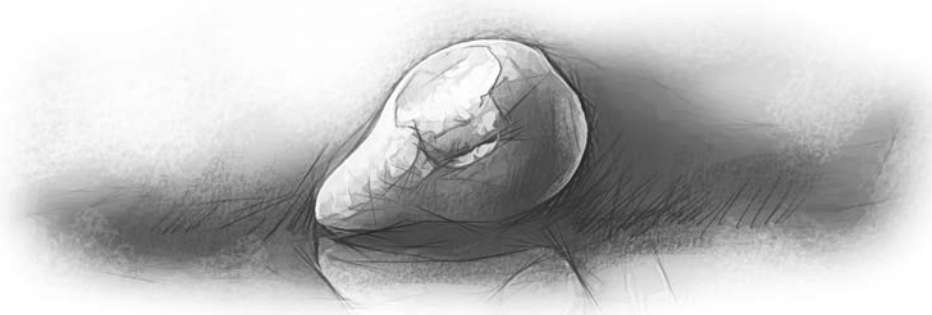


The Fall



SABBATH—APRIL 2

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 3:1; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:7–9; Genesis 2:16, 17; Genesis 3:7–13.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. You will bite her child’s foot, but he will crush [destroy] your head’ ” (Genesis 3:15, ERV).



God sends Adam and Eve away with a promise of hope.

GOD GAVE ADAM AND EVE many gifts. Along with these gifts, God also gave our first parents a warning: “ ‘You may eat from any tree in the garden. But you must not eat from the tree that gives knowledge about good and evil. If you eat fruit from that tree, on that day you will certainly [for sure] die!’ ” (Genesis 2:16, 17, ERV). This warning shows us that God never wanted our first parents to know anything about evil. God wanted Adam and Eve to know only about good.

We all have been hurt by sin and evil in this life. So, we can understand why God never wanted Adam and Eve to know anything about it, right?

Adam and Eve must die (Genesis 3:19) because they disobey the command from God (Genesis 2:17). God no longer will allow Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of life. If they do, they will live forever as sinners (Genesis 3:22). So, God tells our first parents to leave the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24).

But God sends Adam and Eve away with a promise of hope. We see this promise in Genesis 3:15. Genesis 3:15 is the first promise about the Good News. God promises all of us a way to escape the punishment of sin and death.

THE SNAKE (Genesis 3:1)

Who is the snake? How does the snake trick Eve? For the answers, read Genesis 3:1; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and Revelation 12:7–9.

Genesis 3:1 starts with these words: “the snake” (ERV). Moses put the word “snake” at the beginning of the sentence so we will pay attention to it. The first word of a sentence is always important. So, we see that the snake will have an important part in the story. Also, do you see that Moses wrote “**the** snake” and not “**a** snake”? The word “the” shows us that the snake is someone we already know. So, Moses shows us from the first word of Genesis 3 that the snake is someone real and not a make-believe person.

The Bible also shows us that the snake is the enemy of God (Isaiah 27:1). The Bible also names the snake “the devil or Satan” (Revelation 12:9, ERV). During Bible times, people in the Near East believed that the snake was a word picture for evil.

“Satan did not want Eve to discover his evil plan. So, Satan chose to hide who he really was. Satan chose to show himself to Eve in the body of the snake. The snake was the perfect animal for Satan to use to trick Eve. At that time, the snake was one of the smartest and most beautiful animals on the earth. The snake had wings. When the snake flew through the air, it shined as bright as polished gold.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 53, adapted.

The snake pretends to be friends with God, and not His enemy. How does the snake do this? The snake says the words of God to the woman. He acts as if he supports the commandments of God. When we read what the snake says, we see that Satan likes to say the words of God. In the New Testament, we will see that Satan knows the Bible very well (Matthew 4:6).

Do you also see that Satan does not start arguing with Eve? First, he asks her a question. The question tricks Eve into thinking that the snake believes the command of the Lord. “‘Did God really say . . . ?’” (Genesis 3:1, NIV). But the snake really does not believe God at all. So, we see that Satan is very sneaky and tricky. As we will soon see, Satan fooled Eve.

If Satan tricked perfect Eve in a perfect Eden, how can Satan trick us today, too? How can we protect ourselves against Satan’s tricks and lies?



During Bible times, people in the Near East believed that the snake was a word picture for evil.

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT (Genesis 2:16, 17)

Read the commandment from God to Adam in Genesis 2:16, 17. Compare this commandment with the words that the snake says to the woman in Genesis 3:1–6. How are the words of God different from the words of the snake? What important Bible truths do your answers show you?



The snake asks the question in a sneaky way. He wants to confuse Eve.

Do you see that Satan talks to Eve (Genesis 3:1–6) in much the same way God talks to Adam (Genesis 2:16, 17)? Satan uses God’s words to fool Eve. The snake wants Eve to believe that he knows better than God does. At first, the snake asks Eve an innocent question. But the snake asks the question in a sneaky way. He wants to confuse Eve. He wants her to think that she does not really understand what God meant. Next, Satan tries to get Eve to doubt God. Then finally, Satan announces that the words of God are false.

Satan tells two lies. The first lie is about death. The second lie is about good and evil. God tells Adam that he will die for sure if he eats the forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:17). But Satan tells Eve that she will not die (Genesis 3:4). God forbids Adam to eat the fruit (Genesis 2:17). But Satan encourages Eve to eat the fruit because the fruit will make her the same as God (Genesis 3:5).

Eve believes Satan. She believes his lie that she will live forever if she eats the fruit. She believes the lie that she will be the same as God. As soon as Eve disobeys God, she behaves as if God is dead. Worse, she behaves as if she herself is God. We can see this change in behavior when Eve looks at the fruit. Eve “saw that the tree’s fruit was good” (Genesis 3:6, NIV). These words help us remember what God said at the end of each day when He made the skies and the earth. God saw what He made, and He “knew that it was good” (Genesis 1:4, ERV, and so on).

In Bible times, Egyptian and Greek religious leaders accepted and taught the two lies of Satan. These leaders taught that the human spirit does not die when the body dies. The leaders also taught that humans can be the same as gods. Sad to say, these false teachings became part of the Jewish and Christian religions. Today, many churches believe that the spirit does not die with the body.

What does the Bible teach us happens when we die? How does this Bible truth keep us safe from the lie of Satan that our spirits live forever?

HIDING FROM GOD (Genesis 3:7–13)

In Genesis 3:7–13, we read about what happens after Adam and Eve sin. Why do Adam and Eve hide from God? Why does God ask Adam the question “ ‘Where are you?’ ” (Genesis 3:9, ERV). What excuses do Adam and Eve make for their sin?

When God makes Adam and Eve, God covers their bodies in light that is the same as a coat. This coat of light shows the glory of God (read Psalm 8:5; compare with Psalm 104:1, 2). After Adam and Eve sin, their coats of light disappear. The couple are no longer perfect copies of God and His love. They know that they aren't wearing any clothes. “So they got some fig leaves, sewed them together, and wore them for clothes” (Genesis 3:7, ERV). Do you see the word written as “sewed”? This verb also can be written as “make.” So far, we have only seen God “make” something (read Genesis 1:7, 16, 25). Moses wants us to see that Adam and Eve try to cover their sins when they “make” their own clothes. Adam and Eve think their own good behavior can save them. But Paul explains that we cannot save ourselves (Galatians 2:16).

God asks Adam, “ ‘Where are you?’ ” (Genesis 3:9, ERV). Does God ask this question because He doesn't know where Adam is? Of course, God knows! Later, God will ask Cain the same question. God asks the question to help Adam and Eve understand their guilt. God wants them to confess their sin. As soon as humans sinned, God worked to save them.

This story shows us the time when God will judge His people in the end times. First, God asks questions (Genesis 3:9). Next, God announces punishments (Genesis 3:14–19) to help Adam and Eve turn back to Him. Then God can save them (Genesis 3:15). We see this idea all through the Bible.

At first, Adam and Eve do what most sinners do when they are guilty. They blame other people. Eve led Adam to sin. So, Adam blames Eve (Genesis 3:12). Adam also blames God because God gave him the woman. Eve blames the snake. “ ‘The snake tricked me’ ” (Genesis 3:13, ERV). The word written as “tricked” is “**nasha**” in the Hebrew language. “**Nasha**” shows us that the snake tried to give Eve false hope. The snake wanted Eve to believe she was doing the right thing.

Do you blame other people for the wrong things that you do? Why is it easy to blame other people?



At first, Adam and Eve do what most sinners do when they are guilty. They blame other people.

GOD CURSES THE SNAKE (Genesis 3:15)

“ ‘I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. You will bite her child’s foot, but he will crush [destroy] your head’ ” (Genesis 3:15, ERV). What is the Lord saying to the snake? What hint of hope do we see in this curse?

The snake started the trouble in Eden. So, God starts His work as Judge with the snake. Do you see that Satan is the only one in the story that God curses?

Genesis 3:15 shows us the reverse of what happened when God made the skies and earth. At that time, God filled the skies and earth with life, good things, and blessings. Now, God judges the snake. The announcement against the snake leads to death, evil, and curses. As we will see, God also includes a promise of hope for us in His curse against the snake. The curse is a special message about the future: God will save humans (Genesis 3:15). Do you see that God gives Adam and Eve this hope before He judges them? Yes, Adam and Eve sinned. Yes, they will suffer because they sinned. Yes, they will die, too. But God gives them hope that He will save them in the end.



The war between the snake and the woman will continue until the end of time.

Compare Genesis 3:15 with Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; and Revelation 12:17. How do these verses show us God’s plan to save us and the war between good and evil?

Do you see how Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:17 show us the same word pictures and ideas? Let us see how the parts in these verses match:

Genesis 3:15

Snake (Satan)
 Enemies
 Woman (in Eden)
 Her children
 Bite/crush

Revelation 12:17

Dragon
 Very angry
 Woman (in desert)
 Her children
 War

The war between the snake and the woman will continue until the end of time. God promises that Satan will lose the war. Jesus will crush the head of the snake (Revelation 20:10).

God gave us hope in Eden where sin and evil started on this earth. Why is this Bible truth so comforting?

THE PLAN OF GOD FOR HUMANS (Genesis 3:15–24)

What happens to Adam and Eve because of their sin? For the answer, read Genesis 3:15–24.

God gives the snake a punishment that is the same as a curse (Genesis 3:14). But God gives the man and the woman a different punishment. Their punishment is not a curse. Moses writes the word “curse” only one more time in Genesis to show us that God curses the “ground” (Genesis 3:17). God has better plans for the man and the woman than He has for the snake. God offers Adam and Eve hope that He does not offer Satan.

The woman sins because of her connection with the snake. So, God gives the woman a punishment connected to the curse that God puts on the snake. That is why the special message about the woman in Genesis 3:16 shows us the special message about the Savior in Genesis 3:15. This connection helps us to see that everything God says about the woman is part of His future plan to save humans (compare with 1 Timothy 2:14, 15).

The man sins because he obeys the woman, and not God. So, God punishes the man by putting a curse on the ground because God made Adam from the ground (Genesis 3:17, 19). Now the man must work hard his whole life (Genesis 3:17–19). Then he will go back to the ground when he dies (Genesis 3:19). Death was never part of the plan of God for humans.

The woman in Genesis 3:20 is a word picture for life and mercy. A Child will be born to a future daughter of Eve. This Child will be the Savior of the whole earth. He will save humans from the curse of sin and death.

God wants only good for Adam and Eve, and not evil. Adam and Eve had no reason to doubt the love of God or His words to them. But now Adam and Eve know evil. So, God will do everything to save them from it. We see this Bible truth in the punishments that God gives Adam and Eve. These punishments show us the hope that God gave to our first parents—and to us.

We often think that “knowledge” is good, right? Why is that not always so, as the sin of Adam and Eve shows us? What things are we better off not knowing?



The woman in Genesis 3:20 is a word picture for life and mercy. A Child will be born to a future daughter of Eve.



Our spiritual choices are connected to our health and our bodies.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Compare the tree of life to the tree of the knowledge about good and evil. Both trees are located in the middle of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9). When the first humans eat the forbidden fruit, God no longer allows them to eat from the tree of life. This Bible truth teaches us an important rule: our spiritual choices are connected to our health and our bodies.

Our spiritual choices can make us weak or strong. They can lead to life or death. Solomon understood this connection. That is why he tells his son: “Don’t forget my teaching. Remember what I tell you to do. What I teach will give you a good, long life, and all will go well for you” (Proverbs 3:1, 2, ERV). The New Jerusalem also shows us this connection between our spiritual choices and our health. There in the Holy City, we find only the tree of life (Revelation 22:2).

“When God made Eve, He did not make her less or better than man. Eve was the perfect match for Adam in everything. God did not plan for the holy couple to have separate interests from each other. At the same time, God made both of them to think and act on their own. But then Eve sinned. Because Eve sinned first, the Lord told her that Adam will be the one in control of their marriage. God told Eve she must obey her husband. This punishment was part of the curse that sin caused. In many ways, the curse has made the life of woman very hard. Her life often feels the same as a heavy load. Man has behaved the same as if he were an all-powerful king and woman was his slave.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, page 484, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① God came to Adam and asked him questions. God wanted the questions to help Adam see his guilt. God also asked the questions to help Adam turn away from his sin. God uses this same plan in other Bible stories. We see God doing His work as Judge in the stories of Cain (Genesis 4:9, 10), the Flood (Genesis 6:5–8), the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:5), and Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:21). All these stories show us the future work that God will do when He will judge the earth in the end times. How do you see in these stories the special work of God as our Judge?
- ② Why does Eve think that she will get wisdom if she eats fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? How can we avoid making the same mistake of expecting something better than the hope that God promises us in the Bible?

FORGIVEN IN PRISON, PART 1

Prisoners who wanted Bible studies wrote their names on pieces of paper. The volunteers at the prison in Spain each chose one of the pieces of paper. But there was one piece of paper that no one took. Dante Marvin Hermann looked at the name on the piece of paper: Matías. Dante was a 36-year-old Bible student at Sagunto Adventist College. “Doesn’t anyone want to meet with this man?” Dante asked the volunteers.

“He’s too difficult to work with,” said one volunteer.

“He always makes fun of God,” said another volunteer.

Dante prayed. He felt God say to him, “Go visit Matías.”

A prison guard brought Matías to Dante in the dining hall. Matías did not look the same as the other prisoners. He did not have any tattoos or an angry frown on his face.

“You don’t look the same as the other prisoners,” Dante said to Matías.

Matías laughed. “You don’t know who I am.”

“I don’t really care about that,” Dante said. “We all have made mistakes in our lives. We can’t change the past.”

Matías took a close look at Dante. Blue tattoos covered Dante’s arms. There were many stretched-out holes along his ears from earrings and other ear jewelry he wore in the past.

“Are you from the Seventh-day Adventist Church?” Matías asked. “You don’t look the same as the other Adventists.”

“God can change every one of us,” Dante replied. He told Matías how he sold his soul to the devil when he was 17. Dante joined a street gang and sold drugs before he found the love of God in the Bible. Then Dante became an Adventist. When Dante finished talking, the hour for Bible study was up.

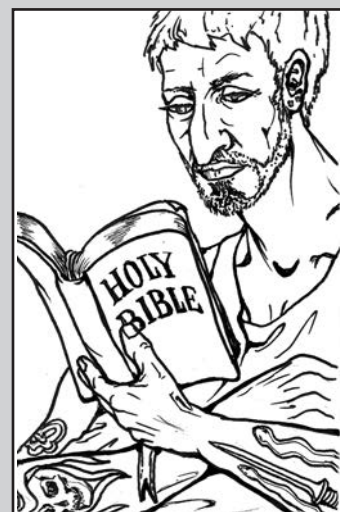
“Can you visit me again, please?” Matías said.

Dante promised to come back the next Sabbath.

Back at the college, Dante told a teacher about Matías. “Do you know who he is?” the teacher asked. When Dante shook his head, the teacher suggested that Dante do an online news search. The online search caused Dante to pray. “God, this information about Matías troubles me,” Dante said. “Why did You send me to Matías?” He felt God answer, “Dante, I have mercy for you. I have forgiven you. I can forgive Matías, too.”

Read the rest of this story next week. The story shows Church Growth Task No. 2 of the “I Will Go” plan for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Church Growth Task No. 2 is: “We will help the Adventist Church grow strong in new ways in large cities. We will share Jesus with people who do not know Him.” Read more at IWillGo2020.org. (The prisoner’s real name was changed.)

INSIDE
Story
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



Dante joined a street gang and sold drugs before he found the love of God in the Bible.

