

# **Origins**

## **Creation and the Fall**

Lesson #6 for February 9, 2013

Scriptures: Genesis 3:1-15; Matthew 4:3-10; Colossians 2:20-23; John 3:17; Revelation 14:6,7.

1. If everything had continued as God planned, we would all still be living in the Garden of Eden. But, of course, we know that is not what happened. This lesson will trace the early history of sin and its effects throughout the universe—especially here on this earth.
2. As we know, sin began in the mind of Lucifer the covering cherub in the most holy place in heaven next to God's throne. (*Letter 114*, 1903; *7BC* 973.3-5) How such a thing could have happened is beyond our comprehension. Inspiration tells us that Lucifer desired a position and authority equal to Christ who stood, figuratively speaking, on the other side of God's throne. (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-15; *4SP* 17-24; *Patriarchs and Prophets* 35-43)
3. Then, there was war in heaven. (Revelation 12:7-9) What kind of weapons did they use? Was it a war of ideas? Satan and his angels were defeated and thrown down to this earth. (Revelation 12:10-12) Looking back on what happened to him, Satan was very distressed. He called a passing angel and asked to be granted an interview with Christ. He claimed to be repentant and asked to be reinstated in heaven. Christ wept at Satan's request but said that was impossible because rebellion was still within him. (*1Spirit of Prophecy* 29.2)
4. Soon thereafter, God implemented His plans to create this world. Of course, Satan had already expressed his desire to be a part of the creation committee. (*1SP* 17.2-18.1) Thus it was that God prepared a world specifically designed to help answer Satan's accusations in the great controversy. Human beings were a new and distinct order of beings. (*1BC* 1081.3) For the first time, God made creatures with the ability to procreate. They would thus be responsible for the little creatures they had produced and be better able to understand God's challenges in dealing with His children. Furthermore, in their joint responsibilities, they would need to learn to understand each other and work together as equals. It is God's plan that we learn to work together and get along with other people who may not think exactly the same way we do. We will need to do that in heaven.
5. Immediately, Satan demanded to have access to the new creatures. Thus, God placed a tree of knowledge of both good and evil in the Garden of Eden. This was not primarily for the purpose of tempting Adam and Eve or even to test them—although those things are true. It was primarily to provide protection for Adam and Eve. Satan was not allowed to pursue them wherever they went in the garden. (*1SP* 34.2) Satan was confined to that one tree.
6. Satan told his followers that he would convince Adam and Eve to follow them in rebellion. He believed that God would provide a plan for Adam and Eve to return to favor with God; and then, he hoped that plan might include Satan and his followers as well. (*1SP* 30.4)
7. He [Satan] shuddered at the thought of plunging the holy, happy pair into the misery and despair that he himself was enduring. (*1SP* 32.1) Satan realized that he must use very subtle means to bring down Adam and Eve.
8. God assembled the angelic host to take measures to avert the threatened evil. Two angels were sent to Adam and Eve to explain everything to them. Adam and Eve had many questions, and those were discussed in detail. The angels sadly reported to them the history of Satan and his rebellion and fall. They warned the pair not to disobey God and, thus, plunge themselves into hopeless despair. (*1SP* 32.3-33.1) Did God and those angels give our first parents sufficient warning? Did Adam and Eve really understand what would happen to them if they sinned? Had anyone or any creature died up to that point?

9. The angels warned Adam and Eve that Satan was determined to get them. They specifically warned Eve not to separate from her husband as she went about her daily activities. If separated from each other, they would be in greater danger. (1SP 34.2)
10. Satan knew that he was limited to just that one tree in the garden. He knew that if he appeared as a commanding soldier or even as an angel, they would be wary. So, he assumed the form of a serpent. In those days, serpents had wings and could fly. (1SP 35.1)
11. Eve, unconsciously at first, separated from her husband in her activities. When she became aware that they were separated, she thought she was okay and continued with her work. Did Adam realize that they were separated? Did he do anything? Suddenly, she found herself looking up with mingled curiosity and admiration at the forbidden tree. The tree looked lovely. There was no obvious evidence that it was dangerous. She wondered why God had so decidedly prohibited their eating or even touching it. Suddenly, the serpent speaking with the voice of Satan said, "Has God told you not to eat of any tree in the garden?" Eve was surprised and shocked to see a serpent speaking. (1SP 35.2)
12. She had no idea that this could be the Devil speaking through the snake. Satan implied that if Adam and Eve would only eat the fruit, they would enter a higher plane of existence, being equal in knowledge to God Himself. He suggested doubts about the fact that Adam and Eve were already created in the image of God. He wanted to create doubt in her mind.
13. What was it about the fruit of the tree that looked good to Eve? There must have been hundreds of trees with different types of fruit. Did every type of fruit look good to her? Did she somehow think that it would be good to eat? Maybe, even better than others? Eve had never before been lied to. How was she supposed to know that the serpent was lying? Eve's sin was not so much in believing the serpent but in distrusting the word of God. Before she took the fruit, did she carefully think through God's warnings sent by the angels?
14. Shouldn't God have allowed Adam and Eve to live in the garden for some time before He placed the tree of knowledge there so they could perhaps be more experienced before facing the Devil? In His foreknowledge, God knew exactly what Satan was going to do. Shouldn't He have warned Eve about the snake?
15. It was never God's plan that any human being should have any knowledge of evil. Satan insinuated that God had lied to them and was trying to keep them subordinate. (1SP 37.1)
16. In support of his claims, the serpent told Eve that because of eating the fruit, he himself had learned how to talk. He had eaten of the fruit and found it not only harmless but delicious and exhilarating. (1SP 37.2)
17. Then he handed her some of the fruit, and she took it. He reminded her that she had been told by God not to even touch it lest she die. And since she did not feel any harm from touching it, she proceeded to eat the fruit. (1SP 37.2) Then, she picked more of the fruit for herself and ate it. She imagined herself entering a higher level of existence. She quickly took some more fruit and sought out her husband. (1SP 38.1)
18. Sadness came over the face of Adam. He was afraid and astonished. He knew that Eve had sinned and specifically broken God's command. Now, he was faced with a terrible dilemma. Eve was a part of himself. He did not want to lose her. He decided to eat the fruit so that if Eve died, he would die with her. He could not perceive in her any signs of death. (1SP 39.2)
19. Eve made the mistake that so many of her modern descendants have made. She should have said to the serpent: "What you say is amazing. It is impressive to see that you have learned to speak. But, this tree has been here as long as I can remember. Let me discuss these issues with my husband and with God. If the fruit would be such a benefit to us, I will come back and have some tomorrow."

20. Then, Adam and Eve realized that the clothing of light that they had previously had was gone. They felt they were naked and tried to make coverings for themselves.
21. When God came down to speak with them, they tried to hide. God called out to them and asked several questions. Why did God ask those questions? Didn't He already know the answers? Why did God choose to present Himself as if He had the same limitations as human beings?
22. All heaven was in agitation. They were afraid that by reaching out and taking fruit from the tree of life, sin would be perpetuated forever. (1SP 42.2)
23. And then, the blame game started. Adam blamed Eve; Eve blamed the serpent and, in effect, blamed God for creating that serpent.
24. Why did Adam immediately start blaming Eve? Why did Eve blame the serpent and God? That was a brand new approach to dealing with life. Was blaming others an inherently, naturally selfish approach which started immediately when they sinned? The serpent was apparently just a tool in this whole process. Was he treated fairly?
25. Look at Genesis 3:15 (GNB): "I will make you and the woman hate each other; her offspring and yours will always be enemies. Her offspring will crush your head, and you will bite her offspring's heel." Christians have suggested that Genesis 3:15 was the first hint of a gospel message? What is it about that verse that is good news or gospel? Was God saying that humans would always hate snakes? Or, that they would hate the Devil who was behind the snake? Today, does it seem like humans hate the Devil and the sin that he causes? What was implied by the crushing of the snake's head? Humans have been killing snakes from that day until this. Is that what God had in mind? Certainly, we have not crushed Satan! How do you think Adam and Eve understood those words? Did God go on to explain everything to them in more detail?
26. Notice that before God said anything to Adam or Eve about what were going to be the consequences of their sin, He suggested that eventually they would "crush" the one who deceived them. The good news came before the bad news. Was that the first time God had told Satan what his fate would be? What did Satan think would be the result of his being thrown out of heaven?
27. Read Genesis 3:16, (GNB): "And he said to the woman, 'I will increase your trouble in pregnancy and your pain in giving birth. In spite of this, you will still have desire for your husband, yet you will be subject to him.'" Was Eve's mistake at the tree the real reason why women have pain during childbirth? Since no children were born in the garden, we do not have any record of any woman having painless childbirth. Did God intend for Eve to be "subject" to her husband? Or, did God just know that men being naturally a little larger and stronger would force their wives to be in subjection?
28. Read Revelation 12:17, (GNB): "The dragon was furious with the woman and went off to fight against the rest of her descendants, all those who obey God's commandments and are faithful to the truth revealed by Jesus." Is this a repetition of the statement in Genesis 3:15? Clearly, Satan has been especially determined to deceive or destroy God's faithful children. We are the ones who know about his activities! Why do you think so many in our world today do not even believe Satan exists? Is that a triumph for Satan's deceptions?
29. Seventh-day Adventists have believed that Revelation 12:17 applies especially to them. Aren't we the ones who keep the commandments of God or at least claim to? Aren't we the ones who have "the faith of Jesus" or perhaps are "faithful to the truth revealed by Jesus"? Is that what would be required to crush Satan's head? If we were fulfilling all of God's plans for us as represented by Revelation 12:17 and 19:10, would Jesus be able to come back very soon? Are we supposed to contribute to "crushing" Satan's head? (2 Peter 3:12)

30. In your mind, what is the most important aspect of the gospel? Is it that somehow we will succeed in crushing Satan? Or, that we will eventually have the opportunity of living together with God and developing a fuller and more complete understanding of His character and His love for us? Is all of that implied in Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:17?
31. Isn't the gospel more than just freedom from condemnation? If God removes the death sentence which is a natural consequence of sin, (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23) has He changed the rules of the game? Or, will sin always result in death? If we are not to die, what will happen to us? If we never die, isn't that implying that we will live forever with God?
32. Read Revelation 14:6,7. These verses imply that the God who created everything deserves our worship and praise. And that message is supposed to spread all over the earth until it reaches everyone. Is it good news to know that God's judgment is coming? What is the "eternal message of good news" that we are supposed to be announcing to the whole earth? Is it the truth about God's character, His government, and how He runs the universe? Or, is it primarily that we will crush the head of Satan?
33. How often are we deceived by our senses? Apparently, Eve was deceived by what appeared to be delicious fruit which had seemingly given the serpent the ability to speak. We have often suggested that "seeing is believing." Is that a reliable statement? What will Satan do at the end of time to deceive our senses? In our day, why is Satan apparently trying to convince people that he does not even exist? If you do not believe the Devil exists and then he or one of his agents appears and performs apparently unexplainable miracles, the only option you have is to attribute those miracles to God. That is exactly what Satan wants.
34. So, how do we protect ourselves against the deception of the senses? "None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great [594] conflict." (GC 593.2)
35. Eve was attracted by the fruit and tree and deceived by a speaking serpent. Why is sin attractive to us? What makes sin attractive in our day? Can we reduce our attraction to sin in any way? Is sin nothing more than an appeal to our selfishness? Satan wants us to believe that a brief period of sinful pleasure cannot be so serious.
36. What should be our ultimate criteria for deciding what is truth? If we cannot trust our senses, what can we trust? No doubt, through the serpent Satan implied to Eve that since everything God had created was good, then surely this tree must be fine. Satan deceived Eve into thinking that by eating of the fruit, she could grow closer to and more like God. Will Satan use those kinds of arguments against us at the end of time? In what ways might he suggest that we can come closer to God? Could it be through experiences such as speaking in tongues? Through experiencing apparent miracles which are actually happening through the power of Satan?
37. Our experience at the end is going to be something like Jesus' experience on the cross. Every sensation and physical input suggested that He had been abandoned and that He was going to be dying and remaining dead forever. His only safety was in trusting His Father's Word that had been given Him earlier. Have we reached the place where God's Word is so important to us and so well known that when even the slightest hint that departs from that Holy Word is suggested to us, we will reject it? What kind of temptations do you expect Satan to come up with in his final attempt to deceive God's true people? Will we be among the deceived?

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