

# A Study of the Book of Genesis

## The Serpent

The serpent from Genesis 3 is identified in Revelation 12:9, where it associates the words 'devil' and 'Satan' with the 'serpent of old'. The serpent that approached Eve to tempt her is none other than Satan himself. "Satan" is a Hebrew word that means adversary. He is working against God and against God's people. He is called many other names in the Bible:

- Star of the morning, son of the dawn (Isaiah 14:12)
- The devil (Matthew 4:1, Revelation 12:9)
- The serpent (Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 11:3)
- Beelzebul (Luke 11:15)
- The ruler of this world (John 12:31)
- The prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2)
- The evil one (Matthew 13:19)
- A liar and the father of lies (John 8:44)
- A murderer from the beginning (John 8:44)
- The dragon (Revelation 12:3-4)



The goal of Satan and his demons is to turn people away from God so that they are ultimately destroyed. Satan's desire is to blind people from the truth of the gospel and hinder a Christian's witness and usefulness. As your adversary, Satan and the demons employ many destructive tactics to accomplish these goals: lies, deception, confusion, sickness, envy, pride, doubt, fear, guilt, slander and even murder.

Satan himself is not omniscient, nor is he omnipresent (he's not all-knowing nor is he everywhere at the same time). He is an expert in human behavior though, based on thousands of years of observing what sorts of tricks will make people fall. Lying and deceiving worked very well at the very beginning, and he's been doing that ever since.

## Where Did Satan Come From?

Ezekiel 28:11-19 points out that he was beautiful and blameless; the anointed cherub on God's holy mountain... that is, until he became prideful, unrighteous and profane, and God cast him and 1/3 of the angels (Revelation 12:4) out of heaven. Isaiah 14:12-15 details Lucifer's pride in the notorious "I will" statements. He wanted to overthrow God!

## Sin Introduced Into the World

The serpent was successful in tempting Adam and Eve to disobey God by eating from the tree. This is the beginning of mankind's battle with sin. What exactly is sin? It defined in a most general sense as

human rebellion against God. It means personally 'missing the mark'. The Bible uses several nuanced terms that fall into the category of sin:

Disobedience - Romans 5:19 – hearing amiss; unwilling to hear  
*"God says to do something, or not to do something, and I ignore Him".*

Transgression - 1 Timothy 2:14 - a disregarding and violating of the law (even when ignorant of it)  
*"I ignore the law's demands, and in fact seek to break them".*

Iniquity - Leviticus 26:40 - that which produces guilt and demands punishment  
*"I will give heavy consideration about how I can transgress the law".*

Lawlessness - Titus 2:14 - contempt for the law and consequent violation of it  
*"I hate the law enough to be willing to break it".*

Trespass - Ephesians 2:1 - a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness; something owed, like a debt  
*"I am willing to defraud someone, and I won't lose any sleep over it".*

Ungodliness - 1 Peter 4:18 - destitute of reverential awe toward God  
*"I have no respect for God or His truth".*

Unrighteousness - 1 John 1:9 - that which is 'not right', causing defilement and pollution  
*"What I am doing or thinking is not right and I am ok with it".*

Unholy and Profane - 1 Timothy 1:9 - impious and wicked  
*"Things that are good and pure disgust me and I will make every effort to twist and make them ugly".*

Wickedness - Proverbs 11:31 - guilty of a crime; hostility toward God  
*"I do evil things because I hate God, hate His Word and hate His people".*

The main issue with sin is that it is an offense against God! It is a personal attack on the character and ordinances of God. Romans 3:23 states clearly that *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*. In other words, all people are equally guilty before God! And as such we are all equally in need of Christ's atoning work. *Source: ESV Study Bible, Crossway, Wheaton IL, 2008*

## Fig Leaves?

Adam and Eve found some fig leaves in a feeble attempt to cover their naked bodies. Regardless of the fact that some fig leaves can grow up to 12 inches long, they would never be sufficient to hide their sin from God, who knows and sees all things. And the problem with fig leaves is that they dry up and crumble into dust, typically in two to seven days. Our methods of covering our sin are similar! Any man-made attempts to cover sin will never be enough!

It would take a bloody death to cover Adam and Eve's sin. So God slaughtered an animal and used the skins to cover Adam and Eve. Imagine both of them witnessing death for the first time; one of the animals that Adam had named in Genesis 1. Which animal? Was it a lamb?

Hebrews tells us that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin (9:2). Jesus is our Lamb, whose blood was shed for us.

## The Curses

1). The Serpent is appointed to crawl on the ground (3:14). Plus, he will eventually be crushed by one of Eve's descendants, Jesus Christ (3:15); the victory over death by His resurrection from the dead. This passage is called the "*protoevangelion*" which is the first indication in the Bible of God's redemptive intentions.

2). The Woman will experience multiplied pain in childbirth (and ultimately passed down to every woman afterwards). She will 'desire' (or try to usurp) the leadership role in the family, but he will still rule over her (3:16). But this 'rule' is more of a harsh dominion and subjugation situation that was never intended for a husband/wife, leader/helper relationship. God's order for the family unit has been disrupted from the very beginning, because of sin and the resulting curse.

3). Adam's curse involved all of the natural world. Thorns and thistles from a cursed ground will grow, making man's work very laborious. Thistles are luxuriant growing plants, but useless for anything. They only make the job of cultivating the ground much more difficult. Man would work by the sweat of his brow and then he would return to the ground he came from; the very ground that was now cursed by God.

## Into The Lake of Fire and Brimstone

God prepared hell, the eternal fire, for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). And He will send them there (Revelation 20:10) as a precursor to the Great White Throne judgment, where all the people whose names were not written in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire. This is the final defeat of the enemy! The promise that Christ would overcome and crush the head of the serpent comes to its fulfillment as Satan is cast into the fire to be tormented forever. Victory belongs to God!

## Our Response of Worship!

Two stanzas of the modern hymn "In Christ Alone" are a fitting response to Christ's victory over death!

*In Christ alone, who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
'Til on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live*

*There in the ground His body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ*