

*To be short and sweet, my question is this: A majority Christian scholars profess that if God had not given Adam and Satan the ability to sin then that could compromise their freedom of will (or choice). My question is, if the ability to sin is necessary for free will as most profess, then by that logic, is God lacking in freedom of choice or will by his inability to do so? If not, then why would he impart an imperfect freedom to creatures he claims to love? Secondly, why did God make Adam and Eve susceptible to Satan's wiles? So that they would have a choice? Freedom of choice is meaningless without knowledge - such a thing is factual that one cannot make an accurate choice without knowing the variables involved and their impact (I say this because the most common response to that statement is "God told them they would die." To which response is, God's warning in Genesis 2:17 would have meant nothing to Adam if Adam didn't know what death meant because he hadn't experienced it personally or seen it in operation.) While a lack of understanding of the consequences may not be a justifiable defense, neither is an understanding of the consequences necessarily a prerequisite for obedience.*

God does not sin (Hab 1:13, Heb 4:15) because he is committed to righteousness (Is 11:5). He gave men a will so that love is real. Removing will would remove the possibility for love.

Satan fell (Is 14:12) and he tempted Adam and Eve to sin and fall, as well (Ge 3:12). When Satan told the woman that she would be like God, he wasn't lying. Eve *would* know good and evil. Satan caused her to doubt God's word (Ge 3:1) and believe that God was withholding some good thing from her (Ge 3:5).

When God says *don't*—he means *don't hurt yourself*. After the fall God prophesied to the woman, "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children (Ge 3:16)." One of Eve's sons would murder the other. God said, "Your desire shall be for your husband (Ge 3:16a)." She would look to her husband; but he couldn't help her as he had lost a right relationship with the Lord, himself.

To the man he prophesied, "In toil you shall eat of [the ground]. All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you (Ge 3:17-18)." He would work and work but never find satisfaction until he regained a right relationship with his maker.

Satan didn't reveal the whole truth. Adrian Rogers said, "The devil offers high wages but he pays in counterfeit money." He doesn't have man's best interests in mind; but God does (Mk 4:15).

Horizontal relationships (e.g. husband and wife) must be made right so that a vertical relationship (e.g. God and man) can be right. Oneness is important to the Lord. In fact, it was Jesus' prayer. He prayed: "That they may be one as We are one (Jn 17:11b)."

God had given only one command in the garden: "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die (Ge 2:16–17)." Adam and Eve died spiritually when they disobeyed and eventually they would die physically, as well.

Men are warned today that if they will not humble themselves before the Lord, they will go to hell. Hell is described as : everlasting fire (Mt 25:41), everlasting punishment (Mt 25:46), outer darkness (Mt 8:12), everlasting destruction (2 Thess. 1:9) and a lake of fire (Re 19:20).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1996). Nelson's quick reference topical Bible index (p. 283). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Regarding Re 14:10-11<sup>2</sup>, J. Vernon McGee wrote:

“Tormented with fire and brimstone.” Now let me say that if this is not literal fire and brimstone, whatever it is must be worse than fire and brimstone. If it is a symbol, remember that a symbol is used to give a faint representation of the real. It is rather like the essence of something. There is the essence of pepper and the essence of perfume. Essence is the faint odor that is left in the bottle after the substance is gone. A symbol is an essence or just a faint copy of the real thing, and the reality can be much worse than the symbol indicates. But remember, the brimstone of Sodom was quite literal....<sup>3</sup>

Adam and Eve were given enough information to live--God said *don't do it*. They may not have understood all of the ramifications of their sin. God would have to die himself to restore them (2 Co 5:18, 19). All men and women born after Adam and Eve would have a sin nature (e.g. given enough time and opportunity they; too, would sin [Ps 51:5]).

Men can avoid hell. God has provided a way back to himself by Christ's: death, burial and resurrection (2 Cor. 5:18-21).

God is holy (Ps. 16:10) and just (Deut 32:4). He must judge sin (2 Pe 3:7). He is the creator (Is. 40:28). Man is his *creation* (Ge 9:6). God has made clear man's responsibility to him. The prophet Micah wrote: Mankind, He has told you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God (Mic 6:8).

When one understand the exceeding sinfulness of sin (Ro 7:13), he can begin to appreciate why God must do what he does.

The apostle Paul wrote: Don't judge anything prematurely, before the Lord comes, who will both bring to light what is hidden in darkness and reveal the intentions of the hearts (1 Co 4:4-5). God plans to live with people who love him. Some exchange his truth for a lie (Ro 1:25).

Satan deceived Adam and Eve in the garden and he continues to deceive men today (Mk 4:15). Eve was unaware of his schemes; but, the believer today is not (2 Co 2:11). God's word can be trusted—it is the word of life (Phil. 2:16).

Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with one another and with God. They chose to disobey. No doubt they wanted their paradise back; but, salvation would have to come through a sacrifice (Ge 3:24).

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<sup>2</sup> He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” The New King James Version. (1982). (Re 14:10–11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> McGee, J. V. (1991). Thru the Bible commentary: The Prophecy (Revelation 14-22) (electronic ed., Vol. 60, p. 44). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.