



Daily Verse and Comment

Genesis 3:16-19

(16) To the woman He said, "I will greatly increase your sorrow and your conception—in sorrow shall you bring forth children. Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you." (17) And to Adam He said, "Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat *of it*!'—the ground is cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life. (18) It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you, and *thus* you shall eat the herbs of the field; (19) In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you shall return."

A Faithful Version

The matter of leadership—whether nationally, locally, at home, on the job, or on the team—has always been a vexing problem for mankind. “Always” should be taken literally because [Genesis 3:16-19](#) reveals it was a major part of several issues that triggered mankind's circumstances ever since, down to this very second. After Adam's and Eve's sins, [God](#) imposed curses, at the same time pointedly stating why this major flaw in man's character helped to trigger the human condition that persists today.

Notice that God mentions to Adam, whom He had appointed as leader of the family through which He intended to populate the entire earth, “You have heeded the voice [counsel] of your wife.” In other words, he had failed to lead the only person who was then under his authority. He took her counsel rather than do what God had commanded him to do, and thus he sinned. The context does not state why he did so, but what resulted was an act of idolatry. He put her counsel before God's, breaking the first commandment.

How long did Adam ponder the challenge of the serpent's arguments to break God's commandment by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and

Evil? A few seconds? A few minutes? Whatever it was, in comparison to the amount of time that has passed since, it remains as little more than a flash of lightning. Yet, consider how this seemingly minor [sin](#) motivated God to react.

This singular episode in Eden illustrates how seriously God treats sin as compared to how lightly we tend to take it. It was a brief moment in time, when Adam, along with Eve—only two people—failed to exercise leadership by obeying God's simple stricture. What they chose to do instead has brought far more difficult lives on billions of people—difficulty that otherwise may have never occurred. Life, righteousness, and sin do not operate in a vacuum. There is no such thing as sin that does not hurt others, as some so foolishly think or proclaim to justify themselves.

[Ecclesiastes 7:29](#) makes a telling statement regarding our creation: “Truly this only have I found: That God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.” Solomon intends that we understand Adam and Eve to be representative of all mankind. However, Genesis 3 makes clear that they exercised their leadership by leading us into sin. In so doing, they led us all to fall from the pinnacle of human innocence in which they had been created.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Leadership and Covenants \(Part One\)](#)

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[God Made Man Upright](#)

[God's Attitude toward Sin](#)

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