

THE LOSS OF LIFE






How God's image was lost – and how it may be regained.

YOU have learned about the special care with which God made mankind. All plant and animal life was created simply by calling it into being. In the case of man, however, God breathed into him the breath of life. Then God put man in charge of creation, to use it for his needs and to the glory of the Creator. Scripture leaves no doubt that *man* was to be the leader in the world that we can see.

The Bible also reveals, however, that God created spirit-beings/creatures which are usually not seen, such as the angels. For reasons known only to Himself, God does not mention the creation of angels in the first chapter of Genesis. Yet we may learn a number of things about angels from various passages of the Bible

Angels

ICON KEY

-  Introduction
-  Important point
-  For further reading

1. Read John 1:1-3. Since angels are certainly a part of God's creation, *when, according to John, must they have been created?*

2. Read Genesis 2:1-2. We are told that God did all His creating work during the first six days. *What may we say then about when the angels were created?*

3. Look up Revelation 5:11. *What does this passage tell us about the NUMBER of these unseen spirit-beings?*

4. Read Psalm 103:20-21. *Write down at least four things that God tells us about angels in this passage:*

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5. Read Hebrews 1:14. *Which people did God specifically create the angels to serve?*

6. Turn to Psalm 91:11-12. *What special duties are angels to perform?*

7. Read Luke 15:10. One particular event is described in the Bible as causing great rejoicing among the angels – *what is it?*

8. Look up Matthew 22:29-30. Jesus was speaking with a sect of the Jews known as the Saducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. In the process, He gave us an interesting piece of information about the angels. In contrast to God's plan for people, *what did the Lord NOT provide for angels?*

9. We have studied how our loving God made the whole world in six natural, 24-hour days. He did it using only the power of His Word. It was God's will that mankind and angels should love Him, and serve Him in perfect joy and knowledge. Everything was perfect. Then what happened? How did this world get to be the kind of place it is, so full of hardship and sin and sorrow? Why did God ever allow evil to enter His perfect creation? Why did a large number of the angels defect under Satan, their leader? Why did God allow man to go against His will and commandments? These questions will remain mysteries to our limited minds until Judgment Day, when we shall see God face-to-face, and are able to "...know God even as I am known," in the words of the Apostle Paul (I Corinthians 13:12).

In the meantime, we have more than enough to deal with in living our lives. The world we live in is filled with sin, tears, sorrow, and uncertainty about the future. We all have a problem similar to that of a man going down for the third time in deep water. Someone throws him a rope. He doesn't ask how he got in such a dangerous predicament in the first place. He doesn't care about the color of the rope. He doesn't even question whether or not the rope is strong enough to hold him – he just grabs on, and is saved. Similarly, this Bible course may not answer every question you could come up with about God and His creation. Many of those answers will only be ours in heaven. But the Word of God *is* able to do the most important thing – it can "make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Along the way, you may also find the Lord answering many other questions you have about your life.



The Evil Angels, and Satan their Chief

10. How did some angels give up their life with God? Read I John 3:8. *How does this verse describe the leader of the Evil angels, the devil?*

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11. Read II Peter 2:4. *What did God do with the angels who rebelled against Him?*

We do well to remember that Satan and his evil angels are the second most powerful force on earth (after our Lord). You may have heard stories about people who try to face the devil with a crucifix – a man-made image of Jesus' cross – but surely we cannot trust a mere piece of wood or metal when faced with this fierce enemy. Our trust can only lie in our Savior Jesus Himself!

12. Read Ephesians 6:10-12. *How alone can we hope to survive when faced with the power of the devil and his evil angels?*



We have seen that, right from the beginning of time, Satan and his followers fell away from God. In his rage against God, the devil determined to oppose everything that is good, and he immediately turned his attention to man. You would do well at this point to read again the third chapter of Genesis before continuing with this lesson.

The First Sin

Proverbs 1:7 reminds us that all true knowledge begins with the “fear of God” (which means respecting Him, standing in awe of Him). All *temptation*, on the other hand, begins with the *questioning* of God and His Word. Satan began his attack on Eve by promising her wisdom – wisdom at least as great as that of God Himself. The devil spoke through the animal known to be the cleverest of all – the serpent. Although the Lord had clearly told Adam and Eve not to eat from the forbidden tree (Gen. 2:17), Satan challenged God’s Word by asking, “Is that what God *really* said?” This was the first temptation, and every one since has been similar.

13. Read Genesis 3:2-3. Eve started down the wrong path by first saying *more* than God had said. *What part of Eve’s answer was NOT part of God’s original command? (check Gen. 2:17 if necessary)*

Once the devil got Eve to question the word of God, the next step was to *deny* the Word completely – to claim the very opposite. Satan appealed to Eve’s pride and desire to know as much as God. He offered a half-truth; namely, that God was withholding from her the wisdom to know both good and evil. He did not mention, of course, that the knowledge of evil was something terrible which God was keeping from them in His mercy. Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and gave some to Adam, who also ate.

14. Read Genesis 3:7. The eyes of Adam and Eve were opened, but in their new-found “wisdom” *what did they now realize?*

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The human body had been created perfect and beautiful. But now, for man, it became an object of shame, as sin infected every part of life. Sin has tainted man's view of the human body ever since.

15. As you read on in this chapter, you can see the effects of sin multiply. Adam and Eve actually think they can hide from the all-seeing God. The Lord, of course, finds them, and calls them forward to confess what they've done. Adam, however, refuses to accept the responsibility (thus starting the "buck-passing" trend which has lasted down to this day among all people). At first he gives his nakedness as his reason for fear and for hiding. Then he blames others. Read Genesis 3:12. *Which TWO persons does Adam blame for his sin?*

16. God then confronts Eve with her sin, and she too refuses to accept the blame. Read Genesis 3:13. Instead of admitting her own sinful desire for "wisdom," *whom does Eve blame?*

Then the Lord turned to Satan directly. The creature known as the serpent was cursed for Satan's sake.

The Promise of a Savior from Sin

Now we come to one of the most far-reaching and remarkable verses in the entire Bible, Genesis 3:15. This is a good passage to memorize, because it is the very first promise of a Savior given in Scripture. Let us study this verse carefully, so that we can understand what God was saying in the same way He intended Adam and Eve to understand it.

17. Read Genesis 3:15. *To whom is God speaking in this verse?*

18. The word "seed" means descendant or descendants. God declared in this verse that there would exist, from that time forward, a deadly hostility between the two parties. *This enmity would exist between...*

the descendants of _____ and the Descendant (singular) of _____

in other words, between _____ and _____

It is commonly known that, in order to kill a snake and take away its power, you have to crush its head. God was promising in this verse that Satan would one day have his power completely taken away. That power was and is sin. If the devil could only make sin *stick* to Eve and her descendants, they too would perish eternally along with him. But God, in His love for mankind, holds out the promise of a Savior from sin. This Savior would pay the debt of sin man owed, and take away Satan's power to condemn us. We know now how God planned to



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send Jesus, His only Son, to undo what the devil had done. Jesus would live a perfect life and give up that life on the cross in order atone for the sins of the world. Jesus would not escape unharmed - and therein lies the "bruise" which He would suffer. In dealing the death-blow to Satan, Christ Himself would suffer and die. But it was a wound "in the heel," a wound which would not last. Christ would rise to life again, triumphant, on the third day!

Some teachers have said that such an interpretation of Genesis 3:15 is forced and untrue. However, it is clear that Eve understood these words to be the very promise of a Savior from sin.

19. Read Genesis 4:1. *What did Eve say when she and Adam had their first child?*

The original Hebrew in this verse can better be translated, "I have gotten a man, *the Lord!*"

20. Eve thought that the very first child born to them was the Savior from sin whom God had promised. But skim through the rest of chapter four. *Their son, Cain, turned out to be, not the Savior of the world, but the world's first...*



Genesis 3:15 gives us great cause to rejoice. Thanks be to God - man deserved punishment forever with Satan, but God provided us all with a second chance through faith in Jesus. Read John 3:16. Believe this and live forever!

There were other results from the entrance of sin into the world. God said that childbirth would be difficult for the woman. Her husband would rule over her. For the man, just making a living would now be difficult. The ground would now resist his efforts, and weeds would interfere with growing food. And the result of sin would now produce *death*, a return to the dust of the earth from which man was created.

As a final act of mercy after the fall into sin, God banned man from the Garden of Eden, lest he eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life and live forever in this sin-tainted world.

The Effects of the Fall

21. What has been the result in our world ever since Adam and Eve first went against God's will? Read Genesis 5:3. Adam had been made in *God's* image - perfectly holy and righteous. *But in WHOSE image would Adam's children - and all human beings after him - be made?*

22. Look up John 3:6. *What is now born of sinful flesh?*

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23. Read Romans 7:18. *What must man experience because of the presence of sin?*

24. It is popular nowadays to think that people are basically good, and must be taught to do evil. But read Romans 8:7. *What is the NATURAL ATTITUDE OF MAN TOWARDS GOD, which every human being has from birth?*

25. Read Matthew 15:19. *What sort of things are the natural outcome of the sinful heart of man?*

26. In summary, read Romans 6:23.

What has sin earned for man? _____

What has Christ earned for man? _____

Can We Regain the Image of God?

27. Through sin, all mankind lost the "image of God," that is, true righteousness and holiness. There is now a way for us to *regain* that image, *and that is by believing in...*



(answer from Genesis 3:15) _____

(answer from Acts 16:31) _____

(answer from Romans 1:16) _____



Additional Bible Readings

For additional Bible readings on the material covered in this lesson, you may want to Genesis chapters 6-9, and chapter 11.