

## Chapter 3: Separated From God

The key to understanding this world and the role of Jesus Christ is that we have become separated from God by our “sinfulness:”

- “And you, who once were **alienated**<sup>G526</sup> and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight” (Colossians 1:21-22)
  - alienated<sup>G526</sup> to *estrangle* [i.e. separated]

And what is sin? According to the Bible anything that “falls short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). More about that later.

- Whether we take the Biblical story of the Garden of Eden literally or figuratively, the result is the same. God said to Adam & Eve that they could eat of every tree in the Garden except one, the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” and warned them that if they did they would “surely die.”

When first created, humans knew no evil. However, with free will, they had a choice. The Bible says that Satan, the devil, a “fallen” angel (see Chapter XX for more information about the devil) tempted Eve through deception saying that God didn’t want them to eat of that tree or else they would become gods like Him. So Eve ate and gave it to her husband to also eat. The Bible says that Adam’s sin was worse because Eve was deceived whereas he willfully disobeyed

- Humanity became sinful and turned away from God (what Christians call the “fall”) and so we live now in a “fallen” world. Humanity was kicked out of the Garden and into a world where we are removed from God’s presence.
- The sinfulness of humankind was so great, that God eventually got tired of it all and wiped all of humanity off the face of the earth except for Noah and his family (eight people in all). Then He promised never to do it again, and created the rainbow as the symbol of His promise.

But again, sin overtook humanity, so God tried again by creating a separate group of people to whom He gave special instructions and attention – the Jews. They are not literally the “chosen people” because God did not choose a particular group of people out of all the people groups then in existence.

- The Jews did not exist as a people until they were fathered through Abraham.....

So, we are now born with the “sinful nature” which we inherit from our ancestors. In addition, God cursed humanity and this world as a result of the direct disobedience in the Garden. He had said we would “surely die” and we do. In the Garden was the “tree of life” so that as first created humans lived forever. True to His word, not anymore.

- In addition, He cursed men to have to work “by the sweat of their brow” to provide sustenance for their families. In the Garden the food was there for the taking.
- God cursed women to now deliver children in “pain” (not so originally), to be afflicted with “sorrows” (hence they are more emotional) and that their husbands were to rule over them (not God’s original plan where women were created as complimentary equals).
- And finally, God cursed the world to be overcome with “thorns and thistles” (so although we can still see much of the majestic beauty He originally created, we also see weeds and deserts and barrenness).

It is as if we were sentenced to prison, marooned on this planet. To make matters worse, the devil is the warden and we have to play by his rules.

- The Bible says that Satan is the “god of this world” and the “prince of the air”. Satan then has the audacity to blame God for the conditions here on earth in order to deflect attention and responsibility from himself. Instead, God is no longer here – except when we accept His Son as our Lord and Savior and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (see Chapter XX: Born Again).