in the midst of judgment, the human race would continue. (CSB)

desire ... rule. Her sexual attraction for the man, and his headship over her, will become intimate aspects of her life in which she experiences trouble and anguish rather than unalloyed joy and blessing. (CSB)

Despite the pain associated with pregnancy, women will not cease to desire marital relations. (TLSB)

The order God established in creation has not been altered by the fall. Together, Adam and Eve will continue to rule over the rest of creation (1:28). God also intends that Adam remain His steward, responsible for cultivating creation (vv 17, 23), and that the husband remain the head of the family. All of these relationships will be stained by the effects of the fall. That women may experience this order troublesome and a source of suffering is a direct result of the fall. (TLSB)

3:17–19 *you will eat.*† Though he would have to work hard and long, the man would be able to produce food that would sustain life. (CSB)

Because he submitted to his wife, whereas he should have ruled, therefore he shall experience insubordination on the part of the soil, whereas otherwise he would have exercised complete control. (Leupold)

3:17 *listened to* - Adam's sin included his failure to act as head of the human community, the role God had given him. (TLSB)

cursed is the ground - Adam's role as steward of creation is taken away. Rather, the curse God places on the ground means that man will suffer in performing his function as husband, even as woman will suffer in her function as wife. (TLSB)

3:19 *return to the ground ... for out of it you were taken.* Man's labor would not be able to stave off death. The origin of his body (see 2:7) and the source of his food (see v. 17) became a symbol of his eventual death. (CSB)

Tacit condemnation to death, as God warned Adam initially (2:17), fulfilling the promise that Adam would die after eating from the tree. "Human nature is subjected not only to death and other bodily evils, but also to the devil's kingdom" (Ap II 46). (TLSB)

3:20 *called...Eve* – Both Adam and his wife received the first Gospel proclamation in silence; they believed the promise and arose from their fall with due repentance. This is shown even in the name which Adam applied to his wife, calling her "life," or "source of life," because she became the mother of the entire human race, whose propagation and life was dependent upon her. (Kretzmann)

Adam gave his wife a new name befitting her role as child-bearer. By this name, Adam expresses hope for the future through the promised Seed of the woman. In giving her a new name, he continues his role as steward of God's creation. "Eve" Hebrew chawwah,

6/17/11 – Gen 3:20-24 – Even in a negative setting God looked for His people by clothing them with skins (now these would be the death of animals). Even in driving them out of the Garden and guarding the tree of life He was taking care of their futures. We produce lemons and God makes lemonade.

Lord thank you for giving us a glimpse of the great eternity ahead by the sun rays through the trees this morning.

3:21 *clothed them.* God graciously provided Adam and Eve with more effective clothing (cf. v. 7) to cover their shame (cf. v. 10). (CSB)

Some commentators argue that God killed animals to provide a covering for Adam and Eve, thus anticipating the introduction of the sacrificial system (as providing a covering for sins), and so ultimately pointing to Christ. However, nothing in this verse necessarily implies that God killed the animals whose skins were used; they could have died of natural causes after the fall. Moreover, this verse is never treated as messianic elsewhere in the Bible. While it may be read by Christians as an allegory pointing to Christ, it is probably more accurate in this context to suggest that the verse demonstrates God’s continuing care for Adam and Eve (and ultimately for all creation) despite the judgment that He pronounced on the. Luther states: “Here Adam and Eve are dressed in garments by the Lord God Himself. Whenever they looked at their garments, these were to serve as a reminder to them to give thought to their wretched fall from supreme happiness into the utmost misfortune and trouble. Thus they were to be constantly afraid of sinning, to repent continually, and sigh for the forgiveness of sins through the promised Seed. This is also why He clothed them, not in foliage or in cotton but in the skins of slain animals, for a sign that they are mortal and they are living in certain death” (AE 1::221). (TLSB)

3:22 *knowing good and evil.* In a terribly perverted way, Satan’s prediction (v. 5) came true. (CSB)

God acknowledged the truth of what the serpent said to the woman: having done evil by disobeying God, Adam and Eve now know both good and evil. (TLSB)

live forever. Sin, which always results in death (Ro 6:23; Jas 1:14–15), cuts the sinner off from God’s gift of eternal life. (CSB)

God’s stated reason for driving them out of Eden was that now He did not want them in the sin-stained condition to eat of the tree of life. God didn’t want them to live permanently in bodies enslaved to sin, like the damned in hell; that would have made Christ’s great work of restoration impossible. (PBC)

3:23 *banished him from the Garden . . . to work the ground.* Before he sinned, man had worked in a beautiful and pleasant garden (2:15). Now he would have to work hard ground cursed with thorns and thistles (v. 18). (CSB)

to work – God intends that Adam’s role as steward of creation should continue, even after expulsion from the garden. (TLSB)

3:24 *cherubim.*† The Hebrew plural form of “cherub.” These celestial beings carry out various purposes and functions at God’s direction. They are described as having composite forms similar to the statues of winged, human-headed bulls or lions that stood guard at the entrances to palaces and temples in ancient Mesopotamia. (CSB)

flaming sword -Literally, “the flame of the sword.” Probably refers to flashes of light reflecting from the sword as it is swung by the cherubim. (TLSB)

to guard. The sword of God’s judgment stood between fallen man and God’s garden. The reason is given in v. 22. Only through God’s redemption in Christ does man have access again to the tree of life (see Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19). (CSB)

Cherubim prevent Adam from returning to the garden. Judgment upon sin cannot be undone by a human’s choice. God alone can undo the effects of disobedience. This is the first clear indication that if people were to be saved, salvation would have to come from God alone and from what God would do in the future. (TLSB)

Ch 3 With the words that God speaks to the serpent, to Eve, and to Adam after their disobedience, He sets the course for the rest of biblical history. Here there is judgment for sin, but also the first hint that the effects of the fall will one day be undone. There is no way back to Eden. The only way for Adam and Eve and their descendants is forward to the cross. The long story culminates in Jesus Christ, the Seed of the woman, but it does not end there. Today, we are part of the unfolding story. We have received God’s grace through the Seed of the woman, and now we are sent out to the ends of the earth to bear witness to the completion of God’s plan of redemption and to offer His grace in Jesus Christ to all the descendants of Adam and Eve. • O Savior, write our names into Your story, into the Lamb’s Book of Life. Amen. (TLSB)