

Genesis 2:15-17 (NKJV)



¹⁵ Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

God gives here a command to Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that he would eat, he would surely die. Then Satan comes and tempts Eve with deception, by bringing doubt about the word of God that was spoken to them. As we all know, Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree and something interesting happened to them when they did, besides the fact that their spirit died instantly and was separated from God. Let's read it in Genesis 3:6-7:

Genesis 3:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

⁷ Then *the eyes of both of them were opened*, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

This passage tells us that the moment they ate from the fruit, their eyes were opened. What eyes? Didn't they see before? Of course, they have been seeing perfectly before, but they have been walking and seeing by faith. They were dominated more by the spiritual world in their inner vision and perception. The spiritual things were more real to them than the physical things. However, when they ate of that fruit, their perception of spiritual things diminished, and their perception of the physical things became dominant. We consider it to be normal today the way you and I see, feel, and think right now, but it's actually abnormal compared to the way God created us initially. And through the new birth, we receive a new spirit inside of us that is capable again to walk by faith and not by sight. Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:7, 17 the following:

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For we walk by *faith*, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; *behold, all things have become new.*

We are called to walk by faith in what the Word says about our new identity and not walk by what we see with our physical eyes. We can behold and perceive that all things have become new for us through the eyes of the new spirit. We, as New Testament believers, should go back to the way Adam and Eve were intended to be. The spiritual realm together with what the new spirit holds inside of us should be more real to us than anything else. That has to become more real to us than this natural, physical, and tangible realm. It's so sad that very few Christians today live in and from the spiritual realm. We are physical carnal beings that are controlled and dominated by what we see, taste, hear, smell, and feel. In 2 Kings 6:15-17, Elisha's servant had his spiritual eyes closed and Elisha prayed that his spiritual eyes would be opened. Let's read:

2 Kings 6:15-17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

¹⁶ So he answered, "Don't fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, *open his eyes that he may see.*" Then the Lord *opened the eyes* of the young man, and he saw. *And behold*, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

In this instance, it was the exact opposite of what happened to Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve have been walking by faith prior to their fall; but when they ate of the tree, the eyes of their heart were closed to spiritual things and opened to physical ones. Here on the other hand, Elisha's servant had the eyes of his heart closed to spiritual things and open to the natural ones. But when Elisha prayed for him, God opened the servant's spiritual eyes so that he was able to see by faith what Elisha was already seeing. Coming back to Genesis 3:7 now, it says there that the eyes of both Adam and Eve were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Let's continue reading up to verse 11:

Genesis 3:8-11 (NKJV)

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

⁹ Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and *I was afraid because I was naked*; and I hid myself."

¹¹ And He said, "*Who told you that you were naked?* Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

Let's focus on verse 11 for a minute and think about it: Who told you that you were naked? This is not talking about just being without clothes. Who told you that you were defeated? Who told you that you were sick? All these things that came because of sin, where did you get this knowledge from? Who told you all these things? This is important! Where did you get this knowledge? Here comes into play *the*

human conscience.

First, Satan didn't tell Adam and Eve that they were naked. There is no Scripture to indicate that. When they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they intuitively and automatically recognized their nakedness, their sin, and their failure. Immediately, fear and shame came as a result. And the very fact that God asked them, "Who told you that you were naked?," shows that God was not the One who told them. He was the One that asked them the question. God didn't tell them that they were naked. Where did they get this from? How did they know that they were naked, so that they would go and hide from God? Think about this: the Lord has never given them a reason to be afraid of Him. He created the perfect environment, the perfect world, and everything was awesome. There was no reason for them to be fearful towards God in the sense of feeling threatened by Him. It's obvious that this knowledge came from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God knew that they were naked before. They were not clothed in the glory of God or in a robe of righteousness, as some people preach. We can clearly see this in Genesis 2:25:

Genesis 2:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

If they had been clothed in some kind of robe of glory, or light, or righteousness, then they would not have been naked. This would have been an incorrect statement. But the Bible says that they were both naked, the man and his wife. God knew that they were naked, but He never mentioned it to them. He never wanted them to be aware of that. He didn't create us, the human beings, with a conscience. *The conscience is defined as the faculty of being able to discern right and wrong in one's own actions.* God didn't create us with this ability to sit down and judge ourselves, and constantly evaluating whether we are right or wrong. He created us innocent. Adam and Eve were completely naked and they were not ashamed.

Now, let's think about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for a moment. The name of that tree is descriptive of our conscience, isn't it? When Adam and Eve ate of that tree, that must have been the place and the time when they received a conscience. It was either God created them with an inactive conscience, which was activated when they ate of the tree, or the tree actually gave them a conscience. I am not exactly sure which way was it, but I tend to believe that the tree is what actually gave them the conscience. The reason I say this is because of what the Bible says about the tree of life in comparison with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:

Genesis 3:22-23 (NKJV)

²² Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

Clearly, this passage compares the two trees and the result of eating from their fruit. Both trees were imparting something. The tree of life would have imparted eternal life to man, while the tree of the knowledge of good and evil imparted the knowledge of good and evil. Therefore, this last tree has imparted something to Adam and Eve as well. God didn't create Adam and Eve with a conscience. That came because of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What was the fruit of the conscience? The very first fruit that came was what we already saw in Genesis 3:6-7, that their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked. The conscience immediately has made them self-conscious, and it focused their attention on themselves. Adam and Eve were not one bit more naked after they sinned, than how they were before they sinned. Nothing changed in the natural; it was only their perception that changed. *The conscience does this today as well: it makes us self-aware.*

Adam and Eve were naked before sinning, but they didn't even notice it because they were God-conscious. That's amazing! And in the New Testament we're supposed to walk exactly like that: by faith and not by sight, to be more God-conscious than self-conscious. However, allow me to add this: even if you get so God-conscious that you don't notice whether you have clothes on you or not, please have mercy on the rest of us that are still carnal and wear clothes! Adam and Eve were so God-conscious that they didn't even know that they were naked. But this changed when they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They became self-aware and fixated on their self when they received the conscience. Shame came on them. They weren't ashamed before, but all of a sudden the conscience brought shame over them and fear of punishment. Did you know God never wanted us to experience such emotions? He never wanted us to be afraid. He didn't create us for rejection, but for fellowship. He didn't intend for things to be this way, but after Adam and Eve sinned, it became necessary to have a conscience.

You might say now that it would be nice if we could get rid of our conscience. Well, not really. Do you know why? Because for a lost and fallen human being a conscience is a necessary evil. Your conscience makes you aware of your sin and shows you your need for forgiveness. God had to give us a free choice to serve Him by freedom of choice; otherwise we would not have been true free moral agents. We would have been serving and loving Him only because there was no other option. He had to give us the option, and I don't believe that the alternative to the tree of life was by accident the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The moment they ate of that tree, they received a conscience, which even though had all these negative effects, such as shame, and fear, it also provided a good function: to show them and us that we have sinned and have come short of the glory of God, and that we need forgiveness. I believe that God planned all of this. It says in Revelation 13:8 that:

Revelation 13:8 (NKJV)

⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship Him, whose names haven't been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb *slain from the foundation of the world*.

This verse shows that God had a plan in place even in case we were going to rebel at Him and sin against Him (which we did), and Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Long before He even created us, He had already put a plan in place for that route and Jesus had already accepted that plan to come down to earth and redeem us. That is extraordinary! Imagine this for a moment: you were God and you were going to create humankind. If you knew that there was a possibility for man to rebel against you, and that they were going to do all these terrible things - the Holocaust and all the atrocities happening in the world, the divorces, the ungodliness, the hatred, the hurt, and the pain that entered the human race - would you still have done it? Probably not. The only way I can understand this is that God saw you and me - those who would accept His payment for sin and who would become new creatures, those who would be born again in His likeness. He looked at us and thought that you and I were worth all the pain and all the suffering involved. *The value of something is measured by what you are willing to pay for it.* You may look at you and at the world and think that we are not worth much, but the very fact that God Almighty was willing to send His Son to die for us, put a huge value on us. The Scripture here said that He was slain from the foundation of the world.

God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden, with a purpose: in case we were going to violate His instructions, we would receive the conscience that immediately would start condemning us.

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