

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 3

In this chapter an account is given of the temptation of our first parents, of the instrument of it, and of their fall into it, and of the effect of it, (^{<OCB1>}Genesis 3:1-7) their summons upon it to appear before God, against whom they had sinned, (^{<OCB3>}Genesis 3:8-10) their examination by him, and the excuses they made, (^{<OCB11>}Genesis 3:11-13) the various sentences passed of the serpent, the woman, and the man, (^{<OCB14>}Genesis 3:14-19) some incidental things recorded, expressive of faith and hope in man, and of favour to him, (^{<OCB20>}Genesis 3:20,21) and his expulsion from the garden of Eden, (^{<OCB22>}Genesis 3:22-24).

Ver. 1. *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made*, etc.] Many instances are given of the subtlety of serpents, in hiding their heads when struck at, rolling themselves up, stopping their ear at the voice of the charmer, putting off their skin, lying in sand of the same colour with them, and biting the feet of horses, and other things of the like kind; but by these it does not appear to be now more subtle than any other creature, whatever it might be at its first creation; particularly the fox greatly exceeds it: the words therefore may be rendered, “that serpent”; that particular serpent, of which so much is spoken of afterwards; “or the serpent was become”^{f194}, or “made more subtle”, that is, not naturally, but through Satan being in it, and using it in a very subtle manner, to answer his purposes, and gain his point: for though a real serpent, and not the mere form or appearance of one, is here meant, as is clear from this account, and the curse afterwards pronounced on it; yet not that only, but as possessed and used by Satan as an instrument of his to accomplish his designs, as is evident from its having the faculty of speech, and the use of reason, employed in a very artful and sophistic manner: nor is it rational to suppose that human nature, in the height of its glory and excellency, should be outwitted and seduced by a creature so inferior to it; besides, the Scriptures always ascribe the seduction of man to the devil; who, because he acted his deceitful part in and by the serpent, is called the serpent, and the old serpent, and the devil and Satan, (^{<OCB2>}

Corinthians 11:3 ^{f193} Revelation 12:9). The Targum of Jonathan restrains this subtlety to wickedness, paraphrasing the words

“but the serpent was wise to evil.”

Some Jewish writers ^{f195} interpret the passage of the nakedness of the serpent, taking the word in the sense it is used in (^{f195}Genesis 2:25) and render it, “more naked than any beast of the field”, the rest having a clothing, as hair, etc. but this none; and so might be more agreeable to Eve, being in this respect like herself; but it is generally interpreted of subtlety. The serpent early became the object of religions worship. Taautus, or the Egyptian Thoth, was the first that attributed deity to the nature of the dragon, and of serpents; and after him the Egyptians and Phoenicians: the Egyptian god Cneph was a serpent with an hawk’s head; and a serpent with the Phoenicians was a good demon: what led them to have such veneration for this animal, were its plenty of spirits, its fiery nature, its swiftness, its various forms it throws itself into, and its long life ^{f196}; and so Pherecydes ^{f197} speaks of a deity of the Phoenicians called Ophioneus; and who also affirms ^{f198}, that this was the prince of demons cast down from heaven by Jupiter; and Herodotus ^{f199} makes mention of sacred serpents about Thebes; and Aelianus ^{f200} of sacred dragons; and Justin Martyr says ^{f201}, the serpent with the Heathens was a symbol of all that were reckoned gods by them, and they were painted as such; and wherever serpents were painted, according to Persius ^{f202}, it was a plain indication that it was a sacred place. Serpents were sacred to many of the Heathen deities, and who were worshipped either in the form of one, or in a real one ^{f203}; all which seem to take their rise from the use the devil made of the serpent in seducing our first parents.

And he said to the woman; being alone, which he took the advantage of; not the serpent, but Satan in it; just as the angel spoke in Balaam’s ass; for we are not to imagine with Philo, Josephus, Aben Ezra, and others, that beasts in their original state had the faculty of speech, and whose language Eve understood: it is very probable that good angels appeared in paradise to our first parents, in one form or another, and conversed with them; it may be in an human form, and it may be in the form of a beautiful flying serpent, which looked very bright and shining, and that sort called Seraph, (^{f204}Numbers 21:6) hence angels may bear the name of Seraphim, as some have thought; so that it might not be at all surprising to Eve to hear the serpent speak, it being what she might have been used to hear, and might

take this to be a good angel in such a shape, that was come to bring a message to her from God, and to converse with her for her good, and who thus accosted her:

yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? or “of any tree” ^{f204}; so ambiguously does he speak, in order to reproach the divine goodness, and draw into a disbelief of it. The speech is abrupt; and, as Kimchi observes ^{f205}, supposes some discourse, as to this purpose; surely God hates you, for though you are greater than the rest of the creatures, he has not provided any superior excellency for you, and especially since he has said, “ye shall not eat”, etc. Or as others, taking occasion from their being naked, (^{<0025>}Genesis 2:25) he observes, that that was unbecoming them, of which they might be ashamed; yea, also, that it was unjust to forbid them to eat of the tree of good and evil: he might, it is suggested, first endeavour to persuade the woman, that it was indecent for her, and her husband, to be naked; which they not being convinced of, he insinuated that this was owing to a defect of knowledge, and that there was a tree in the garden, which if they ate of, would give them that knowledge, and therefore God had forbid it, to keep them in ignorance: but he seems to put this question, to cause them to doubt of it, whether there was such a prohibition or not, and as amazing that it should be, and as not believing it to be true; it being, as he would have it, contrary to the perfections of God, to his goodness and liberality, and to his profession of a peculiar respect to man: wherefore the Targum of Onkelos renders it, “of a truth”, and that of Jonathan, “is it true?” surely it cannot be true, that a God of such goodness could ever deny you such a benefit, or restrain you from such happiness; he can never be your friend that can lay such an injunction on you.

Ver. 2. *And the woman said unto the serpent,* etc.] Or to him that spoke in the serpent, which she might take to be a messenger from heaven, a holy angel: had she known who it was, she might be chargeable with imprudence in giving an answer, and carrying on a conversation with him; and yet even supposing this, she might have a good design in her answer; partly to set the matter in a true light, and assert what was truth; and partly to set forth the goodness and liberality of God, in the large provision he had made, and the generous grant he had given them: from this discourse of Eve and the serpent, no doubt Plato ^{f206} had his notion of the first men discoursing with beasts:

we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; of all and every one of them, which is to be understood, excepting the one after mentioned; so far are we from being debarred from eating of any, which the speech of the Serpent might imply, that they were allowed to eat of what they pleased, but one.

Ver. 3. *But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden,* etc.] This tree stood near the tree of life, as is highly probable, since that is described in the same situation, (^(KJB)Genesis 2:9) she does not give it any name, which perhaps was not as yet given it; or she was not acquainted with it, its name in the preceding chapter being given by anticipation; and most likely it is, it had its name from the event, and as yet was without one:

God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die: here the woman is charged by some both with adding to, and taking from the law of God; and if so, must have sinned very heinously before she eat of the fruit; but neither of them are sufficiently proved; not the former by her saying, “neither shall ye touch it”, which though not expressed in the prohibition, is implied, namely, such a touching the fruit as to pluck it off the tree, take it in the hand, and put it to the mouth, in order to eat it: nor the latter by these words, “lest ye die”, or “lest perhaps ye die”^{f207}; as if it was a matter of doubt, when it was most strongly assured; for the word used is not always to be understood of doubting, but of the event of a thing; (see ^(KJB)Psalm 2:12) and may be rendered, “that ye die not”^{f208}; which would certainly be the case, should they pluck the fruit and eat of it.

Ver. 4. *And the serpent said unto the woman,* etc.] In reply to her answer:

ye shall not surely die; in direct contradiction to the divine threatening, and which he would insinuate was a mere threatening, and which God never intended to put in execution; so that they had nothing to fear from that, God would never be so rigid and severe, and beat so hard upon them as to put them to death for such an offence, if it was one; he only gave out the menace to frighten them, and deter from it: however, at most it was not a certain thing they should die, and they might safely conclude they would not.

Ver. 5. *For God doth know,* etc.] Or “but^{f209} God doth know”, who knows all things, and has foreknowledge of all future events; he foreknows what will be the consequence of this event, eating the fruit of this tree, that it would be so far from issuing in death, which he has threatened, that the

effect of it would be a clearer understanding, and a greater degree of knowledge of things, which he is unwilling should be enjoyed, and therefore has endeavoured to prevent it by this prohibition; suggesting hereby, even in God, hatred of the creatures he had made, and unwilling they should be as happy as they might:

that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened; not the eyes of their bodies, as if they were now blind, but the eyes of their understanding; meaning, that their knowledge should be enlarged, and they should see things more clearly than they now did, and judge of them in a better manner; yea, even together with the light of their mind, the sight of their bodily eyes would receive some advantage; and particularly, that though they saw the nakedness of their bodies, yet it was as if they saw it not, and were unconcerned about it, and heedless of it; did not see it as unseemly and indecent, and so were not ashamed; but now they should see it as it was, and be filled with shame and confusion:

and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil: as “Elohim”, which word is sometimes used of civil magistrates, sometimes of angels, and sometimes of God himself, and of the divine Persons in the Godhead: the Targum of Onkelos seems to respect the former, rendering it “as great personages”, princes, judges, civil magistrates, who ought to know the difference between good and evil, or otherwise would be unfit for their office; but this cannot be the sense here, since there were no such persons in being, to whom the reference could be made; nor could it convey any proper idea to the mind of Eve, unless by them are meant principalities and powers, or “the mighty angels”, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the word; and so it intimates, that upon eating this fruit they should be as wise and as knowing as those intelligent creatures: though perhaps Satan might mean, such angels as himself and his were, and that they should by sad experience know the difference between good and evil, as they did: but rather it is to be understood of that Elohim that made the heavens and the earth, for as yet the word had never been used, but of the true God, and of the divine Persons in the Trinity: and this agrees with what is ironically said, (~~OR2~~ Genesis 3:22) “behold the man is become as one of us”, as the devil told him he should, and as he believed he would: this was the bait laid for than, suited to his intellectual mind, and to the ambitious desires of it, not being content with finite knowledge, but aiming at omniscience, or something like it: now the temptation began to take place and operate.

Ver. 6. *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,* etc.] She being near the tree, and perhaps just at it when the serpent first attacked her; wherefore looking more wishfully at it, she could discern nothing in the fruit of the tree which showed it to be bad, and unfit to be eaten, or why it should be forbidden for food; but, on the contrary, had a most promising aspect to be very delicious, nourishing and salutary, as any other fruit in the garden:

and that it was pleasant to the eyes; of a beautiful colour, and very inviting to the taste:

and a tree to be desired to make one wise; which above all was the most engaging, and was the most prevailing motive to influence her to eat of it, an eager desire of more wisdom and knowledge; though there was nothing she could see in the tree, and the fruit of it, which promised this; only she perceived in her mind, by the discourse she had with the serpent, and by what he had told her, and she believed, that this would be the consequence of eating this fruit, which was very desirable, and she concluded within herself that so it would be:

she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; she took it off of the tree, and not only tasted of it, but ate of it; what quantity cannot be said, enough to break the divine law, and to incur the divine displeasure: so Sanchoniatho says ^{f210}, that Aeon (the same with Eve) found the way of taking food from trees:

and gave also to her husband with her; that he might eat as well as she, and partake of the same benefits and advantages she hoped to reap from hence; for no doubt it was of good will, and not ill will, that she gave it to him; and when she offered it to him, it is highly probable she made use of arguments with him, and pressed him hard to it, telling him what delicious food it was, as well as how useful it would be to him and her. The Jews infer from hence, that Adam was with her all the while, and heard the discourse between the serpent and her, yet did not interpose nor dissuade his wife from eating the fruit, and being prevailed upon by the arguments used; or however through a strong affection for his wife, that she might not die alone, he did as she had done:

and he did eat; on which an emphasis may be observed, for it was upon his eating the fate of his posterity depended; for not the woman but the man was the federal head, and he sinning, all his posterity sinned in him, and

died in him; through this offence judgment came upon all to condemnation; all became sinners, and obnoxious to death, (~~812~~Romans 5:12-19). If Eve only had eaten of the forbidden fruit, it could only have personally affected herself, and she only would have died; and had this been the case, God would have formed another woman for Adam, for the propagation of mankind, had he stood; though since he fell as well as she, it is needless to inquire, and may seem too bold to say what otherwise would have been the case.

Ver. 7. *And the eyes of them both were opened,* etc.] Not of their bodies, but of their minds; not so as to have an advanced knowledge of things pleasant, profitable, and useful, as was promised and expected, but of things very disagreeable and distressing. Their eyes were opened to see that they had been deceived by the serpent, that they had broke the commandment of God, and incurred the displeasure of their Creator and kind benefactor, and had brought ruin and destruction upon themselves; they saw what blessings and privileges they had lost, communion with God, the dominion of the creatures, the purity and holiness of their nature, and what miseries they had involved themselves and their posterity in; how exposed they were to the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and to eternal death:

and they knew that they were naked; they must know before that they were naked in their bodies, but they did not perceive that their nakedness was at all uncomely, or any disadvantage to them; but now they were sensible of both, that whereas they could look upon it before, and not blush or feel any sinful emotions in them, now they could not behold it without shame, and without finding evil concupiscence arising in them; and it being now the cool of the day, and their spirits also seized with fear of the divine displeasure, they might feel a shivering all over them, and wanted something to cover them: but more especially this may respect the nakedness of their souls they were now conscious of, being stripped of that honour and glory, privileges and power, they were vested with; and having lost the image of God that was upon them, and that robe of purity, innocence, and righteousness, the rectitude of their nature, with which they were arrayed, and finding themselves naked and defenceless, and unable to screen themselves from the curses of a righteous law, and the fury of vindictive justice:

and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons; not to cover their whole bodies, but only those parts which, ever since, mankind have been ashamed to expose to public view, and which they studiously conceal from sight: the reason of which perhaps is, because by those members the original corruption of human nature has been from the beginning, and still is propagated from parents to children. The leaves of the fig tree were pitched upon because of the largeness of them; the leaves of the common fig tree are very large, as everyone knows; and perhaps those in the eastern countries, and especially in paradise, were much larger than ours. Pliny^{f211} says of the fig tree, that its leaf is the largest, and the most shady. Some think the Indian fig tree is meant; so John Temporarius, as Drusius relates; and so our Milton^{f212}; and according to Pliny^{f213}, the breadth of the leaves of this tree has the shape of an Amazonian shield. And when they are said to sew these together, it is not to be supposed that they sewed them as tailors sew their garments together, since they cannot be thought to be furnished with proper instruments, or that they tacked them together with some sort of thorns, or made use of them instead of needles; but they took the tender branches of the fig tree with leaves on them, as the word signifies, (see ^{<16815>}Nehemiah 8:15) and twisted them round their waists; which served for “girdles”, as some render the word^{f214}, and the broad leaves hanging down served for aprons; but these, whatever covering they may be thought to have been to their bodies, which yet seem to be but a slender one, they could be none to their souls, or be of any service to hide their sin and shame from the all seeing eye of God; and of as little use are the poor and mean services of men, or their best works of righteousness, to shelter them from the wrath of God, and the vengeance of divine justice.

Ver. 8. *And they heard the voice of the Lord God*, etc.] Which they had heard before, and knew, though perhaps now in another tone, and very terrible, which before was mild and gentle, pleasant and delightful: some by it understand a clap of thunder, sometimes called the voice of the Lord, (^{<16218>}Psalm 29:3-9) and the rather because mention is made afterwards of a wind; but rather the voice of the Son of God, the eternal Word, is here meant, who appeared in an human form, as a pledge of his future incarnation, and that not only as a Judge, to arraign, examine, and condemn the parties concerned in this act of disobedience to God, but as a Saviour of men, to whom, as such, he made himself known, as the event shows, and therefore they had no reason to entertain such terrible

apprehensions of him, as to flee from him; and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, “the voice of the Word of the Lord God”, the essential Word of God then with him, and since made flesh, and dwelt among men as the Saviour of them; and to him agrees what follows:

walking in the garden in the cool of the day; or “at the wind of the day”^{f215}; of “that day” in which man was created and fell, as some conclude from hence; in the evening, at sun setting; for very often when the sun sets a wind rises, at least a gentle breeze; and this might bring the sound of the voice, and of the steps of this glorious Person, the sooner to the ears of Adam and his wife, which gave them notice of his near approach, and caused them to hasten their flight: some render it emphatically, “at the wind of that day”^{f216}; as if it was a violent wind which arose at that time, as a sign and testimony of the indignation of God, as the sound of a violent wind was a testimony of the coming of the Spirit of God, (~~4M~~Acts 2:2)

and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden; conscious of their guilt, and vainly imagining they could flee from his presence, which is everywhere, and hide themselves from his sight, before whom every creature is manifest, be it where it will; and very foolishly fancying, that the thick trees and bushes in the garden would be a screen and shelter for them: and sad shifts do wretched mortals make to secure themselves from the wrath of God, who are ignorant of the justifying righteousness and atoning sacrifice of the Son of God: it is in the singular number in the original text, “in the midst of the tree of the garden”^{f217}; which some understand of the fig tree, whose leaves they covered themselves with, and under the shade of which they hid themselves; and particularly of the Indian fig tree, which is so large, that it is said that fifty horsemen may shade themselves at noon day under it; nay, some say four hundred^{f218}; but tree may be put for trees, the singular for the plural.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord God called unto Adam*, etc.] The Jerusalem Targum is, the Word of the Lord God, the second Person in the Trinity; and this is the voice he is said to have heard before:

and said unto him, where [art] thou? which is said, not as ignorant of the place where he was, nor of what he had done, nor of the circumstances he was in, or of the answers he would make; but rather it shows all the reverse, that he knew where he was, what he had done, and in what condition he was, and therefore it was in vain to seek to hide himself: or as

pitying his case, saying, “alas for thee”^{f219}, as some render the words, into what a miserable plight hast thou brought thyself, by listening to the tempter, and disobeying thy God! thou that wast the favourite of heaven, the chief of the creatures, the inhabitant of Eden, possessed of all desirable bliss and happiness, but now in the most wretched and forlorn condition imaginable; or as upbraiding him with his sin and folly; that he who had been so highly favoured by him, as to be made after his image and likeness, to have all creatures at his command, and the most delightful spot in all the globe to dwell in, and a grant to eat of what fruit he would, save one, and who was indulged with intercourse with his God, and with the holy angels, should act such an ungrateful part as to rebel against him, break his laws, and trample upon his legislative authority, and bid, as it were, defiance to him: or else as the Saviour, looking up his straying sheep, and lost creature, man: or rather as a summons to appear before him, the Judge of all, and answer for his conduct; it was in vain for him to secrete himself, he must and should appear; the force of which words he felt, and therefore was obliged to surrender himself, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 10. *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden*, etc.] The voice of thy Word, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan: this was not the true cause of his hiding himself; he had heard his voice in the garden before, when it did not strike him with terror, but gave him pleasure;

and I was afraid, because I was naked. This also was not the true reason; he was naked from his creation as to his body, and it caused no shame in him, nor any dread to appear before God; he conceals the true cause, which was sin, that made the nakedness of his body shameful, and had stripped his soul of its native clothing, purity and holiness; and therefore it was, he could not appear before a pure and holy Being:

and I hid myself; among the trees of the garden, and his wife also; or therefore^{f220} “hid myself”; through fear of God, his wrath and displeasure, which he had justly incurred by his disobedience, and because of his sin which had made his soul naked, though he was not as yet ingenuous enough to confess it.

Ver. 11. *And he said*, etc.] The Lord God, or the Word of the Lord;

who told thee that thou [wast] naked? or showed it to thee; by what means hast thou got knowledge of it? what hast thou done that thou perceivest it, so as to cause shame and fear? man was made naked, and so he continued,

and he must be sensible of it, but it gave him no uneasiness, because he was without shame on account of it; so that it was as if it was not, and he was regardless of it, as if he was not naked; but now, having sinned, he could not look upon his nakedness without blushing, and sin being what had produced this sensation, he was afraid to appear before God, against whom he had sinned; though he did not choose to acknowledge it, only alleges his outward nakedness, without confessing the inward nakedness of his soul, and being humbled for that as he ought to have been; and in order to bring him to this, is this question and the following put unto him;

hast thou eaten of the tree, wherever I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? The Lord knew he had; but he puts this question to bring him to a confession of it, as well as to aggravate his crime; that it was a violation of a precept of his, who had been so kind and bountiful to him, who had crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of his hands, and had put all creatures under his feet, and had allowed him to eat of every tree in the garden but one; there was but one tree restrained from him, but one command he gave him, and this he broke; sin is a transgression of the law, (~~GEN 2~~ 1 John 3:4). And in this light it is here put to bring Adam under a conviction, and to a confession of it; though he made it in a very lame manner, having covered it as long as he could; being found he excuses it, as loath to bear the blame and scandal of it. (see ~~GEN 3~~ Job 31:33).

Ver. 12. *And the man said,* etc.] Not being able any longer to conceal the truth, though he shifts off the blame as much as possible from himself:

the woman whom thou gavest to be with me: to be his wife and his companion, to be an help meet unto him, and share with him in the blessings of paradise, to assist in civil and domestic affairs, and join with him in acts of religion and devotion:

she gave me of the tree, and I did eat; she first ate of it herself, through the solicitations of the serpent, and then she persuaded me to eat of it; and accordingly I did, I own it. By this answer Adam endeavours to cast the blame partly upon his wife, and partly upon God; though in what he said he told the truth, and what was matter of fact, yet it carries this innuendo, that if it had not been for his wife he had never ate of it, which was a foolish excuse; for he, being her head and husband, should have taught her better, and been more careful to have prevented her eating of this fruit, and should have dissuaded her from it, and have reproved her for it, instead of

following her example, and taking it from her hands: and more than this he tacitly reflects upon God, that he had given him a woman, who, instead of being an help meet to him, had helped to ruin him; and that if he had not given him this woman, he had never done what he had: but at this rate a man may find fault with God for the greatest blessings and mercies of life bestowed on him, which are abused by him, and so aggravate his condemnation.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord God said unto the woman,* etc.] Who was first in the transgression, and drew her husband into it, and upon whom he seemingly casts the blame of his eating the forbidden fruit:

what is this that thou hast done? dost thou know how great an offence thou hast committed in breaking a command of mine, and how aggravated it is when thou hadst leave to eat of every other tree? what could move thee to do this? by what means hast thou been brought into it, and not only hast done it thyself, but drawn thine husband into it, to the ruin of you both, and of all your posterity? so heinous is the sin thou hast been guilty of:

and the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat; that is, a spirit in the serpent, which she took for a good one, but proved a bad one, with lying words and deceitful language imposed upon her, told her that the fruit forbidden was very good food, and very useful to improve knowledge; even to such a degree as to make men like God; and this God knew, and therefore out of envy and ill will to them forbid the eating of it; nor need they fear his menaces, for they might depend upon it they should never die; and thus he caused her to err from the truth, and to believe a lie; and by giving heed to the seducing spirit she was prevailed upon to eat of the fruit of the tree, which was forbidden, and which she owns; and it is an ingenuous confession that she makes as to the matter of fact; but yet, like her husband, and as learning it from him, she endeavours to shift off the blame from herself, and lay it on the serpent.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord God said unto the serpent,* etc.] And to the devil in it; for what follows may be applied to both; literally to the serpent, and mystically to Satan; both are punished, and that very justly, the serpent in being the instrument Satan made use of, and is cursed for his sake, as the earth for man's; and the punishing the instrument as well as the principal, the more discovers God's detestation of the act for which they are punished, as appears in other instances, (⁽¹²²⁸⁾Exodus 21:28 ⁽¹²¹⁵⁾Leviticus

20:15). Nor could it have been agreeable to the justice of God, to punish the instrument and let the principal go free; and therefore the following sentence must be considered as respecting them both: and it must be observed, that no pains is taken to convince Satan of his sin, or any time spent in reasoning and debating with him about it, he being an hardened apostate spirit, and doomed to everlasting destruction, and without any hope of mercy and forgiveness; but to show the divine resentment of his crime, the following things are said:

because thou hast done this; beguiled the woman, and drawn her in to eat of the forbidden fruit,

[thou art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; the serpent is the most hateful of all creatures, and especially the most detestable to men, and Satan is accursed of God, banished from the divine presence, is laid up in chains of darkness, and reserved for the judgment of the great day, and consigned to everlasting wrath and ruin, signified by everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels;

upon thy belly shalt thou go, or “breast”, as Aben Ezra, and others; Jarchi thinks it had feet before, but were cut off on this account, and so became a reptile, as some serpents now have feet like geese, as Pliny^{f221} relates; or it might go in a more erect posture on its hinder feet, as the basilisk, which is one kind of serpent, now does; and if it was a flying one, bright and shining in the air, now it should lose all its glory, and grovel in the dust, and with pain, or at least with difficulty, creep along on its breast and belly; and this, as it respects the punishment of the devil, may signify, that he being cast down from the realms of bliss and glory, shall never be able to rise more, and regain his former place and dignity:

And dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life; meaning not that particular serpent, and as long as that should live, but all of the same kind, as long as there were any in the world, even to the end of it: it is probable, that when the serpent moved in a more erect posture, it lived on herbs and plants as other creatures; but when it was obliged to go upon its belly or breast, it licked up the dust of the earth, and which it could not well avoid in eating whatsoever food it did; and some serpents are said to live upon it. This is applicable to Satan, designs the mean and abject condition in which he is, and the sordid food he lives upon; no more on angels’ food and joys of heaven, but on the base, mean, earthly, and impure lusts of men; and this will be his case, condition, and circumstances, for ever.

Ver. 15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,* etc.] Between whom there had been so much familiarity, not only while they had the preceding discourse together, but before; for it is conjectured by some ^{f222}, that she took a particular liking to that creature, and was delighted with it, and laid it perhaps in her bosom, adorned her neck with its windings, or made it a bracelet for her arms; and being a peculiar favourite, the devil made choice of it as his instrument to deceive her; but now being beguiled hereby, she conceived an antipathy against it, and which is become natural between the serpent and man; man abhors the sight of a serpent, and the serpent the sight of man; and the spittle of a man and the gall of a serpent are poison to each other; and this antipathy is observed to be stronger in the female sex: and this was not only true of the particular serpent that deceived Eve, and of the particular woman, Eve, deceived by him, but of every serpent and of every woman in successive ages; and is also true of Satan and the church of God in all ages, between whom there is an implacable and an irreconcilable hatred, and a perpetual war:

and between thy seed and her seed; the posterity of Eve, mankind, and the production of serpents, between whom the antipathy still continues, and mystically the evil angels and also wicked men called serpents; and a generation of vipers on the one hand, and the people of God on the other, the seed of the church; the latter of which are hated and persecuted by the former, and so it has been ever since this affair happened: and especially by the seed of the woman may be meant the Messiah; the word “seed” sometimes signifying a single person, (^{<01025>}Genesis 4:25 15:3 21:13) and particularly Christ, (^{<816>}Galatians 3:16) and he may with great propriety be so called, because he was made of a woman and not begotten by man; and who assumed not an human person, but an human nature, which is called the “holy thing”, and the “seed of Abraham”, as here the “seed of the woman”, as well as it expresses the truth of his incarnation and the reality of his being man; and who as he has been implacably hated by Satan and his angels, and by wicked men, so he has opposed himself to all them that hate and persecute his people:

it shall bruise thy head; the head of a serpent creeping on the ground is easily crushed and bruised, of which it is sensible, and therefore it is careful to hide and cover it. In the mystical sense, “it”, or “he, Hu”, which is one of the names of God, (^{<1927>}Psalms 102:27) (^{<2382>}Isaiah 48:12) and here of the Messiah, the eminent seed of the woman, should bruise the head of the old serpent the devil, that is, destroy him and all his principalities and powers,

break and confound all his schemes, and ruin all his works, crush his whole empire, strip him of his authority and sovereignty, and particularly of his power over death, and his tyranny over the bodies and souls of men; all which was done by Christ, when he became incarnate and suffered and died, (^{<3024>}Hebrews 2:14,15 ^{<3025>}Colossians 2:15 ^{<3026>}1 John 3:8)

And thou shall bruise his heel; the heel of a man being what the serpent can most easily come at, as at the heels of horses which it bites, (^{<0497>}Genesis 49:17) and which agrees with that insidious creature, as Aristotle ^{f223} describes it: this, as it refers to the devil, may relate to the persecutions of the members of Christ on earth, instigated by Satan, or to some slight trouble he should receive from him in the days of his flesh, by his temptations in the wilderness, and agony with him in the garden; or rather by the heel of Christ is meant his human nature, which is his inferior and lowest nature, and who was in it frequently exposed to the insults, temptations, and persecutions of Satan, and was at last brought to a painful and accursed death; though by dying he got an entire victory over him and all his enemies, and obtained salvation for his people. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase this passage of the days of the Messiah, and of health and salvation in them: what is here delivered out in a way of threatening to the serpent the devil, carries in it a kind intimation of grace and good will to fallen man, and laid a foundation for hope of salvation and happiness: reference seems to be had to this passage in (^{<3910>}Psalm 40:7) “in the volume”, in the first roll, *εν κεφαλιδι*, as in the Greek version, at the head, in the beginning “of the book, it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God.”

Ver. 16. *Unto the woman he said*, etc.] The woman receives her sentence next to the serpent, and before the man, because she was first and more deeply in the transgression, and was the means of drawing her husband into it.

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, or “thy sorrow of thy conception” ^{f224}, or rather “of thy pregnancy” ^{f225}; since not pain but pleasure is perceived in conception, and besides is a blessing; but this takes in all griefs and sorrows, disorders and pains, from the time of conception or pregnancy, unto the birth; such as a nausea, a loathing of food, dizziness, pains in the head and teeth, faintings and swoonings, danger of miscarriage, and many distresses in such a case; besides the trouble of bearing such a burden, especially when it grows heavy: and when it is said,

“I will greatly multiply”, or “multiplying I will multiply”^{f226}, it not only denotes the certainty of it, but the many and great sorrows endured, and the frequent repetitions of them, by often conceiving, bearing, and bringing forth:

in sorrow shall thou bring forth children, sons and daughters, with many severe pangs and sharp pains, which are so very acute, that great tribulations and afflictions are often in Scripture set forth by them: and it is remarked by naturalists^{f227}, that women bring forth their young with more pain than any other creature:

and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, which some understand of her desire to the use of the marriage bed, as Jarchi, and even notwithstanding her sorrows and pains in child bearing; but rather this is to be understood of her being solely at the will and pleasure of her husband; that whatever she desired should be referred to him, whether she should have her desire or not, or the thing she desired; it should be liable to be controlled by his will, which must determine it, and to which she must be subject, as follows;

and he shall rule over thee, with less kindness and gentleness, with more rigour and strictness: it looks as if before the transgression there was a greater equality between the man and the woman, or man did not exercise the authority over the woman he afterwards did, or the subjection of her to him was more pleasant and agreeable than now it would be; and this was her chastisement, because she did not ask advice of her husband about eating the fruit, but did it of herself, without his will and consent, and tempted him to do the same.

Ver. 17. *And unto Adam he said*, etc.] Last of all, being the last that sinned, but not to be excused:

because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife; which was not only mean but sinful, since it was opposite to the voice of God, which he ought to have hearkened to God is to be hearkened to and obeyed rather than man, and much rather than a woman; to regard the persuasion of a woman, and neglect the command of God, is a great aggravation of such neglect; (see ^{<4019>}Acts 4:19,29)

and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee; saying, thou shall not eat of it; that is, had eat of the fruit of the tree which God had plainly pointed unto him, and concerning which he had given a clear and an express command not to eat of it; and had delivered it to him in the

strongest manner, and had most peremptorily and strictly enjoined it, adding the threatening of death unto it; so that he could by no means plead ignorance in himself, or any obscurity in the law, or pretend he did not understand the sense of the legislator. The righteous sentence therefore follows,

cursed is the ground for thy sake; the whole earth, which was made for man, and all things in it, of which he had the possession and dominion, and might have enjoyed the use of everything in it, with comfort and pleasure; that which was man's greatest earthly blessing is now turned into a curse by sin, which is a proof of the exceeding sinfulness of it, and its just demerit: so in later instances, a "fruitful land" is turned "into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein", (^{<39A734>}Psalm 107:34) hence, whenever there is sterility in a country, a want of provisions, a famine, it should always be imputed to sin; and this should put us in mind of the sin of the first man, and the consequence of that:

in sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life, meaning that with much toil and trouble, in manuring and cultivating the earth, he should get his living out of the produce of it, though with great difficulty; and this would be his case as long as he was in it.

Ver. 18. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee*, etc.] Not for his advantage, but to give him more trouble, and cause him more fatigue and sorrow to root them up: these include all sorts of noxious herbs and plants, and troublesome weeds, which added to man's labour to pluck up, that those more useful might grow and flourish: and Rabbi Eliezer ^{f228} was of opinion, that if there had not been a new blessing upon the earth, it would have brought forth nothing else, as that which is rejected and nigh unto cursing does, (^{<30103>}Hebrews 6:8) and this curse continued, at least it was not wholly removed, until the times of Noah, (^{<00021>}Genesis 8:21) which made it hard and difficult to the antediluvian patriarchs to get their bread.

And thou shall eat the herb of the field; not the fruits of the garden of Eden, but only the common herbs of the field, such as even the beasts of the earth fed upon: to such a low condition was man, the lord of the whole earth, reduced unto by sin; and this was according to the law of retaliation, that man, who could not be content with all the fruits of Eden, save one, by eating the forbidden fruit should be deprived of them all.

Ver. 19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*, etc.] Or “of thy nose” ^{f229}, sweat appearing first and chiefly on the forehead, from whence it trickles down by the nose in persons employed in hard labour; and here it takes in all the labour used in cultivating the earth for the production of herbs, and particularly of corn, of which bread is made; with respect to which there are various operations in which men sweat, such as ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, grinding, sifting, kneading, and baking; and it may have regard to all methods and means by which men get their bread, and not without sweat; and even such exercises as depend upon the brain are not excused from such an expense: so that every man, let him be in what station of life he will, is not exempt, more or less, from this sentence, and so continues till he dies, as is next expressed:

till thou return unto the ground, his original, out of which he was made; that is, until he dies, and is interred in the earth, from whence he sprung; signifying that the life of man would be a life of toil and labour to the very end of it: and nothing else can man expect in it:

for dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return; his body was composed of the dust, was of the earth, earthly, and should be reduced to that again by death, which is not an annihilation of man, but a bringing him back to his original; which shows what a frail creature man is, what little reason he has to be proud of himself, when he reflects from whence he came and whither he must go; (see ^{<1117>}Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Ver. 20. *And Adam called his wife’s name Eve*, etc.] Whom he had before named “Ishah”, a woman, because taken from him the man, (^{<10123>}Genesis 2:23) and now gives her a new name upon this scene of things, which had taken place; which is derived not from “Chavah”, to “show forth”, to “declare”; as if she was called so, because of her discourse with the serpent, being loquacious and talkative, and telling everything she knew, according to some Jewish writers ^{f230}; but from “Chayah, to live”, as the reason given in the text shows. She is called Aeon (“Aevum”) by Philo Byblius, the interpreter of Sanchoniatho ^{f231}. The word “Eve” is retained in many Heathen writers, and used to be frequently repeated in the Bacchanalian rites, when the idolaters appeared with serpents platted on their heads ^{f232}; which plainly refers to the affair between the serpent and Eve; hence Bacchus is sometimes called Evius ^{f233}: the reason of Adam’s giving her this name follows,

because she was the mother of all living; which reason is either given by Moses, when from her had sprung a numerous offspring, and would be continued to the end of the world; or if given by Adam was prophetic of what she would be; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “because she would be the mother of all living”; and the ground of this faith and persuasion of his, that he and his wife should not die immediately for the offence they had committed, but should live and propagate their species, as well as be partakers of spiritual and eternal life, was the hint that had been just given, that there would be a seed spring from them; not only a numerous offspring, but a particular eminent person that should be the ruin of the devil and his kingdom, and the Saviour of them; and so Eve would be not, only the mother of all men living in succeeding generations, but particularly, or however one descending from her, would be the mother of him that should bring life and immortality to light, or be the author of all life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and who is called ζωη, “the life”, which is the same word by which the Greek version renders Eve in the preceding clause. It was with pleasure, no doubt, that Adam gave her this name; and it appears that this affair of her being seduced by the serpent, and of drawing him into the transgression, did not alienate his affection from her; and the rather he must needs cleave unto her, and not forsake her, since her seed was to break the serpent’s head, and procure life and salvation for them; and by means of her there would be a race of living men produced, which would propagate his species to the end of time: for all living can only respect them, and not other animals, though in some sense they may be included, as our English poet^{f234} hints.

Ver. 21. *Unto Adam also, and to his wife*, etc.] Besides the kind intimation of grace and favour to them, another token of God’s good will towards them was shown, in that whereas they were naked and ashamed,

did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them; not that before this they were only bone and flesh, and now God brought a skin over them, and covered them with it, or ordered a beast, which was very like a man, to have its skin stripped off, and put on him, as some in Aben Ezra foolishly imagined; but these were made of the skins of beasts, not of the skin of the serpent, as the Targum of Jonathan; but of creatures slain, not merely for this purpose, nor for food, but for sacrifice, as a type of the woman’s seed, whose heel was to be bruised, or who was to suffer death for the sins of men; and therefore to keep up and direct the faith of our first parents to the slain Lamb of God from the foundation of the world, and of all believers in

all ages, until the Messiah should come and die, and become a sacrifice for sin, the sacrifices of slain beasts were appointed: and of the skins of these the Lord God, either by his almighty power, made coats for the man and his wife, or by the ministry of angels; or he instructed and directed them to make them, which was an instance of goodness to them; not only to provide food for them as before, but also raiment; and which though not rich, fine, and soft, yet was substantial, and sufficient to protect them from all inclemencies of the weather; and they might serve as to put them in mind of their fall, so of their mortality by it, and of the condition sin had brought them into; being in themselves, and according to their deserts, like the beasts that perish: as also they were emblems of the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garments of his salvation, to be wrought out by his obedience, sufferings, and death; with which being arrayed, they should not be found naked, nor be condemned, but be secured from wrath to come. The Heathens had a notion, that the first men made themselves coats of the skins of beasts: the Grecians ascribe this to Pelasgus, whom they suppose to be the first man ^{f235} among them, and Sanchoniatho ^{f236} to Usous, who lived in the fifth generation.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord God said,* etc.] The Word of the Lord God, as the Jerusalem Targum; not to the ministering angels, as the Targum of Jonathan but within himself, or to the other two divine Persons:

behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; which is generally understood as an irony or sarcasm at man's deception by Satan, who promised man, and he expected to be as gods, knowing good and evil; behold the man, see how much like a god he looks, with his coat of skin upon his back, filled with shame and confusion for his folly, and dejected under a sense of what he had lost, and in a view of what he was sentenced to; yet must be understood not as rejoicing in man's misery, and insulting over him in it, but in order the more to convince him of his folly, and the more to humble him, and bring him to a more open repentance for affecting what he did, and giving credit to the devil in it: though I rather think they are seriously spoken, since this was after man was brought to a sense of the evil he committed, and to repentance for it, and had had the promised seed revealed to him as a Saviour, and, as an emblem of justification and salvation by him, was clothed with garments provided by God himself: wherefore the words are to be considered either as a declaration of his present state and condition, in and by Christ, by whose righteousness he was made righteous, even as he is righteous, though he had lost his own; to

whose image he was conformed, now bearing the image of the heavenly One, though he was deprived of that in which he was created, having sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and was now restored to friendship and amity with God, favoured with his gracious presence, and having faith and hope of being with him for evermore; the eyes of his understanding were enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, to know the good things which God had provided for him in Christ, and in the covenant of grace, a better covenant than that under which he was made, and which he had broke; and to know the evil nature of sin, its just demerit, and the atonement of it, by the death and sacrifice of the promised seed: or else the words are a declaration of man's past state and condition, and may be rendered, "behold, the man was as one of us"^{f237}; as one of the Persons in the Deity, as the Son of God, after whose image, and in whose likeness, he was made; both as to his body, that being formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind, and which was not begotten, but made out of the virgin earth; and as to his soul, which was created in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge, and was like him in the government he had over all the creatures: and besides, he was in many things a type of Christ, a figure of him that was to come; especially in his being a federal head to his posterity, and in his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and being created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him, and having the law of God inscribed on his heart, he knew what was good and to be done, and what was evil and to be avoided: but now he was in a different condition, in other circumstances, had lost the image of God, and friendship with him, and his government over the creatures; and had ruined himself, and all his posterity, and was become unholy and unwise; for being tempted by Satan to eat of the forbidden fruit, under an expectation of increasing his knowledge, lost in a great measure what he had:

and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life; as well as of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which some take to be a continued sarcasm; and others, that it was in pity to him, that he might not live a long life of sorrow; and others, as a punishment, that having sinned he was justly deprived of the sacrament and symbol of life; or else to prevent a fresh sin; or rather to show that there could be no life without satisfaction for the sin committed, and this in no other way than by Christ, the antitype of the tree of life:

and eat, and live for ever; not that it was possible, by eating of the fruit of the tree of life, his natural life could be continued for ever, contrary to the sentence of death pronounced upon him; or so as to elude that sentence, and by it eternal life be procured and obtained; but he was hindered from eating of it, lest he should flatter himself, that by so doing he should live for ever, notwithstanding he was doomed to die; and very probably the devil had suggested this to him, that should he be threatened with death, which he made a question of, yet by eating of the tree of life, which stood just by the other, he might save himself from dying: wherefore to prevent him, and to cut off all hopes of securing life to himself in this way, it is suggested that something must be done, which may be supplied from the following verse, let us send him out of the garden.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden,* etc.] Gave him orders to depart immediately; sent or put him away as a man does his wife, when he divorces her; or as a prince banishes a rebellious subject: for how long Adam was in the garden (see Gill on “~~1992~~ Psalm 49:12”), however, he did not send him to hell at once, as he did the apostate angels, but

to till the ground, from whence he was taken: either the earth in general, out of which he was made, and to which he must return, and in the mean while must labour hard, in digging and ploughing, in planting and sowing, that so he might get a livelihood; or that particular spot out of which he was formed, which is supposed from hence to have been without the garden of Eden, though very probably near unto it: some say it was a field near Damascus; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“he went and dwelt in Mount Moriah, to till the ground out of which he was created;”

and so other Jewish writers say ^{f238}, the gate of paradise was near Mount Moriah, and there Adam dwelt after he was cast out.

Ver. 24. *So he drove out the man,* etc.] Being unwilling to go out upon the orders given, some degree of force was used, or power exerted, in some way or other, to oblige him to depart; the word it is expressed by is used of divorces: there was a conjugal relation between God and man, the covenant between them had the nature of a matrimonial contract; which covenant man broke, though he was an husband to him, by committing idolatry, that is, spiritual adultery, not giving credit to him, but believing

the devil before him; wherefore he wrote him a bill of divorce, and sent him away; drove him from his presence and communion with him, from his house and habitation, from his seat of pleasure, and garden of delight, and from all the comfortable enjoyments of life; an emblem of that separation and distance which sin makes between God and his creature, and of that loss which is sustained thereby:

and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims; the Septuagint version is,

“and he placed him, or caused him (Adam) to dwell over against the paradise of pleasure, and he ordered the cherubim”

But the words are not to be understood either of placing man, or placing the cherubim, but of Jehovah’s placing himself, or taking up his habitation and residence before the garden of Eden, or at the east of it: while man abode in a state of innocence, the place of the divine Presence, or where God more gloriously manifested himself to him, was in the garden; but now he having sinned, and being driven out of it, he fixes his abode in a very awful manner at the entrance of the garden, to keep man out of it; for so the words may be rendered, “and he inhabited the cherubim, or dwelt over, or between the cherubim, before or at the east of the garden of Eden” ^{f239}; so the Jerusalem Targum,

“and he made the glory of his Shechinah, or glorious Majesty, to dwell of old at the east of the garden of Eden, over or above the two cherubim;”

or between them, as the Targum of Jonathan; and very frequently is Jehovah described as sitting and dwelling between the cherubim, (~~<000>~~1 Samuel 4:4 ~~<100>~~2 Samuel 6:2 ~~<200>~~2 Kings 19:15 ~~<300>~~Psalm 80:1 99:1 ~~<376>~~Isaiah 37:16) by which are meant not flying animals or fowls, whose form no man ever saw, as Josephus ^{f240}; nor angels, which is the more generally received opinion; for these were not real living creatures of any sort, but forms and representations, such as were made afterwards in the tabernacle of Moses, and temple of Solomon; and which Ezekiel and John saw in a visionary way, and from whom we learn what figures they were: and these were hieroglyphics, not of a trinity of persons, as some of late have stupidly imagined; for these were the seat of the divine Majesty, and between which he dwelt: and besides, as these had four faces, they would rather represent a quaternity than a trinity, and would give a similitude of

the divine Being, which cannot be done, and be contrary to the second command; to which may be added, that the word is sometimes singular as well as plural: but these were hieroglyphics of the ministers of the word, whose understanding, humility, and tenderness, are signified by the face of a man; their strength, courage, and boldness, by that of a lion; their labour and diligence by that of an ox; and their quick sight and penetration into divine things by that of an eagle, which are the forms and figures of the cherubim; (see Gill on “²⁰¹⁰Ezekiel 1:10”). Among these Jehovah is; with these he grants his presence, and by them signifies his mind and will to men; and these he makes use of to show them the vanity of all self-confidence, and to beat them off of seeking for life and righteousness by their own works, and to direct them alone to Christ, and point him out as the alone way of salvation; and of this use the hieroglyphic might be to fallen Adam, now driven out of Eden:

and a flaming sword, which turned every way; a drawn sword, brandished, and which being very quick in its motion, as it was turned to and fro, glittered and looked like a flame of fire: this is not to be understood as by itself, and as of itself, turning about every way without a hand to move it, nor as with the cherubim, or as in the hands of angels, as in (¹²¹⁶1 Chronicles 21:16) or as being they themselves, which are made as flames of fire; but as in the hand of the Lord God, that dwelt between the cherubim; for so it may be rendered, “he inhabited the cherubim and that with a flaming sword”^{f241}; that is, with one in his hand, an emblem of the fiery law of God now broken, and of the fire of divine wrath on the account of that, and of the flaming justice of God, which required satisfaction; and this turning on all sides,

to keep the way of the tree of life; showing, that life and salvation were not to be had, unless the law and justice of God were satisfied; and that they were not to be expected on the foot of men’s works, but only through Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; that no happiness was to be looked for from the covenant of works, now broke, nothing but wrath and vengeance; and that there must be another way opened, or there could be no enjoyment of the heavenly paradise.