

# Paradise Lost: How to Recover What YOU Lost in the Garden

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## I. Introduction

The reason people live unhappy and unfulfilled lives where they question every decision they ever made is because they don't really know who they are: Who was I supposed to be? What job was I supposed to have? Who was I supposed to marry? Wouldn't it be great to know what life you were supposed to have and what choices you were supposed to make? Is that possible, if it is, how?

## II. The Lies That Enslave Us to Satan and Cause Us to Doubt Our True Identity

**Why did Adam and Eve run away from God after they sinned (Genesis 3:7-10)?** We might think that they ran because they feared that God might kill them, Genesis 2:17. But look closely, why did they run away? Because they were naked. Why is nakedness bad, after all, at the end of Genesis 2, they were both naked and "not ashamed"? So what's changed? As soon as Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the tree, they saw life differently. They now saw themselves differently because they now saw God differently: they were now terrified of Him, Genesis 3:10. From the beginning God showed Adam and Eve nothing but love, so why are they now afraid of Him? Because they now have a false view of Him. He is no longer their Loving Father; He's a Terrifying God. The normal response to a loving father whom you've disobeyed might be worry, concern, or even hesitation, but would it be terror?

**Was God angry with Adam and Eve or concerned about them (Genesis 3:8-11)?** Adam and Eve's sin was devastating to humanity and creation; their actions brought death and destruction to the entire world. So, was God furious? No, in fact, God's response reveals the actions of a Loving Father—they ran away from Him, He ran to them. Instead of punishing them, God's first reaction was to run to their aid. The first questions He asks them were designed to undo the lies they now believed about Him and themselves.

**Who told Adam and Eve they were naked?** God's first question to Adam was, "Where are you?" This question was designed to undo the lie Adam and Eve believed about themselves: they were the king and queen of the earth, Genesis 1:28, they were not supposed to be hiding behind trees. The second question to Adam was, "Who told you that you were naked?" Why did God ask this? It was designed to undo the lie they believed about their shameful state and the lie they believed about who God was. It was not God who said that they were naked and full of shame; they got this information from someone else and the only other being in the Garden was the Serpent. God is saying to them, "You don't belong behind the bushes. Yes, there is something wrong with you, but it's not the fact that you're not wearing any clothes. The reason you don't see yourself and Me as you used to is because you've been blinded by the Serpent's lies."

**Who told YOU that you were "naked"?** We all at one point or another have fallen for Satan's lies. His goal is to convince us that we are not who God says we are, that we're not worthy, that we won't succeed, that we're "naked" and need to hide in shame.....the story of a little boy who grows up thinking that women are sex objects, which leads him to think that he'll never be able to get married because he'll never be able to be faithful.

### III. The Truth That Sets Us Free and Allows Us to Recover What We Lost in the Garden

**God restores our true identity (Genesis 3:12-21)?** The Serpent's goal was to take authority over the earth away from Adam and Eve. He accomplished this by getting them to believe a terrible lie about God, which caused them to believe a terrible lie about themselves. Once they believed that God was a liar who was holding out on them, they ate the fruit and no longer saw themselves as the ruling king and queen of earth. No, now they were simply two naked people who needed to hide in shame. Thus, when they sided with the Serpent's words instead of God's, they (especially Adam as the leader and protecting king) handed authority over the earth to the Serpent....is all hope lost, are we destined to live under the Serpent's rule forever? Never.

Who's the first one God punishes in this whole thing? The Serpent. What does He say to him? First, God curses him to live on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life. Second, there will be hostility between the woman and the Serpent. Third, there will be hostility between the Serpent's seed and the woman's seed. Fourth, the Seed will crush the Serpent's head and get His head bruised in the process. This means that immediately after the Serpent succeeded in taking away authority over the earth from mankind, God reassured them that complete authority over the earth will one day be given back to them when the Serpent's head is crushed by the Seed of the woman.

Next God punishes Adam and Eve. They deserved death, Romans 6:23. But God tempers his punishment with mercy and restores their identity as king and queen over the earth. In the beginning God had set Adam and Eve as king and queen and gave them two responsibilities: have children and have dominion over the earth. Though the Serpent now has authority over the earth and will forever wage war against the woman's seed, God gives Adam and Eve their dominion back. But they will both have to labor hard in their new responsibilities. Thus, they will be able to have children, but it will be very painful every time the woman gives birth. The woman will also struggle in her relationship with her husband. She will want to dominate him, but instead he will dominate her. As for dominion over the earth, God also gives this back to Adam. He will be able to make the land produce, but it will be a long life of hard labor. And at the end of it, he will return to the dust from where he came....but when Adam names his wife Eve, he reveals the tremendous hope that lies in the future. Eve means *life* or *living*, thus Adam believes that the crushing blow to the Serpent by the Seed will enable him and everyone else who is a seed of the woman to live again, i.e., Eve is "the mother of all living" not the mother of all who have died and are still dead.

The final sign that God has restored to the man and woman their rightful places as king and queen is what God does to cover their nakedness. He makes tunics of skin for them to wear. How does this signify their restoration as king and queen? First, animals had to die in order for them to be clothed. Thus, instead of Adam and Eve rightly suffering death for their sin, innocent animals were killed to cover their sin—a picture of what the Seed would later do for the seed of mankind. This means that their nakedness and shame has been removed and their rightful place as king and queen restored. Second, the Hebrew word used for "tunics" means a robe-like garment. God didn't just cover their nakedness with jeans and a shirt; He gave them a kingly and queenly robe to wear.

**The truth sets you free**, eventually, God found that little boy who grew up thinking that women were sex objects and He showed him that this was a lie, that there was a way to be faithful to one woman. He showed him, among other things, that sex was a sacred blessing that He had designed for the husband and wife. Thus, sex was to be respected, honored, and protected.

### IV. Conclusion

*Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*