

## Genesis 3: God's Response

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Genesis 3 is one of the most important chapters in the book of Genesis (indeed, perhaps the Old Testament), as it documents the entrance of sin into the world, and the consequences thereof. There are numerous references to this event in the New Testament, many pointing to the necessity of the death of Christ to remedy the situation introduced there. Adam's sin is parallel to the sin of every person who follows him; it is a choice we make in an innocent condition with eternal consequences.

### GOD'S RESPONSE: CURSES

When God confronted Adam, Eve and Satan, they were each cursed by God. Satan was cursed to be overthrown by the Seed of Woman (Jesus), as well as the very form in which he inhabited was cursed (consider that similar curse on Jesus and His incarnation into the flesh). Adam was cursed in that from now on life would be a burden. He would have to work to bring forth food. In a sense he was to be at war with the ground, and God promised that eventually the ground would win, as he would die and return to the dust.

Eve's curse was in childbearing. Considering this curse, the human is unique among creatures in that: 1) human babies are born utterly helpless (they need a 21 month gestation to be equivalent); 2) our babies take the longest to be delivered; 3) other animals that have dangerous deliveries are bred into that condition while we are not; 4) universally, we alone usually need assistance in child delivery. Evolutionists cannot explain this; they call it "*The Obstetric Dilemma*", as even our "*closest relatives*" (in their mind) the chimpanzee does not experience what we do: "*although evolution ought to favor low-risk, easy deliveries, this is not how it turned out for humans.*"<sup>1</sup>

### GOD'S RESPONSE: PROPITIATION

God might have reasonably chosen to wipe out our race and begin again (consider Gen. 6:6, Deut. 9:14). However, He instead chose a plan to cover over sin and restore man to Him. Key to this plan was propitiation, which is the repair of the damage of sin for those who seek God. The theme of propitiation was seen in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve attempted to cover their nakedness (their shame, symbolic of their guilt) with leaves. God would slay an animal and make skins to cover them; this represents the first sacrifice in history. The covering over of shame by the life of another is the theme of redemption, found in the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and revealed in Christ. God made the first sacrifice here; God WAS the last Sacrifice in Christ.

### FOUR DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

1. Why was the tree even there? The purpose of the tree was to establish a very core concept in the relationship of God to man. God desires that we love Him, as He loves us. Yet without a choice as to whom we love, is it really love? IF there is no alternative, is it love at all? The tree represents all that the world

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<sup>1</sup> <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/why-humans-give-birth-to-helpless-babies/>  
[http://www.slate.com/articles/health\\_and\\_science/explainer/2012/09/animals\\_giving\\_birth\\_dolphins\\_bear\\_newborns\\_easily\\_but\\_hyenas\\_risk\\_death\\_.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/explainer/2012/09/animals_giving_birth_dolphins_bear_newborns_easily_but_hyenas_risk_death_.html)  
<http://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20161221-the-real-reasons-why-childbirth-is-so-painful-and-dangerous>  
<https://www.americanscientist.org/article/why-is-human-childbirth-so-painful>

offers as an alternative to the Love of God (compare Gen. 3:6 with 1 John 2:16). We cannot love both God and the world (James 4:4, John 15:19). Therefore, the tree was necessary to establish whether man would love God or the world. We love God through obedience; thus a commandment was required.

2. Why was Satan permitted there? Absence of Satan's history leaves us without a clear answer as to the reason his presence was permitted. It is not known if prior to this moment Satan was the adversary or not. But there are examples where God permitted Satan to act in a similar manner. Consider that God permitted Satan to test Job (Job 1-2); He permitted Satan to tempt David (1 Chron. 21:1 w/ 2 Sam. 24:1); He permitted Satan to deceive Ahab (1 Kings 22:22). We know that even now similar opportunities are permitted to Satan to test us (Luke 22:31), to offer temptation (1 Thes. 3:5), and even deceive (2 Thes. 2:10-12). As temptation is important to ascertain our love of God, Satan may serve as a catalyst to reveal our hearts.

3. Why didn't they die that moment? God had said that *"the day that you eat of it you shall surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). Yet we see in Genesis 3:22 that God, almost as an afterthought (although God cannot have afterthoughts) banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden. Is this an example of God changing His mind? In fact, it is not. Scriptures make a simple point that there are two forms of death: a Spiritual death and the physical death in the flesh. We are dead spiritually the moment we sin (Eph. 2:1, Col. 2:13). The ultimate point of this death is the second death, i.e. the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15). If *"the wages of sin is death"* then we are all the more blessed to know that *"the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 6:23). Just as sinning and spiritual death is the true death before God, eternal life is the true life before God.

4. Why were they banished? Scripture states that Adam and Eve were banished because they needed to face the sting of death in sin, which could only come by the measure of physical death. But God's mercy was that He would not instantly strike them down, but by His scheme of redemption offered them the brevity of life to return to Him. A wise woman summed it up well to King David: *"For we will surely die and are like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away life, but plans ways so that the banished one will not be cast out from him."* (2 Samuel 14:14).