

The Fall

Lesson Introduction

- Have you ever knowingly disobeyed a command or directive?
- What were your thoughts when you made your decision?
- What were the consequences of your decision?

Lesson Objectives

By the end of the lesson, learners will:

- Describe the motives and characteristics of the serpent in the Garden of Eden
- Reflect on the meaning of “death” after eating of the forbidden fruit
- Describe changes in the behavior of Adam and Eve as a result of their disobedience
- Discuss the consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin
- Express understanding of who God is

Background for the Scripture

Many readers of the Bible would agree that the “very good” state of humans deteriorated when they were tempted to cast doubt on the words of God. At least one scholar has indicated that yielding to this temptation of disobedience brought on spiritual death for the inhabitants of the Garden (Benware, 1993, p. 34). Other sources have cited The Fall as being one of the most significant events in the life of humankind, indicating that disobedience rests at the heart of the human fall from grace.

In the Garden, those who were created by God substituted their own judgment for that of the Creator. “This sense of pride underlies the appeal of the serpent to the woman when he tells her that if she eats of the forbidden fruit, she will ‘be like God, knowing good and evil’” (3:5) (Tulloch, 1997, p. 41). Before the woman can ask questions or adequately deliberate her choices, she falls for the serpent’s arguments and ends up suffering from the consequences.

The serpent in this account, also known as “the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev 12:9) tempts the man and the woman, and consequences are far reaching (Collins, 2004, p. 70). This story conveys the initial occurrences of shame, guilt, and suffering for humankind.

Read the Scripture

[Genesis 3:1-24](#)

Examining the Scripture

1. The serpent is depicted as a tempter. Identify details from the scripture that substantiate this description.
2. What are the possible meanings of “death” in vv. 3-5?
3. Why did Adam and Eve hide themselves from God in verse 8?

4. Evaluate vv. 12-14 and share your thoughts about that passage.
5. What were the consequences of Adam's and Eve's sinning in the Garden?

Applying the Scripture

1. Based on your previous knowledge of the Bible, where else does the serpent appear, and what does the serpent represent? Use a concordance or a Bible dictionary to support your answer.
2. How is the concept of the "tempter" still a factor in our spiritual deliberations in the present day?