**‘Trouble for the Man’**

***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 toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. 18“Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; 19By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”*** Genesis 3:16-19

In this first sentence, God makes it clear to the man, Adam, why trouble is going to be integral to the work he will do throughout his life. God said, ***“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife…”***

The man knew exactly what God told him. He knew that he was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He knew that no one was to eat of it. He was clearly told, ***“for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die,”***[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftn1) and yet he ate of it. Why? Why did he eat what he knew was forbidden? He did it because he listened to his wife.

There isn’t anything inherently wrong with Adam listening to his wife or any man listening to their wife. After all, God did create the woman to be ***“a helper suitable for the man”***.[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftn2) The problem was that the woman told the man to do something contrary to what God had made perfectly clear. The trouble for the man came to Adam because **he chose** to listen to what his wife had to say, rather than remain steadfastly obedient to what God had told him. He chose disobedience over obedience. He was with the woman when she was in conversation with the serpent, yet he didn’t interrupt their conversation. He didn’t pull the woman aside to remind her of what she already knew. He just stood by and did nothing to stop her.

What the man did in the Garden of Eden has been repeated an infinite number of times throughout history. Isn’t it true that oftentimes we know exactly what God has said on a matter, and yet we allow other people to talk us into doing what we know is wrong? Surely this is so. If only we could go with God has said and turn our backs on the suggestions of our spouse, our family, and our friends. We would have less trouble in our lives if we would do this. Ah, but…we don’t always do what we know to be right.

Adam knew exactly what God had said, yet he listened to his wife. Now he was about to hear the consequences his actions would bring upon himself. What does God tell him?

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The man had been created to subdue the earth. He had been placed in the Garden of Eden ***to till it and keep it***.[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftn3) He was created to work, but now the very ground which was to provide the food he was to eat is cursed[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftn4). The man would toil and sweat, tilling the ground for food, and what would it produce? It would produce thorns and thistles. Do we realize what this means? It means that thorns and thistles weren’t part of God’s original creation. These belong to the curse. Their presence makes it obvious that the earth is under a curse.

Because of the curse, what was supposed to be a joyous task – going out to gather food from the bounty of the earth – was now going to be toilsome labor. It would be difficult, but there would be no guarantee that the work would be rewarded with food from the land. City-dwellers aren’t cognizant of this fact, but farmers know this all too well. Harvests aren’t guaranteed no matter how much work is put into preparing the ground and planting the seeds.

Finally God tells Adam what death would bring to him. He tells him that he would return to the dust from which he was created. The serpent was wrong. He had lied. The man and the woman would die. However glorious their lives might be on earth, the end result would be the same for all. All would return to the dust.

These weren’t comforting words for the man to hear. They weren’t meant to be comforting. The man had willfully disobeyed the Lord, and there were consequences for that disobedience. There are always consequences – always, always, always.

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[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftnref1) Genesis 2:17

[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftnref2) Genesis 2:18

[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftnref3) Genesis 2:15

[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/01/" \l "_ftnref4) Here we must realize what the word “curse” means. People, places, and things that are put under a curse are hindered from being all they were created to be. In the case of the earth, the fact that it was now cursed meant that it would not be able to yield crops to its original potential.