

Genesis 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as... This chapter narrates humanity's tragic fall from innocence through temptation, sin, and divine judgment. The serpent's subtle questioning of God's word, Eve's addition to and misquotation of God's command, and Adam's passive participation demonstrate the progression from doubt to disobedience to disaster.

The consequences affect every dimension of human existence: spiritual death (separation from God), physical death (mortality), relational dysfunction (shame, blame, conflict), vocational difficulty (cursed ground, painful labor), and cosmic disruption (groaning creation). Yet within the curses, God provides gracious provisions: proto-evangelium promise of redemption, clothing to cover shame, and preservation of life despite deserved death.

Theologically, this chapter establishes the origin and nature of sin, the reality of Satan's activity, the universality of human fallenness, the justice of divine judgment, and the necessity of redemption. Understanding the fall illuminates why the world contains suffering and evil, why humans rebel against God, why salvation requires divine intervention, and how Christ as the second Adam reverses the first Adam's failure (Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45).

Historical Context

The serpent in Genesis 3 reflects ancient Near Eastern associations between serpents and chaos, evil, or deceptive wisdom. Unlike pagan myths where serpents might be deified, Genesis presents the serpent as a mere creature, though Satan's instrument (Revelation 12:9, 20:2). Ancient curse formulas from various cultures parallel God's pronouncements, but Genesis uniquely embeds redemptive promise within judgment.

The agricultural curses (thorns, sweat, difficult labor) would have resonated deeply with ancient subsistence farmers for whom crop failure meant starvation. The pain in childbearing acknowledges a universal female experience that ancient cultures attributed to various causes, but Genesis traces it to sin's consequences rather than divine cruelty or inherent evil in creation or sexuality.

Archaeological evidence of humanity's ancient struggles with agriculture, disease, death, and violence aligns with Genesis's portrayal of a fallen world. Ancient wisdom literature from Mesopotamia and Egypt grappled with suffering's origins, but Genesis alone provides the theological explanation: human rebellion against God brought cosmic corruption. This account would have answered Israelite questions about why their promised land required hard labor, why they suffered pain and death, and why they needed redemption.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What theological truths about The Fall emerge from this passage?

2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?
3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

Interlinear Text

מִתְּבָא אֶכְלָכֶם בַּיּוֹם יְדַעַת יְהָוָה יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ	בְּיַמִּים יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ	בְּיַמִּים יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ
H3588 doth know H3045	For God H430	H3588 that in the day H3117
		ye eat H398
		H4480
וְיַדְעָה יְמִינְךָ וְיַגְפְּקָה יְמִינְךָ	עִנְיָנִיכֶם וְהַיִתֶם	וְיַבְרָא יְמִינְךָ
shall be opened H6491	thereof then your eyes H5869	H1961
		For God H430
		H3045
וְיַבְרָא יְמִינְךָ	עִנְיָנִיכֶם וְהַיִתֶם	וְיַדְעָה יְמִינְךָ
doth know H2896	good H2896	doth know H2896
וְיַבְרָא יְמִינְךָ	עִנְיָנִיכֶם וְהַיִתֶם	וְיַדְעָה יְמִינְךָ
and evil H7451		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 28:2 (References God): Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

2 Thessalonians 2:4 (References God): Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Genesis 2:17 (Evil): 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 Corinthians 11:3 (Parallel theme): But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Acts 26:18 (References God): To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Matthew 6:23 (Evil): But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

2 Corinthians 4:4 (References God): In whom 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.

Genesis 3:7 (Parallel theme): And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Genesis 3:22 (Evil): And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Genesis 3:10 (Parallel theme): And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

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