

The "Curse," An Encouraging Perspective

Genesis chapters 1 and 2 describe God as He Created.

God finished by creating man and woman (in His image), and afterwards said, 'it was (all) very good' (**Genesis 1:31**). If the man and woman chose not to disobey God, the Bible may have only contained these first two chapters. Unfortunately, given a choice to obey or disobey God, Adam and Eve chose poorly (**Genesis 3:6**). The rest of chapter 3 describes God's curse. Adam and Eve felt shame and covered themselves (**vs. 7**). They then hid from God (**vs. 8**) likely because they were ashamed and afraid to face Him. God then pursued them (**vs. 9**) and confronted them (**vs. 11**). The man then blamed the woman AND God for his disobedience (**vs. 12**). The woman blamed the serpent (**vs. 13**). God then cursed the serpent (**vs. 14**). God gives mention of His plan of redemption (**vs. 15**). Other consequences of their disobedience include death (**vs. 16-24**).

Now, Adam and Eve, and all their offspring have a choice to do good or evil.

In Genesis 4, one of the couple's sons chose to honor God with his offering to God, and the other did not. They both gave offerings to God but only one (Abel) did it with a sincere heart. God was not pleased with Cain so Cain got upset and took the life of his brother Abel (the first murder - Genesis 4:8). The rest is history.

So, how could God's curse of hard labor, sweat, pain and death be a blessing? What was His motive?

If we give no consequences to our children for bad behavior, and even reward it, what kind of people would they grow up to be?

List all the reasons you can think of where pain and suffering could be blessings in disguise (hint):

• Romans 5:3-6	• 1 Peter 2:20-25	• 2 Corinthians 1:3-5,8-9
• James 1:2-4	• 1 Peter 4:1-2	• 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
• 1 Peter 1:6-7	• Philippians 3:10-11	• Hebrews 12:10-11

How can death actually be a "gift" from God? This is not at all to suggest that suicide or homicide is good; quite the contrary. However, if death did not exist (just as the angels do not die), what does this give to us that the angels do not have?

• John 11:25-26	• John 12:24-26	• 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
• Philippians 3:10-11,20-21	• Romans 6:3-10	• 1 Corinthians 15:21-28

Unlike humans, the angels appear to have been given a one time choice to turn away from God, or to remain committed to follow and obey Him.

• We, not the angles, are made in God's image (Genesis 1:26)	• Satan likely took a third of the angels with him at the time of his (their) rebellion (Revelation 12:3-4).
• We, not the angels, are saved by our faith (Ephesians 2:8-9)	• The Bible describes fallen angels (demons) as "powers of this dark world," and "spiritual forces of evil" (Ephesians 6:12).
• The angels cannot have faith in Something or Someone they see, know and experience (Hebrews 11:1).	• God did not spare the angels who sinned, and they await the day of judgement (2 Peter 2:4).
• The most beautiful angel (Satan), out of pride, wanted to be like the Most High and rebelled against Him (Ezekiel 28:12-17; Isaiah 14:12-15).	• The eternal fire (hell) is reserved for the unbelievers with the devil and his demons (Matthew 25:41).

To summarize, based on the above Bible passages, how could the Curse actually be a blessing?

- 1) How has pain and suffering caught your attention, and drawn you closer to God?
- 2) While we were lost in sin and separated from God, what would happen without suffering and death?
- 3) Explain why Satan and the angels who fell (demons) don't have a second chance like we do?
- 4) As you go through pain and trials, and approach the end of your life, how might you better respond to your circumstances and prepare for death? (Consider the study on "Are You Ready To Cross The Finish Line")
- 5) Finally, what is the choice we must make to receive, and restore the relationship that God once had with Adam and Eve before they sinned (therefore, all have sinned)? (hint: **John 3:16, 14:6; Romans 10:9-10**)

**God shows us that death is not the end of the road, but a bend in the road.
Which path will you take?**