

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7ⁱⁱ

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 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 die.

Now, the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" "But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

ⁱⁱ About the First Reading: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

God placed a prohibition on the tree "of the knowledge of good and evil" (2:17), which represents the wisdom of conscience that comes not intellectually but by experience. Adam and Eve sought independence, the freedom to define for themselves what was good and what was evil apart from God's wisdom.

Chapter 3 recounts the rebellion against God's prohibition. The temptation progresses from doubt about what God has said, through suspicion of God's motive, to awareness of the

possibility of independence. The primary sin here is disobedience, which leads to the disordering of all relationships—with one's own body, with God, with one another, with nature, within families and within societies.