

Genesis 3:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Analysis

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a ... 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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּרְא כִּי טוֹב בַּעַץ לְמַאֲכֵל
 saw And when the woman was good and a tree for food
 H7200 H802 H3588 H2896 H6086 H3978 H3588

לְהַשְׁכֵּן תָּאִוָּה וְנַחַם דְּלִעְיָן יְמֵה הַאֲמֵן
 to be desired and that it to the eyes was pleasant and a tree to make one wise
 H8378 H1931 H5869 H2530 H6086 H7919

עָמָד הַלְאִישׁ הַגָּם וְתָתַת מְפֻרִי וְיִאֱכָל
 she took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also
 H3947 H6529 H398 H5414 H1571 H582 H5973

וַיִּאֱכָל:
 and did eat
 H398

Additional Cross-References

1 John 2:16 (Parallel theme): For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

1 Timothy 2:14 (Parallel theme): And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Joshua 7:21 (Good): When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

2 Samuel 11:2 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

Hosea 6:7 (Parallel theme): But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.

Genesis 6:2 (Parallel theme): That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Ezekiel 24:16 (Parallel theme): Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.

Ezekiel 24:25 (Parallel theme): Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

Matthew 5:28 (Parallel theme): But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Genesis 3:12 (Parallel theme): And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.