



# THE STORY OF THE FALL OF MAN

## (Genesis 3:1-24)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, filling them with beauty and order. In the midst of His creation, He planted a garden in Eden, a paradise where everything was in harmony. This garden was abundant with life, with every kind of tree that was pleasing to the eye and good for food. At the center of Eden stood two special trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

God formed man from the dust of the earth, breathing into him the breath of life. This man, whom God named Adam, was made in His image and likeness. To care for the garden and to share in God's creation, Adam was placed in Eden. Seeing that it was not good for Adam to be alone, God caused him to fall into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, and fashioned a woman from it. Adam called her Eve, recognizing her as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Together, they lived in a state of original holiness and justice, in perfect communion with God and with each other.

God granted Adam and Eve the freedom to eat from any tree in the garden, except for one—the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He commanded them, "You shall not eat of the fruit of this tree, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die."

One day, a serpent, which was more subtle than any other creature in the garden, approached Eve. The serpent was Satan, who had already rebelled against God and sought to bring humanity into disobedience. He questioned Eve, "Did God really say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Eve responded, "We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

The serpent, however, deceived Eve, saying, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Eve, seeing that the fruit of the forbidden tree was good for food, delightful to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom, took some and ate it. She also gave some to Adam, who was with her, and he ate it as well.

Immediately, their eyes were opened, and they realized they were naked. In shame, they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. Later, when they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve hid from Him among the trees.

God called out to Adam, "Where are you?"

Adam replied, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

God asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"

Adam blamed Eve, saying, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

God then turned to Eve, who said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate."

Because of their disobedience, God pronounced a series of judgments. He cursed the serpent, saying, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly, you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." This promise, known as the Protoevangelium, is seen as the first announcement of the Gospel, foretelling the coming of Christ, who would defeat Satan.

To Eve, God said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain, you shall bring forth children. Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

To Adam, God said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil, you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you, and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust, you shall return."

God then made garments of skins for Adam and Eve and clothed them, showing His continued care and mercy even in their fallen state. Recognizing that man had become like one of them, knowing good and evil, God banished them from the Garden of Eden to prevent them from eating from the Tree of Life and living forever in sin. He placed cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

Thus, Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, and original sin entered the world, marking the beginning of humanity's separation from God. However, God's love and mercy did not abandon them. Through the promise of a Redeemer, the story of salvation began, a plan that would culminate in the coming of Jesus Christ, who would reconcile humanity with God and open the way to eternal life.