

**The Curse on Man**  
**Genesis 3:17-19**  
**November 13, 2016**

**Genesis 3:17-19** *To Adam He said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. **18** It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **19** By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

**I. Reason For Curse (17a)**

- To Adam
  - First time God has called Adam by name
  - Adam: Hebrew word means man
  - Up to this point, it was always "the man" or "the adam"
- You have listened to your wife

**Genesis 3:6** *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

- We know that Adam was not deceived

**1 Timothy 2:14a** *And Adam was not the one deceived;*

- He was not deceived by Satan
- Adam sinned because he listened to his wife
  - He chose to listen to wife over the clear command of God
  - God clearly commanded man and woman not to eat of the tree
  - Adam was not confused about what God had said
    - He willfully and premeditatedly disobeyed God
    - Abraham did the same thing

**Genesis 15:2-4** *But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can You give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" **3** And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." **4** Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir."*

**Genesis 16:1-2** *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; **2** so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said.*

- Adam's disobedience placed the whole human race into sin

## II. Curse On Man (17b-19)

- The curse is not directly on man himself
  - Same as woman
  - The woman's curse was in her home
    - Her relationship with her children and husband
  - The curse on the ground—where man works
- The curse on the ground
  - Thorns and thistles, and eat the plants of the field
    - Before the Fall
      - There were no thorns or thistles and plants of the field

**Genesis 2:5** *and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground,*

- What are these shrubs and plants?
  - These plants have not been found yet on earth
  - These are plants that appeared after the fall
  - Hebrew words
    - Shrubs = *siyach*
    - Plants = *eseb*
  - Same order of words as **Genesis 3:18**
    - Shrubs = thorns and thistles
    - Plants = planted crops (wheat, barley, rye, oats, etc)
- Why no shrubs and plants?
  - Remember during creation everything was perfect
  - Nothing to spoil creation or hard work to make things grow
  - Thorns and thistles are weeds—there were no weeds during this time
  - Cultivated plants did not appear
    - They were both dependent on rain and cultivation
- After the Fall
  - Everything changed
  - Weeds grew in place where the food is—choking it
  - Many problems arose
    - Lack of water
    - Soil
    - Weed
    - Animals (mammals, birds, bugs)
    - Weather
  - To get food from the ground...work became harder
- The cursed labor
  - Now it is painful toil—hard work
    - Very little enjoyment from work
    - Constant struggle
  - Hard work with much effort
    - Before the Fall, there was no effort for Adam in work
    - It was a joy to work
  - Even though the ground is cursed, it is still able to produce food in abundance
    - However, man has to exert tremendous effort to get the food

- To live or eat, one must work

**Proverbs 16:26** *The laborer's appetite works for him; his hunger drives him on.*

**2 Thessalonians 3:10** *For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."*

- Work is constant and seems no end or benefit

**Ecclesiastes 2:23** *All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless.*

**Ecclesiastes 3:9** *What does the worker gain from his toil?*

- Work to gain everything, and then die to leave all wealth to another

**Ecclesiastes 2:17-19** *So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. **18** I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. **19** And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless.*

- Continuous, repetitive work
  - Full of sweat
  - We work and sweat to get food from the ground
  - Then we eat it, then we go back to work to get more food from the ground
  - Every day until we die
- Tragic result of life...death
  - To the dust we will return
  - Punishment for man's disobedience
  - Adam brought death and decay to the whole creation

### III. Relief Of Curse

- Millennial reversal of the curse

**Ezekiel 47:1-2, 6-12** *The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. **2** He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was flowing from the south side.*

**6** He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river. **7** When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. **8** He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh. **9** Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. **10** Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Great Sea. **11** But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. **12** Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every

*month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing."*

- Work to the Lord
  - The curse brought toil and meaningless to work
  - However in Christ, our work becomes eternally meaningful
  - God has given us work

***Ecclesiastes 3:13*** and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor--it is the gift of God.

- It is better to work than to do nothing
- His labor is easy

***Matthew 11:30*** For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

- He created us to do good works!

***Ephesians 2:10*** For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- Work is a place where we can share our salvation
  - Even though Paul uses "slave", this applies to all employer-employee relationships

***Titus 2:9-10*** Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, **10** and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

- Our work is an act of worship

***Colossians 3:22-24*** Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. **23** Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, **24** since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

***Ephesians 6:5-6*** Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. **6** Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.

- Work is a place where we serve Christ
- Our work brings honor to God
- We will receive an inheritance from God