



International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Genesis 3:8-17; 20-24 New International Version September 30, 2018

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, September 30, 2018**, is from **Genesis 3:8-17; 20-24**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

(Genesis 3:8) Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

As the keeper of the garden, Adam had the responsibility to teach the woman (his wife, helper, and partner), not only about the animals and birds and their names, but also about the one and only law that God had given them to obey. When they both disobeyed God, they both learned evil by experience. For the first time they experienced pain, shame, and separation from each other and God. They lost their ability to reason clearly and thought they could hide themselves from God, their Creator.

(Genesis 3:9) But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

God loved the man and the woman that God had created in His image, and they communicated in an open and natural way until the man and woman

sinned. Just as happy children will run to loving parents when they hear them come home, Adam and Eve had probably run to God, their heavenly Parent, whenever they heard God walking in the garden. Based on what the New Testament teaches about Jesus' role in creation, the LORD God could be God the Father and God the Son walking together or the One or the Other (see John 1 and John 17). God knew perfectly well where they were hiding, but for the first time (to teach them a lesson), God asked, "Where are you?" His question would reveal to them more of the nature of evil and the death of a relationship that they had brought upon themselves when they disobeyed God and did evil.

(Genesis 3:10) He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

Adam answered God honestly and expressed his new feelings about himself, feelings of fear and shame. His new experience of knowing evil, and his knowledge that he had disobeyed God and his fear of the consequences (his fear of what death might mean for him) motivated him to try to hide from God. Death means separation. At physical death, our soul separates from our body, and our body returns to the ground (to dust) until the resurrection. The moment Adam disobeyed God, he separated himself from God and that had both immediate and lasting consequences, not only for him and his wife but for the entire human race that would follow them. He immediately experienced the spiritual death of his loving and open relationship with God and the woman. The process of death began in him, and someday his human body would die.

(Genesis 3:11) And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

God continued to ask Adam questions as part of helping Adam come to terms with and understand the consequences of his disobedience. No one told Adam that he was naked; Adam's conscience that God had built within him accused him of being naked, of having something (his sinful actions) to hide, a pain that Adam thought he could cure himself by hiding a part of

himself (his skin). Adam now experienced sin, shame, and guilt, but he transferred these feelings to now being ashamed of the way God had made him physically, and he covered himself. In some sense, Adam blamed God for having made him naked. If he had not sinned, he would have been open and totally honest before God. Because he had sinned, he hid and would not admit to God, “I was afraid of You, because I disobeyed You and ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree.” Instead, God had to ask Adam directly to take personal responsibility for his choices and actions by asking Adam in so many words, “Did you disobey me?”

(Genesis 3:12) The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

First, Adam blamed God for not making him “good,” for Adam said he was naked. Adam and the woman probably hid from one another too, because they were naked and tried to cover themselves in front of one another (see Genesis 3:7). He knew that when God saw him that He would see that he had disobeyed God, so he both covered himself and hid from God. God had made the man good and God had made the man naked. Though made good, Adam freely chose to disobey God and then thought his being naked was bad. Second, Adam blamed God for not giving him a “good” woman, for Adam said that she was the one who gave him the fruit to eat. However, from reading Genesis 1, we know that God made everything good, and God had made the man and the woman good in His image. The fact that Adam had misused his abilities and blamed God for not making him and the woman “good” in his opinion revealed something of the depth of the separation between Adam and God, between Adam and the woman, and the growing experience of evil in the lives of the man and the woman in their relationships. The evil that the woman experienced led her to try to deceive her husband into eating the forbidden fruit rather than warn him not to eat the forbidden fruit because she had eaten and had suffered damaging results.

(Genesis 3:13) Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

God knew all the facts in the situation, but He examined both Adam and Eve through questions because both the man and the woman were responsible for their choices, and as their Parent and Teacher, God needed to bring this awareness to their consciousness. When Eve learned what evil was by experience, she became morally and spiritually corrupted; therefore, she wanted to involve Adam, her partner, in evil too (this is unreasonable, but it is part of the nature of evil in people — they try to spread their evil infection to others: see 2 Timothy 3:13). Rather than take responsibility for her choices, Eve blamed the serpent. The New Testament reminds us that Eve was deceived, but Adam was not deceived (see 1 Timothy 2:14).

(Genesis 3:14) So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

We know from other scriptures that the serpent is Satan. Satan later tempted Job to sin, but Job did not fall for Satan’s tricks. Satan also tempted Jesus in the wilderness, but Jesus defeated Satan when He chose not to disobey God, His Father. God knew that Satan was not teachable, so God passed judgment against Satan immediately without discussion (there is no need for us to discuss anything with Satan, who is a deceiver). God judged that Satan would have a miserable life all the days of his life.

(Genesis 3:15) And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

God declared that Satan with his demonic offspring and the woman with her children would forever be enemies (whether all the woman’s children would admit that Satan was their enemy or not). Jesus spoke about the characteristics of the children of the devil (see John 8:44). Filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul called the magician Elymas a “son of the devil” (see Acts 13:8-12). Satan and his demonic offspring do all they can to destroy men, women, and children physically, morally, mentally, and spiritually. God declared this to warn men, women, and children not to make peace with

Satan, who is evil and who would require them to be and do evil as a condition of peace with him. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is the only One who can bring true and lasting peace to people. Those created in the image of God must always fight against Satan and evil. In this verse, God speaks for the very first time of Satan's ultimate defeat. Satan would strike the heel of the Messiah, Jesus, when Jesus died on the cross. On the other hand, Jesus would strike Satan's head. Because Jesus defeated Satan and death when He rose from the dead, Jesus will someday decisively and publicly strike Satan's head. One spiritual consequence of sin is people must never make peace with Satan; people must fight Satan whenever he or his offspring tempt people to do evil. This battle will last until Jesus Christ comes again.

(Genesis 3:16) To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

A physical consequence of sin was God's direct punishment for the woman's disobedience, and this consequence will have an effect on all women until Jesus Christ comes again. However, her desire for her husband would overcome her shame at being naked before him and her desire to avoid the pain of childbearing, so the human race would continue. These consequences serve as reminders to people not to sin again, because there are natural, spiritual, and judicial consequences when people sin. There are natural painful consequences to sin, because we have violated our human nature as created by God. And there are judicial consequences to sin, consequences that God judges we must suffer for our sins unless we repent and return to faith in God and in Jesus, Who suffered the judicial consequences of sin that we deserve.

(Genesis 3:17) To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.

God did not curse the man or the woman; God designed suffering from sin to restrain the growth and spread of sin. The consequences of sin gave people a reason to fight against Satan's temptations rather than continue to follow his suggestions to disobey God. Sinners will often try to mislead others into sin, as the woman misled her husband, so believers must think, pray, and rely on God to avoid being misled. God punished man for his disobedience by making his work difficult and tiring. To survive, people would now need to fight against weeds, and struggle and toil to make the ground grow food to meet their needs. With less leisure time and more effort needed to survive, some people would be less likely to waste their time in sinful activities and the misleading of others.

(Genesis 3:20) Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

Adam first called his wife "Woman" (see Genesis 2:23). Because she would bear children, Adam named her "Eve," which can be translated as "Source of Life." God drove them out of the Garden of Eden so they could not eat of the tree of life and live forever in sin and shame. Because Jesus came to save those who had died, or would die, with a biblical faith in the true God, believers now have access to the tree of life (see Revelation 2:7; and Revelation 22:2, 14, 19). Jesus needed to come and change people before they could truly enjoy eternal life now and also live forever.

(Genesis 3:21) The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

Other than eating plants, Adam and Eve had never seen or experienced death, so they did not know what physical death meant until God taught them the meaning by experience. God graciously put an animal to physical death instead of Adam or Eve, an animal had to die for the LORD to cover them, and they saw what death meant for the first time. Their sin brought about the death of an animal (probably one of their friends or companions), and someday they would die too. They could not clothe themselves to cover their shame successfully, only God could do that with the sacrifice of an animal. They learned about animal sacrifices from God. Later, they would

make and teach their children to make sacrifices approved by God (perhaps they were commanded to only sacrifice lambs). Later, Jesus, the Son of God (also called the Lamb of God), would die to remove our sins, our guilt, our shame, and rise again to clothe us with His righteousness so we could enter the kingdom of heaven and spend eternity with God in open, honest, loving communication.

(Genesis 3:22) And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

The LORD knew that obeying God was good and disobeying God was evil. God also knew evil secondhand, after the angels rebelled against God. God never experienced evil personally by doing evil, for all God does is good and wise. God is Love and Light, and there is no darkness in God. After Adam and Eve sinned, they came to know evil firsthand by personal experience. The evil they did separated them from one another and from God. Before they sinned, they could have eaten from the tree of life forever, because that was not forbidden by God until after they disobeyed the LORD.

(Genesis 3:23) So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

God had told Adam to manage the creatures put under his authority as their benevolent ruler, just as the LORD managed Adam and Eve as their benevolent Ruler. After they rebelled against God by disobeying the only law the LORD gave them, they not only suffered the true moral guilt that led to their separation from God and one another, they also suffered God’s just discipline. From that time forward, they would no longer be able to just eat the delicious fruit hanging from the trees; they would need to work the ground to provide food for themselves to eat. Until the LORD restored all creation, they would never be able to enter the Garden of Eden again.

(Genesis 3:24) After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

The LORD sent angels, called cherubim, to guard the only entrance into the Garden of Eden (on the east side of the garden) and used a flaming sword to deter a casual or forced entry. King Solomon put gold plated images of cherubim in the Holy of Holies when he built the temple (see 1 Kings 6). Since the time of the flood in the days of Noah, the location of the Garden of Eden has been lost.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What are some of the ways sinners try to hide themselves from God?
2. When God already knew the answers, why do you think God asked the man and woman questions?
3. Why do you think the man was afraid of God?
4. Who did the man and the woman blame for their having sinned against God? How did sin have an effect on their relationship?
5. What two types of punishment did the man and woman experience? Do people today still experience these two types of punishment?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

Visit the [International Bible Lessons Forum](#) for Teachers and Students.

Copyright© 2018 by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr. Permission Granted for Not for Profit Use.

Contact: P.O. Box 1052, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083 and lgp@theiblf.com.