

The Book of Beginnings

Chapter 1

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4–4:26)

-2-

The Temptation (3:1–24)

“The third chapter in Genesis is one of the most important in all the Word of God ... Here are the foundations upon which rest many of the cardinal doctrines of our faith. Here we find the divine explanation of the present fallen and ruined condition of our race. Here we learn of the subtle devices of our enemy – the devil. Here we behold the utter powerlessness of man to walk in the path of righteousness when divine grace is withheld from him. Here we discover the spiritual effects of sin – man seeking to flee from God. Here we discern the attitude of God toward the guilty sinner. Here we mark the universal tendency of human nature to cover its own moral shame by a device of man’s own handiwork. Here we are taught of the gracious provision, which God has made to meet our great need. Here begins that marvelous stream of prophecy, which runs all through the Holy Scriptures. Here we learn that man cannot approach God except through a mediator” (A. W. Pink).

1. The Temptation (vv. 1–5): “Did God actually say?”

The devil’s appearance means that some kind of fall has already taken place within the created order. See 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

2. The Transgression (v. 6): “He ate.”

“But each person is tempted when he is lured away and enticed by his own desire” (Jas. 1:14). Adam and Eve were lured away by their own desire: (1) the lust of the flesh (“the tree was good for food”); (2) the lust of the eye (“it was a delight to the eyes”); and (3) the pride of life (“the tree was to be desired to make one wise”). “Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death” (Jas. 1:15).

“The sin of Adam was a complicated one, he sinned against light and knowledge, and when he was in full power to have resisted the temptation; he could neither plead ignorance nor weakness in excuse for his sin, it was the height of ingratitude to his Maker; it was affronting Him in the highest degree, by disbelieving His word, and thereby making Him a liar; it was intolerable pride, an affection of deity or of equality to God; a want of thought, of care, concern, and affection for his posterity, with whose all he was entrusted. In short, it included all sin in it” (John Gill).

3. The Indictment (vv. 7–10): “Where are you?”

4. The Interrogation (v. 11): “Have you eaten?”

5. The Confession (vv. 12–13): “I ate.”

6. The Sentence (vv. 14–19): “Because you have done this.”

(1) *The Serpent (vv. 14–15)*

(2) *The Woman (v. 16)*

(3) *The Man (vv. 17–19)*

“The consequences to creation ensue from man’s position of headship and sovereignty over it. Linked inseparably with his destinies, as it is crowned in his person, external nature would have shone in man’s virtue, as now it sinks in his fall. What was a gracious ordinance of God, by which man and creation were mutually honored and blessed, becomes, when permeated by sin, a source of misery and calamity. The kingdom suffers in the ruin of the king. ‘The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now’ (Rom. 8:22)” (D. Gracey).

7. The Hope (v. 20)

8. The Provision (vv. 21–24)

(1) *God clothes them*

“Now, when it was too late, they saw the folly of eating forbidden fruit. They saw the happiness they had fallen from, and the misery they had fallen into. They saw a loving God provoked, his grace and favor forfeited, his likeness and image lost, dominion over the creatures gone. They saw their natures corrupted and depraved, and felt a disorder in their own spirits of which they had never before been conscious. They saw a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and captivating them both to sin and wrath... They saw themselves disrobed of all their ornaments and ensigns of honor, degraded from their dignity and disgraced in the highest degree, laid open to the contempt and reproach of heaven and earth, and their own conscience” (Matthew Henry).

(2) *God expels them from the garden*

(3) *God stations the cherubim and the flaming sword to the east of the garden*

The cherubim are creatures that reside beneath God’s glory (Ezek. 10:10–20). They have four faces: man, lion, ox, eagle (Ezek. 1:10). We read that God’s glory descends above the cherubim (Num. 7:89). This depicts God’s glorious presence in heaven. He “sits above the cherubim” (1 Sam. 4:4). He’s “enthroned above the cherubim” (2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Kgs. 19:15; 1 Chron. 13:6). See Ps. 80:1; Isa. 37:16.

This speaks of the separation that now exists between God and man. Prior to the fall, man delights in God and in God’s moral perfection. After the fall, what was previously his delight becomes his dread.

The next time we read of the cherubim is when God gives directions for the construction of the mercy seat (Ex. 25:18–20). The cherubim are found in the tabernacle. *Jehovah Elohim* (a God astounding grace) doesn’t abandon His creatures when they sin.