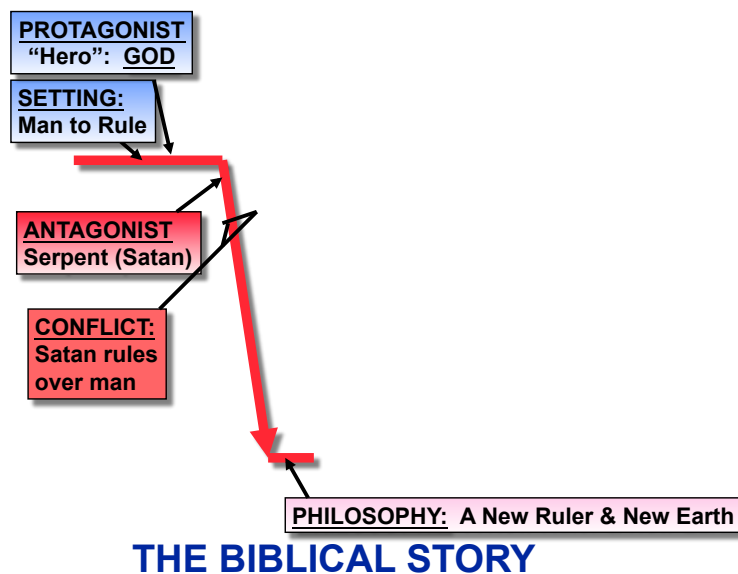


CHAPTER 6

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HERO

Now that the antagonist has introduced a conflict to the Hero, the Hero must plan His move to overcome this conflict so as to accomplish the desire He had in the beginning. Note a giant principle here. **One's character is only visible through their reaction to unjust suffering (i.e., undeserved conflict).** One's character will always act on the basis of what it knows to be true, what its character values. Thus, God's character will be known and become extremely visible by this conflict, this threat to His very desires.



The Trial of Adam

Now that the woman and the man have completed the rebellion against God, the reader waits, as do Adam and Eve for the confrontation with this Holy God.

Part 1: The Arrival of the Judge and His Righteousness

⁸ They heard the sound (lit.: “voice”) of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool (lit. “Spirit”) of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence (lit.: “face”) of the LORD God in the midst of the trees of the garden.

Note that the “presence of (lit. “face of”) YHWH Elohim” is in the garden. Thus, this man, Adam, is to be the representative of God to the rest of humankind. It is here in the garden

that this Man will link with YHWH for the “presence of God” was there.¹

God is the evaluating judge (recall that God “sees” what is “good”). He is also the standard by which all is judged (“good”). Thus, Righteousness and the Judge of righteousness arrive in the courtroom. “Walking” (Hebrew: הִלֵּךְ) frequently is used as imagery for one’s spiritual or obedient character. *YHWH Elohim* will walk, and Adam was to walk with Him. But he cannot since his character is now in a major conflict with God’s. Later Enoch will “walk with God,” Noah will “walk with God.” This indicates that they are in agreement with God, that is, they have a common value system ... God’s. God is revealed through His promises and thus they are obedient or are “walking by faith” in God’s unseen, but revealed, promises.

Part II: The Response of the Man and the Woman to the Arrival of Righteousness - fear

The man and woman now must respond to God and attempt to “justify” their actions and prevent the judgment that God had promised.

What would you think if you were in a courtroom and the moment that the judge arrived in the court, the accused bolted out the exit? You would immediately think that the actions of the accused indicated his guilt. He wanted to escape the trial since he knew that he was guilty in the judge’s eyes and wanted to escape from his evaluating eyes. He left because he was afraid, ashamed of the judgment standard that he would have to face.

Now the same happens here and Adam and Eve hide from God. They hide because they are afraid of the Judge. They know they are not up to His standards and are afraid of His actions as they recall His words, “You shall surely die!” Their actions proclaim their guilt. If nothing else they show that they know that they and the Judge are not going to see “eye” to “eye,” that is, they are not going to be pronounced “good.” They are not “walking” together.

John comments on this in 1 John 2:6 when he states, referring to this passage, “the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.” While this verse is commonly taken to indicate one’s walking with Jesus on the basis of similar good works, it is not Jesus in the verse, nor is it good works. The “He” contextually is God the Father, and the passage John is referencing is this passage in Genesis 3 where God “walks” in the garden, and man is not “walking” with Him. “Walking” is not enabled by “good works,” but by a common value system ... which is the promises/warnings of God. It is walking in the provision of God through His promises. God’s specific promises are that He will forgive one’s sins through His Son

¹ When man is exiled, he alone will be exiled while the “presence of YHWH Elohim” will not be exiled with him. This will be represented later by the “Glory of God” which will dwell in the tabernacle in Jerusalem. Israel will be exiled out of Jerusalem, but the Glory will return to heaven (Ezekiel 10).

and give imputed righteousness. Adam could not walk with God because he had denied God's desires that he not eat of the fruit. And now he had no protection against God's judgment.

Their response was "fear." That was a fear of judgment because they realized they had sinned and had no way out of God's pronouncement of certain death.

Once one accepts God's love in Messiah's sacrifice then the "fear" of judgment is removed in His provision of forgiveness through Christ. As John comments again in regard to this passage,

"¹⁷ By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

(1 John 4:17-18)

Part III: The Holy Judge Asks the Accused the First Question

⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

Note here that God has not lost His omniscience, that is, He does know where Adam is. This question is designed to note emphatically that he is not there with God (e.g., a difference). Thus, He has the accused tell why he is hiding from God. But the question is also meant to make the accused realize that God must look for Him, that is, that he is he apart from, and not walking with, His Creator? The point is that he is not walking with the Creator. He is apart from Him. Adam has incurred a different value system than God.

Part IV: The Accused Justifies Himself which is Self-Condemning

The truth (not perception) is reality. There is only one reality. While we may think we know reality, only God does. His character is the only determiner of truth. When Adam and Eve varied from God they were in falsehood, in evil. Thus, when God showed up in the Garden as Truth, Adam and Eve were nowhere to be found. The reason was that Adam and his wife had become evil and could not exist with God as if they had the same value system, Truth. Thus, there is no excuse that Adam could give that would justify his character as truth. Whatever he said in defense would be a lie and would expose his character as evil. There is no excuse for not walking with God. To provide an excuse is a demonstration in itself that one has not walked with God. This demonstrates that there is only one acceptable standard . . . 100% holiness. Anything else requires an excuse, self-righteousness . . . which is "evil."

Years ago, I worked in an automobile factory, building Chevy II's (a mid-size Chevrolet), at the Chevrolet Plant in Willow Run, Michigan, I was an inspector on the

frame line, so I stood at the end of a long assembly line. The frame would start down at the beginning of the line and production workers would each add a part or two to the frame as it moved along. By the time it got to me it had all kinds of parts attached, steering assemblies, brakes, etc. My job was to take the build schedule for that car and make sure that all the right parts had been placed on it. For instance, in the case of a steering knuckle, should the wrong piece be placed on the frame, it could have disastrous effects when the car made a hard turn. Thus, I had to be sure that the right steering knuckle had been attached to the right frame for the right model.

One thing I noticed was that if a wrong part was put on the car, there was no way one could make it fit, much less make it work. Further, other parts that were to be attached to that part could not fit, nor could they be made to work. That frame and the parts schedule were the truth. Anything else was false. Errant parts could not be made to fit. We, as Christians, work overtime trying to get our desires (wrong part) to match God's desires (the designed construction schedule). Instead of aligning to what He wants, we try to make our selfish reasoning fit His will. We try to justify our selfish desires, our ill treatment of others, our ignorance of the poor and needy and outcast, our lusts and coveting. But it will not work, even though we may convince ourselves and others, it still will not work. We must submit humbly to God's word and ask Him to show us His unhindered word. Anything else just will not fit. James contrasts Biblical "wisdom," the character of God, contrasted with man's preference for his own fleshly, selfishly ambitious, reasoning,

⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts (seeks human wisdom as truth) is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

(James 1:5-8)

Adam now defends himself (called self-righteousness).

¹⁰ He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."

Adam speaks to justify himself (e.g., trying to make his part fit) but condemns himself. There is no answer, no excuse that will justify Adam before God since he was apart from God because he sinned. One cannot make that right. Any answer, since he is not walking with God, is going to be less than God's desire and thus sin. Justifying one's sin does not ever make things right. It declares one's guilt. The request for forgiveness is the only speech allowed since it is the expression of a desire to conform to God's character. ¹ John points this out clearly.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from

all unrighteousness.”

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1 John 1:9

John continues, stating that this is spoken in contrast to the effort to declare ourselves righteous through any other means.

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

(1 John 1:8, 10)

It is also interesting that this is the unwavering doctrine of the Scriptures. Excuses of any kind are self-righteousness. Only total repentance, admission of unworthiness, and acceptance of God’s total mercy will place one on the path, walking with God.

One of my favorite stories is the story of the Lost Son in Luke 15. As bad as that son was, when he came back to the father there was no excuse proffered. Note what he says, “I am not worthy ...” Those are the key words in Luke. They are repeated by the Tax Collector praying in the temple in Luke 18: 13, “God be merciful to me, the sinner.” Jesus replies that he went home justified.

But note that there is something much deeper than just the sin, it is Adam’s defense of the sin. The very fact that Adam is trying to convince God that his sin was all right shows that Adam’ problem is more than just the sin. His reasoning is also apart from God. His mind is shown as depraved by the fact that he is trying to defend his sin. Stated another way, Adam is trying to convince God that sin is “good.”

The Book of James is about this exact problem. In fact, James refers to this passage when he argues that believers in the church are becoming arrogant, rich, selfishly ambitious, ignoring the poor, the widows and orphans, and then justifying themselves by saying their prosperity and success is godly. I’m sure you have heard this phrase many times from many pulpits regarding some rich, famous or honored man, “He’s successful because he is obedient!” That is exactly what James is condemning, doing evil (e.g., claiming one’s self-elevation) and justifying it by saying it’s godly (self-goodness justifies one’s elevation).

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

(James 1:13-16)

As one can see James is saying that those who are pursuing things for themselves and calling it godly are no different than when Adam and Eve listened to the serpent and then justified themselves as “good” before God. The problem in the church today is, as it always has been, demonic self-elevating prosperity being passed off as godly.

¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

(James 3:14-16)

Paul notes the same problem; that is that people apart from God not only sin but approve their sin (call it “good.”)

³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. (Romans 1:32)

In other words, Adam is trying to convince God that Adam’s standard of good is the same as God’s. But he won’t be successful since sin cannot conform to God’s character, as God is the only One that determines “good. Only the request for forgiveness would show that Adam’s mind desires conformance with God’s.

Like the example of the production of the automobile frame, if the wrong part is on the frame and a production mechanic tries to convince me, the inspector, that it is all right, it shows more than just a wrong part. It shows wrong reasoning. Thus, the mechanic showed he had a devious character as well as attaching the wrong part. Very simply, nothing but the actual right part will work. Convincing me of the wrong part will not make the part work.

Adam responds to the “sound” of God in the garden (same word as “voice.”) It is God’s word that convicts Adam. Adam says he had to hide. One does not hide because someone he loves appears. One hides due to fear because of shame and of impending doom. God’s “voice” arrives in some form. It is the presence (lit.: “face”) of God’s Word that represents Him.

But the statement that he is “naked” is interesting. Earlier nudity was related to a lack of shame. Now Adam relates it to the presence of shame and wants to cover it. Adam thus errantly thinks that he can cover his nudity to keep God from “seeing” (evaluating) him. So, he sowed fig leaves together and hid with his wife. Again, his self-justification shows his guilt. There could be no self-justification. It shows his now newly depraved mind, that is, saying he is trying to look “good” when he is not.

In this post-modern world there is a phrase, “perception is reality.” While the exact usage of that phrase varies, probably the most troubling version is that what one

perceives is, in fact, truth (e.g., there is no absolute truth, only perception). Of course, that is false, since one will go to a real hell based on the real truth, not what they perceived as true.

Adam tries to give God a “perception” of innocence, that he is not really a sinner as he has covered it up so God cannot “see” it. Yet the reality is that he is different, and God will move past Adam’s desired perception to the reality of the situation.

Part V: The Follow-up Question Shows the Accused is Guilty by His confession

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

There are several things that God is saying in this question. He first notes that something has changed in the man’s evaluation of his nudity. He has received additional information regarding “truth” from a source other than that of God. The only place that information can come from is Satan, the antagonistic source of all deceit. Adam has tried to deceive God through self-justification. He never had done that before. The only possibility was that Adam had been a recipient of the deceit of the serpent and had eaten in disobedience to God’s command. Now he perceives nudity as not good since God can “see” him, all because he has incurred shame at the hand of the serpent.

Part VI: The Man Confesses His Sin and the Source

There is some question here as to what the man is doing in 3:12 when he states “the woman whom You gave me, she gave to me . . .“ Is he blaming the woman for his sin? Or is he coming clean with God, that is, confessing his sin and the source? It appears that he is confessing that he did indeed eat of the tree² and then, in addition, identifying the source of prompting as the woman. Note that everything he says is true. Blame, an errant interpretation, is not stated (he didn’t say he didn’t sin, or that the woman sinned, not him). In this context, he seems to be saying that he submitted to the woman (which he was not to do) and sinned. In other words, stating the woman had been given to him is making the point that he had failed in his

² There is a parallel to this statement in Deuteronomy 1 by Moses. Moses sinned, when in response to the peoples’ rebellion, he struck the rock twice and was barred from entering the Land of Canaan. Yet in Deuteronomy 1:37, Moses says, “The LORD was angry with me also on your account . . .“ and repeats in in 3:26. It would seem as though Moses is saying the same thing as Adam and Eve, that is, blaming, but since it is a lecture of Moses recorded as truth then Moses cannot be denying his sin (which would be sin), nor blaming others (which would be sin). It appears he is simply stating a fact, that he sinned when tempted by them, the same as happened to Adam and Eve. In other words, it is a statement of fact, not a blame issue. In fact, it is a statement of confession. He had sinned in relationship to a conflict, and thus failed.

relationship to the gift that God had given to him. Thus, he is not calling himself and his wife “good,” in a contrast to when she had justified her lusts as from God (“good” 3:6) by again justifying himself. What is happening here is that God is tracking down the source of sin and the man is admitting to God his own sin and, in addition, from where it came. Evil does not just float around and land in one’s heart, it is motivated from somewhere, ultimately by one’s character which is sourced from Satan. And the most important issue here is that the source was not God, but Satan. And the woman was the means by which that came. She will then speak to ultimately trace it to Satan.

¹² The man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."

One should not overlook the fact that this confession was, in fact, well placed. In other words, Adam and Eve are not blaming in order to get rid of their guilt, but saying their own failure was due to the fact that this source (the serpent) was the evil antagonist and deceiver. In other words, had they simply said they themselves were to blame, it would not have been totally correct. One is sinful because of the source ... Satan. So, both are to blame. The sinner in that he sins, his character which prompts him (lust), but ultimately the source of that lust, that is, Satan.

This is the more likely view in the context. The problem is that Eve had identified the eating of the fruit as “good” (i.e., “godly”). Now by contrast they are admitting that it was sourced ultimately from Satan, and thus evil. This is the same as what James says is wrong and alludes to this place in Genesis. In short, what Adam and Eve are saying is that Satan was the source of their sin and thus they are admitting it was evil since they listened to him.

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God" (*i.e., doing what is self-centered but claiming it is from God*); for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

(James 1:13-15)

Later James identifies the source of people’s sin, saying the same thing when he talks about the sin of jealousy and selfish ambition and identifies the source. The reason that source is important is that man is not independent. He is loyal to one source or the other. He gives glory to one source or the other, God or Satan. Thus, again James identifies the source because sin is not isolated.

¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

(James 3:14-16)

This is an important concept to understand. When source is identified, it identifies who is the tutor, to whom one aligns their value system. Or, stated another way, who is one's father. In other words, no one acts independently based on some sort of perceived "freedom." They are always following Satan or God. Jesus says exactly this in John 8.

⁴¹ "You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God." ⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. . . . ⁴⁴ "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

(John 8:41-44)

Thus, both Jesus and James state the same thing, that the origin, the father of Adam and Eve, by their own confession is Satan.

Now the woman does the same. By saying the serpent deceived her, she is not just assigning the serpent the blame as source but also noting her gullibility at listening to an animal. On the other hand, she is identifying the serpent as the source of her knowledge, a clear problem to which she is admitting. She is not saying she did "good" any longer. Note that prior to the sin, Eve did not have the depraved character and thus needed to be tempted by the serpent. She is establishing the source of her temptation. God will respond by judging this source and eliminating it forever.

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

This, as was stated, is their confession of guilt, and the identification of the source of the temptation as ultimately Satan.

Paul sees it that way in 1 Timothy 2:14,

¹⁴ And *it was* not Adam *who* was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (1 Timothy 2:14)

Again, in 2 Corinthians Paul notes, not that Eve had sinned independently, but that the serpent prompted her with false teaching. Thus, this sets up the beginning of false teaching and false prophets. They are constantly attempting to delude and bring about the fall of men and women. It is of utmost importance, thus, to note the source.

³ But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ.

(2 Corinthians 11:3)

There is a large point to be made here in application. When one sins, they assess themselves as evil. That is true. But there is a larger point. They are the servants of Satan. They have done his bidding.

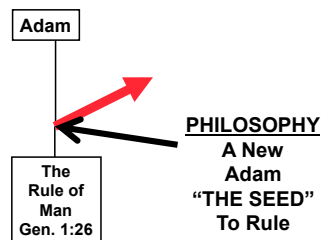
The Philosophy of the Protagonist Hero

The Hero had originally revealed His desires in Genesis 1—2; that man would represent Him and rule over this creation. Now that the conflict had occurred, the Hero would reveal His deepest character, a commitment (promise) of sacrificial mercy beyond anything that could be comprehended.

SETTING

THE RULE OF THE KING
THROUGH THE
NATION OF ISRAEL

Individual Rule



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To the Serpent³

³ The passage in 3:14 is also on the serpent, “¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent, “^aBecause you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And ^bdust you will eat All the days of your life ... ” The “more than every beast of the field” references back to 3:1 where the serpent was “wiser than any beast of the field.” Thus, he is now below animals in the order. The next line indicates how that will be. The “eating of the dust” is a figure of speech for being subject to another by bowing down in fear (eating or licking the dust). See Micah 7:17, Isaiah 49:23, 65:25, Psalm 72:9. Thus the serpent will serve man once again in judgment instead of the elevated position he had gained by deceiving man.

An Ongoing Battle between the Woman and the Serpent

“And enmity I will put enmity
between you (*i.e., the serpent*) and between the woman and
between your seed and between her Seed”

(Genesis 3:15a)

There are two sides to this battle. There is God’s side (“good”) and there is the serpent’s (Satan’s) side (“evil,” but is called “good”). God has declared that man would rule and that the man and the woman would be fruitful and multiply, bringing forth other humans to populate His creation and to represent His character (“image”). Thus, the woman (the one Satan dealt with and deceived) is pronounced to be the means through which God will have victory over the serpent, that is, to restore “good” in His creation. She will bear children and the serpent will attempt to deceive them as he did the first man and woman⁴. Her children (“seed”) will then either choose to follow the serpent (“human wisdom”) or follow God (“revelation”). Her ultimate⁵ Seed will be One, the Messiah, the New Adam, who will fully represent (“Image”)

⁴ Note the continuance of what Eve said in 3:13, that the “serpent deceived me.” Now the serpent will continue to try to deceive Eve’s progeny. In other words, what he did in the beginning to Eve he will now do continually. She, interestingly enough, will be the means to reverse her failure. In other words, the Seed of the Woman will be the one who covers His mother’s failure, and delivers her. It is as if Eve says that the serpent has done this to her and she failed, but now God says, it is through Eve that that the serpent will fail because her Son will strike Him.

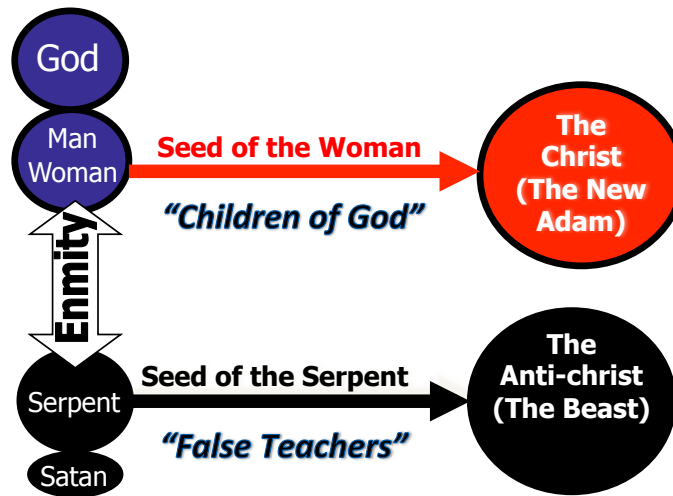
⁵ The question of one ultimate “Seed” or many is frequently asked here. The issue is, who will replace Adam as unique ruler of this world, the first ruler of the old creation? The prophecy of “Seed” in both cases (Seed of the Woman or seed of the serpent) is looking for an ultimate singular “seed.” However, in the case of the serpent, his followers will duplicate his act of rejecting God’s revelation and become little “seeds” or followers. Thus, there are a lot of little anti-christs, but only one ultimate one. But there is only One ultimate “Seed” of the Woman, but many who follow God and identify with that ultimate One (Revelation 12:17 uses the phrase to indicate those who have His righteousness, thus “seed of the woman”).

“So the dragon (*i.e., “the serpent, see 12:9*) was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 12:17)

1 John reflects this.

“Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.” (1 John 2:18)

God. The ultimate follower of Satan will be the antichrist, also called “the Beast” because he is the ultimate “seed of the serpent.”⁶ 106



A New Adam will Execute Judgment on the Serpent, his followers, and the first Creation

“He⁷ shall strike (or: “batter”, “crush”) you on head,

⁶ Reference Daniel 7 where the Gentile antagonists to Israel and to the Christ are represented as “beasts.” This is due to the Genesis 3 motif of animals under the rule of man parallel with Gentile nations under the rule of Israel and their King.

⁷ This singular masculine pronoun is what makes the “Seed” in the previous reference a masculine “individual” singular as opposed to collective singular (i.e., many seeds). In addition, this prophecy is about “One” to replace the “one” ruler in Adam. Some claim (e.g., NET Bible, “Genesis,” cf. notes on Genesis 3:15) that the use of the singular pronoun is necessary to agree with the number of the noun “Seed” and thus should be translated “they” (collective) not “He” (individual), and thus simply indicating she will have children. The question must be asked as to why the interpreter of the NET Bible prefers the collective to the individual when the evidence is for a singular “He?” (One expects a contrast to the old Adam who would strike the serpent (singular) and thus the expectation is for one to appear, not a group). There is no indication that “Seed” is collective without some outside interpretive input. In fact, it is not infrequent for the singular pronoun to be used with the singular “seed” to indicate an individual elsewhere in Genesis and the plural pronoun to be used to indicate collective “seed” when that is the case. This principle used in the NET Bible would render the author’s choice of a singular pronoun or plural pronoun ineffective, especially if his desire was to indicate an individual or a collective.

And you shall strike (or: “batter”, “crush”) him on heel. "

(Genesis 3:15b)

The first Adam was in charge of (“ruled”) the creation on behalf of God. The first Adam did not represent God and the creation came under the rule of Satan. God now pronounces that He will bring forth a New Adam who will judge the old creation with death. This New Adam will rule over a new creation. Thus, the serpent and all his followers will be executed with the judgment of death along with the old creation.

⁴⁵ So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. (1 Corinthians 15:45)

One should also note that “heel” (in the same verse) is singular and if “Seed” were a collective noun it would be expected to be “heels” (although not absolutely necessary).

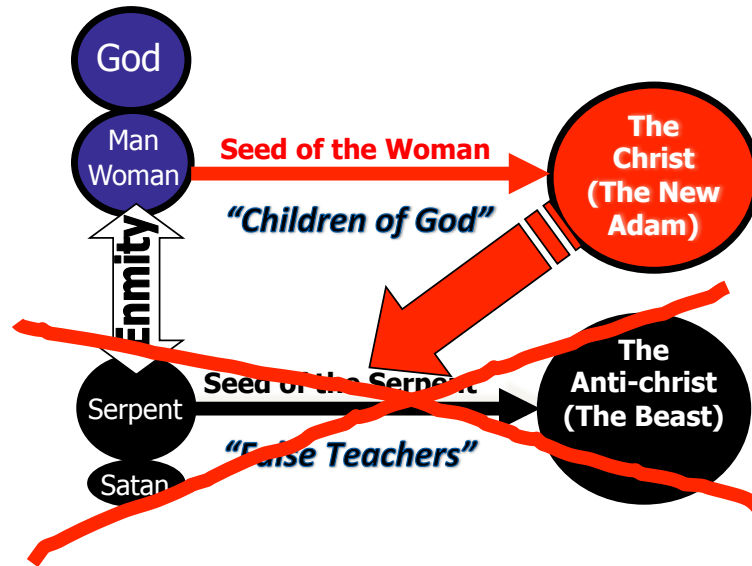
Cases to illustrate the use of a singular pronoun with “seed” to indicate an individual are Genesis 16:10, 22:17; 24:60. These repeat the case of 3:15 as they also are indicating an individual “Seed” instead of collective. Note that Paul takes “Seed” (singular) to be an individual in Galatians 3:16 which references Genesis 22:17. If one advocates a collective use of “Seed” in Genesis 22:17 then it would disagree with Paul’s literal use of Genesis 22:17 as a singular. (Thus, the interpreter would have to disagree with Paul’s interpretation). If one sees Paul as using Genesis 22:17 as proof of his case in Galatians, then this would add substantial proof to the case of 3:15 as an individual since it is similar. Paul takes the singular in 22:17 to indicate “Messiah” and thus is also the case in 3:15. Of course, Lamech (Noah’s father) in 5:29 takes the use of Genesis 3:15 to also be a singular since he advocates that “One” is to come and remove the curse of Genesis 3:17, and Lamech is applying it to his singular son.

Also see Genesis 15:13 where “seed” (singular) is used with the plural pronoun “they”. Thus, the requirement of conformance of singular pronoun number to singular noun number (for “seed”) is not consistent in Genesis. The use of “seed” as an individual person is very common, for instance in Genesis 4:16 to indicate Seth. The singular pronoun with “seed” also occurs in 15:3 (contextually this prefaces the “Seed” which caused Abram to believe).

See also Genesis 17:8,9, which has the plural pronoun. Note also that as in Genesis 13:16 that it would be unnatural to use a collective (i.e., acts as a plural) in the sentence there. For instance, which one makes more sense; “I will make your seed(s) as (equal to) the dust of the earth” or “I will make your (individual) seed as the dust of the earth”. The first sentence makes the nation similar (equivalent) to the amount of dust (but not multiplied since the nation (plural seeds) would already be multiplied). The second then makes a singular seed (multiplied) as the “dust of the earth”. That is multiplied, one to many. If the term “multiply” is used, then the first reference (“seed”) must be smaller than the second reference (“stars of the heavens”) and thus must be a singular. If “seed” is collective (“nation”) then there is no multiplication, but the second reference clarifies the first as to number.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. (Romans 5:14)

¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:19)



But the serpent will execute judgment on the New Adam

And you shall strike (or: “batter”, “crush”) him on heel. "

(Genesis 3:15b)

However, the serpent will execute the judgment of death on the New Adam (“the heel” is where serpents strike⁸). Thus, even with the victory of this New Adam over the serpent and his followers, this obedient Messiah will also be executed with the judgment of death by the serpent. Recall that death is a judgment. Thus, the judgment of death on this New Adam is unjust. This unjust death will be the ultimate test of obedience, as this New Adam will undergo an unjust death to substitute for the sins of the old creation (perfect representation of God’s character of sacrificial mercy). This will be seen when God immediately (Genesis 3:21) takes the coats of skins of an innocent animal and replaces their human-reasoning coats of leaves to demonstrate the picture of the Genesis 3:15 substitution of the innocent Messiah.

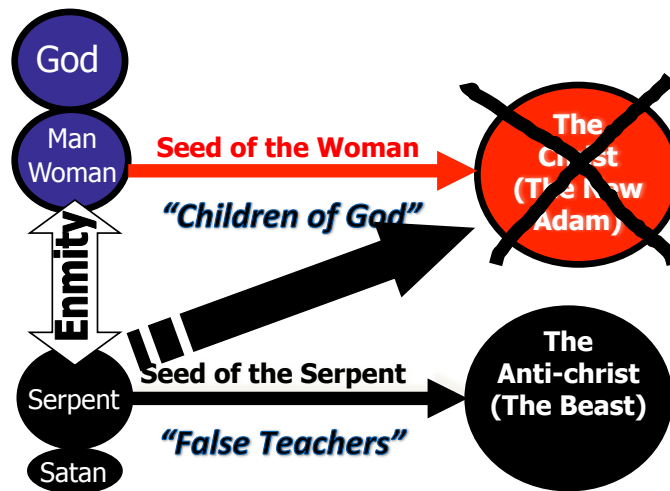
⁸ It is not infrequent to hear that the “strike on the heel” of Messiah is not a deathblow while the “strike on the head” of the serpent is a deathblow. Serpents are killed only by strikes to the head, while poisonous serpents who crawl on the ground typically kill their prey by striking on the heel. See Genesis 49:17 for a reference to a serpent biting at a horse’s heels.

Frequently “obedience” is stated as one who does good things. So a believer is “obedient” if he goes to church, treats his wife right, pays his bills, and waters the plants. However, Biblical obedience is not just doing what one thinks is a good program for a good life. Secularists do the same and some of them garner respect for their moral life. “Obedience” is acting according to God’s revelation, especially when it is difficult and does not receive acclaim. By difficult, what is meant, is that there is no observable (“seen”) benefit. This is what is called “suffering for the gospel” or “walking by faith not by sight.” Obedience thus is being faithful to the revelation of God when a physical benefit is not present or does not come immediately as a result of one’s actions (Hebrews 11:1). Thus, Christ was obedient in that he endured ridicule and death for God without immediate and visible physical benefit. While the evangelical church searches for something that will be admired by the world (physical observable success), yet lack of acclaim is one of the major tests of one’s faithful obedience. Will one be true to the word even if they go it alone, if they go without admiration or measurable success?

This is what the Pharisees missed. They interpreted Deuteronomy 28 to indicate that physical benefits were a result of obedience (e.g., “good works”) and thus physical benefits were to be pursued as a justifiable end. Yet obedience, by definition, required being faithful to God without physical benefits. Restated, God would reward them later for being faithful in a period of time when they would not see physical benefits. Then following a delay, in which God tested them, the reward would come which included visible benefits of creation enjoyment.

Obedience is foregoing one’s own desires (character selfish ambition) for God’s desires (sacrificial mercy), which hopefully becomes one’s own desires.

All this was to show that this Messiah, this Seed of the Woman, would have to go without physical benefits, even to death, to show His obedience. He ultimately would give up the physical to be faithful to the unseen revelation of His God.



The Protagonist's (Hero's) action toward the Woman

While there was no hope given for the serpent, only judgment, the woman now will also incur judgment (death), but deliverance as well. Her physical life will only result in tragedy (death), while her hope for the new creation will be centered in the One who will come from her body.

Suffering in childbearing/raising: Her children will incur the curse.

Now, in a play-on-words (“multiply” in 3:16 compared with “multiply” in 1:28), her multiplication of children will be incurred only through hardship.

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your sorrow and your conception, In sorrow you shall bring forth children (lit.: “sons”) (Genesis 3:16).

The word here, “sorrow” (frequently translated “pain”) is the same word used for Adam’s “sorrow” in 3:17 and should be translated “sorrow” here as well. Thus, Eve’s pain will be more than physical⁹. Contextually it will be the struggle in child rearing,¹⁰ since her children will have

⁹ Rev. 12:2 is a reference to this “labor and in pain” in the national sense with Israel as the woman.

¹⁰ The literal reading of 3:16 is “your pain (or sorrow or hardship) in conception (or pregnancy). ‘Conception’ here is a figure of speech standing in for the whole of the raising of a child from conception to adulthood. Thus, the ‘pain’ and ‘sorrow’, in light of the ethical/moral image here, is the suffering that the woman will endure in watching some of her children give

a choice, neither of which will bring her success in this world. Her children may choose to¹¹¹ follow the serpent (“seed of the serpent”) and be dead while they live. Consequently, she will have sorrow because those children have chosen to follow the serpent (human wisdom and death). Should they choose to trust in the “Seed of the Woman” then her “good” children will ultimately receive “life” (relationship with God through the “Seed of the Woman”) but will be persecuted and killed by Satan and his followers in this life. That will also bring her sorrow.

Thus, the curse that she has brought forth will ensure that she has sorrow in her children. The curse will bring sorrow to her no matter which path they choose. Literarily one can expect that such a foundational pronouncement will be played out throughout the rest of the story and, of course, it is the story Cain and Abel. At the end of the story (4:25), Eve (the one who would hope to bear the Messiah) will express great sorrow over Cain’s evil choice to follow Satan, but express that her joy over righteous Abel was short lived as Abel suffered persecution and death at the hands of Cain.

Of course, the greatest grief that she will have over her children will be present in the ultimate grief, the death of her ultimate Seed, the Christ¹¹.

into the deceit of the serpent. Or in lieu of their deceit, the serpent’s seed will execute her righteous children. Either way she will have sorrow.

¹¹ As an extra-Biblical note, when one views Michelangelo’s Pieta (Jesus’ mother holding the body of Jesus located in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome), one cannot help but think of Mary as the ultimate Eve, the bearer of the Seed, standing at the cross as her Son is unjustly crucified (John 19:25). The fulfillment in Mary of the “sorrow” of the prophecy to Eve, while not stated specifically, seems logical.



The Woman will seek to bear the New Adam so she can be delivered through Him¹².

“Yet your desire shall be for your Man, And He shall rule among you.” (Genesis 3:16b, professor’s translation)

“Desire:” The word here for “desire” is used only here, in Genesis 4:7 and in Song of Solomon 7:10. It simply means, “long for,” or “crave.” It does not carry with it any inherent meaning of “rule over” as has frequently been imported into the meaning from the context in 4:7 (with Cain). Note that it is used only in the sense of “desire” in Song of Solomon. It should be simply translated in its normal sense as “long for.”

She is going to “long for” “her Man” (פֶּה, “the Seed” of 3:15, cf. 4:1 for a similar use of פֶּה), the “Seed” that she will bear since this One is her hope.

“Your Man:” The “Man” in context is not her husband (as has been frequently interpreted and translate) but is the “Man” she will bear that is her hope (immediately preceding in 3:15). Note that she uses the same word when she bears Cain and hopes he is Messiah in 4:1 (“I have born a man (פֶּה) . . .”).

“He will rule in you.” This Seed (“her Man”) that is in her is The Seed. But beyond that this Seed (“in her”) is going to rule her¹³. In other words, she needs a new ruler different from the first Adam, the New Man. Note that a similar construction is used for Abraham in 12:3 as the national woman, Israel. There “all the families of the earth shall be blessed ‘in’ you.” This indicates more than the fulfillment in the rule of Christ in the Kingdom, but that this One is the only hope of life from the moment the Seed is “in” her. It will be regarded throughout the text of the Old Testament. Those who bless the ones who have the Seed (“in them”) will be blessed and those who curse those who have the Seed “in them” will be cursed. The same construction is used also for Joseph ruling over (“in”) his brothers in Genesis 37:8.

The Protagonist’s Judgment on The Man: rebellion of the ground against The Man

¹² This interpretation of Genesis 3:16 was first explained to me by Dr. David Klingler, Associate Professor, Dallas Theological Seminary.

¹³ The same construction is used in Genesis 12:3, “in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” The designation here seems to be an emphasis on this Man ruling from within her (her Seed). And that is reflected in Genesis 22:18, “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

Now, just as man has rebelled against his Creator, the ground is now cursed and will¹¹³ rebel against the man (note use of ground; **הָאֲדָמָה** *hadamah*, and the man; **הָאָדָם** *hadam*) to show from what he was taken. He was to utilize the plants of the ground for food, to till the ground, yet the ground ultimately would fight him and finally repossess him.

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In sorrow you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field; ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, (Genesis 3:17-19)

The victory of the ground to conquer him

In a continuation of the ground's rebellion against the authority of man, it will ultimately be victorious over him as he returns to the ground from which he came.

"Till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

This indication of the curse of the ground is the curse of the old creation. All of the physical in which the man had put his hope now will oppose him. Thus, note very clearly, that this creation is suffering, and will suffer. There is no case in which suffering is not present. This is the case until Messiah appears and brings forth the new creation. Note also that what is being removed is God's equipping of Adam with the "breath." As Adam becomes dust, the breath is removed.

²⁶ For just as the body without the breath is dead, so also the faith without works is dead.

(James 2:26)

Solomon validates this in Ecclesiastes, referencing Genesis 3.

"then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the breath will return to God who gave it."

(Ecclesiastes 12:7)

Summary: The Philosophy of the Hero, God

In the judgments on the three individuals, they are overwhelmingly negative, but the hope comes in the promise of the Seed.

Yet in the judgment of the serpent will be the obedience of “HE” (the woman’s¹¹⁴ ultimate Seed). That obedience of this New Adam will be His faithfulness in going through the unjust judgment by the serpent.

In the judgment on the woman, she will suffer in bringing forth her Seed, yet ultimately that Seed will end the curse on her and creation.¹⁴

In the judgment on man, death will ultimately remove the man from the creation. Yet it is through death that he will proceed into the new creation through resurrection, as he must be regenerated by being born of the obedient last Adam.

The Playing Out of the Philosophy of the Hero

The next few verses are very important as they illustrate the philosophy of the Hero. This is literary clarification as narrative literature is apt to do by illustrating the philosophy of Genesis 3:15-16. So that the reader can validate that he has a correct understanding of the basic philosophy, it is illustrated in the characters.

Man: Anticipation of Life (Representation Restored) through the Seed of the Woman

²⁰ Now the man called his wife's name Eve (lit.: “life”), because she was the mother of all *the living*. (Genesis 3:20)

It is a strange thing to the reader for Adam to call rename his wife “life” (Eve), when in fact the whole creation was cursed with death as the preceding discourse and verse emphasized. All her children would meet with “death” as the genealogies in Genesis 5 will so clearly emphasize (“and he died . . . and he died . . .”).

But there are two definitions of “life,” just as there are two character value systems, God’s and Satan’s (man’s). Satan had called life the pursuit of one’s lusts in the physical (only) realm¹⁵. But God called that “death” since it was apart from His revelation. However, God’s true definition of “life” is found only in His character and thus in His self-revelation, and now will only be present in the hope of “the Seed.” “The Seed” alone will represent God. The woman will bear this “Seed.” Since God (and the Seed) alone is “life” and the Seed is in her, Adam names his wife, “life.” She will bear the One who has “life.” John, focusing on the Genesis story points out that Jesus was this new life, the life that one must have for the Kingdom, the New Creation.

¹⁴ Refer to Rev. 12:1ff. where the woman Israel is in pain to bring forth the Christ.

¹⁵ One often hears unbelievers state during some period of ecstasy in this physical realm, “It doesn’t get any better than this,” “now this is living (or life).” That is, very clearly, the definition Satan has given “life,” the enjoyment of the physical realm apart from God.

In the beginning was the Word . . .

⁴ In Him was **life**, and the **life** was the Light of men. (John 1:1, 4)

And the Word became flesh . . . (John 1:14a)

Since God's Word represents His character, the Seed of the Woman is the One who will come and represent His character. Thus, Jesus is the Word, or the representation of His character.

This life is what is known in John as "eternal life" since it is sourced in God the Father's character alone. Man will obtain it through the One who is "life" who will come from Eve according to prophecy. Jesus Christ will give that life to man, but also that life will be fully realized when the believer is resurrected into the kingdom. Daniel speaks of that resurrection into the Kingdom.

² "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to **everlasting life**, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt.

(Daniel 12:2)

God: Sacrifice of an animal and the expulsion from the garden.

²¹ And the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them¹⁶.

²² Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to serve (or "work") the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.

The Change of Animal Skins for Vegetable Leaves

Adam and Eve had, through human wisdom, clothed themselves with leaves to cover their sin. God had revealed in 3:15 that He would cover their sin through the unjust execution of His Messiah. Now He illustrates it with the replacement of their leafy coverings by the skin covering of an innocent animal. This was only a symbol, since the prophecy was of a Man who

¹⁶ Abraham will refer to this event in 22:8 when he responds to Isaac's question by saying, "God will provide the lamb." What Abraham is noting is that Isaac was given by God and will be used by God. Abraham had given up on his own self-efforts (like Adam and Eve finally did) and was pursuing God's way.

was to be sacrificed. Thus, God established the symbol by which man will anticipate this¹¹⁶ coming One until His Son would come. The Lamb that will ultimately come to be sacrificed as a Man was announced by John the Baptist in John 1:29.¹⁷

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

God exiled man out of the garden and guarded the way. Death was insured¹⁸ (access to the tree denied) as judgment moved in. The exile is a constant reminder that man is under judgment (cf. Romans 8:18-25) and there is a restoration yet to come. Man, seeing through his own eyes, will try to fight the curse and make his kingdom on this earth anyway, but he will ultimately die regardless of his success. Until resurrected man returns to the new garden ruled by the New Adam all would be death. The garden will reappear in Revelation 21:1—22:5, complete with the Tree of Life, the river of life flowing out of the city to water the earth, and the New Adam ruling over the garden city forever.

John commented on that future garden in Revelation 2:7 in promising a return where one could finally eat of the Tree of Life and live forever. The overcomer is the One who trusted in Christ, the Overcomer of Satan. "Paradise" (παράδεισος) is the Greek word for "garden."

⁷ 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise (lit.: garden) of God.'¹⁹ (Revelation 2:7)

Finally, in the eternal kingdom, the Tree of Life is realized and is totally accessible. In a "Garden of Eden" setting, John records the vision of the future.

¹⁷ Isaiah 61:10 captures the "covering" meaning here as the "covering" is imputed from the innocent One who is sacrificed for the sin of the guilty one.

I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (Isa. 61:10)

¹⁸ Death in a major sense is a blessing. While man frequently claims to 'turn over a new leaf' or 'wipe the slate clean', it is only following death that the believing man is able to truly start over in the bodily resurrection. For the unbeliever, death is their only sure promise from God.

¹⁹ Whenever the reference to the "Garden of God" is used, it is always a reference to the Garden of Eden. (Ezekiel 28:13, 31:9)

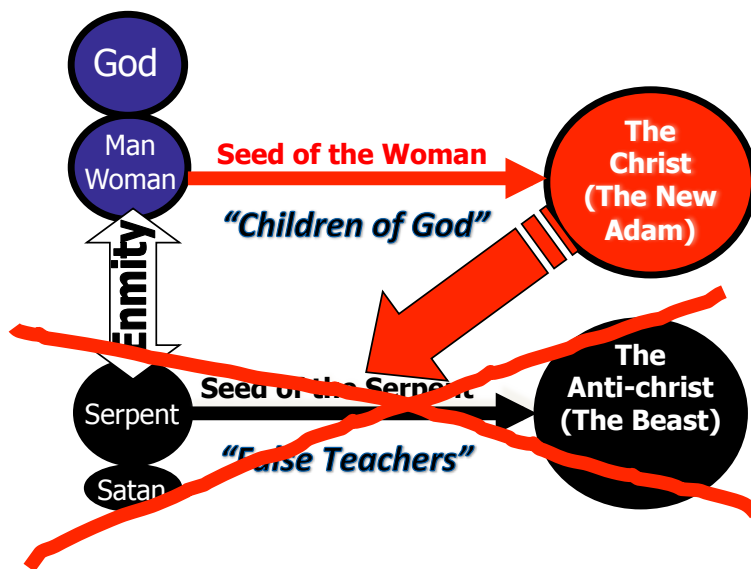
Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month (Revelation 22:1-2)

Summary of man's future: Hope in a cursed world

Enmity will continue between the followers of the serpent (false teachers who reject the revelation of the Christ and choose human wisdom) and God's people (who follow the revelation of Messiah). The righteous will be persecuted by the evil ones and the ultimate evil one, the Beast (ultimate seed of the serpent). The righteous will trust in the Son of Man (ultimate Seed of the Woman) and His ultimate victory. Yet on the way to that victory the Seed of the Woman will be the sacrifice for the Old Creation as the serpent executes him unjustly.

As Jesus states in Matthew 23:33-35 regarding the fact that these Pharisees were considered "seeds of serpents" (followers of their fathers who followed Satan the first serpent)

³¹ "So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² "Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers. ³³ "You serpents, you seeds of serpents, how will you escape the sentence of hell? ³⁴ "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ "Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. (Matthew 23:31-36)



So, out into this cursed dead world go Adam and Eve. What will come to them?¹¹⁸
The reader knows of some things, certain death and the curse of the ground. Yet ultimately the Messiah will come forth and deliver them into a New Creation, and they will be returned to the Garden. However, since this coming New Adam must conquer (and judge) the old creation, He must appear in it and subdue it, removing the Satanic rule. Only then man will return to the Garden, the same garden that he left so long ago. This will be known as the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (the Millennium, Revelation 20). Following that the New Adam will create a New Creation wherein will be a new garden to replace the old one. This will be known as the Eternal State (Revelation 21:1—22:5). Speaking of a recreated earth and a new Jerusalem wherein the New Adam rules, John says this in Revelation 22:1-2 regarding the Tree of Life which once again reappears and provides the fruit which can then be eaten.

“Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

(Revelation 22:1-2)

The Cursed World

²² Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever "-- ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard²⁰ the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:22-24)

Man now has this different character, a character that determines good and evil from its own person, from its own value system, a greedy, self-centered value system. He has become his own god by definition. And the world that he is now entering will be characterized by a value system not of God, one that values the physical world, achievement, honor, riches, decadence, and sensuality. It is a world that will re-create God in its own image, a god of materialism that rewards its own depravity. Paul states exactly this; that man is not only evil but additionally he approves of evil as “good.”

²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, ²⁹ being filled with all

²⁰ The word here for “guard” is the same word in 2:15 where Adam was to “guard” (or “keep watch over”) the garden to keep out all beings who would bring unholiness into this realm. Adam failed to “guard” against the serpent, and now the cherubim are given that role to guard the garden, ironically they are guarding it against Adam, the one who was originally to guard it.

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unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. (Romans 1:28-31)

So God blocks the way for man to rule for Him. Man continues, but with a depraved character (evil “image”). He is removed from the realm from which he was to rule the world, from the garden. Man will not be able to access the life that God wanted to give him. One day far in the future a Man will appear of whom it will be declared, “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men . . . as many as received Him to them gave He the right to become children of God.” (John 1:4, 12). And the promise to the overcomer (one who trusts in The Overcomer of the serpent) is a return to the garden and the Tree of Life.

⁷ 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

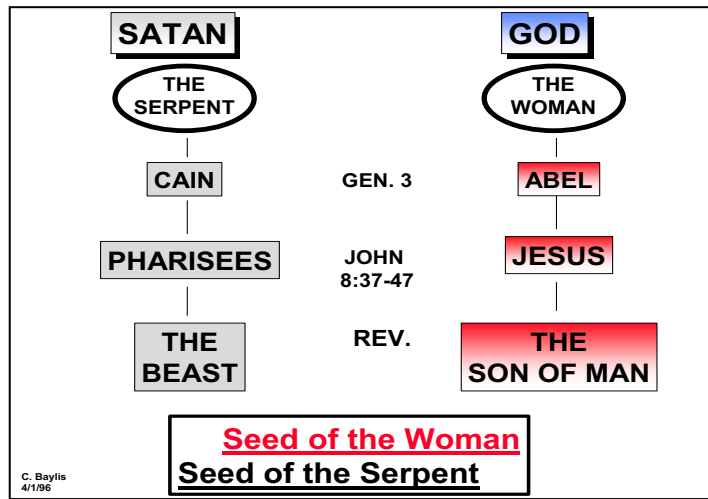
(Revelation 2:7)

New Testament Validation

1 John: John warns against those who deny the Christ is the only access to the Father.

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour. (1 John 2:18)

This reference is to Genesis 3:15, which begins the enmity of the serpent and his followers (rejecters of the revelation about the New Adam) against the woman and the followers of God (the Messiah). Finally, the ultimate follower of the serpent, the Beast, the antichrist, appears as Satan’s false prophet and battles the New Adam for final dominion. John, thus, is warning the believers that there are those who deny the Christ and pursue access to God by other means, particularly their self-glorifying works, exactly as Genesis 3:15 prophesied. They will not only oppose the Christ as the access to the Father, but will persecute (i.e., “hate”) those who do trust in the Messiah.



Matthew: The “seeds of serpents” as those following their evil fathers who followed Satan

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You seeds of serpents, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"
(Matthew 3:7)

³⁴ "You seeds of serpents, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. (Matthew 12:34)

³⁰ and say, 'If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.' ³¹ "Consequently you bear witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² "Fill up then the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers. ³³ "You serpents, you seeds of serpents, how shall you escape the sentence of hell? ³⁴ "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. (Matthew 23:30-35)

The reference to “seeds of serpents” is a reference to the fact that they are following their fathers (23:30), who followed the original serpent by rejecting the revelation of God. Now these Pharisees are following Satan again and rejecting Jesus as the “Seed of the Woman.”

The Overcomer as the Christ and ultimately His followers:

John uses the word “overcome” to indicate His victory over Satan. Jesus is said to “overcome” the world, the very world dominated by Satan and his followers. They will oppose

Jesus, the New Adam, from coming into the world and ruling (John 16:33). In 1 John 4:3,¹²¹ John states very clearly that now the believer shares in that overcoming of Satan, but only through the imputed righteousness of Christ (see also 1 John 2:13, 14, 4:4).

Jesus as the Overcomer of Satan

³³ "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

(John 16:33)

The Believer in Jesus as the Overcomer of the World (Satan's realm)

⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(1 John 5:4-5)

The Believer in Jesus as the Overcomer of Satan, and He dies for Christ

The "overcomer" continues to be linked with the believer who has imputed righteousness through the blood of the Lamb as John states in Revelation 12:11 (see also Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21, 5:5, 6:2, 11:7, 13:7, 15:2, 17:14, 21:7).

¹¹ "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

(Revelation 12:11)

The Exile from the Garden Kingdom

²² Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever "--

²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

(Genesis 3:22-24)

Adam and Eve are now forced to leave the realm from which they were to rule, the Garden. This was their designated place and no other will ever be that home base. As man is exiled from the garden, and angels prevent his re-entry, it is clear that nothing will be right until man is allowed to return to the realm of the garden. The cherubim now “guard” the garden against Adam’s reentry, and ironically it was Adam who was originally to “guard” the garden against the serpent’s arrival. When will he be able to return? Not until the New Adam appears and leads those with the new birth back. 122

Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:1-2