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*“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”  
Colossians 2:8*

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## Following the Biblical Stream:

By Philip Busby

As we continue our look at chapter 3 of the book of Genesis, beginning in verse 14, we see what most like to call “the curses.” However, we need to have a clear view of what God did here and not be so general. When we use the word “curse,” we think of bad things. Then, we make the mistake of talking as if God cursed man. This culminates in an attitude that God simply did bad things to man so his life would be miserable. In retribution for man's disobedience, we say God cursed us. This attitude brings negativity to everything God did in these verses, and that is a bad way to think!

I talked about this issue last time, and we will discuss the fine points of each action as we continue to take this chapter, verse by verse. However, I want to start by taking a simple view of what God did in these verses. We should make a list, of sorts, if we want a clear view, so here it is. God curses the serpent and changes its physical attributes. Then, He puts enmity between the serpent and the woman and their seed. Next, God multiplies the sorrow and conception of the woman and the sorrow in childbirth. God also points out the life she has chosen will result in the submission of her desires to those of her husband. Then, God curses the ground for man's sake. That, in a nutshell, is what God did. Nothing catastrophic to the moment, but long term, these actions would definitely have an effect. How great the effect would be on our existence would depend on the choices man would make.

Note here, out of the three beings God is dealing with, only one of them is cursed, and that's the serpent. The sorrow, conception, and childbirth issues God tells Eve she will endure, is not defined as a curse. Neither is the next item for the woman. These are, in many ways, simply consequences of the path she chose by taking the fruit. Then the ground was cursed. This was done because Adam

listened to his wife in the matter of the fruit, but it's a curse of the ground, not Adam himself. The effect of this would have consequences for all life on the planet! This is why we read the words in Genesis 8:21 where God states He will not again curse the ground for man's sake nor smite every living thing again, as He did with the flood. God determined He had directly caused His creation to suffer enough because of man's actions, and God would no longer touch the rest of His creation to get through to man. This is how we know the wording in Revelation is not telling us a story of God destroying the planet, but a story of man by his own actions and choices, bringing destruction upon himself!

Even so, we continue to see God interacting with us through this process of life. He is trying to get us to open our eyes and see the truth. What the Bible tells us is, most people not only ignore the truth but go to great lengths to try and blot it out! The “curses” God puts down here in Genesis, are only the beginning of God's love for us “...while we were yet sinners.” Romans 5:8 The devil has tried to get us to look at God's interaction with us as hardship which we must overcome, when in reality, God is trying to lead us to the cross of Christ and His life giving blood! (Matt. 16:24-25)

So, in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15, as God put enmity between man and the serpent, God does this so man would understand Satan was and is, not a god. Enmity is not a word we use much in the English language anymore. However, it is a good word, deep in meaning. It does not simply mean hostility, but a deep, angry, bitter hostility as between enemies. God wants us to know Satan is our enemy not simply the other option. With Satan there is only one end, death and destruction. (Rom. 6:23)

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We should understand this enmity was something very different for humans at the time. In today's world, all different kinds of animals are feared by man. However, this begins at the time of the flood. In Genesis chapter 9, God gives man permission to kill animals for food. This, however, comes with a consequence. From then on, animals would have a fear and mistrust of humans that they did not have before. Further, if animals were to be killed by humans, then humans would be killed by animals! This relationship of eat and be eaten did not exist at the time of Adam and Eve. The idea of hostility between any animal and humans was completely foreign to them. This is why the specific warning is given that the serpent would bruise man's heel and man would bruise the serpent's head. When God put enmity between man and the serpent, man, for the first time, had something to be cautious of while he walked the planet. The serpent would fight and man would be forced to fight back!

This new and strange relationship between the serpent and man would be illustrative of the fact man could not ignorantly stumble through life but must be on his guard against the devil. It also illustrated how this would be ongoing. The only way for this to end, would be for Satan to be removed from our lives. Revelation tells us, for a thousand years Satan will be locked away from man and Jesus brings peace. However, at the end of those thousand years when Satan is released, many follow after him again. (Rev. 20:7-9)

As people who desire the ways of God, we need to overcome Satan, not just in a temporary way but in a permanent way. The Bible tells us to resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7) However, the devil will come back at anytime he feels your resistance is down. He is kind of like a cold or flu in that way. He is always lurking not too far away, looking for the opportunity to catch us off guard. This is no way to live for eternity, and God wants us to be free. Of course, we could only be ultimately set free through the work of Christ on the cross. Then the key would be simple, do we want to be free? If we do, then it is still up to us to overcome the devil as individuals. How do we do that? Revelation tells us those John sees in heaven with the Lord had, "...overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelation 12:10-11 The "curses" of Genesis were meant to show us this path.

Post innocence, this life was going to be hardship and toil. The end of a sin-filled life will always be death and destruction. The things God implements here in Genesis are physical and mental things which show us this fact in obvious everyday ways. God needs us to keep our eyes on Him and the life which lies beyond this one. Loving our lives not unto death is part of how we overcome Satan, and it is not just in the aspect of giving our lives to Christ in

spite of those who would martyr us. It is also in the simple day by day way we live our lives and what we make most important!

As we go back to our verse by verse study, we are ready to look at verse 16. Verse 16 deals with the woman. The wording here is tricky in the English. God says to the woman, He will "...greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;..." The word "and" is used here, that is to say "sorrow" and "conception" will be multiplied. To understand this you have to take a look at each of the three main words in this statement.

We probably all get the sorrow idea. However, the original language word doesn't mean just sadness. It also means things like worry and toil. A good word to use in the description today would be stress! The original language word we translate "conception" from is larger than we use the word conception for today. Today, we seem to only apply the word conception to the initial moment a child is formed. In this verse, the word is talking about the whole process from what we would call conception all the way through the birth. In many ways the wording is even more broad than that. In reality, it is referring to the idea of family life in general: the process of being a woman, deciding to have a physical relationship which could result in a child, the birthing, the raising and caring for that child, as well as the watching them live on their own someday. Bringing children into this world would be a worry filled experience for the woman. It is mothers who bear most of the worry when it comes to their children. It is not that fathers don't worry, but it is much different and not as universal as with the mother.

The third word in the line is "multiply." This word means "to increase." Whether you are using the word increase or multiply, keep in mind, this is not telling us there was nothing there before. The woman had emotions connected to her job as a mother even before the fall. However, these emotions would greatly increase or multiply. They would exist at an unhealthy level. To put it altogether, God was telling the woman, her job in the family unit was going to be much bigger than before. Her sorrow in the matter would be much greater. Her job as a mother would be a lot harder! A mother's concern for her children's well-being will never end in this life. This fact is part of the reason for the scripture in Revelation which assures us that, in the end, God will wipe all the tears from our eyes. (Rev. 21:4)

The next line in verse 16 says, "...in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;..." This is where we see the fact that bearing children would come with pain. God did not say He would increase this sorrow. He simply tells the woman there would be sorrow. This "sorrow" comes from the same prime root as the one in the line before, but it is not the

# Living Springs' Questions & Answers

*"Can a Christian ever lose their salvation?"*

The answer to this question all depends on one thing, what do you mean by "salvation"? The bottom line is simply this, each human has to decide if they want to know the God who created them or not. God created us with such a free will that even the decision to have or not have a relationship with Him is up to us. When we decide we believe there is a God, and we want to have a relationship with Him, we must understand that we still have the ability to change our mind at any time. Just as God does not make us have a relationship with Him, He does not make us stay in that relationship. So, our walk with God can be lost just like our friendship with a human.

We can lose our relationship by specifically deciding we no longer want it, or we may simply lose it because we no longer care enough to maintain it! The maintaining it part is never God's fault. He is always there for us and waiting for us to take the time to be with Him. He has promised, He will never leave us nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5) So, it is always our choices which make the difference. Do we want to talk to Him and commune with Him or is there always something better to do? The only way God will reject a relationship with us is if we purposely commit the one sin Jesus tells us will not be forgiven us, and that is the blaspheming of The Holy Ghost. (Matt. 12:30-33) This is a choice. It must be done intentionally, and some have decided they do not want God in their lives, to the extent, they have chosen to cross this line. So, as we live on this earth, our options are wide open, and God is forcing nothing on us!

The problem is, we have been misled by many false doctrines which have arisen in our churches over the centuries. We do not see the issue of salvation in its proper context. We have come to believe, in most Christian circles, that we are to come to a point where we specifically say a sinner's prayer. Then we are taught, at that point we are "saved." In many churches this is simply a miss use of terms. Many Christians do believe you can fall away from God, but we should have our theology in a more proper place. The issue of saying we

are "saved" is getting more and more distorted as the generations go by. People come up with all kinds of ideas which drag them off course with the Bible and what it truly tells us. Many believe in what I like to call the "Magical Ticket" theology. They believe by saying the sinner's prayer or something along those lines, they have completed a formula. They believe if you complete the formula correctly, it is as if you receive a magical ticket to heaven. Some carry this theology so far, they will even tell you the "sinner's prayer" is the first prayer God ever hears you say. This is such a terrible thing to think! We need to realize God is not some closed off, distant God. He is all knowing and all seeing. He hears every word you speak, and He is waiting for you to acknowledge His presence in your life. If God had not loved us first, we would have no idea how to come to Him. (1 John 4) The Bible tells us faith is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8) It tells us God knows us from our mother's womb, and the Psalmist tells us, God was his God, from his mother's womb! (Ps. 22:9-10, Gal. 1:14-17) We are born knowing God. It is we who truly decide to walk away in the first place!

God is waiting for us to say that first prayer when we acknowledge His existence and our realization that we have sinned, thus we need Him. However, this is a decision to set your feet on a path which we must then daily choose to walk! Straight is the way and narrow is the path which leads to life everlasting. (Matt. 7:13-14) When most talk about being "saved," they talk about it as if we have somehow made the transition talked about by Paul in I Corinthians 15:42-57, where this corruptible has taken on incorruption. There is no mistranslation in these verses, they simply mean what they say. In the here and now we are corruptible, meaning we are capable of being corrupted. If we are going to live with God for eternity, we must be changed to incorruptible or take on incorruptibility. So, we can believe in God, walk with Him daily, and say we want to always be with Him, but this does not keep our physical forms from dying!

The fact we still face death is the telltale sign we are not yet saved. This very fact concerned many in the early church, and they asked Paul about it. Paul simply told

them the living will not prevent the dead, but the dead in Christ will rise first, and then we which are alive and remain will be caught up to meet Him in the air. (I Thes. 4:15-17) In I Corinthians 15, he tells the church even those of us who are alive in these sinful fleshly bodies will not stay the same, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump! Paul is not teaching some new fangled theology in these verses. He is simply pointing out, when Jesus returns to set His feet on the Mt. of Olives, (Acts 1:9-12, Zech. 14) He will also collect all those who have chosen to serve Him, whether alive or dead. They will be given new bodies which are incorruptible, and from then on, they will always be with The Lord. This will truly be salvation, and once we have been given our incorruptible bodies, we will never be able to lose them. This is why God wants us to come to Him. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. It is not God's will that a single human not come to live with Him forever, but we have a will as well. So, we have to come to repentance; and again, this is a big commitment, one we must choose. God is not going to force us to live with Him for eternity; thus, He will only grant salvation to those who truly want it. This means, what we want can't just be heaven because it sounds better than hell. We must desire to be with God. Heaven is the place Jesus left this earth to prepare for us, that where He is, there we may be also. (John 14:1-4) Hell is a place prepared for the devil and those angels which followed him. Hell is a place where God will not be. So, it simply matters what we want. This life is the chance to see if God is what you want. Eternity is a big commitment!

Let's look at your question using a different term used in the Bible. Many Christians will tell you once you say the sinners prayer, you are "born again"! This is also not really the proper use of a term. This term comes from the story of Nicodemus talking to Jesus. You should take the time to stop and read that story now. It is found in John 3:1-21. Here Nicodemus is talking about the fact that, in the matter of death, there seems to be no difference, through the years, between those who serve God and those who do not. He is asking, how can anyone be saved from the loss of these physical forms? Jesus' answer is not that the true believer will not die. Jesus' answer is that we must be born again! Now, understand this is where a great deal of false teaching and misunderstanding comes in again. When many ministers teach on this subject, they will tell you this "born again" idea is about our spirit not our flesh. They will tell you, when you make that first commitment to God, your

spirit, which they say is dead - is then born. This is totally wrong! Jesus is literally talking about the need to shed this sinful, corruptible flesh. Nicodemus was not the ignorant one, many tell us he was. Nicodemus is right on the same track with what Jesus is talking about in many ways; most believers today are not. However, he couldn't figure out how the flesh could be reborn. Thus, he asks the logical question, how can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again. Nicodemus was asking how a person could possibly receive a new physical form, when being born of a woman is the only way Nicodemus could think that a person could have a fresh start. Jesus answered this question somewhat poetically. Jesus tells Nicodemus not to "marvel" at what He was telling him. Jesus says the wind blows, and we hear its sound. However, we do not really understand where it comes from and where it goes. Scientist today will tell us they understand much more about the wind, but they still don't really know why it does what it does. This fact is testified by the fact we still have a very hard time knowing anything about what the weather will be like!

What Jesus was telling Nicodemus is, when you were born from your mother's womb, you were born by the will of your parents. This was a human decision of the flesh. If we are going to have life eternal, we must be born of spirit. When he says "spirit" here, Jesus is not referring to the birth of our spirit. The fact we have a mind and spirit which will be left without a physical form after we die, is the whole problem Nicodemus was concerned about. Here, Jesus is telling us we must be born of God. (In I Cor. 15:44-49, Paul explains this in detail.) Jesus was talking about the transition only God can grant from corruptible to incorruptible. Nicodemus still couldn't figure out how this could be, because he did not understand that God can do things we can't even imagine or think. (Eph. 3:20-21) In verse 12, Jesus asks the question, if we can not believe something like God's ability to transition our flesh, how can we believe God has things which we need, far beyond that simple first step? In verse 13, Jesus tells us "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven,..." Jesus is referring to Himself. Jesus goes on to tell us the work He came to do so that it might be possible for us to share in that experience. Jesus explains what I just explained above. We must choose. Do we love darkness or do we love light? If we love light, we will come to a place of repentance. We will seek to change our ways by knowing the ways of God. This is why the base commandments for how to live our lives, are to love God with everything we have and to love our

neighbor as ourselves. (Matt. 22:35-40) Whether true darkness or light is what we desire, will be shown in our actions.

Let's look at some other scripture. The Bible says if we come to God, we must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them which diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6) Again, we must first accept God exists, then we must believe God has the power to save us from the death we all face! This is why the Bible tells us we are saved by grace. Many get this wrong as well. They tell us we are saved by faith, but Ephesians 2:8 tells us we are saved by grace. If it was not for the fact God loves us and desires none of us love darkness rather than light, there would be no plan of salvation! Jesus came and gave His life for us because of the love of God. God offers salvation to all, because He is a God of grace. No matter what mistakes we have made in life, there is still salvation thru Jesus Christ. So, the scripture tells us, we are saved by grace through faith. What does that mean? Well, God being gracious offers salvation to all, but what does God ask of us? The answer is faith!

This brings us to yet another point of confusion among many believers. Many look at faith as simply belief. They tell you what you can not see, you accept by faith. What they say is not wrong, it's what they mean! They mean that what we can not see, we simply accept anyway with nothing to back it up. They tell us this is faith. This is not faith. Paul tells us in Hebrews 11:1 that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. The most simple definition of faith is a relationship with God! As we grow in the grace and knowledge of God, we find there are things that exist which in these present forms we can not see or touch, but they exist nonetheless! We find that tangible things are not the only things our life is about. This fact is why scripture tells us not to be so focused on the flesh. The flesh is the part of us which will die. There is no profit in it. (John 6:63) This is why things like fasting should be a part of every believer's life. We need to keep this flesh under submission, or it will blind us from the things of God. If we give the flesh everything it wants, we will never have growth in faith. Again, we are back to the choice! Do we want this life and world, or God? (Matt. 10:38-39) If we want God, He is waiting to have a relationship with us. So, faith, being a relationship with God, means if we have faith, it is truly the substance of what we hope to have eternally and the evidence that such a relationship is possible! Again, Ephesians 2:8 tells us, this faith or relationship with God, even though we can not see or touch Him, is not something we

develop on our own, it is the gift of God. When we come to God or say that sinner's prayer, this is really what we have come to receive: a deep and meaningful relationship which God is readily willing to give and grow!

Paul explains in Romans chapter 4, Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. In verse 5, he tells us Abraham's faith is counted for righteousness. Abraham had a relationship with God. Now, Abraham was not a perfect man, and he could not make up for the mistakes he had made in his life. However, Abraham believed if he cried unto God, God would take care of this fact. Abraham was right! Abraham continued in his relationship with God, growing and learning everyday. He understood he could never earn his salvation, but he loved God and longed to commune with God. God loved Abraham and longed to commune with him. So, Abraham walked in a relationship with God even knowing that he (Abraham) would die someday for his sins. Why would Abraham not just live it up and not care about what God wanted? If he couldn't make up for the fact he was not perfect, why would he waste time, he could have spent enjoying the things of the flesh, trying to walk with God? The answer is given to us in Genesis 22.

God had asked Abraham to give up his son. Abraham loved God so much he was willing to do even this! As Abraham and his son walked up to the place where the sacrifice would take place, Abraham's son said he saw the fire, the wood, and all the provisions to give a sacrifice to God, but he did not see a sacrifice. Abraham's statement in response to this is something which we should never forget! Abraham said, "God will provide himself a lamb!" Abraham knew even the sacrifice of his son would not gain him salvation. He understood sacrificing was only a symbol of what God would do for us, and only God's sacrifice would ultimately save us. This understanding, through his relationship with God, and Abraham's firm belief God would someday provide, not just a lamb, but "Himself a lamb," is what was counted to him for righteousness. Abraham knew God would not let death end the relationship they had!

Today, we live much the same. The only real difference is that we live on the other side of the cross. Jesus was that Lamb. He has come and sacrificed Himself for our sin. Abraham believed God would provide a lamb and we believe God has provided that Lamb. The biggest difference is in the fact we know the

name of that Lamb, and are told to confess the name of Jesus. This is for very simple reasons. Outside of those who do not care that The God who created them sacrificed Himself to provide eternal life, there only exists two reasons for not proclaiming the name of Jesus. First, we may have never heard the “good news” or gospel, which is that God has provided Himself a Lamb and His name is Jesus! The second reason can be that we do not believe Jesus is that Lamb! Jesus said, His sheep know His voice. (John 10:14-30) If we have faith in God, we will come to the understanding that Jesus was and is The Lamb slain for our sin, and again the choice is ours!

This understanding of the true nature of our walk with God, clears away many of the arguments people use to support theologies like eternal security. People who believe this, do not believe you can miss heaven once you've confessed your sins and became a “Christian.” What we need to understand is that we are not saved or born again as of yet. We are not perfect. Our righteousnesses are still as filthy rags. (Isa. 64:6) It is only our desire to have a continual relationship with God which will lead to our salvation. Yes, Romans 8:38-39 tells us that nothing will separate us from the love of God, and that is still true. God loves us always! Again, it's not His will that any perish, but that all come to repentance. (II Pet. 3:9) If we never choose to come to that place, God still loves us. His love is why He opened the door of salvation, even though it caused Jesus to go through the cross. However, it's also His love which allows us to make our own choices, just as He created us to!

Some will ask what the Bible means when it says, we become a new creature? (II Cor. 5:17) This is simple as well. When we do not know The Lord and have a relationship with Him, then the things of this world is all we know. When we yield to that little voice or measure of faith which God has given to everyone of us, we will find God is ready and able to change our lives. To open our eyes to the ways He intended us to live, instead of the ways of the world. We no longer live in the idea that

what this life has to offer is all there is. We find there is so much more with God, that the things of this world grow unimportant to us. We see everything differently than before. Our entire world shifts, and truly a new life begins. This is the gift of God!

So, if calling unto God is really what we have done, the process of change in our life will move as fast as we are able and willing to yield up each part of our lives to Him. We do not have to wait for heaven to serve and know The Lord. We can live in the knowledge that death is only a transition, not an end, as it is for those who do not serve The Lord. To receive this revelation in our lives is so profound, the Bible even tells us, if we are not going to endure to the end, it would have been better for us to have never known the truth in the first place! (II Pet. 2:9-22)

In a nutshell, no, you can not lose your salvation. However, whether we endure to the end and receive that crown of life, which is promised to all that love the Lord, is still a question. (James 1:12, Rev. 2:9-10) This is the reason Paul speaks so much about resisting the desires of the flesh. We can make the choice to serve God, but if we turn and go after the things of the flesh, we will miss out. Paul himself says in I Corinthians 9:27 that he keeps his body under subjection because he understands that if he does not, even after all the work of God he has done, he will not make it to heaven. So, will we be saved? It's all up to us and the decisions we make until the day we pass from this life or are caught up to meet Jesus in the air. Thus, Romans 13:11 tells us, “...awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” This is why the Bible tells us, today is the day of salvation. (II Cor. 6:2) We never know when these physical forms will give up the ghost. Even if we are as strong as an ox and healthy as any human can be, we could walk out tomorrow and get hit by a truck. That is, if we live to see tomorrow! Today, is the day to start, renew, or continue to grow in our relationship with God. Let's not miss out on a second!

***Questions submitted to the Institute, answered  
by Philip Busby.***

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## **FBS continued from pg. 2**

same word in the original language. This “sorrow” comes with a stronger indication of pain and discomfort of a physical sense.

The next line is simple if we would just be honest, “...and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” This is another lesson in what a weak language English is. The word “desire” is the key in this line. However, we do not have words in English which differ in their description of what kind of desire we are talking about. In many ways, we have trouble even understanding there is a difference. In our world today, we are not taught to think on a deeper level and express deep thoughts and emotions. It is one of the things which leads to much misunderstanding among humans today. This fact is why we must be cautious of Bible versions which continue to be “translated” into “modern English.” English at the time of the King James translation was weak enough, and English has only gotten worse overtime. This shallowness in our relationships and expression of thoughts causes great unhappiness and frustration with life in general. We shouldn't let it affect our ability to study the Word of God!

There is a difference in the way we desire things! There is a desire which is a deep longing. Something you want because you want it. It is not because external forces are driving you. This is like the desire King Solomon had to build the temple of God! It is the desire a true artist has to paint, sculpt, etc. It can be almost an unexplainable compulsion. Then there is a desire which is a seeking. This can many times be because something is driving you. The hunter desires to find his prey, or a farmer desires to bring in his crop. He may be hungry or he knows his family will be hungry. It is a desire driven by necessity. This kind of desire can also range between points of extreme, such as - I'm hungry now and want something to eat, all the way to - I'm starving and I must find something to eat. Desire can be negative or it can be positive. It can come in all different ways.

The desire talked about here in verse 16 is a desire which can not be fulfilled. Solomon felt great as he built and finished the temple. The hunter and his family can be filled with meat, satisfied for at least a time. However, the desire talked about here would be another one of those items which, here in this life, could never be satisfied, not even for a time. It is an overflowing desire which cannot be contained. So, what does all this mean? Well, it means, down inside, the woman would never stop longing for what was lost in the garden! When God created Adam, God said it was not good for him to be alone. This is why God created Eve, utilizing a piece of Adam. In I Corinthians 11:7-8, Paul says it this way, “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.” When God brings the woman to Adam, he says this is bone of my bone and flesh

of my flesh. There was an intended relationship between man and woman which would be equal. Not because they had exact physical and emotional attributes, but because they were two halves of one complete relationship. Together, they could walk hand in hand, being more together than they could alone.

Men have a certain psychological profile. That profile includes leadership, but leadership is very different from rulership. God knew the struggles humans would face in life would cause great stress on man's ability to lead his family. God knew man would turn to more of a rulership role, in place of the leadership role God had intended. In any dictatorship, there are those at the top and those underneath. Man has taken this concept so far, as a society, that man went beyond the family unit, of man, wife, and many times children, to form what we call governments. The forefathers, of the United States, understood there was no way to form a government without the structure of greater than and less than. This disturbed them because they had seen firsthand the damage this could cause. Their solution was to take turns as to who was greater than and let everyone have a say in who would be in these roles and when. It may be about as good as man can do with government, but it still is not great!

Through the centuries of building tribes, nations, and empires, we have almost lost what it means to be a simple family unit. We barely understand what it means for a man to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:3-6) The idea of individuals building family units, which often result in the future formation of new family units, is not the way we see human existence. We mark human achievement as a society. Many factors have played a part in shaping our world, but ultimately the bottom line is simple, we live in a rulership world. It is not the free world God intended humans to have!

So, God was telling the woman she would desire her husband to be who he was created to be. She would even try to fulfill this desire by trying to take man's natural position at times. The end result is that you can never go home again! The man was not created for the woman, the woman was created for the man. The woman's desire would always be for the relationship God built her to have with man. Her desire would be for the husband's leadership not rulership, but the response whether personally in marriage or overall as in society is that, “...he shall rule over thee.”

Keep in mind, this is not to say women have no role in the bad way the world has turned out. It was Eve who chose the fruit first and gave it to her husband. It was she who desired to have the wisdom and freedom from God she believed the tree could bring. Talking about all this is to point out, you cannot have it both ways! You cannot go

your own way and expect to have the blessings which following God can bring. You can not get all the things you want and be honestly surprised when the negative consequences follow. You can not refuse to follow the instructions of God then be upset when others don't.

I said earlier that God did not call what He said to Eve a curse. This shows us a very interesting point. God was not enacting anything for the woman. God was simply pointing out the consequences of her actions! God said "I will..." in the first part of verse 16. This is an example of something we see in the Bible which many do not understand. God is working for our good. That does not mean everything which happens to us is pleasant. Our decisions force God to take actions which are good for us but have very bitter repercussions. This is what we are talking about when we say, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus. We must endure the trials of this life, knowing the end reward God is working for us is the wonderful life beyond our hopes and dreams. God will ultimately do this by ending this world and taking all those who desire God's way of life to a new place which Jesus is preparing for us. (John 14:1-3)

So, as God talks to Eve He says "I will..." But understand what God is saying is not that He will reach down and implement these specific feelings and pains. The sorrow would come because of the world man would build. Remember, God does not curse Adam or Eve. God curses the ground for man's sake and the rest follows naturally. The more man fights the curse of the ground the worse all this gets! Why would a woman's job as a wife and mother get harder? Because the world would become increasingly unsafe. Sin would abound, making marriage harder and raising children in the ways of God next to impossible. The emotional profile of a woman makes all this very stressful. There was never a reason before the fall to worry about the safety of a human. The responsibilities of parenthood would have been the same. A child would need to be fed, bathed, carried from place to place and all the things involved in general care. A child would need to be taught things, and would go through varying stages of development. However, there would never have been the fear involved, and we would always have had God nearby.

After the fall, sin would cause sickness and disease. This would lead to the constant deterioration of the human body. As time marches forward, we continually face new problems. We believe we have wiped out some diseases,

but a new and often more aggressive one comes our way. Children would get sick and this would tear at the emotions of a mother in ways a father just can't comprehend. The deterioration of the woman's body means carrying a child would be a constant concern. Greater physical pain would exist in carrying and birthing a child as well.

As we've already talked about, the desire a woman would have toward her husband and the fact he would rule over her are also simple consequences to the path they had chosen, by taking the fruit God told them not to. God uses the wording "I will" here because God takes responsibility for His creation. Throughout the Word of God, we see God taking responsibility not just for those actions He specifically takes, like the flood of Noah's day, but also those actions He chooses not to take. When talking to Israel, many times God said I will do this or that; but in many cases, He was referring to the simple fact He would not intervene and help. God created a nation by bringing them out of Egypt and placing them in a land flowing with milk and honey. They did not get their freedom or land by their own strength. Therefore, they were not going to keep it by their own strength. If God simply stepped back and let nature take its course, the armies would come and destroy.

So, we see God takes responsibility for His actions and inactions. It is vital we understand this point as we study the Word of God, or we will never understand the nature of God. The point Eve needed to understand was, it was her decisions which caused God to take action or desire not to. A point we need to keep in mind is that at the time of these verses there were only two humans. This meant God could deal with the entire human race based on these two and their choices. As man increased in number, the dynamic became very complex. This is why we can not question God's actions; we must examine our own. We must seek to be sure we are in the place God wants us to be, and we should realize that knowing whether we are in that place or not can't be judged by what is going on around us. It can't be judged by whether we think our personal life is going good or bad. In a world filled with sin, we must take on the attitude of Job when he said, "...shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job 2:9 The only way for us to know we are right is by having a relationship with God where we can hear His voice in our everyday actions!

I'll see you next time!

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