

Our Merciful LORD

(6/20/2021)

Scripture: (Genesis 3:1-24)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You[a] shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” **2** And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, **3** but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” **4** But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” **6** So 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 to be desired to make one wise,[b] she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool[c] of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”[d] **10** And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” **11** He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” **12** The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” **13** Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14 The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring[e] and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

16 To the woman he said,

“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire **shall be contrary to**[f] your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

17 And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.[g] **21** And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” **23** therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. **24** He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Scripture: (John 3:16-21)

“For God so loved the world,[b] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. **18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. **19** And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. **20** For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. **21** But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

Sermon:

We have now reached Genesis 3, the “beginning of the end”, as it were.

Thus far, since creation, things have been Good, Very Good even, and quite promising.

Last week, we left Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The Garden for which Adam had been given the task, with Eve to help him as his *ezer*, to tend, and guard, and also which he had been given the authority to rule over and protect, and thus all the rest of creation. They had been given the commands to, *"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."* (Gen. 1:28 ESV), and also *"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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."* (Gen. 2:16-17 ESV).

{Adam and Eve had been given their purpose, their reason for being. They had: duty, authority, limits or boundaries, and a consequence for disobedience.}

We can only imagine that they did their best to be faithful and obedient to God's commands and rules, for a time; until that one day, when Eve had the serpent strike up a conversation with her.

Now Eve is not to be blamed for the entirety of her and Adam's sin *{as many theologians (Roman Catholic) in history have}*. She does bear some responsibility, but not the sole responsibility because *"...the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.."* (3:1); you see that she had an adversary with bad intentions, and she honestly didn't know better *{she had never faced deception before}*. The serpent knew something which she did not know, and could not know *{whether you consider this to merely be an ordinary serpent, Satan himself transformed into a serpent, or a serpent possessed and controlled by Satan}* because all the animals, plants, birds, and fish had been created before the woman, Eve; we understand this as being all creatures, to include both the Angels and those who would become the Demons. Thus, when the LORD God gave Adam the command to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the serpent/Satan had already been created, and was likely present to hear the Word straight from God's lips, like Adam, but Eve was not there. Eve had to take Adam's word concerning God's command of prohibition, based on her faith and trust in him.

So, this crafty serpent, when he asked, *"Did God actually say...?"* (3:1), he knew that God had not said what was being suggested by way of the question. Satan was intentionally trying to cause doubt within Eve with the question, but he was also exposing a serious problem and error of Adam's.

When Eve responded to the serpent, she said, *"but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"* (Gen. 3:3 ESV) which is not what the Bible records God telling Adam (2:16-17). God gave no prohibition on touching the fruit. Now, not touching a fruit that is forbidden to be eaten, sounds like a good idea, doesn't it? To prevent temptation or accidentally eating it, right? Adam was within his authority: as her lord, husband, federal head, and mediator before God; to add the extra prohibition for her, and his, and their posterity's good, but the serious error was in ascribing *"neither shall you touch it..."* to God.

Aware of all this, and hearing the response from Eve, the serpent continued, *"You will not surely die."* (3:4). So, Eve was convinced to look upon the fruit, to gaze longingly upon it, to desire it, and then she took the fruit...and she didn't die.

Uh-oh. Full stop. Eve just broke the rules, doing what she had been told not to do, “upon pain of death”. She touched the fruit, but there was no lightning bolt come down from heaven to Zap! her; the earth did not open to swallow her up; nor did she just simply fall over dead. Do you see the big problem here? Mightn't she think that God had lied?

Believing what she did about what God had said, {Don't eat it, don't touch it, otherwise you die.}; believing the well intention-ed falsity *{false in it's being attributed to God}*, which had been added to truth, and then discovering that this extra prohibition was false, she took the next step by disbelieving and doubting the true prohibition.

Adam was only trying to protect her, by fencing God's command, to guard it against transgression; just like the extra rules and practices crafted by the Pharisees of Jesus' day, that were meant to prevent accidentally breaking any of the 613 *mitzvot/commandments*¹ identified in the *Torah*; *{which turned things into a legalistic system demanding strict obedience; like the Jewish people intentionally “forgetting” how to correctly pronounce the name of God: or taking YHVH, the tetra-grammaton consonants and mixing the vowels of “adonai” to make Yahweh/Jehovah, neither of which are likely correct; so that they could avoid “[taking] the Name of the LORD...in vain” (Ex 20:7); it became more about obeying the “rules of man” rather than the “Law of God”.*

Eve, by violating Adam's rule, caused them both to transgress God's Law of absolute obedience. Touching the fruit and suffering no ill consequence caused Eve to doubt, and then to indulge her doubt by believing that either God was powerless and unable to punish her for her transgression, or that He was unwilling to punish. She thought that it would be safe to eat the fruit; that she would be safe like the person who climbs over a fence, into a marked but abandoned mine field; that she would be safe like a person playing “Russian Roulette” for a second time.

“...she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” (Gen. 3:6 ESV)

Again, Eve is not the one solely responsible for our Fall into sin.

- Adam was with her, he should have corrected her response to the serpent and refuted the Devil. He could have affirmed her trust in him and God, built up her faith, instead of allowing the seeds of doubt to take root in her heart and mind.
- Adam was with her, he could have stopped her from eating; he should have stopped her, but instead of stopping her, he chose to join her. Preventing her from sinning was his duty and his obligation because she was under his authority.
 - Adam was the one who had been given the law by God. He knew best, and so he would be held accountable, because her transgression was ultimately his failure and transgression.

God made Adam to be responsible for her, for himself, and for everyone else yet to come. Adam was mankind's representative, chosen by God. Adam's obedience would have been our obedience, so Adam's sin and disobedience became our sin and disobedience. Through his disobedience, Adam injected something into our human nature that did not belong: sin. Humanity was changed, altered for the worse instead of the better. We became no longer, “Very Good”.

1 https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/756399/jewish/The-613-Commandments-Mitzvot.htm

<https://torah.org/learning/basics-primer-torah-oraltorah/>

Think you can improve upon perfection?

Do you think that you can make it any better?

Do you think that you could improve upon any of the “Masters” paintings at the Louvre, with a five gallon bucket of latex paint and a 3” brush? No. *{I mean yeah, I think I could...because I think some of that “art” is horrendous, fixable with a complete coat of white over top...but, still no.}*

What happens if you were to DARE to change the ingredients (or even brand of ingredients) in your grandmother's “perfect” chocolate chip cookie recipe? Nothing good.

Addition is not always positive, sometimes “more is less”.

Sin is/was the worst additive to our human nature; bringing sin into ourselves, sin which was not created by God, nor given to us by God, but became the result of our “free will”. Sin damaged and defaced the *Imago Dei* within us, like a 5 year old who finds some finger-paints and is left unattended for five minutes in a room with freshly painted white walls, brand new carpet, and new furniture. *{I'm sure that Ms Sonya is glad that I did not decide to use this example for the Children's Message...}*

We have all become an absolute mess because of Adam's sin, which we have compounded with our own sins. Adam's sin not only “poisoned the well” of our humanity, but it also “primed our pumps” so that all of our works and lives would be tainted by sin.

{As Lady Macbeth exclaimed, “Out damn spot!” (Macbeth: Act V, Scene I), our sin stain is not something which we can remove from ourselves.}

“Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” (Gen 3:7 ESV)

{Now this will be the subject of another word study, one day, but regardless of their state of attire,} “... [knowing] that they were naked.” is not the point here; naked here means plainly “uncovered”, or better yet “exposed”. The Bible was not concerned about their lack of dress.

So, Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, sinned, and knew that they were “exposed”. They knew that their sin could not be hidden; neither from each other, nor from their Holy God, but they tried anyways, “*And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.*” (Gen. 3:7 ESV). Adding sin to the *Imago Dei* exposed them to God's judgment. It exposed them to suffer the consequence of their actions. It exposed them to suffer the wrath of God. They knew it, and they knew that they deserved it, too.

“for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

GAME OVER. Do not Pass GO! Do not Collect \$200.

They were exposed. Then, they heard God walking in the garden; so, they tried to hide from His presence. Neither fig leaves nor trees could cover their nakedness; nothing created could shield these sin stained creatures from the sinless, Holy, Sovereign LORD with Whom they had been in a personal relationship.

When God asked, “*Where are you?*” (3:9), it was not because the LORD didn't know where they were, but it was to provide Adam the opportunity to come forward for confession and to repent of his sin.

When God asked them, “*Who told you...?*” and “*Have you eaten...?*”, God already knew what Adam and Eve had done. He already knew of their sin, which they had tried to hide with their flimsy, finite, creaturely coverings.

But did Adam confess or repent? No. instead he tried to “pass the buck”. He blamed Eve, who in turn blamed the serpent. All of them were guilty, so all would be punished, because the LORD is Righteous and cannot acquit the wicked and guilty (Ex 23:7; Job 10:14); the LORD is Just, and justice must be served.

Remember that the Apostle Paul wrote, *“For the wages of sin is death...”* (Rom 6:23)? Well that is what Adam, Eve, and the serpent earned and deserved, that day in the garden. That is the result of their works and free choices.

“for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

But, instead of justice being served, we witness here the greatest act of Mercy. All mankind, through our most ancient forebears, received God's Grace, because of the eternally finished work of Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (Jn. 3:16 ESV)

Christ came into the world and died so that we may live. Christ's sacrificial death of atonement on the cross, meant that Adam and Eve lived. The Mercy which Adam and Eve received was not Justice denied, because Justice, for all the sins of God's elect, was served upon the Person of Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve “passed the buck”, but Jesus said, “The Buck Stops Here.” Nor was this Divine Mercy Justice delayed, because Christ's atonement was efficacious across all eternity even if it was effected over a few hours of time, on one Sabbath eve, during the remembrance of God's act of mercy by “passing over” the “Children of Israel” when, with His “strong hand” (Ex 13:3,9), the LORD brought them out of bondage in Egypt. Jesus is the “Lamb who was slain, before the foundation of the world” ...”the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world...” (Rev 13:8; John 1:29)

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” (Jn. 3:17 ESV)

As bad as our human circumstances became following the sin in the garden, we are still left with such a great hope and promise. Mercifully, instead of death we, and all creation with us, came under God's curse.

To the serpent God said, *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”* (Gen. 3:15 ESV)

That promised offspring of the woman is Jesus Christ {as explained by Paul in Galatians 3:16}. Satan struck Christ on the heel, injuring Him to His death; but Christ crushed the power and authority of Satan and sin, in His resurrection. Trampling on Satan's head, Christ has triumphed; even as Satan was allowed to attack Him, just as Satan was allowed to torment Job. Everything works out to the Father's greater Glory.

While God cursed the serpent, He promised: the redemption of His elect by “her offspring”; the ultimate triumph of His eternal plan and the serpent's final downfall, Jesus Christ on the cross.

While God cursed the woman, He promised: that both she and the man would have “offspring”, but although she would suffer, and experience pain, in giving birth; the LORD also promised her a joy to come afterwards, a joy that makes all the pain worth bearing (Ps 30:5). A joy which we all will share in, when Christ consummates His Kingdom on earth and all of our trials, tribulations, sorrows, and pain will be justified and redeemed.

While God cursed the man, He promised: that although his work will now become toil; that although life would become one consisting of pain and suffering; God promised that the earth would still respond to his authority, efforts, and power; He promised that he (and she) would continue to be provided for, by God.

God made the merciful judgment that despite their lack of obedience, by their failure to keep God's command, that although they were deserving of nothing less than death, destruction, and total annihilation, they would live.

Yes, Adam and Eve did not die that day in the Garden, but the days of their lives were now uncertain, troubled, and lesser than they should have been; because, by their willful choice to sin and disobey God, they removed themselves from the LORD's presence. This was a choice that they could not undo themselves.

Adam and Eve added sin to God's created perfection, added the unholy to what before had been made holy and very good.

The LORD is too Holy and too Pure to look upon or remain in the presence of sin (Hab 1:13); so, Adam and Eve could not remain in God's presence. Now, because of their sinful state, they could not stay in God's perfect Garden paradise, otherwise they would be destroyed (Ex 33:3).

The choice had been made and it could not be undone. We all deserve destruction, yet the Divine Justice was served, so that we may receive the Divine Mercy. Adam and Eve did not pay the penalty for their sin, but they still suffered consequences on account of their sin; so too do we still suffer consequences for our sins.

Adam was created to be the mediator and representative for all mankind before God; created to be the first high priest, but he failed in those roles. Fortunately for us, before all this, the LORD had taken that into account; God had His plan of redemption, for the elect.

Before the foundation of the world, the LORD chose some to be made holy and blameless before Him; elected some to be His children by adoption, for Him to be Father to, whom He would redeem from Adam's sin and from their own sins, through the blood of God the Son, Jesus Christ. The Father covenanted with the Son, to forgive those whom the Father gave to the Son, so that they would be saved and not eternally lost. (Eph 1:3-12; John 17:1-12)

So, how are we saved? By our faith in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.

People say that we are the product of all our choices, but we are also the product of the choices made by our parents, and all those who came before them. We cannot change or undo those choices of the past. Our lives are enslaved by their choices: like where we are born, or live as children, causing us to have different opportunities and different challenges. Therefore, many of our life choices are not been freely made; there is always some constraint placed upon them. So too, our ability to choose God has been constrained by sin; preventing us, unless or until the extra-ordinary happens, and the Holy Spirit works inside of us: regenerating us and granting us saving faith in Christ. Until that happens we cannot say Yes! to Jesus. The disobedience of Adam, our representative head, limited all of our future choices to always be away from God, until we were grafted into Jesus Christ, our Righteous representative and the Greater-Adam.

“Whoever believes in him [Christ] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (Jn. 3:18 ESV)

We are no longer condemned for our sins or Adam's original sin, because we believe and trust in Christ. We now receive mercy, because the Holy Spirit has given to each of us our measure of faith, to believe in Him (Rom 12:3). Thanks be to our Merciful LORD!

{Paul writes, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he

condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:1-4 ESV)}

The Holy Spirit unites us together, into Jesus Christ, who fulfilled all righteousness and the requirement of the Law, the requirement of perfect obedience; so that we might receive God's Mercy and be saved, so that Adam and Eve could justly receive God's Mercy, way back in the Garden.

Adam and Eve ruined things, such that only God could fix them. Nothing we have ever done, can we undo. But we who are called can come to Christ for restoration and repair. Forgiveness and mercy is offered freely to all who hear and answer God's call (John 10:27-30).

“And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.” (Jn. 3:19-21 ESV)

We can be sure that all those who are called will come to Him. They will come into the life of life, the light of the Father's love. Like Adam in the Garden, God calls us to Himself and allows us to confess our sins so that we may receive forgiveness, mercy, and have our works sanctified. We do this every Sunday morning, during our time of corporate and individual confession; after our earnest confession, then we receive an assurance of our pardon, like Adam and Eve did.

Granting Mercy, what then did God do?

Following the proclamation of the curse, *“And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”* (Gen. 3:21 ESV)

The LORD, in His Mercy, covered their nakedness and removed their exposure. He removed their guilt of sin. He covered their sinfulness, so that He would not remember it and hold it against them. *“Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”* (Ps. 32:1 ESV).

Scripture tells us that God made them *“garments of skins”* for a covering; this was the very first sacrifice of atonement. Like every sacrifice performed by the priests of Israel at the Tabernacle and in the Temple, this was a temporary, imperfect, and incomplete covering for sin. It was a reminder that the true penalty for sin: every sin, any sin; is death. Animals died, so that Adam and Eve could be covered. Their sacrificial deaths, significant in themselves, were even more significant because they foreshadowed and pointed the way to the one effective sacrifice of atonement by Jesus, our Great High Priest, in His death on the Cross (Hebrews 9+10).

We have established before that *{the value of a man,}* the value of a person, is much greater to God, than the value of an animal or flower. The death of an animal, as payment for a man's debt of sin, could never cover what was owed; but, it could show us the way, until our full debt was satisfied by Jesus'. *{tetelstai, τετέλεσται}* (John 19:30)}

This is why the doctrine of the Incarnation is so important to our faith. That in the Person of Jesus, God took on *“the likeness of sinful flesh”* and became human: the God-man Jesus; both God and man together united, but not mixed or mingled. Man owed the debt for sin, but only God could afford to (or was able to) pay that debt.

Jesus died to cover all our bounced checks and the returned check fees which we have accrued with our sin. Until Christ came, we needed the regular sacrifices to remind us of our sinfulness; now, we act and love out of thanksgiving, because of all that He has done for us, until He returns to bring us to our eternal home.

After clothing Adam and Eve, they were banished from the Garden. Sent into exile *{in the “East”}*. Removed from their home and locked out. They were removed from what was meant to be their eternal home in paradise. *{Ever since that day, all of human existence has revolved around our constant drive, back towards the West. Consider JRR Tolkien's keeping the “hope” of Middle as coming from “the West”, meaning the ancient human kingdom of Numenor and their heirs of Gondor; or the “Undying Land” of Valinor for the Elves, which was also located in the west, from which the majority of elves (full of pride and anger and violence and deception) left to go to Middle Earth, in disobedience of their gods, into a self-imposed exile from which they would one day be redeemed.}* We are all looking for Eden, looking for a way back into that “Promised Land” beyond the Jordan.

There is such tragedy here in Genesis 3, but there is also hope!

We fell into sin, but in His Mercy, God promises us that we will be restored and redeemed. He promised us a Messiah and Savior, who will clothe us in imperishable garments (1 Cor 15:51-57). Our sins will be (and are) eternally forgiven and forgotten, covered by the Blood of the Lamb before we even needed His precious blood.

When the LORD drove Adam and Eve from the Garden, I don't think it was in a Plymouth *Fury*. They received His Mercy, because God did not express His Righteous Fury against them. His wrath was turned aside from them, and they were passed over. God's wrath was satisfied by Christ in His death, on our behalf. He died so that we might live.

In mercy, the LORD drove Adam and Eve from the Garden, He removed them from that place, but He did not remove our hope to return there, from us; but He did place a guard at the gate, to keep sinners out. One day, when Christ returns, Jesus will welcome us at that gate, wash us clean of our sins, and then usher us inside into paradise, to live and dwell with Him forever.

Until then, we are still banished; people living in exile. The earth, the world, this present life in which we live is not our home. We are “strangers in a strange land”, because we are [citizens of heaven] (Phil 3:20), wandering in this sin-wracked world.

But, we have an eternal home. One day, our Merciful LORD will bring us home, to Himself, and end our Exile. This is our great hope in Christ. This what every faithful Christian has to look forward to when either Christ returns, or we are called home to glory.

AMEN

RC Sproul - “What's Wrong with You People?” - Quote

Ligonier Q&A • Since God is slow to anger and and patient, then why is His wrath when man first sinned so severe and long-lasting?

RC Sproul – That God's punishment for Adam was so severe?

This creature from the dirt defied the everlasting Holy God. After that God had said, “The that you eat of it, you shall surely die.”, and instead of dying, *thanatos*, that day, he lived another day, and was clothed in his nakedness, by pure grace, and had the consequences of a curse applied for quite some time; but the worst curse would come upon the one who seduced him, whose head would be crushed by the seed of the woman.

And the punishment was too severe?

What's Wrong with You People?

I'm serious. This is what's wrong with the Christian church today. We don't know who God is, and we don't know who we are.

The Question is (the question is), why wasn't it infinitely more severe? If we have any understanding of our sin and any understanding of who God is, that's the question; isn't it?

Is it acceptable to interpret Adam as an allegory, not a historical person?

SPROUL: This issue is really becoming hot in our day, and it's critical. It's critical not only for the teachings of Genesis, but for the teachings of the Apostle Paul and of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you negotiate Adam's headship of the human race and try to mix it up with theistic evolution, you're on a roller coaster without any brakes.

MACARTHUR: The question I always ask about this is: Where in the Bible did you come to that conclusion? Where is that in Scripture? That's not in Genesis. The next question would be, Do you believe the account of Genesis 1–3 to be a divine account of creation?

If someone says, "It's an allegory; it's a poem," there's plenty of evidence that's not true. One of our professors at The Master's College did a quantifiable study on a computer system comparing Hebrew poetry with Genesis 1–3, and there was no relationship between that literature in Hebrew and any form of Hebrew poetry. So, it's not some kind of epic poem that can be interpreted allegorically.

The bigger question is this: When do you start believing the Bible? Do you start in Genesis 4? Or maybe you wait until Exodus? If you don't believe Genesis 1 and 2, do you believe Matthew 1 and 2? Exactly how much liberty are you going to take with this?

I wrote a book called *The Battle for the Beginning*, and one of the things I said in that book is that whatever you observe in the world today, or whatever science observes, has nothing to do with origins. It only has to do with what you observe, which doesn't say anything about origins because you couldn't observe it. There was only one eyewitness to the origin of everything, and that eyewitness has given us a divinely-accurate account in Genesis 1 and 2.

This is a huge issue. You either believe the Bible at that point or you don't. If you don't believe it there, then you are susceptible to not believing it at all kinds of other places that might be uncomfortable or that some philosopher or pseudoscientist decides isn't accurate. That is a slippery slope of epic proportions.

[\(https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/is-it-acceptable-to-interpret-adam-as-an-allegory/\)](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/is-it-acceptable-to-interpret-adam-as-an-allegory/)

This is a transcript of R.C. Sproul's and John MacArthur's answers given during our 2012 West Coast Conference, and has been lightly edited for readability. To ask Ligonier a biblical or theological question, just visit Ask.Ligonier.org or message us on Facebook or Twitter.



Illustration 1: A 1958 Plymouth Fury

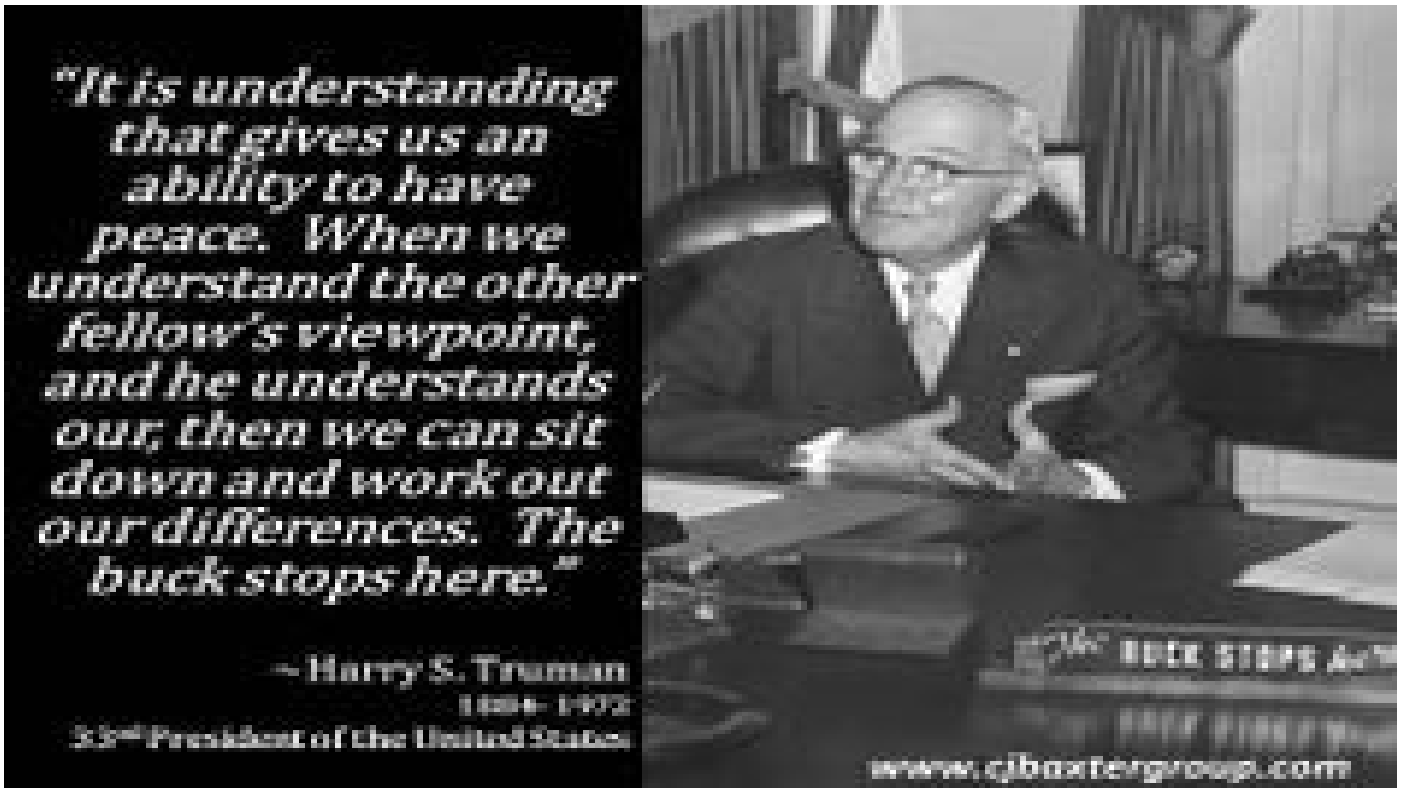


Illustration 2: Harry S Truman - 33rd President of the United States: NOTE the sign on his desk