

THE FIRST PROVISION OF GOD FOR MAN: GOD PROVIDES LIFE AND CLOTHING (RIGHTEOUSNESS) FOR MAN GENESIS 03:20–21

Introduction

The first judgment has just been pronounced upon man and woman. Both man and his world have been judged to suffer under the corruption of imperfection. Man, tragically, is to be struggling for survival in a hostile and evil world, a world that will eventually snatch his life away. Man is condemned to the most awful fate imaginable, the doom of death and eternal separation from God — unless God can save him. This is the subject of this great passage: *The First Provision of God for Man: God Provides Life and Clothing (Righteousness) for Man*.

- I. Adam names the woman, Eve: he believes God's provision for birth and life (v. 20).
- II. God provides clothing for man and woman, clothing through sacrifice (v. 21).

I. *Genesis 03:20 God's Provision for Birth and Life*

Adam names the woman, Eve: he believes God's provision for birth and life. This is the first time the name Eve appears in Scripture. We sometimes overlook this fact, so much so that we often refer to Eve when discussing the creation and the fall of man and woman into sin. But Scripture never refers to the woman as Eve in these accounts. She has been called *female* (Gen 1:27); a *help-meet* or *suitable helper* (Gen 2:18); *wife* (Gen 2:24-25; 3:8, 17, 20-21); and usually *woman* (Gen 2:22-23; 3:1-2, 4, 6, 12-13, 15-16). But now Adam names his wife, and the name he gives her is very significant. The name *Eve* (chavvah) means to live, to give life, or the mother of all living. Different commentators give the Hebrew word different shades of meaning, such as to breathe, to propagate life, and to quicken seed (The pulpit commentary vol. 1, p. 72) But the fundamental meaning of the name is life. Eve means to give life, to spring forth life, to propagate *life*. Note the latter part of the verse. This is exactly why Adam named his wife Eve: she was the mother of all living.

As stated, this is very significant. When Adam named his wife Eve, he was acting in faith. Remember: Eve had no children; no child was yet born. Adam did not even know what pregnancy and giving birth involved, not yet, for no pregnancy or birth had ever taken place upon earth. By naming his wife Eve, Adam was showing that he accepted and believed God's Word, God's promise. What Word, what promise?

1. First, there was God's promise made in verses 15 and 16, the promise that Eve would *bear seed and bring forth children*.
- => Note the promise made in verse 15 where God is judging Satan. God says there will be enmity — hostility — between the devil's seed (followers) and the woman's seed (believers). God clearly says that the woman will be bearing seed or children.
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=> Note the promise made in verse 16 where God is judging the woman. God clearly says that she shall conceive and “bring forth children.”

2. Second, there was God’s promise made in the latter part of verse 15, the promise that Eve would bring forth a seed — one particular child — who would crush the head of the serpent or Satan. In speaking to the serpent or Satan, God clearly said,

Gen 3:15b “*He [the seed, the Saviour, which is singular] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*”

The point is this: Adam believed the Word of God; he believed these two promises of God. Remember, as pointed out, Adam and Eve had no children, not yet. They had no experience in bearing children; they had no way to know that they could even bear children, not after they had sinned. The only way Adam could know his wife was going to bear children was for God to tell him. This God did; this is clearly stated in the two Scriptures covered above (vv. 15-16). Adam believed God, believed the Word and promises of God. Therefore, he named his dear wife Eve, which means *life*. His wife was to bring forth children, and more importantly, she was to bear *the promised seed* or Saviour who would save them and their children.

Note this also: faith — true faith — always involves repentance. A person who truly believes God always repents. He always turns away from sin and turns to God, completely and fully. This means that Adam repented of his sin, truly repented.

Thought 1. Adam is a dynamic example for us, a dynamic example of faith. He knew nothing — absolutely nothing — about the birth process. He had...

- never *seen* a pregnant woman before
- never *touched* a baby
- never *heard* a baby cry

All Adam had was the sheer Word and promise of God, that God would give life to the world, both the life of other human beings and the life of one particular person, the Saviour.

The same promise is given to us. We already have life upon earth as human beings, but just as Adam and Eve were condemned to die, so we are doomed to die. However, we do not have to die. We can have the life of the Saviour. We can be saved from the judgment of death just as Adam and Eve were. We can live forever through the cross of *the promised seed*, the Lord Jesus Christ. How? By doing what Adam did: believing and accepting the Word and promise of God. We have the very same thing Adam had, God’s Word and promise of life. All we have to do is believe — truly believe — and commit our lives to God’s Word and promise about Jesus Christ.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

John 3:16 “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*”

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 10:10 *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

John 11:25 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”*

John 20:31 *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

2 Tim 1:10 *But it [God’s grace] has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

1 John 5:11-12 *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

II. Genesis 03: 21 God Clothes Man and Woman

God provides clothing for man and woman, clothing through — sacrifice. Note that God Himself makes the clothing for Adam and Eve, and that He Himself actually clothes them. This verse, as much as any, shows the enormous love and care of God for man and woman. Note exactly what God did.

1. God Himself met the need of man and woman for the raw, basic necessities of life. The world had been corrupted by sin. It was now afflicted with the disorder and confusion of nature, with harsh and dangerous weather. Man and woman were soon to be expelled from the Garden of Eden out into the world. The only clothing they had was made of fig leaves, and fig leaves would never last nor protect them from severe weather. They needed one of the very basic necessities of life, that of clothing. But they had no idea how they could meet their need; they had no idea how to secure heavier clothing that would last and be more protective. They had been living in a perfect world where there was no harsh weather nor any need for heavy clothing.

But note this: God knew. God knew how sin had corrupted the earth, how cold the weather would sometimes get and how violent nature and weather would sometimes react. God knew that fig leaves would never last nor provide the protection Adam and Eve needed; therefore, God provided for their need. God Himself made clothes for man and woman, and God Himself put the clothing across their shoulders. Imagine this tender act, actually laying the skins upon their shoulders. God showed man and woman both how to make clothing and how to clothe themselves.

A question needs to be asked at this point: Why did God do this? There are at least two reasons.

⇒ God wanted to show His great love and care for man and woman. God loves and cares for us; therefore, God always reaches out to show us His love and care.

⇒ God wanted to teach man and woman that He would take care of their necessities. God will always meet our needs if we will trust and follow after Him. Adam and Eve needed to know this great lesson as they stepped out and began their journey together in the harsh and violent world of sin and evil.

This is the same lesson we need to learn. God will meet our needs, our necessities — always — just as He met Adam's and Eve's. But He can help us only if we let Him, only if we trust and follow Him, only if we do what He says:

Mat 6:33 *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”* (see 6:25-33)

Phil 4:19 *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

1 Pet 5:7 *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

Exo 23:25 *Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.*

Psa 31:19 *How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you.*

Psa 57:1 *Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.*

Isa 25:4 *You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall.*

Isa 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

2. God taught man and woman that sin causes the most terrible things imaginable, even death. Note what God used to clothe man and woman: the skins of animals. Imagine Adam and Eve standing there as the animals were slaughtered. They had never seen blood nor the agony, pain and suffering of death before. They must have stood there in shock, stricken with the horror and devastation of sin. When the animals were slaughtered, Adam and Eve learned the terrible results of sin.
 - a. Adam and Eve learned that the animal kingdom was thrown into utter disorder and confusion. They learned that sin had caused terrible suffering and pain for the animal world of the earth.
 - b. Adam and Eve learned that the whole world — all of life and nature, including their own personal lives — was thrown into utter confusion and disorder. Sin leads to corruption and death.

- c. Adam and Eve learned what death meant. An awesome fear must have gripped their hearts. God had warned them, if they sinned, they would die. Now, Adam and Eve knew exactly what death meant. Every death they witnessed in the future would forever remind them...
- that they, too, were soon to die
 - that they must trust God for life beyond death
- d. Adam and Eve learned what mercy meant and how dependent they were upon the mercy of God. God had warned them: if they sinned, they would die. But note: their death was delayed. They were allowed to live upon earth for some years and to prove their trust in God and their worthiness to live with God throughout eternity.

***Dan 12:2** Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*

***Mat 25:46** “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”*

***John 6:27** “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”*

***John 10:28** I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.*

***Rom 2:7** To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honour and immortality, he will give eternal life.*

***Rom 6:22-23** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

***Rom 8:6** The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.*

***1 Tim 6:19** In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

***Titus 1:2** A faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time.*

***1 John 2:25** And this is what he promised us — even eternal life.*

***Jude 1:21** Keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

3. God met the need of man and woman to cover their shame. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were immediately affected emotionally and spiritually: they immediately felt guilt and shame.

Before they sinned, they were perfect: they had no sense of guilt, shame, sin, evil, wrong or nakedness — no sense of anything negative whatsoever. As discussed in an earlier passage, Adam and Eve had most likely been clothed with the shining light of glory and perfection (see notes, Gen 1:26; 3:7). But sin changed all this: sin corrupted man and woman, stripped them of glory and perfection. They became conscious and aware of sin, that they had done wrong and were guilty of wrong-doing. They felt guilt and shame; they became aware of their nakedness. Remember: they had rushed into the bushes and made aprons of fig leaves.

The point is this: after their confession and repentance — after they had been reconciled with God — God clothed Adam and Eve. God Himself clothed their shame. This taught Adam and Eve two things:

- => God alone could cover their feelings of shame and guilt.
- => God alone could make them feel right within their hearts, within their inner soul and spirit.

Thought 1. This, of course, points to the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which must clothe every person who wishes to become acceptable to God. The only way a person can have his guilt and shame covered is to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ. The righteousness of Jesus Christ alone...

- can cover the guilt and shame of sin
- can clothe a person with the righteousness that God accepts

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Rom 13:14 *Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

Eph 4:24 *And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (see Rom 13:14; Col 3:10; Isa 61:10)*

Rom 3:25 *God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.*

4. God taught man and woman that the sacrifice of life was necessary to clothe their shame. Again, note how God clothed Adam and Eve: by slaughtering several animals — by taking the life and shedding the blood of others. The life of animals had to be sacrificed in order to clothe the shame and guilt that man and woman felt. Adam and Eve were bound to grasp this fact as they stood there witnessing the slaughter. Remember: they had been perfect in intelligence, and sin had not yet had time to affect their minds too much. Adam and Eve were certainly able to see and reason about what was happening: a life was being taken in order to clothe them. A life was being substituted in order to cover the shame and guilt they felt, in order to reconcile them to God.

Note another fact as well. Scripture does not say this, but common sense and logic would certainly point to this: God loved Adam and Eve just as He loves us. They were, after all, to be the parents of the whole human race. God is bound to have taught them the need for sacrifice in order to be saved...

- taught them what He was doing in sacrificing the animals, that He was clothing their sense of shame and guilt
- taught them that the sacrifice of the coming Saviour was necessary to save them
- taught them that the serpent's (Satan's) bruising of the woman's seed referred to the Saviour and the sacrifice He was to make for man and woman
- taught them that the crushing of the serpent's (Satan's) head was to be accomplished by the death of the Saviour
- taught them that the Saviour Himself was to give His life as their substitute, that He was to die for their sins (as their ransom and propitiation)
- taught them that it was by the blood of the sacrifice that they were to be reconciled to God

Some may argue that God did not reveal all this to Adam and Eve, that Scripture says nothing about it, that such in-depth revelation overlooks progressive revelation. In all honesty, such arguments may be true. But note these points:

First, Adam and Eve had been created perfect, which means perfect in the ability to reason, learn, grasp and think things through. They had *just fallen* into sin, so sin could not have affected their reasoning ability all that much, not yet. It would take time, sin after sin, to take its toll upon their minds. True, their minds would become more and more depraved as they committed sin after sin. But such time had not yet passed for Adam and Eve. Some may argue that the mind and its reasoning ability was so totally corrupted by sin that Adam and Eve were unable to see what God was doing. This is most unlikely. This would make their minds and reasoning ability to be far less than what ours is today. The reasoning ability of the human mind is phenomenal despite sin and depravity. This fact is proven every day in the modern world through technology, science and medicine. The point is this: Adam and Eve, even if they were left with nothing but their reasoning ability, could certainly grasp something of what God was doing. They were bound to realize that animals were being slaughtered and sacrificed in order for God to cover their shame and guilt. They were bound to reason *at least* this fact.

Second, God loved Adam and Eve. Why would He not discuss what He was doing with them?

Third, Adam and Eve were the parents of the whole human race. No one else existed. Whatever God wanted the human race to know, God had to teach Adam and Eve so they could in turn teach their children. One of the lessons God wanted man to know

was this: how He, God, was to be approached. He was to be approached through sacrifice, the sacrifice of a life for a life, that of a substitute. Why would God not share this most basic of all truths — most basic of all needs that man has — with Adam and Eve?

The fact is, God did. Scripture shows us that God told Adam and Eve that He was to be approached through sacrifice. They taught their children how to approach God. This is seen in their son Abel's sacrifice and in the fact that God accepted his sacrifice.

Gen 4:4 *But Abel brought fat portions from some of the first-born of his flock. The LORD looked with favour on Abel and his offering.*

Fourth, Adam and Eve began life in a perfect world and knew perfect fellowship with God. In a perfect world God would share everything necessary with His people. Even after the first sin, God's love would certainly get man started off right. God would certainly share in detail how man was to worship and approach God, and that God was going to provide a Saviour for man.

This is what this verse, Genesis 3:21, is teaching. God taught Adam and Eve that they were to approach Him through sacrifice, the shedding of blood. Then Adam and Eve taught their children. Not all the children listened and learned (Cain), just as all persons do not listen and learn today. Nevertheless, there is only one way to approach God, only one approach that God accepts:

=> the way of sacrifice

=> the way of His Son and the sacrifice of His dear Son's life for our life

Thought 1. Jesus Christ died for our sins, died in our place, in our stead, as our substitute. Jesus Christ took our sins upon Himself and bore the penalty and punishment of our sins, bore the judgment for us. Jesus Christ sacrificed His life for us. Therefore, we are able to stand before God *without sin, perfectly righteous* — all because Christ has removed our sins from us. We are acceptable to God because we are counted sinless, and we are *counted sinless* because Jesus Christ took our sins off us and bore the punishment for us.

But note: this happens only when we trust — truly trust — Jesus Christ as our Savior, only when we trust Christ so much that we cast our whole lives upon Him in total commitment. It is then that God counts Christ as our substitute, then and only then that God counts our sins forgiven — as having been borne and paid for by Christ.

Mat 26:28 *“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”*

Rom 5:6 *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*

Rom 5:9 *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*

1 Cor 15:3 *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

John 1:29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Gal 1:4 *Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

Titus 2:14 *Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

Heb 9:14 *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

Heb 9:22 *In fact the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*

1 Pet 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

1 John 3:16 *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ■*