

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH CAFÉ: “Genesis” (Subtitled: Is there a snake in your Garden too?) Further subtitled: Lessons from the Garden! Lesson 3. (3:1-13)

Introduction: “Genesis” (“In the Beginning”) is a narrative description of the story of God. Chapters 1-11 provide the stories of creation, human origins, the “fall” of humanity, and the ensuing progress of evil – all against the backdrop of God’s enduring patience and love. Today we continue our 3 or 4 week review of chapters 2 and 3 – with each week devoted to looking at different aspects of these integrated verses.

Explanatory overview: Professor Rick Marris, in his book, *Embracing the Call of God*, p. 44, notes that the literary style adopted by the author of Genesis, described as “Ring Composition,” strongly suggests reading chapters 2 & 3 together to get its integrated message. Last week we read both chapters and then concentrated on creation’s completion in Genesis chapter 2 (with “woman” as a culminating event!). This week, we watch the unraveling of that design through deceit, and mankind’s willing subordination to the words of deceit in chapter 3. Next week, we will look at God’s punishment. The progression reveals:

- (A) “This is the account (generations)...” (2:4)
- (B) The field is unworked – no one to till the ground (2:5-6)
- (C) Humanity is given life & installed in the Garden (2:7-17)
- (D) The man prefers human companionship over beasts (2:18-22)
- (E) The man calls his companion “woman” (2:23)
- (F) Summary – “therefore a man leaves...” (2:24)
- (G) Human couple is “naked and not ashamed” (2:25)
- (H) Serpent promises – “eyes will be opened” (3:1-5)
- (I) Transgression (3:6) [*Fulcrum or turning Point!*]
- (H). The couple’s “eyes are opened” (3:7a)
- (G) The couple experiences shame (3:7b-10)
- (F) Summary – “For you are dust” (3:19b)
- (E) The man calls his companion “Eve” (life-bearer) (3:20)
- (D) The man & woman wear skins of beasts (3:21)
- (C) Humans are expelled from the Garden and denied immortality (3:22-24)
- (B) Field work begins (3:23b)
- (A) The birth of a child completes one generation (4:1)

Read: Genesis 2:25-3:1-13 completely through. The closing of chapter 2 and opening of chapter 3 are linked through Hebrew wordplay establishing a contrast that portends the change to come: 2:25 “*And the man and his wife were both naked [arummim], and were not ashamed.* 3:1 *Now the serpent was more crafty [arum] than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.*” (ESV) The intimation is that “naked” equals “innocent” while “crafty” is the opposite of innocent. Thus, we are introduced to the tragic consequence of mankind choosing to direct our own lives and decide for ourselves what is right and wrong. Chapter 3 also introduces a series of narratives with a common theological structure: sin - punishment - renewal. Scripture depicts Adam & Eve (chap 3); Cain & Able (chap 4); Noah & flood (chap 6-9); tower of Babel (chap 11). Each instance has similarities: sin = rebellion; God punishes; renewal = often in form of a child. Today’s lesson will review man’s initial “sin” (although not stated specifically as such in chap 3):

- **Re-read 3:1-5. What observations do you make about: The serpent? About the interchange between the serpent and the woman (compare Gen 2:16 & 3:2 regarding the woman’s response)? About the serpent’s answer to the woman 3:4-5?**
- **Re-read 3:6-8. Previously, the man & woman knew only the Word of God; they have now heard words other than God’s and have acted according to those words. What sequence, if any, do you see to the woman’s actions in 3:6 (compare also to James 1:14-15)? In verses 7-8, what does Scripture say happened as a consequence of the actions in verse 6?**
- **Re-read 3:9-13. What key points strike you in God’s response to man’s attempt to hide, and the following interchange that takes place between God, Adam and Eve?**
- **Key question: What do you think is the fundamental problem expressed in 3:1-13? What application do you make for your own lives as a result of your interpretation?**