

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

Answer: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Scripture memory: “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...[Adam said]: The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” – Gen. 3:6,12

An explanation: We should understand that there was nothing intrinsically evil in the fruit of the forbidden tree. What made the eating of the fruit evil was that **it was forbidden by God**. God forbade Adam and Eve from eating the fruit to try their obedience. God desired to test their obedience to His Sovereign Lordship as their King. Their eating was a great sin because it was a transgression of God’s specific and clear and holy Law (“*Sin is lawlessness,*” 1 Jo. 3:4). The sin was against a holy and perfectly just God, who had shown great kindness in His condescension to enter into a covenant with Adam (Hos. 6:7). “*By the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners*” (Rom. 5:19a). The sin was also against Adam himself, his soul, body, estate, upon his family, and his posterity. “*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...*” (Rom. 5:12).

Thomas Vincent lists seven specific sins that were committed in this terrible act that brought mankind into depraved darkness: 1) **Rebellion** against God as their Sovereign King; 2) **Treason**, in conspiring with the devil, God’s enemy, against God; 3) **Ambition**, in aspiring to a higher state, to be as God; 4) **Luxury (Greed and Discontentment)**, in indulging to please the sense of taste, in inordinately desiring the fruit over fellowship with God; 5) **Ingratitude to God**, who had given them everything in the garden for their enjoyment; 6) **Unbelief**, in not believing God’s warning that if they disobeyed they would die; 7) **Murder**, in bringing death by this sin, upon themselves, and their posterity.

Let us soberly remind ourselves that ever sin we commit is no small matter; there are no “peccadilloes!” The smallest sin deserves God’s just wrath and eternal punishment. “*Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!*” (James 3:5, KJV). In breaking the Law of God through disobedience in these points, our first parents (and we in them! Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:12-14) were guilty of breaking all of the Law: “*For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.*” – James 2:10. But God in His mercy, sent His Beloved Son to keep the Law in our place, and to die under the curse of it! “*For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works*” (Tit. 2:11-14).

A Prayer: Lord God, and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, Please forgive me for my sins. Thank you that you are faithful and just to forgive me when I transgress your law (Jo 1:9). I deserve to die, and to be condemned under your just wrath, but you have provided Christ a Mediator for me, an Advocate, and He has died in my place as a holy propitiation (1 Jo. 2:2). Thank you, dearest and kindest King! Let me live faithfully and obediently to you according to your Holy Law (Rom. 8:3-4). In Jesus’ Holy Name, Amen.

In Christ’s love,
Pastor Biggs

“For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”

- Romans 5:19