

# In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the  
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



## The Presence & Problem of Evil

**INTRO:** This study marks the last in section one of our series: the doctrines that have their foundation in Genesis 1-3. It is, by no means, the final word on the subject. There are many other truths leading to other aspects of Biblical revelation that can be found here and which we have not discussed. Those we have discussed so far, however, are the major teachings of the Bible and certainly establish the premise that every major doctrine in the Bible is rooted in the first three chapters of Genesis. Next we will move into section two and examine the cosmology of creation and discover that the Biblical record is not at odds with what is truly scientific, though it is plainly in conflict with the majority of which passes for science in all of the major disciplines of that field.

Today we examine the existence of the devil and the problem of evil. While it is not a “fun” study, it is a necessary one because we need to understand the wiles of our foe. And, even though the subject is the Biblical teaching about evil and Satan, it must still remain Christocentric. Jesus Christ is always our primary focus and in the matter of sin and the devil it is most comforting to know that *in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him Who loved us.* (Rom 8:37)

### I. Propositional Truths About Evil From Genesis 3

- A. Just as the Bible begins with the assumption of the existence of God (and calls them fools who do not believe it), so also it introduces evil and the devil without preamble: his existence is declared, not explained.
- B. The Bible never really explains how he became evil or exactly when it began, but we are given clear hints about the nature of his origin as Satan.
  - 1. Isaiah 14:3-21 gives a personification of Satan in the king of Babylon and reveals his pride and ungodly ambition: I will ascend to heaven, I will make my throne above the stars of God...I will make myself like the Most High. (vv.13-14)
  - 2. Ezekiel 28:12-19 gives further insight in to the power behind the prince of Tyre: your heart was lifted up because of your beauty. (v.17)
  - 3. Ezekiel 28:13 implies this anointed cherub was in Eden in an unfallen condition. While we may not speculate exactly when he fell, many Bible students believe it was after the end of creation on the sixth day when God pronounced everything that He had made as very good.
- C. There are some things the Bible presents as fact for our information without giving the details which we do not need to know:
  - 1. What was Noah's time really like? What would have happened if the tower of Babel had been completed? What was Paul's thorn in the flesh? Are examples.
  - 2. Why is the devil like he is and where did evil originally come from? We are not told with precise detail. What we are told quite plainly is that:
    - [a] God is good and there is no sin in Him (I Jn 1:5) [b] He made everything good and without sin [c] creating freedom of the will does not imply responsibility of the Creator for choices made with that will [d] Lucifer (Is 14:12 KJV), morning star, son of the dawn, wanted to be God, as a consequence he fell morally, and now he wants to ruin us via the same desire.

### II. What We Do Know Absolutely From Genesis 3 About Evil & the Devil

- A. He did fall through his desire to be God, and at its root, all temptation toward us arises from the same desire.
- B. He is a liar, and the father of lies (Jn 8:44) and bases all his work in deception
- C. He appears in attractive ways (II Co 11:14) and disguises himself as an angel of light
- D. The end result is always loss and death
- E. Adam and Eve did not “have” to sin, and neither do we as born again people of God (I Co 10:13)
- F. The earth is corrupted and death is inevitable as a consequence of sin (Gen 3:17-24)

## NOTES

Genesis 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; <sup>3</sup> but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" <sup>4</sup> The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Isaiah 14:12-14 <sup>12</sup> "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup> "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. <sup>14</sup> 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

## Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. In your small group discuss several common types of sinful behavior and explain how each has at its root a desire to be god, to be autonomous.
2. What are the principle avenues through which temptation appeals to us?
3. Identify how the sins you have been discussion fit into one of these primary avenues of temptation.
4. What would you say, from our study of the Bible, is the core sin?
5. Is it possible for a born again follower of Jesus Christ to live each day without doing anything that he/she recognizes as wrong or sin? Defend your answer with Scripture.
6. It is reported that a woman once reacted to John Wesley's teaching on sanctification by quoting the Westminster Catechism by saying, "Mr. Wesley I'll have you know I sin every day in every way in thought and word and deed." Wesley replied, "Madam, you had better quit it!" Explain their two viewpoints.