

In The Beginning

The essence of this study reveals the key issue at the heart of the conflict between God and Satan. Which can be trusted? Which is telling the truth? Which one truly loves us? Which is the real God, the Creator God or the one who claims to be god of this world? Which one if obeyed, can sustain eternal life?

Genesis 2:15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Let's read of Adam and Eve's disobedience and how it came about. The story begins with God's warning about the subtlety of the serpent, a subtlety commending more than just a superficial reading.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil [crafty] than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.

Who is the serpent? Revelation calls him the "dragon. . . that old serpent." "Old" because he existed even before the garden was created. Note that we are advised he deceives the "whole world."

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Notice the subtle methods of deception Satan deployed:

Genesis 3:1 ...And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

If Eve interpreted Satan's insinuation as does the Rotherham Bible, "Can it really be, that God hath said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" then by expressing his pretended disbelief in supposing an overly restrictive commandment of God, Satan would have plied Eve's mind with the notion that perhaps she had been unreasonably imposed upon.

Some translations, by interpreting "every" as "any" lead the reader to suppose that Satan was attempting to persuade Eve God had forbid eating from any of the trees. This would hardly be subtle.

God had said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Gen 2:16, but the insinuation was effective in engaging Eve's mind in deliberation over God's credibility; deliberating with a far superior foe who would watch and wait for the slightest opportunity to further divert her mind from implicit trust and obedience. Not yet convinced, Eve nevertheless began to parley with Satan's mind, a fateful presumption her intellect did not long survive. We can see his craft was successful as we hear Eve carelessly misquoting God.

Genesis 3:2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

God had said, "...thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen 2:17 Eve added "neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Gen 3:3

Because Satan was successful in causing Eve to reevaluate, even misstate, God's word, he now continues with his subtlety. The statement of Eve gave him advantage. Here the father of lies made his assertion in direct contradiction to the expressed word of God.

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

What seeds of doubt did Satan insinuate?

Here are a few “seeds.”

- 1) You cannot die, you are immortal.
- 2) Sin will not cause you to die.
- 3) God is lying so you cannot trust Him.
- 4) Your wisdom supersedes God’s, His laws are optional.
- 5) God knows something you don’t know and desires to maintain His supremacy. He is self-exalting. God doesn’t have your best interest at heart. He is self-serving.
- 6) You shall be equal with God.
- 7) You shall be able to decide for yourself what is right and wrong for you, “knowing good and evil” (a new age concept from an age-old lie.)

Let’s take a closer look at these seeds of doubt.

1) You cannot die, you are immortal.

But God had said, “Ye shall surely die.” Would God say, “ye shall surely die” if it was impossible for them to die?

The Bible describes man as mortal, subject to death.

Job 4:17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

God alone is inherently immortal, not subject to death.

1 Timothy 6:15 Which in His times He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

What about this seed of doubt?

2) Sin will not cause you to die,

Yet the word of God plainly states:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

In this next seed of deception, Satan cleverly projects his own character trait at God.

3) God is lying so you cannot trust Him.

Again, we turn to the Scriptures for answers.

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

4) Your wisdom supersedes God's, His laws are optional.

The more we trust someone's judgment, the slower we are to overrule them when we don't understand why. Satan persuaded Eve that God was not so knowledgeable about the natural cause and effect of His immutable laws that transgressing them would surely produce death. Why would Eve, who had walked and talked with God in a perfect garden functioning in all its complexity under the perfect laws of love that govern all creation, suppose that those laws were optional and arbitrary impositions of God?

By subtly insinuating God's selfish motives, Satan, without losing credibility by directly accusing God, effectively led Eve herself to logically doubt God's intentions.

Are the laws of God optional? Are they mere arbitrary judicial decrees, or do they compassionately affirm the immutable outworking of natural cause and effect?

Exodus 31:18 And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

Psalms 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

Psalms 119:129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

Psalms 119:138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.

Psalms 119:144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

What laws were in existence in the garden? Was there sin in the garden? If so, because sin in transgression of the law, then there had to also be laws in effect though not written or necessarily known to Adam and Eve.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

5) God knows something you don't know and desires to maintain His supremacy. He is self-exalting. God doesn't have your best interest at heart. He is self-serving.

Genesis 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6) You shall be equal with God.

The word "gods" translates "Elohiym," the plural word for God as also found in Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God created . . ."

7) You shall be able to decide for yourself what is right and wrong for you.

Just what was so subtle about Satan's argument? After all, Satan was upholding Eve's freedom of choice, a power with which God had endowed her, but he challenged the wisdom of God's counsel. He appealed to freedom at the peril of disregarding God's warning. He insinuated God's counsel was selfishly restrictive, not protective. Little could Eve's limited knowledge comprehend the aftereffects—fear of God, shame of nakedness, accusing spirits, and the reproduction of self-dependence and accusation in their first offspring, culminating in murder and the downward spiral of humanity.

But God had lovingly given Adam and Eve freedom of choice. By creating the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He provided an opportunity to choose to trust or distrust Him, to obey or disobey Him. He also gave them instruction regarding the consequences should they choose not to believe Him. We know what their decision was and we too are experiencing the consequences of their choice and ours.

The Bible declares that God is love. Could it be that because God gave us the liberating power of choice, He loved us enough to also give us divine instruction on how to exercise that power to bless, not harm ourselves and others? Wisdom without the power to choose is useless. The power to choose without wisdom is harmful. In love, God has given us both freedom of choice and wise instruction, but our human inclination is to desire the freedom without trusting the Instructor.

Secular education emphasizes non-judgmental, self-determined morality, assuring us that we are capable of determining what is "good and evil" without divine assistance.

This new age concept, which has permeated religions teaches that within each of us is a god-self, awaiting full development. This new age teaching is an age-old lie.

Not only was Eve deceived but the whole world remains deceived regarding the issues we examine in this study: A) the nature of sin and its consequences and B) the nature or character of God and how He deals with the sinner. Summarizing the key issues these deceptions address:

- Sin, transgression of God's commands, will not cause you to die. The law, the commands of God, are not binding, they're optional, there is no consequence for disobedience.
- God cannot be trusted, He is self oriented, self-exalting and self-serving.

We are going to discover that these subtle lies were refuted at the cross by Christ Himself.

The great controversy between Christ and Satan is over the principles by which each rules. Both propose freedom. Both recognize we are self-governing creatures of choice. Both propose self-governing principles by which to live, but which principles produce health, happiness, and full development of human potential to love and be loved? And which principles appeal to pride, appetite and passion but lead to self destruction? In the end, who's kingdom principles will be found just and true? Who's governing laws will be found able to sustain life? In other words, will the real God please stand up.

Where did this controversy first begin?

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8) And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Mysteriously dissatisfied with the highest position to which any angel could be assigned, as covering cherub over the throne of God, it was not enough for Satan. He coveted the highest position in the universe, the very throne of God. This is the mystery of iniquity. Filled with the spirit of self-exaltation he accused God of his own attributes.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13) For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

A covetous spirit is never satisfied no matter how generously endowed one may be. Satan's insinuations once believed, infected Eve with the same covetous mind. It was not enough to partake of every tree but one, she desired the one forbidden tree as well.

Satan desired to be king and rule the congregation in the sides of the north, the city of the Great King.

Psalms 48:1 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. 2) Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King.

The foundation of God's government is His law. The foundation of God's law is love and the foundation of love is choice. Because God is love, and love never forces but honors the choice He extends, Lucifer was permitted to

rebel. God knew of his insurrection beforehand yet created him anyway. How beautiful the principles of love and liberty by which God rules His universe!

Zechariah 4:6 . . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

This love and liberty with which God administers His government allowed the origin of sin that began with Lucifer, which ever reproduces sin in all those who believe his insinuations.

Ezekiel 28:12 Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. 13) Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering. . . . 14) Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Instead of giving God the glory for his beauty and talent, Satan took the credit. The partiality that always attends pride inevitably results in the corruption of wisdom and reason, and Satan, however brilliant, could not escape the inevitable.

Ezekiel 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: . . .

Paul concludes this same condition befalls all who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

One false assumption leads to another. The nature of sin follows such that the next step in this departure from God is to change the glory or character of God into an image like unto oneself. Pride leads to such a highly esteemed self-image that the proud suppose God to be worthy of the same and unwittingly project their corrupted character at God.

Romans 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Satan set about to misrepresent God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator. Thus he deceived angels, thus he deceived men. Because of his subtle deceptions the whole world has been deceived regarding the nature of God and the nature of sin. The deception first began in heaven and was repeated in the Garden.

Satan appealed to Eve's pride and ambition and reproduced in her the sequence of his own fall, first exalting self, then distrusting God's wisdom, then coveting, then rebelling.

Satan's clever deceptions bore fruit and Eve fell into sin then tempted her husband.

Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7) And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Was Satan successful in misrepresenting God's character such that He would be feared instead of trusted?

Genesis 3:8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

Why were Adam and Eve hiding from God? The Bible declares that Satan has been successful in deceiving the whole world. How did he do it? Remember Satan's insinuations, when he so strongly implied that God is self-exalting and self-serving? He made no direct suggestion that God would punish them if disobeyed but simply planted in Eve's mind the assumption that God is self-oriented.

What would you infer if after having crossed the will of an all powerful Creator to whom had been imputed such selfish motives, everything went terribly wrong? Might you also arrive at the conclusion that God did it in defense of His self-serving authority? What would you suppose is one of Satan's most effective means of deception? Might it be by using the Word of God mixed with a little error that Satan is able to plant seeds of doubt which as they mature are embraced as one's own ideas, appearing original, reasonable and therefore less suspect?

Genesis 3:9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

Did God not know where they were? Had *He* separated from them or they from Him? If God knew where they were, wasn't He really asking, "**Why** are you hiding? Do you really believe that I would hurt you? Have you believed Satan's insinuation that I am self-exalting, self-serving and cannot be trusted? Do you believe that sin does not lead to death and that I, not sin, should be feared?"

When God inquired of them if they had eaten of the tree, they responded with a spirit of accusation. Adam blamed Eve and then blamed God who had given her to him. Eve blamed the serpent which God had also created. Once Satan's lies had infected their minds, the snowball effect of sin began to roll. Why?

Romans 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

At this point, Adam and Eve were at enmity with God and it was *impossible* for them any longer to obey His commands. They had traded the mind of God for the mind of Satan. They had chosen to believe Satan's subtle lies and in so doing had effectively chosen him for their God . . . but God would not give them up without a fight.

Before God addresses Adam and Eve we find the first promise of salvation from the consequences of their sin, giving them reason to hope before the curses were given.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.

This is the first prophecy given of the cross and the atoning work of Christ. Satan would bruise His heel, but Christ would bruise Satan's head.

"I will put enmity (variance) between you (Satan) and the woman." The woman was Eve but in a prophetic sense she represented the church.

Revelation 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

Revelation 12:12 . . . Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The seed also has more than one meaning. Yes, it referred to Eve's offspring as well as to the final generation of saints, but in a prophetic sense it referred specifically to one, to Christ.

Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Genesis 3:15 reveals to us that the real controversy is between the serpent (Satan) and the seed (Christ). God continues revealing the consequences of their choice.

Genesis 3:16 Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17) And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18) thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. 19) In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground.

We know Satan's game plan is to misrepresent God's character, so we need to now ask ourselves,

"Where do these curses come from?" "Do they come from a God who gives you choice and then says, but if you choose to disobey me, I will curse you and eventually destroy you?"

We read in Proverbs 26:2 that curses do not come without a cause.

Proverbs 26:2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

Undeserved curses will not harm you; they are like flittering sparrows or darting swallows that do not land. (The Clear Word)

As we continue these studies we will look into the vast systems of cause and effect God has established to empower and bless His creatures, provided they are not misused to our own destruction.

Christ taught that the enemy is responsible for the thorns and thistles.

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

We will discover that these curses not only did not come from God, but He *took* the curse in the place of Adam, Eve and the whole world. This is the only reason they did not *surely* die the day they sinned. Yet something did die that very day.

Genesis 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Where did the skins come from? Obviously some animal gave its life that the nakedness of Adam and Eve might be covered. Nakedness represents sin and its shame. God would have our eyes anointed with eyesalve that we may comprehend the wiles and subtleties of Satan.

Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

He would have us comprehend the malignant consequences of sin. Like a malignant cancer tumor, sin if not stopped continues to mature unto death. Sin, like disease, leads to death.

Romans 3:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

James 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: 14) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15) Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The next verse cautions us not to be deceived in our understanding of this passage.

James 1:16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Do not err regarding what? Do not err concerning where temptation comes from. Do not err concerning where sin comes from, and do not err concerning where death comes from. But know this:

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Romans 3:6. . .but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In other words, sin is a disease that leads to death. If God has to destroy us because we have the disease, doesn't that suggest that the disease will not destroy us? Isn't that just what Satan insinuated, you can sin and "Ye shall not surely die?"

Again in another place we are warned about being deceived regarding the consequences of sin.

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption [death]; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

The animal that gave its life that day represented Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, providing an escape from the inevitable result of sin—death. In order to save us from death, it follows that He must save us from the sin that brings forth death.

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, [speaking of the antichrist] whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation [creation] of the world.

Satan has deceived us into believing that God is responsible for the curses. What did Christ say on the cross?

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

Instead of being responsible for the curse, knowing that man had been deceived by Satan, He took the curse that man might have another chance.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Did He not bear each of the curses we find in Genesis 3?

Was He not naked on that tree?

Matthew 27:35 And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

Did He not sweat? In fact, He sweat blood.

Luke 22:44 And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Did He not wear a crown of thorns and thistles?

Matthew 27:29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

Did He not suffer the travail of giving birth to His seed?

Isaiah 53:10, 11 He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.

We have read how Satan would bruise His heel, foretelling the beautiful truth that Christ would take the curse for us.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Paul alludes to this in his book to the Galatians.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Let's look at how Christ exposed the deceptions relating to A) the nature of sin and its consequences and B) the nature or character of God, how He deals with the sinner.

Let's first examine issue A, the nature of sin. By dying on the cross Christ proved that sin, the transgression of the law, does in fact produce death. Death came as a result of the weight of the sins that He bore. It was the guilt for our sins that crushed His life. Isaiah 53 reveals to us that it was our sin that caused His death:

He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities (verse 5)

The Lord hath laid on Him our iniquities (verse 6)

For the transgression of my people was He stricken (verse 8)

For He shall bear their iniquities (verse 11)

He bare the sin of many, pouring out His soul unto death (verse 12)

Man, through the subtle deceptions of Satan, has credited God with the slaying of the Lamb.

Isaiah 53:4 Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

The final lie that the law is optional also proved untrue. If the law could be changed in order to save man, Christ would have opted to do so. The fact that He died for its transgression reveals that it is not the law that needs to be changed, but the sinner.

Matthew 26:39 And He went a little further, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Christ did not, by bearing the sinner's guilt, release man from his obligation to obey the law; for if the law could have been changed or abolished, He need not have come to this world to suffer and die. The very fact that Christ died for its transgressions attests to the unchanging character of the Father's law.

Matthew 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18) For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Isaiah 42:21 The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.

Let's now consider issue B, the nature of God. By taking the curse, Christ revealed God's love toward the sinner. He proved that God can indeed be trusted. When we purchase a high priced item, though we may struggle with the price, if we finally conclude it is of at least equal value, we are satisfied with the exchange. God also, concluding that we were of equal value to His Son, was satisfied to give Him to us that we might be saved.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

What exposed the lie that God is self-serving, self-exalting?

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery [a thing to be coveted] to be equal with God: 7) But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8) And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Even though He was equal to God (something that Satan coveted), He did not covet His own exalted position, but humbled Himself and took the curse for us. Why? It is a mystery! Who can explain the love of God? When this truth is finally revealed it will then be:

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Revelation 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 4) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

The revelation of the greatest act of love bruised the head of the serpent. In other words, compelling light was shed in this dark world regarding the nature of God and how He deals with His arch enemy. Through this demonstration of love, He refuted the lies of Satan. Truly, the exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government.

Hebrew 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He [Christ] also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

The Scripture tells us that God's people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge about Him.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: . . .

Hosea 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

Yet God promises that the light shall shine forth and Satan's lies shall be refuted, and humanity will see God in a new light because His children will reflect His character.

Isaiah 11: 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

All are invited to choose to be among those that rise and shine forth this glory—the true character of God.

Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2) For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. 3) And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

When we fathom that sin kills and God loves, the very issues about which Satan has long deceived humanity, we too will share the implicit trust the young Adam and Eve returned to the all-wise, all-loving Creator who walked with them in the cool garden of edenic glory “In the Beginning.” Will you?