

studies in

GENESIS

Book 2:
Chapter Two

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*Published in 1982 by Biola University
as a ministry of the Biola Hour
13800 Biola Avenue,
La Mirada, California 90639*

CHAPTER TWO

It is unfortunate that this chapter has become a veritable battleground. Critics of the Bible have attacked it from several points of view. Some say that these first two chapters disclose divergent or discrepant accounts, or that they were written by two different writers. One critic labeled them, "two chapters glaringly incompatible in details."

The critics are wrong in their conclusion. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (2 Timothy 3:16), and this chapter in the Bible is an actual and factual account of events that every impartial reader will accept as a part of the divinely inspired text, literal, historical and truthful. Concerning this chapter, Leupold says, "The use made of it in the rest of Sacred Scriptures treats every part referred to as sober fact, not as a fancy picture. Compare on this chapter the dozens of marginal reference passages found in almost any Bible." Every inch of this chapter in all of its parts is truth.

Possibly one reason for the confusion in the minds of some is the unfortunate chapter division (chapter and verse divisions were not introduced until the sixteenth century). The chapter division might somewhat disturb the inner unity and hide to some degree the idea of continuity, but this is insufficient reason for attacking the chapter as being unreliable.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (2:1).

That first word "thus" is a connective expressing a logical result of the Divine activity on the six days in chapter one. There is no way that one can escape the idea of retrospect, a looking back at all God accomplished on those six days. With the universe completed according to His plan, the Creator simply announces that the work was completed. The word "*host*" here may refer to the stars as suggested in such passages as Deuteronomy 4:19, 17:3, 2 Kings 17:16, etc., or to angels who also are called by that same term (see 1 Kings 22:19; Psalm 148:2, etc.), or possibly to both. I have not read an explicit statement in the Bible which gives the time of the creation of angels.

We come now to that much discussed "*seventh day*."

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (2:2, 3).

It is clear from the first verse that the entire work of re-creation was finished on the sixth day so that there was nothing remaining to be done on the seventh day. What God did on the seventh day was to *cease* or *desist* from work and merely *declare* finished His work of creation. Nothing had to be completed on the seventh day. The goal He had set for Himself was now finished.

As this is the first mention of the Sabbath, it must be considered in its primary meaning within the context. Its use here is limited to God and not enjoined upon man. As yet man has not appeared on the scene to receive any commandment from his Creator. When Adam did receive the first commandment from God, there is no reference to the Sabbath. This first week mentioned in Scripture, including the seventh day, is entirely a "Divine week." It is the pre-Mosaic Sabbath and it in no way applies to man in its primary meaning, however, there is a spiritual application to all believers.

At this point in our study you should read Hebrews 4:1-11. Just as God rested after His work of creation, even so the believer in Christ enters into a perfect rest through Christ's completed redemption. When God finished His creation, He rested. When the believing sinner receives Christ's redemption, then "we which have believed do enter into rest" (Hebrews 4:3). "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). We are no longer at enmity with God, but now we have peace and rest through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now I am not suggesting that the idea of a sabbath rest does not ever apply to man. Jesus said, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:27, 28). But that teaching comes later in the Book of Exodus. Here in Genesis 2 the seventh day, in its initial and primary use, applies to God.

Now the fact that God desisted from His work of creation after six days does not suggest that He is no longer concerned about His universe. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). God continues to maintain

His universe so that it functions exactly as He planned. What God created remains under His control (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:1-3).

Verse 4 commences a new paragraph and a new thought:

"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (2:4-7).

Here we meet with the first of the ten appearances of the phrase, "*These are the generations of*." The word *generations* means *story* or *history*. This is the *story* or the *history* of the heavens and the earth when they were created. The remaining nine appearances of this phrase in Genesis deal with the *story* or *history* of families.

And now we meet with another first in Genesis, the compound name "LORD God." It appears not less than eleven times here in chapter two (verses 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22). In chapter one we were introduced to the Creator as *God (Elohim)*, the strong, faithful One. There we met the omnipotent God Who by His very nature and His mighty works stirs within man a holy fear and reverence. Here in chapter two we meet *Jehovah Elohim*. In the several names of God we discover truths related to the many-sided nature of God. *Elohim* is the God of creation; *Jehovah* is the God of revelation and redemption. In some Scriptures *Elohim* is used when God is dealing with unbelievers, while *Jehovah* is employed when His covenant people whom He had redeemed and to whom He revealed Himself, are in view (for examples of this distinction see 1 Samuel 17:46, 47 and 2 Chronicles 18:31).

We now proceed to those details concerning the creation of man. It cannot be stressed too emphatically that these verses, beginning with verse 4, do not speak of a second account of creation. What appears here is a more detailed account of what is stated in a concise and summarized form in chapter one. Chapter two merely expands, enhances, enlarges upon chapter one. Chapter two does not contradict chapter one; it complements it. The purpose of chapter one is to fix all creation (re-

creation) in stages and in a given period of time. The purpose in chapter two is to amplify, to enlarge upon certain brief, broad statements made in the former. The first amplification has to do with man.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (2:7).

First, there is the *process*. Here is an explicit statement as to the process by which man was formed. God literally took the dust of the earth to mold man's body. With that lump of earth He carefully prepared a shell in which the real personality would be placed. The Scriptures will not let us forget that, even though we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14), "man is of the earth, earthy" (1 Corinthians 15:47). A chemical analysis of man's body has proved the validity of this statement in the Bible. The same chemical elements in the human body are to be found in the ground. Being made of the native stuff of the earth, man was to be an integral part of that earth. He is not adaptable to any other planet. Let this fact ever deliver us from unseemly pride. God Himself can never forget it, "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14). This refutes the false theory that man evolved from a former animal ancestry. When man dies he does not return to an animal state but to the dust from which he was made. After the fall of Adam, God said to him, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19). Evolution is dishonoring to God and His Word. Adam is for real.

Into this divinely fashioned body of dirt and dignity, God *"breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* Here God is said to bestow upon man something He did not impart to any beast, namely, His own life. There is no basic difference chemically between man's body and other animate and inanimate objects that God created, but here in verse 7 we learn why man is immensely superior. All living things have in them hydrogen, carbon and oxygen, three of the chief components essential to all life, but man only was created and made in the image of God. I have never been presented with real evidence of any kind that disproves the biblical account that Adam was the first man, formed by God out of the earth and created spiritually in God's own image. It was no mere human breath or air that God breathed into man's nostrils, but His own breath. The *"living soul"* is the real personality. This verse settles

it, then, that both the material body and the immaterial soul are the result of God's creative act.

Second, there was needed a *place* for man to live. *"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there He put the man whom He had formed" (2:8).* Man began his existence in a garden, a special area planted by God fully adequate for man's need. *Eden* means *delight*. It is no mere symbol but a definite geographical location in the east where God prepared a place of particular beauty for the first man He created. In that easternmost part of the Fertile Crescent, in the area of Eden, man got his start on earth. This sheltered and protective garden reflects God's concern and compassion for the man He created. It was a delightful and desirable place.

Third, God made every *provision* for man. In verses 9-14, we have a brief description of that provision. There were trees of every description that were *"pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (2:9).* The variety of trees provided an attractive and a delightful environment as well as fruits and nuts for man's survival. A river with four branches flowing from it was a necessary part of God's provision.

Special mention is made of two trees: *"the tree of life . . . and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (2:9),* both of which were designed to serve a real purpose. In chapter three, verse 22, where *"the tree of life"* is mentioned again, I take it that that tree would have served its purpose if man would have survived the temptation of Satan. It seems that the fruit of *"the tree of life,"* had Adam eaten it, would have enabled him to *"live forever,"* meaning to render physical death an impossibility. We do not know the physical characteristics of that fruit, nor if Adam knew its significance. We conclude from the mention of this tree in Revelation 2:7, 22:2 and 22:14 that it had much to do with good health and continuing life. Because of man's sin, the tree of life never came to be used.

Next is mentioned *"the tree of knowledge of good and evil."* Frankly, I do not know the nature of this tree. I do know that it was forbidden as stated in verse 17.

Fourth, this brings us to the *probation*. *"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die' " (2:16, 17).* Man was given great liberty in the beautiful Garden of Eden, but there was enjoined upon him one proba-

tion, one simple prohibition. This one restriction was an uncomplicated test of obedience. To Adam was given a sacred trust, but along with that trust went this simple test. Adam was created a moral being, accountable to his Creator. He was no robot, no puppet on a string. He was given the right to make choices. The probation given in verses 16 and 17 involved no hardship or sacrifice on Adam's part. Nor could it raise the question of God's love for Adam. There was the maximum of freedom and the minimum of restriction.

I found it interesting when I observed that God did not give His reason for this one prohibition. He merely stated it, evidently expecting Adam to obey it. And right here I see what I believe to be the reason for the test. Man was given a will by his Creator, and God wanted that will to be exercised in the right way. Man's will must be obedient to God's will. God is the Creator, man the created being; God is the Sovereign, man His subject; God is the Owner, man His steward. The test was to remind man that "the earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). The probation was no trivial matter, nor were the consequences of disobedience disproportionate. I will not clutter my mind with such foolish questions as "Why didn't God create a man who could not sin?" God is God, therefore, let Him be God.

Fifth, there is the *penalty*. "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" This is the first mention of death in the Bible. Here man made the wrong choice and he has been making wrong choices ever since. He continually clamors for his "human rights" but does not give any thought as to whether or not his "rights" are right in God's sight. God did not say that man *could* not eat of that forbidden fruit, but that he *should* not if he wanted God's continued blessing. Every day we live we are in a battle created by choices between two alternatives, a necessary ingredient that reminds us that we are answerable to God. When we make wrong choices, there is a penalty that must be paid. We all make that decisive "Yes" or "No" when faced with the temptation to disobey God.

The penalty for man's disobedience is death. God had said, "*Thou shalt surely die.*" The word *death* is used of physical death, the separation of the spiritual part of man from the material part which is the body. At death, the body ceases to function and returns to dust from which it was originally made (2:7 cf. 3:19). To die then, is to be separated from the body, a human ex-

perience which has come upon all mankind in consequence of sin (see Romans 5:12, 6:23; James 1:15).

We have learned from the biblical account of the creation of man that he is not only a physical being, but also a spiritual being. It is in this sense that he has fellowship with God. But just as death separates the spiritual part of man from his body in consequence of sin, even so does sin separate man from God. The day Adam sinned, both physical and spiritual death went into operation. Now death never denotes the cessation of existence. The spirit of man never lapses into a state of sleep or of non-existence. When man is spiritually alive he is in conscious fellowship with God; when he is spiritually dead he is consciously separated from God. Adam was penalized with both kinds of death and we inherited both from him. This is the general teaching of the Scriptures on the Doctrine of Death and it is always used as the penal consequence of sin.

It was as the sin-bearer that our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross (John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:24). Those who believe in Christ are made alive in Him (Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13), His life being imparted to them at the time of their regeneration. The believing sinner passes out of death into life (John 5:24). The death we died in Adam is overcome by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through His death and resurrection He overcame Satan who had the power of death (Hebrews 2:14). He Himself said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18).

But let us never lose sight of the fact that the main lesson to be learned from the probation is the principle of obedience. Our lives are limited by obedience to the Word of God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Sixth, there is the *partnership*. The remainder of chapter two deals with basic issues, the understanding of which is necessary to a study of chapter three. As a matter of fact, we are not ready for chapter three till we grasp these last eight verses in chapter two. They tell us how and why God made the woman and what her role in life was to be. Here we have the origin of marriage, the home and the family.

"*And the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him'*" (2:18). At the end of the sixth day, everything God made was said to be "*very good*"

(1:31). But now He says that there is something that is “not good.” It is not good for a man to go through life without a partner, so God originated the idea of marriage. Before Adam was ever aware of his incompleteness or his natural desires, God anticipated them and planned for them. The woman was to be a helper suited to the man, his counterpart, an aid suitable to him. That which was “not good” was not a defect in man, but of an incompleteness. If man was to achieve the right goals in life, he would need the help of a wife.

At first glance it might appear that verses 19 and 20 are out of place, for, after all, verse 21 does follow logically after verse 18. But I see a divine purpose in verses 19 and 20 having been placed between verses 18 and 21. After God announced His plan to provide a partner for Adam, there follows immediately the fact of Adam naming all of the animals. Giving a name to each species in the animal kingdom showed man’s superiority over them and the fact that he possessed the gift of speech as well as a large vocabulary. But the point for emphasis is that, after viewing and naming the animals, Adam found nothing in common with them. There was no satisfying kinship between man and beast. It is obvious that man is a special creation made in the image of God. Man could find nothing in the animal kingdom to solve the problem of loneliness. If Adam was disappointed in failing to find a suitable companion among the animals, God was prepared to meet his need.

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man” (2: 21, 22). Here is another first in the Book of Genesis, the first surgical operation under a divinely produced anesthetic, by which means God made the woman. He removed parts from Adam, flesh and bone, and with those parts He formed the wife for man. This is the first marriage and it was a true partnership. Each partner was to be the complement of the other. The union of the first man and first woman in marriage gives to us God’s ideals for this sacred relationship. No relationship in all the world is so blessed of God and so binding as that which exists between husband and wife. At the very beginning of human history, the institution of marriage was divinely sanctioned and sanctified. Adam was taught the permanency of this new relationship when he said, “*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.*” One

man for one woman (and *vice versa*), a monogamous, permanent marriage, has always been considered the ideal. Read carefully the words of our Lord in Matthew 19:3-6, where He not only emphasized the sacredness of the marriage relationship but also set His seal of approval on the Genesis record.

When Adam awoke from his deep sleep he discovered the one who could answer to his needs and respond to him with articulate speech, something he could not find among all the animals. “*And Adam said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man’*” (2:23). Adam took one look at Eve and said, “She is my very own self.” She too was made in God’s image and likeness and therefore possessed the same soul and spirit as did Adam. We know this is so from Genesis 1:27: “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (1:27).

“*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*” (2:24). I do not include this statement as a part of Adam’s remark in verse 23. It is difficult to conceive how he could know as yet those facts of life whereby children would be born and the man and woman would become father and mother. This verse was penned by Moses and came directly from God to him. Our Lord quoted these words in Mark 10:1-12 thereby establishing marriage and the home as the basic unit of the social order.

“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (2:25). Being in the state of perfection as God created them, there was no occasion to feel ashamed. Sex *per se* was not regarded as evil. God had told that first pair, “*Be fruitful, and multiply*” (1:28). Sex is the God-given impetus that draws the husband and wife together. It is a union given by God for the purpose of procreation. As we close our study of chapter two everything is in harmony between God and man. Man was still in the state of sinlessness and innocence.

CHAPTER THREE

It has been interesting to read what conservative commentators have said about this chapter. Leupold said, "This is the most tragic chapter in the Bible." Morgan wrote, "The third chapter of Genesis is one which all modern philosophy and modern fiction deny or ignore." Thomas begins his study of this chapter with the opening remark, "It is hardly too much to say that this chapter is the pivot of the Bible." McGee considers it to be "the most important chapter in the Bible." Henderson wrote, "Cut this chapter out of your Bible and the remainder of it becomes meaningless." Wood begins chapter three with the statement, "The story is basic to the remainder of the Bible." I must say that I am not in disagreement with any of the above mentioned statements.

When we concluded our study of chapter two we were looking at a perfect world, a universe that God Himself called "very good." It was a world of beauty and a world without sin. There was no sorrow, no pain, no suffering and no death. But here in chapter three the whole scene changes. Here we will learn how that change came about. And if we were to omit this chapter, we would be at a loss to comprehend all that follows beginning with chapter four. I purposely read chapters one, two, four, five and six, passing over chapter three. Do it yourself, and you too will see the importance of these 24 verses. In chapter four there is murder, lying and polygamy. Chapter five is characterized by death, and in chapter six there is wickedness, corruption and violence. How can we account for this turn of events? Where did all of the rottenness originate? The answer is here in chapter three.

First, there is the tempter. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God made . . ." (3:1). Here Satan comes into view without any previous introduction and he is the key factor in the entire drama. There is ample subsequent Scriptures to harmonize with our identifying of the serpent with Satan. I have not the slightest doubt that Satan used

the serpent as a tool to accomplish his nefarious scheme. The New Testament identifies him as "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 12:9; 20:2). I believe our Lord was alluding to Genesis 3 when He said that the Devil "was a murderer from the *beginning*" (John 8:44). Moreover, I see no problem with the idea of a spirit-being entering the body of a serpent. Our Lord stated emphatically that Satan entered into Judas Iscariot (John 13:26, 27). There are numerous incidents when demons entered into men and women and controlled them completely.

Now the question is raised, "Where did the Devil come from?" Since God created everything *very good*, by what means did Satan appear on the scene? We can find answers to these and similar questions in God's own revelation in His Word, the Bible. There is no record of Satan's origin in the account of creation in Genesis. Two chapters in the Bible shed light on this strange creature. They are Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:11-19. He was an angel named *Lucifer* when God created him, a magnificent creature, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. He was not created a *devil*; he was created a *cherub*. When he rebelled in his attempt to dethrone God and deify himself, he became the Devil. In Christ's preexistent state He witnessed Lucifer's fall (Luke 10:18). Both Peter and Jude speak of the fall of Lucifer along with other angels (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). His own pride was the cause of his fall (1 Timothy 3:6). He failed to recognize that the Creator is greater than the created being. Sin had its origin in the spirit-world, not on the earth. Our present study treats sin's origin in the human race through the effort of Satan. I assume that the fall of the angels occurred prior to the temptation in Genesis 3.

The tempter is described as being "*more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made*" (3:1). *Subtle* means *clever, crafty, elusive*. This fallen angel was a master deceiver, a creature of wisdom. There is a hint as to why he chose the serpent to approach Eve in the words of our Lord to His disciples: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). In Paul's reference to the temptation he said, "The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Here the word "beguile" means to *thoroughly deceive*. Later that same Apostle wrote, "The woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Timothy 2:14). Jesus called him "a liar, and the father of the lie" (John 8:44). It is incumbent upon us to know

something of the nature and character of Satan. When describing his strategy, Paul spoke of "the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). That word "wiles" (Gr. *methodia*) denotes *cunningness, craft, deceit*. From *methodia* we have our English word *method*. Satan's methods are clever and deceitful.

Second, we have in order the *temptation*. "And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" (3:1). At once his clever method is seen in his use of the question form. Now the question was not asking for information. Dr. Morgan says, "The words were a satirical enquiry, having within them a suggestion." And what might that suggestion be? He was insinuating that God was unreasonable and unkind in His restriction upon Adam and Eve, and that there was harshness in God's prohibition. He misrepresents to man God's true character. His approach was a masterpiece of subtlety. It was designed to create *doubt* in the Word of God and that is precisely what it accomplished. This is how sin began in the human family, through *doubting* the Word of God.

"And the woman said unto the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die' " (3:2, 3). It is apparent that the woman succumbed to the tempter's clever approach even though she might not have been aware of his goal. Her reply indicates that she is wavering. Her *doubt* was but a step to *distortion*. Here we have in the first temptation the ground of our failures, namely, the audacity to doubt the Word of God. Speaking of Satan, Paul said, "We are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Corinthians 2:11). His device with the woman was to attack her mind because the mind is a vital part of God's image in man. It is through the mind that God communicates His will to us. The apostle wrote, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your *minds* should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Satan is acquainted with the astonishing power of the mind and he attacks man in that area. If what anyone says casts doubt upon God's words, do not allow it to enter your mind. Beware of Satan's devices.

The demon of doubt that Satan used in the mind of the woman was the first step away from God. Now she is confused. In her reply she left out two of God's words, "*freely*" and "*every*," thereby making God to appear less generous than He

really was. God is exact in all He says and does and He will not tolerate any person deleting anything from His commandments. "Ye shall not . . . diminish aught from it" (Deuteronomy 4:2). I will not accuse the woman of doing this deliberately and knowingly, but this does not erase her guilt.

In her mental confusion Eve added to God's Word the unwarranted clause, "*neither shall ye touch it*" (cf 2:16). This too was a violation of a divine principle, "Add thou not unto His Words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:6). See also Revelation 22:18,19.

Finally, she made a change in God's words. God had said, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*" (2:17), but when she reported the words to Satan she said, "*Neither shall ye touch it lest ye die*" (3:3). By misquoting God she changed the absolute certainty into a mere possibility. Never take the risk of entering into a dialogue with the Devil. The Christian is no match for this clever enemy. Learn a lesson from Mother Eve whose *doubts* about God's Word led her to *distort* His Word.

Now there follows the presumptuous and impudent *denial* of God's warning. "And the serpent said unto the woman, 'Ye shall not surely die' " (3:4). God's goodness and generosity have been doubted and His plain words distorted. The woman is now softened for Satan's final blow, so she believed the lie. Where did she fail? The Christian has the answer in the words of James, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Let us not fail to see that the whole temptation revolves around the Word of God. Our Lord affirmed plainly the only position we must take when assaulted by Satan: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Satan's denial was specifically a denial of divine judgment. Throughout history, multitudes have been brainwashed into believing that man will not be judged for his sins. Paul said, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan deceives men into believing that God's Word is not true. As a result, he has sent millions to the very judgment he denied. The choice today is the same as it was in the beginning—the true Word of God or the lie of Satan. It is strange that men will believe Satan and reject God's Word.

Recently, my wife said to me, "Suppose you could get a direct

answer from God to any question you asked. What would you want to know?" After giving some thought to her question, I could only tell her that there wasn't anything I want to know. God has already spoken clearly and plainly in His Word, the Bible. I am kept busy every day discovering truth in that Holy Book. On its pages I find His will for me in the present and I know my future destiny. I can say with the Psalmist, "My times are in Thy hand" (Psalm 31:15). God's Word is all I need. My prayer is that I will not *doubt* His Word, nor *distort* it, nor *deny* it, nor *disobey* it. If there is something I need to know, I believe God will show it to me in His own time. At any cost I must be true to the Word of God. This is precisely where Eve failed.

Satan sees from the woman's reaction that he has made an impression on her and that she is softened up for his final blow. She believed his lie, "*Ye shall not surely die,*" while she rejected God's truth, "*Thou shalt surely die*" (2:17).

He clinched his argument with the words, "*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*" (3:5). The inference is that God was keeping her eyes closed. He was withholding from her something she should know. Now I must agree with the Devil that there is nothing wrong in acquiring knowledge, provided that knowledge does in no way contradict God's Word. But the knowledge Satan offered Eve was antagonistic to, and diametrically different from, the Word of the Lord. Eve was tricked into the occult knowledge of Satan's world. Satan's knowledge was made to look like a blessing when it was actually a blight. He knew exactly what the consequence would be when the woman disobeyed God. For when her eyes were opened through disobedience, she did not discover that she was like God, but she did discover what God was like.

The steps of her downfall are recorded clearly. It began with *doubt*, then moved to *distortion*, on to *denial* and finally *disobedience*. We can learn much from this first temptation because it is typical of all temptation. Here we see the great deception, for "the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Timothy 2:14).

To Be Continued

