

## THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies  
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Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: AN EXEGETICAL AND INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF “DESIRE”  
AND “RULE” IN GENESIS 3:16

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The words, *teshuqah* “desire” and *mashal* “rule” in Genesis 3:16 have been subjected to various interpretations. A lot of exegetical investigations conclude that the judgment statement in the text suggests a creation order; while many intertextual analyses give it a sexual connotation. Quite clearly, the man and the woman were to procreate even before the Fall (Gen 1:28). But did the Bible specify who had the greater sexual desire that may have changed after the Fall? Also, it is true that the man and the woman were created sequentially and functionally different. If this (supposed) implicit order was reiterated at the Fall, how can it be reconciled with God’s own statement of protasis and apodosis – “Because you have done this” (Gen 3:14-17, NKJV)?

This research sought an explanation of Genesis 3:16. It investigated whether in the context of this judgment oracle the Lord simply affirms the creation order; or

whether it includes an emotional and/or economic reliance by the woman on her husband; or whether the judgment statement marked the introduction and/or described the unfolding of what was hitherto unknown. The Historical-Grammatical Method was used for this research as opposed to the Higher-Critical Approach.

After a careful examination of “desire” and “rule” in Genesis 3:16, the research revealed that it is a descriptive prescription of the new order of things, of how life will be lived after the Fall—the woman would have a desire to dominate the man, but he will end up ruling her. God originally created man and woman sequentially and functionally different but equal. Therefore, in the context of Genesis 3:16, God did not reiterate an original creation order of male dominance over the female. It also seems a contradiction to see Genesis 3:16 as both a judgment statement and a continuation of the creation order at the same time. In addition, it appears difficult to see in the text that which suggests that as a result of the Fall women exhibit overpowering sexual drives towards their husbands.

Genesis 3:16 presents a description of God’s prescription of the relationship between the man and his wife in a sin-distorted world. Consequently, the policy-making body should maintain and uphold the woman’s subjection/submission to the man’s rulership as long as sin and its consequences endure. This may not be safely ignored.

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A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

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by

Vealumun Iorkyaa

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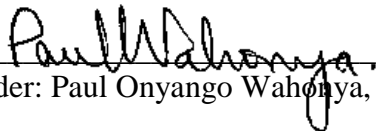
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Dedicated to Dr. Kenneth and Mrs. Marilyn Kelln

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CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

**Background to the Study**

The current issue of feminism in Christendom has precipitated a re-examination of the scriptural passages critically relevant to the relationship of the man and the woman. It appears that a proper understanding of Genesis 3:16 is crucial to this reconsideration of the biblical view of the woman

Confusion revolves around the extent to which the penalty in Genesis 3:16 altered the condition of the participants; many such as Susan T. Foh<sup>1</sup> and Samuele Bacchiocchi<sup>2</sup> reasoning that the woman's position as Adam's peer changed. The woman's penalty impacts her two ordained roles as child bearer and fellowship function. Kenneth Mathews opines that "if the woman had not been deceived by the serpent and had not sinned, she would have been the equal of Adam in all respects."<sup>3</sup>

Controversial opinion has arisen in recent times regarding the interpretation of the judgment on the woman since contemporary feminism has awakened a

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<sup>1</sup> Susan T. Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 37 (1975): 376–383.

<sup>2</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1987), 79-84.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth A. Mathews, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture Vol. 1A Genesis 1-11:26* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2002), 243-252.

consideration of women's roles in the home, society and church.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, it has been proposed that the submissive role of the woman at Genesis 3:16b, whether or not viewed originally as a creation ordinance, is read as a "blessing that insures that salvation will be achieved by the seed of the woman."<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, Umberto Cassuto may be right in referring to Genesis 3:16 as "one of the most difficult and obscure" sentences in the Bible.<sup>6</sup> Richard M. Davidson sees the judgment statement as "enigmatic lines."<sup>7</sup> According to the views of John Rogerson and Philip R. Davies, "of all the chapters of Genesis 1-11, chapter 3, which relates the events surrounding the Fall, is the most difficult to understand."<sup>8</sup> In the post-fall judgment on the woman, was God restating the order at creation? Is it true that due to the Fall women naturally exhibit overpowering sexual desires for their husbands as suggested by Lerner?<sup>9</sup> And if this is so, did God simultaneously order husbands to exercise authority over their wives? Or, perhaps, was the judgment statement only descriptive of a scenario that was soon to unfold as a direct consequence of the disobedience?

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<sup>4</sup> Mathews, *The New American Commentary*, 243-252.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>6</sup> Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1972), 1:208.

<sup>7</sup> Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 60.

<sup>8</sup> John Rogerson and Philip R. Davies, *The Old Testament World* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 118.

<sup>9</sup> Anne Lapidus Lerner, *Eternally Eve: Images of Eve in the Hebrew Bible, Midrash, and Modern Jewish Poetry* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2007), 112.

## Statement of the Problem

The words, *teshuqah* “desire,” and *mashal* “rule” in Genesis 3:16 have been subjected to various interpretations. This may not be unconnected to the current issue of feminism in Christendom. Most exegetical investigations, like that of Bacchiocchi,<sup>10</sup> Foh,<sup>11</sup> Jacob,<sup>12</sup> Bilezikian,<sup>13</sup> conclude that the judgment statement in the text suggests a creation order; while the intertextual analysis of Leupold<sup>14</sup> and Lerner<sup>15</sup> give it a sexual connotation.

The exegetical works seem largely to ignore the intertextual dimensions of the text; while the intertextual analyses appear to be too selective and generally downplay the context of the text. Quite clearly, the man and the woman were to procreate even before the Fall (Gen 1:28). But did Bible specify who had the greater sexual desire that may have changed after the Fall? Also, it is true that the man and the woman were created sequentially and functionally different. If this (supposed) implicit order was reiterated at the Fall, how can it be reconciled with God’s own statement of protasis and apodosis—“Because you have done this” (Gen 3:14-17, NKJV)? It seems a contradiction to see Genesis 3:16 as both a judgment statement and a continuation of

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<sup>10</sup> Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church*, 79-84.

<sup>11</sup> Foh, “What is the Woman’s Desire?” 376-384.

<sup>12</sup> Benno Jacob, *The First Book of the Bible: Genesis*, trans. Ernest I. Jacob (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about a Woman’s Place in Church and Family*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 39-58.

<sup>14</sup> Herbert C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1942), 1:172.

<sup>15</sup> Lerner, *Externally Eve*, 112.

the creation order at the same time. This opens the interpretation of Genesis 3:16 as a creation order to a myriad of unresolved questions. Hence, a combination of exegetical and intertextual analysis of *teshuqah* and *masal* may lead to a better understanding of Genesis 3:16.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The research seeks an explanation of Genesis 3:16. It investigates whether in the context of this judgment oracle the Lord simply affirms the creation order; or whether it includes an emotional and/or economic reliance by the woman on her husband; or whether the judgment statement marked the introduction and/or described the unfolding of what was hitherto unknown. The judgment on the woman in Genesis 3:16 specifically mentions two roles of the woman: childbearing and her relationship to the man. It is the second part, “yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (RSV) that shall form the main thrust of this discourse.

### **Scope of the Study**

Genesis 3:16 was chosen for the scope of the study. The chosen text appears to be a problem not only for faith communities that hold the Bible as Scripture but also for the larger world and its social order. Given the Bible’s influence in and on various societies, the potential for this verse to be used for oppressive means should not be underestimated.

A proper understanding of Genesis 3:16 is essential in appreciating Scripture’s teaching on life after the Fall, and God’s plan of redemption and recreation. There are great tensions in our societies at the moment over how men and women are to relate. Tensions are brought into marriage, church, and business, and all kinds of problems

arise.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the need for proper understanding of such an important text like Genesis 3:16 as a way of helping out in the tensions generated becomes pertinent.

More so, taking together, Genesis 3 may be seen as a lead-in chapter to the rest of Scripture – introducing the reader to the etiological basis of the rest of the Bible. And correctly understood, Genesis 3:16 has the potential of helping to settle feminism-based struggles in Christendom.

### **Significance of the Study**

The work is interpretative in nature. Given that the understanding of the two words, תַּסְהֵקָה (desire) and מְסָהֵל (rule), by some scholars has given rise to male dominance over the female counterparts, this study therefore would be relevant to the field of Biblical hermeneutics as it relates to feminism.

### **Methodology**

The Historical-Grammatical Method is used for this research as opposed to the Higher-Critical Approach. Whereas the former allows the God-factor in addition to the grammatical and historical aspects of a text to serve scientific inquiry, “methodologically, historical criticism has no room for the supernatural;”<sup>17</sup> and the Bible is regarded and treated as any ordinary piece of literature in the latter.

The Historical-Grammatical Method attempts to understand the meaning of biblical data using methodological considerations arising from Scripture alone. It seeks to arrive at the right meaning of the Bible as God intended to communicate it,

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<sup>16</sup> John Benton, *Gender Questions. Biblical Manhood and Womanhood in the Contemporary World* (Darlington, UK: Evangelical Press, 2000), 28.

<sup>17</sup> Raoul Dederen, *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 12:91.

whether or not it is fully known by the human author and his contemporaries. This method presupposes that the authority and unity of the Bible makes it the norm in terms of content and method of interpretation; and that biblical data are to be accepted at face value, and not be subjected to external norm for validity, truthfulness, adequacy, and intelligibility.

The method advocates the suspension of the compelling principle of analogy (to allow for the unique activity of God as described in the Bible); and for the suspension of the principle of correlation or natural cause and effect to give room for divine intervention in history. Furthermore, the Historical-Grammatical method teaches that the Bible equals the word of God, and attempt should not be made to separate and distinguish between the divine and human elements in it. Moreover, the method accepts the timeless nature of Scripture such that God speaks through a prophet to a specific culture, but the message transcends cultural settings and serves as timeless truth.

The work is organized into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the issues of introduction—statement of the problem, purpose of the study, theological framework, and methodology. In chapter two, attention is on the various views of authors on the key words, “desire” and “rule”; as well as the historical interpretations thereof. The concerns of authorship, audience, historical setting of Genesis 3:16 in its context is treated in chapter three. The largest chapter of the work, chapter four, looks at exegetical and intertextual analysis of the text. The concluding chapter five summarizes, makes conclusions and recommendations based on the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### **History of Interpretation**

Joel N. Lohr contends that any interpretation of the utterance in Genesis 3:16—as a curse, etiological statement of fact, blessing or otherwise—is largely dependent on the reader’s gender position and may vary considerably.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that those who have spent time in the literature surrounding the interpretation of this verse may probably only affirm the above dictum. It seems that the effects of one’s wider presuppositions are truly far-reaching and profound in reading this verse.

Some see here the institution of patriarchy. For instance, Phyllis Bird’s words might be taken as representative: “A hierarchy of order is introduced into the relationship of the primal pair. Mutuality is replaced by rule. Patriarchy is inaugurated . . . The rule of man over the woman, as announced in Genesis 3:16, is the Bible’s first statement of hierarchy within the species.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joel N. Lohr, “Sexual Desire? Eve, Genesis 3:16 and TSWQH [unpointed Hebrew Characters],” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130 (2011): 227.

<sup>2</sup> Lohr, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 228.

Others, including Samuel Korateng-Pipim,<sup>3</sup> Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch,<sup>4</sup> see in Genesis 3:16 a description of God's creation ordinance. Some scholars represented by H. C. Leupold<sup>5</sup> readily observe in the text a perverted sexual drive.

### Various Views on "Desire"

The translation of תַּשׁוּקָה, *teshuqah* (desire) causes a large part of the difficulty in understanding Genesis 3:16. There are three typical interpretations. First, תַּשׁוּקָה is frequently equated with sexual desire. It is in this sense that David Mace says the woman's craving for her husband "will be so strong that to satisfy it she will be ready to face all the pains and sorrows of childbearing."<sup>6</sup> Second, תַּשׁוּקָה is viewed as "the desire that makes her the willing slave of man;"<sup>7</sup> It is that "immense, clinging, psychological dependence on man."<sup>8</sup> Third, according to John Calvin, the woman will desire only what her husband desires, and that she will have no command over herself.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, *Must We Be Silent? Issues Dividing Our Church* (Ann Arbor, MI: Berean Books, 2001), 195.

<sup>4</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentaries. Genesis to Judges 6:32* (Grand Rapids, MI: Associated Publishers and Authors, n.d.), 1:64.

<sup>5</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, 1:172.

<sup>6</sup> David R. Mace, *Hebrew Marriage: A Sociological Study* (London: The Epworth Press, 1953), 196.

<sup>7</sup> John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark, 1930), 82.

<sup>8</sup> Gini Andrews, *Your Half of the Apple: God and the Single Girl* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972), 51.

<sup>9</sup> John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1948), 1:72.

Does the interpretation of *הִקְדָּשְׁתְּ* in the context of Genesis 3:16 as somewhat overpowering or slavish libido appear not forced? Will a sexual connotation of the term be possible in this context as used elsewhere in Scripture? Also, accepting John Calvin's position above may imply that the woman is denied the freedom of choice, that power of freewill given to the human race by God.

The "desire" of the woman for the man though unclear could involve a desire for the mastery (as with the verb in Gen 4:7), which will be thwarted by the husband.<sup>10</sup> Others like Gini Andrews<sup>11</sup> view the woman's desire as broader, including an emotional or economic reliance on her husband. In other words, she acted independently of her husband in eating the fruit, and the consequent penalty is that she would become dependent on him. Her new desire is to be submissive to the man, and, quite naturally, he will oblige by ruling over her. However, if the woman would naturally want to submit to the man after disobedience, why should God say, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow . . . thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen 3:16, KJV)? Some have mitigated the idea of penalty by contending that Eve's submission is a penalty only when her husband takes advantage of his position and mistreats her.<sup>12</sup> Another school of thought holds that Genesis 3:16 is not part of the judgment; it is a description of the inherent consequences of sin wherein the headship of the man has been corrupted by sin.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Leander E. Keck, ed., *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 1:363.

<sup>11</sup> Andrews, *Your Half of the Apple*, 51.

<sup>12</sup> Mathews, *The New American Commentary*, 243-252.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 243-252.

Susan Foh argues that “her desire is to contend with him for leadership in their relationship.”<sup>14</sup> She further contends:

The words of the Lord in Genesis 3:16b, as in the case of the battle between sin and Cain, do not determine the victor of the conflict between husband and wife. These words mark the beginning of the battle between the sexes. As a result of the fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband, the woman’s desire is to control her husband (to usurp his divinely appointed headship), and he must master her, if he can. So the rule of love founded in paradise is replaced by struggle, tyranny, and domination.<sup>15</sup>

Victor Hamilton thinks that as applied to Genesis 3:16, the desire of the woman for her husband is akin to the desire of sin that lies poised ready to leap at Cain in Genesis 4:7. It means a desire to break the relationship of equality and turn it into a relationship of servitude and domination. Far from being a reign of co-equals over the remainder of God’s creation, the relationship now becomes a fierce dispute, with each party trying to rule the other. The two, who once reigned as one, attempt to rule each other.<sup>16</sup> This view, to some extent, appears in line with the general picture the Scriptures paint of life after God’s judgment pronouncement in Genesis 3:16.

In the view of Gordon Wenham, the sentences on the man and woman take the form of a disruption of their appointed roles. He says it is difficult to grasp the author’s precise intention. Evidently, the author does not regard female subordination to be a judgment on her sin.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Susan T. Foh, “What Is the Woman’s Desire,” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 37, (1975): 383.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 382.

<sup>16</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 202.

<sup>17</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 1:81.

It is difficult to agree with Wenham that the author of Genesis does not regard female subordination to be a judgment on her when it is precisely stated at Genesis 3:16. The evidence in support of his view does not seem evident in the text itself.

“Remarkable confusion there is surrounding the term [תַּסְהֵקָה] and, at times, the existence of profoundly opposed readings regarding it.”<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the most common way of understanding the term תַּסְהֵקָה is simply through the word “desire”—often taken as sensual or sexual desire. Gordon J. Wenham, in his Genesis commentary, calls this a “sexual appetite”<sup>19</sup> that will sometimes make women to submit to quite unreasonable male demands. Hermann Gunkel, in his commentary on Genesis 3:16, refers to the woman here as having “a stronger libido than the man”<sup>20</sup> an idea with which John Skinner does not concur, though he agrees that the verse refers to sexual desire, something he calls an “ardent desire.”<sup>21</sup> Everett Fox, in his translation of the Torah, uses the term “lust,” but he does not provide an explanation for this decision.<sup>22</sup> Anne Lapidus Lerner, in her Jewish feminist reading of Eve calls it an “apparently unbridled sexual desire.”<sup>23</sup> The view of Herbert C. Leupold appears to be extreme. He translates תַּסְהֵקָה as “yearning,” but states:

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<sup>18</sup> Lohr, “Sexual Desire?”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130 (2011): 228.

<sup>19</sup> Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 1:81.

<sup>20</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1977), 21.

<sup>21</sup> Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 82-83.

<sup>22</sup> Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses: A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), 23, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Lerner, *Eternally Eve*, 112.

The yearning is morbid. It is not merely sexual yearning. It includes the attraction that woman experiences for man which she cannot root from her nature . . . feminists may seek to banish it, but it persists in cropping out . . . Even to the point of nymphomania. It is a just penalty. She who sought to strive apart from man. . . . finds a continual attraction for him to be her unavoidable lot.<sup>24</sup>

To contrast this extreme view, Terence E. Freitheim refers to the term in Genesis 3:16 simply as a type of longing, a longing for sexual intimacy. He continues that this desire for sexual intimacy comes despite the potential for the resultant pains of childbirth.<sup>25</sup>

Other scholars such as Keil and Delitzsch conclude that the desire of the woman is even a “disease.”<sup>26</sup> Keil and Delitzsch quip, “The woman had also broken through her divinely appointed subordination to the man; she had not only emancipated herself from the man to listen to the serpent, but had led the man into sin. For that, she was punished with a *desire* bordering upon disease.”<sup>27</sup>

Franz Delitzsch thinks that the sentence judicially transforms the original condition. He posits that the woman has transgressed against the will of God for the sake of earthly enjoyment; she is punished for this by her sexual life being involved in miseries of all kinds.<sup>28</sup> He sees it that even though in God’s original plan the woman was to become a mother, it was punishment that she should now bear children in the midst of pains, which would threaten her life and that of the child.

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<sup>24</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, 172.

<sup>25</sup> Terence E. Fretheim, "The Book of Genesis," *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 1:363.

<sup>26</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 79.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (Minneapolis, MN: Klock & Klock Christian, 1978), 1:165.

For him, the God-offending independence with which the woman acts in her encounter with the tempter and then sinfully overcomes her husband is punished in what is next declared to her. “Her reward for this is almost the morbid and continual desire she should experience towards the man in spite of the perils and pains of childbirth, that natural attraction which will not let her free herself from him, that weak dependence which impels her to lean upon the man, and to let herself be sheltered and completed by him.”<sup>29</sup> He adds that the woman will henceforth involuntarily follow the leading of the man, and be subject even against her will to his dominion. The subordination of the woman to the man was intended from the beginning; but now that the harmony of their mutual wills in God is destroyed, this subordination becomes subjection. “The man may command as master, and the woman is bound externally and internally to obey.”<sup>30</sup> Delitzsch concludes that the slavish subjection of the woman to the man which was customary in the ancient world, and still is so in the East, and which revealed religion has gradually made more tolerable and consistent with her human dignity, is the result of sin.

Some are not even clear that the term, *הקטנה* indicates desire. For instance, S. R. Driver in his commentary on Genesis says that we are dealing here not so much of desire as with “dependency.”<sup>31</sup> According to him, this dependency shows itself as a woman’s need for “cohabitation.” Phyllis Tribble suggests that *הקטנה* must be understood in the larger context of the man and the woman losing the original union and equal bond found in the creation stories of Genesis 1 and 2.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 1:166.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis: With Introduction and Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Methuen, 1905), 49.

For her, the term comes to symbolize that for which the woman longs for but which is lost—the original unity and equality of male and female.<sup>32</sup> In a rather different reading, Adrian Janis Bledstein posits that *תקוה* should be understood not as desire or attraction to something but rather as attractiveness. That is, the woman will be “powerfully attractive” to her husband yet he can/will rule over her.<sup>33</sup> If this argument is accepted, the man becomes the subject, and the woman object. While discussing different interpretations, it is worth noting the reading of Benno Jacob. He argues that, although the woman feels “irresistibly” attracted to man, it is nevertheless nothing new. In fact, nothing at all has really changed in the Genesis 3:16 pronouncements made to the woman. He adds:

It is a mistake to believe that the relation of woman to man is [here] changed (from 2:20). Does the dominating position of man contradict her position as helper? Naturally the stronger, the protector, should be the leader . . . nothing would have changed had she not eaten the fruit; even in the garden of Eden she would have given birth in pain and would have been subordinate to man.<sup>34</sup>

Accepting Jacob’s position may imply that there was no change in the status quo. Was God only then saying the obvious in the judgment statements? Or, perhaps, merely reiterating the established order at creation?

Elisabeth Elliot thinks that God’s intention at creation is neither affected by culture nor by the Fall. She concludes that women should be submissive to men because that was God’s intention at creation.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978), 2:128.

<sup>33</sup> Adrian Janis Bledstein, *Are Women Cursed in Genesis 3:16?* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 2:142-145.

<sup>34</sup> Jacob, *The First Book of the Bible: Genesis*, 30.

<sup>35</sup> Aida Besancon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 18-19.

The immediate and later far-reaching consequences of the Fall as experienced even today knocks off Elisabeth Elliot's assertion. Others' interpretation of the woman's desire as nymphomania, disease, attractiveness, slavish libido, morbid desire, and need for cohabitation do not seem to emanate from the text.

### **Various Views on "Rule"**

In considering the various views on "Rule" in the context of Genesis 3:16, it seems important to investigate the nature of the relationship of the man and the woman before the Fall. In the Nicene Creed, Spencer says it is stated:

I understand that women, by creation, have been given a place within the human level which is ancillary to that of men, and I am glad of this. The Genesis account calls woman a "help, meet"—that is, fit, suitable, for man. I do not hold all men to be so strong, so intelligent, so competent, and so virtuous or holy that they deserve a superior position. I simply see that the place is theirs not by merit but by appointment.<sup>36</sup>

Does the description of the female as "an help meet" for the male prove that the female was to be submissive to and to obey the male and never was the male to be submissive to and obey the female?

But Samuele Bacchiocchi takes a different stand. He contends that the fact that God created Eve out of Adam's body suggests both equality and subordination. He states that: "The woman is equal to man because she is made of the same substance of Adam's body and is taken from his side to be his equal. Yet the woman is subordinate to man because she is created second and from and for Adam."<sup>37</sup> He argues for functional subordination. In his view, the happy relationship of equality in being and subordination in function which existed in Eden was largely disrupted as a result of

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>37</sup> Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church*, 31.

the Fall. However, he concedes that the equality of male and female is demonstrated in all three critical areas of Genesis 1:26-31; namely, image and likeness, dominion over all the living things, and power to increase and multiply.<sup>38</sup>

Bacchiocchi sees the subordination God intended to exist in His original creation as a unity-subordination. It is the subordination in which some are subordinate to others for the sake of a greater unity. It is the subordination in which the head governs out of genuine love and the subordinate responds out of a desire to serve common goals. But does sequential creation and functional differentiation necessarily imply subordination? Based on grammar and syntax, it seems difficult to prove from the text that the woman was created *for* the man. And since the equality of male and female is demonstrated in all critical areas of image and likeness, dominion over all the living things, and power to increase and multiply (Gen 1:26-31), where, in the text, can functional differentiation be anchored to suggest subordination prior to the Fall?

God is not here issuing a special commandment, “Be thou ruled by him” or, “thou shall not rule.” But here in Genesis 3:16 there appears to be a statement, a prediction, a prophecy, of how man, degenerated by sin, would take advantage of his headship as a husband to dominate, lord it over, his wife. This consideration almost leads to the conclusion that the judgment statement on the woman (Gen 3:16) allows for the possibility of an oppressive, dominating form of subordination.

Victor Hamilton contends that even the traditional translations of the curse on the serpent—cursed are you above all cattle—make little sense. He sees what is imposed on the serpent as alienation from the other members of the animal world;

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 66.

hence it should be “banned” from the other members of the animal world.

Furthermore, he thinks that “your pain and your childbearing” should be understood as a hendiadys by which the two words no longer describe two discrete parts of a pair but a single unit.<sup>39</sup>

The desire of the woman for her husband according to Victor Hamilton is akin to the desire of sin that lies poised ready to leap at Cain. It is a desire to break the relationship of equality and turn it into a relationship of servitude and domination. The sinful husband will try to be a tyrant over his wife. Far from being a reign of co-equals over the remainder of God’s creation, the relationship now becomes a fierce dispute, with each party trying to rule the other. The two who once reigned as one attempt to rule each other.<sup>40</sup> While Hamilton’s position that the man and woman’s relationship becomes marked by fierce dispute at Genesis 3:16 is plausible, his contention that the sentence on the serpent is to be viewed as “banned” and not “cursed” looks out of harmony with the intent of the rest of Scripture and particularly the context of the text.

The editor of Seventh-day Adventists Bible Commentary even sees the judgment statements on the woman as real blessings in disguise. He says that the desire was given to the woman to “alleviate the sorrows of womanhood and to bind the hearts of husband and wife ever more closely.”<sup>41</sup> Francis Nichol states further on *he shall rule over thee*: “The woman had broken her divinely appointed relationship with the man. Instead of being a help “meet” for him she had become his seducer.

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<sup>39</sup> Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 195.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>41</sup> “The expulsion from the garden,” *SDABC*, 1:234.

Therefore, her status of equality with the man was forfeited.” The judgment statements served the remedial purpose of binding the man and the woman more closely after their disobedience.

The serpent is not interrogated. This shows that the purpose of the inquest was to lead to admission of guilt; the inquest of the serpent would have served no purpose. As it is pointed out in Mathew Henry’s Commentary,

This enquiry after Adam may be looked upon as a gracious pursuit in kindness to him, and in order to his recovery. If God had not called to him, his condition would have been as desperate as that of fallen angels; this lost sheep would have wandered endlessly, if the good shepherd had not sought after him, to bring him back, and, in order to that, reminded him where he was, where he should not be, and where he could not be either happy or easy. . . . God did not examine the serpent, nor ask him what he had done nor why he did it; but immediately sentenced him, 1. Because he was already convicted of rebellion against God, and his malice and wickedness were notorious, not found by secret search, but openly avowed and declared as Sodom’s. 2. Because he was to be forever excluded from all hope of pardon; and why should anything be said to convince and humble him who was to find no place for repentance? His wound was not searched because it was not to be cured.<sup>42</sup>

It is to be noted that the last half of each sentence relates to the next sentence in Genesis 3:14-19. The serpent is partly punished by the woman, the woman by the man, and the man by the ground. God uses other persons and things to carry out his punishment.<sup>43</sup>

Gerhard von Rad asserts,

The woman and the man are not cursed (it is unthinking to speak of their malediction!); but severe afflictions and terrible contradictions now break upon the woman’s life. There are three facts which because they are related to one another in unresolved tension grind down the woman’s life: (1) hardships of pregnancy, pains at birth, and (2) yet a profound desire for the man in

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<sup>42</sup> Mathew Henry, *Mathew Henry’s Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 1:22-23.

<sup>43</sup> Terence E. Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood. Studies in Genesis 1-11* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1969), 87.

whom she (3) still does not find fulfilment and rest (Ruth 1:9), but rather humiliating domination!<sup>44</sup>

Adam Clarke holds that at creation the man and the woman were formed with equal rights, and the woman had probably as much right to rule as the man.<sup>45</sup> But subjection to the will of her husband is one part of her judgment. And so very capricious is this will so often that a sorer punishment no human being can well have, to be at all in a state of liberty, and under the protection of wise and equal laws.

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<sup>44</sup> Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis*, Revised ed. (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1972), 93.

<sup>45</sup> Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible: A Commentary and Critical Notes*, New ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, n.d), 1:53.

## CHAPTER 3

### GENESIS 3:16 IN ITS CONTEXT

#### **Authorship of Genesis**

The author of the book of Genesis is also the author of Genesis 3:16.

Christians and Jews generally seem to agree that Moses, the leader of the Hebrews at the time of the Exodus, is the author of Genesis. This traditional view was held virtually unchallenged up to the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, some two centuries ago, opinions and beliefs considered traditional in virtually every field of human endeavour began to be questioned. Discoveries and inventions into hitherto unknown realms led men of critical minds “to question the authenticity of the Scriptures as the basis of the Christian belief.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, “the book of Genesis was the first book subjected to a critical examination in this modern age; and the examination started the era of higher criticism of the Bible.”<sup>2</sup> *Conjectures*, a book published by Jean Astruc in 1753 sparked the controversy. In the book, the French physician argued that different names of the Godhead occurring in Genesis were indicative of various source materials. Even though he retained Moses as the compiler of the book from different sources, his adherents soon jettisoned his submission. Some have had to change their theories and statements continually.

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<sup>1</sup> “Genesis,” *SDABC*, 1:201.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Critical scholars reject mosaic authorship of Genesis for various reasons. The use of three different names of God, with one name apparently favoured in a particular section allegedly shows that more than one author is responsible for the compilation of the book. They deliberately ignore the fact that the sacred names of God, Lord, and Jehovah are used more or less indiscriminately throughout the Hebrew Bible and not an indication of several sources. Also, critics cite the many repetitions of stories contained in the book to show that parallel sources were used and blended together, perhaps crudely, into a narrative by a later editor. But repetitions are a common tool in ancient literary works and not peculiar to Genesis.

In addition, critical scholars allege that conditions reflected in the stories do not fit into the periods described as into later times. But an increased knowledge of ancient history and geographical conditions has revealed that the author of Genesis was well acquainted with the times and places he described. Furthermore, they argue for place names of later period given to localities different from earlier names. It is to be noticed that some place names have been modernized in certain cases so the readers may follow the narrative. Moreover, these modern theologians contend that Hebrew writers borrowed stories from the Babylonians during the exile because of close similarities. The similarities may be traceable to common origin, rather than borrowing. After all, Genesis conveys information in an elevated and pure setting, whereas the Babylonian records narrate the same events in a debased pagan setting.

In the seventeenth century, the philosopher Spinoza raised a question concerning the authorship of Genesis, and this led to what is now known as Higher Criticism of the Bible.<sup>3</sup> With the rise of deism in the 1790s, and the inroads of

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<sup>3</sup> Edward E. Hindson and Woodrow Michael Kroll, eds., *The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 3.

Darwinian evolutionism, in the nineteenth century, a good number of liberal scholars abandoned the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, in favour of Documentary Theory, or Developmental Hypothesis.

This theory uses the initials JEDP to identify what the theorists consider to be four different hands involved in the composition of Genesis. The J manuscript was named from the writer's supposed use of the divine name Yahweh, or Jehovah (ca 850 B.C.). The E document was named after the author's supposed use of Elohim for God (ca 750 B.C.); the D document, which includes the major part of Deuteronomy, was believed to have been written around 621 B.C. and concocted by Josiah. The P document was supposedly the work of a priestly writer in the post-exilic age. Thus, the liberal view is that Moses is not the author of Genesis.

The conservative scholar will totally reject this approach. The two basic presuppositions of the liberal critic rest upon the belief in evolution and the denial of the possibility of supernatural revelation. But there appears to be no valid reason to reject Mosaic authorship. The Pentateuch itself attests to his authorship.<sup>4</sup> And Old Testament allusions outside of the Pentateuch abound.<sup>5</sup> Also, New Testament references to Mosaic authorship are not lacking either.<sup>6</sup> Both internal and external evidences suggest that Moses wrote the book of Genesis.

As with the other books of the Pentateuch, the Hebrew title is taken from its opening word בְּרֵאשִׁית “In the beginning,” whereas the English title “Genesis” is a transliteration, via the Vulgate, of the Greek title. Both titles aptly describe the book's

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<sup>4</sup> Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Numbers 33:1-2; Deuteronomy 31:9.

<sup>5</sup> Joshua 1:7-8; 8:31-32; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Daniel 9:11-13; Malachi 4:4.

<sup>6</sup> See Matthew 19:8; Mark 12:26; John 1:45; 5:46-47; Acts 3:22; Romans 10:5.

contents: it is a book of origins. Greek γενεσις means “origin, source, race, creation.” In fact, the term is used in the LXX to translate הַלְלֵךְ “generations, family history,” a term used repeatedly in the title of each new section of the book, such as Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 11:27, etcetera. And the Book of Genesis describes the origin of the universe, of mankind, and of the ancestors of the nation of Israel. It seems that the focus narrows progressively throughout the book. Each of the *toledot*, then, focuses on one personality and weeds out lesser individuals. In this way the book of Genesis displays evidence of both literary and theological unity.<sup>7</sup> The book is masterful in substance and particularly in its portrayal of human character in its gamut of good and bad and in-between.<sup>8</sup>

Genesis is obviously a book concerned with origins—the origin of earth’s creation, of humankind, of institutions by which civilization is perpetuated, of one special family chosen by God as his own and designated as the medium of blessing. Transcending all of these emphases on beginnings is God. There is no *genesis theou* (theogony) in Scripture’s introductory book, or any theobiography. He is one without *resit* (beginning) and *‘aharit* (end).<sup>9</sup>

Whereas according to Genesis’ own chronology the first book of the Pentateuch spans some two thousand years, the next four cover a mere one hundred and twenty.<sup>10</sup> This helps to put the book into perspective. It does not stand on its own,

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<sup>7</sup> Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Cuthbert A. Simpson and Walter Russell Bowie, “The Book of Genesis,” *The Interpreter’s Bible (IB)*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1952), 1:459.

<sup>9</sup> Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 2.

<sup>10</sup> Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, xxii.

but rather, contains essential backgrounds for understanding those events which constituted the nation of Israel as the Lord's covenant people. It is also essentially preparatory in function and puts the patriarchs into their cosmic context. The God who called Abraham was no local divinity but the Creator of the whole universe. The succession of catastrophes that befell humanity prior to Abraham's call show just why the election of Abraham, and in him, Israel, was necessary.

Modern man makes assumptions about the world that are completely different from those of the second millennium B.C.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, when we read Genesis, we tend to grab hold of points that were of quite peripheral interest to the author of Genesis and overlook points that are fundamental. By looking at the oriental background and the place of Genesis 1-11 within the whole book for instance, we tend to escape this particular pitfall and understand Genesis as it was originally intended. Similarly, modern commentators on Genesis appear to face a problem largely unknown to past generations, the possibility of being charged with using sexist language if they speak of "man" or "mankind," terms central to Genesis 1-11. While the possibility exists that certain terms may enshrine and help perpetuate male oppression of women, it may be considered that in this case such fears are misplaced. The content generally makes clear which meaning is intended, words are not univocal like scientific symbols, but they have a variety of meanings.

### **Literary Context of Genesis 3:16**

Genesis 2 shows us things as God intended them to be. Here, then, we are shown patterns that we may not achieve perfectly in a fallen world, but to which we can aspire in Christ. It may be regarded as a God-given blueprint on which we can

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., xlv.

safely base our ideas.<sup>12</sup> Genesis 3:16-17 presumes the reality of childbearing (Gen 1:28), in which the woman will now experience the effects of the Fall and sin (Gen 3:16). It presumes the reality of work (Gen 1:28; 2:15), in which the man will now experience the effect of the Fall and sin (Gen 3:17ff.). And it presumes the reality of the role relationship between wife and husband established by God's creation order in Genesis 2:18ff; a relationship that will now experience the effects of the Fall and sin. "He shall rule over you" expresses the effect of sin corrupting the relationship of husband and wife. Just as childbearing and work were established before the Fall and were corrupted by it, so this relationship existed before the Fall and was corrupted by it. Neither childbearing, nor work, nor the role relationship of wife and husband is being introduced in Genesis 3; all are previously existing realities that have been affected by the Fall.

In Genesis 2:15 man is given work to perform when he is created. Work is thus seen as something essential for the fulfilment of man. Sin does not make labour necessary; it makes labour less rewarding. Man now has to struggle to secure an existence from the soil. In his work he is subject to frustrations and problems.

The man points the finger of blame both at his spouse—*she . . . gave me*—and at God—*the woman whom you placed by me*. Through rationalisation the criminal becomes the victim, and it is God and the woman who emerge as the real instigators in this scenario.

Genesis 3:15 is one of the most famous cruxes of Scripture.<sup>13</sup> Interpreters fall into two categories: those who see in the text a messianic import and those who see

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<sup>12</sup> Benton, *Gender Questions*, 32.

<sup>13</sup> Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 197.

nothing of the kind. The more conservative and traditional writers (such as Schaeffer, Leupold, Vos, Kidner, Aalders, and Stigers) opt for the first approach, but the bulk of authors in the critical camp (for example Skinner, von Rad, Speiser, Vawter, and Westermann) fail to see any promise of a messiah in this verse and agree that far too much has been read into it. at least, according to this school of thought, the story is an etiological myth that explains why there is hostility between mankind and the serpent world. This verse sounds a positive about the seed of the woman who would strike at the serpent's seed. The coming of this seed, however, will not be without pain and discomfort. For the woman who is destined to conceive will give birth in agony. At the point in her life when a woman experiences her highest sense of self-fulfilment, she will have some physical anguish.

It may be observed that although in the first clause the seed of the serpent is opposed to the seed of the woman, in the second it is not over the seed of the serpent but over the serpent itself that the victory is said to be gained. This foe is Satan, who incessantly opposes the seed of the woman and bruises its heel, but is eventually to be trodden under its feet. Against the natural serpent the conflict may be carried on by the whole human race, by all who are born of woman, but not against Satan. As he is a foe who can only be met with spiritual weapons, none can encounter him successfully but such as possess and make use of spiritual arms. Hence, the idea of the "seed" is modified by the nature of the foe.

Through constantly repeated acts of divine selection, which were not arbitrary exclusions, but were rendered necessary by difference in the spiritual condition of the individuals concerned, the "seed" to which the victory over Satan was promised, was spiritually or ethically determined, and ceased to be co-extensive with physical descent. This spiritual seed culminated in Christ, in whom the Adamic family

terminated, henceforward to be renewed by Christ as the second Adam, and restored by Him to its original exaltation and likeness to God.<sup>14</sup> In this sense Christ is the seed of the woman, who tramples Satan under His feet, not as an individual, but as the head both of the posterity of the woman which kept the promise and maintained the conflict with the old serpent before His advent, and also of all those who are gathered out of all nations, are united to Him by faith, and formed into the body of which He is the head.

God placed pain for males and females at the centre of the human effort to sustain life. This pain counters the arrogance that motivates humans to build a society apart from God.<sup>15</sup> It also continually reminds humans of their limitations, mortality, and alienation from and dependence on God. The pain they experience in the course of sustaining life is the foretaste of death. That foretaste includes feelings of fear, alienation, and mistrust, all of which the first couple experienced after eating the fruit. In antiquity, whoever was cut off from the support and protection of the community faced a bleak future and mortal danger. Expulsion from the garden was therefore a type of death penalty, underscored here by the loss of access to the tree of life (Gen 3:22).

The man's sin was that he *ate* (Gen 3:6, 12). Again God's word of judgment matches the sin. In response to the man's trespass of eating, God speaks no less than five times of eating in his word to the man (vv. 17 [3 times], 18, 19). Thus the penalty on the man parallels the penalty on the serpent. To both God says a word about their

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<sup>14</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentaries. Genesis to Judges 6:32*, 78.

<sup>15</sup> John E. Hartley, *New International Biblical Commentary. Genesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 70.

eating. Similarly, God's word to the man parallels his word to the woman, for in the experiences of both there will be pain (*'issabon*). For her the pain will be connected with childbearing, and for him the pain will be connected with food. *'issabon* and the verb *asab* refer to physical pain, but they also embrace the concept of anguish (Gen 6:6; 45:5).

The judgments against the woman relates first to her sons and then to her husband. What the woman once was to do as a blessing—be a marriage partner and have children—had become tainted by the curse. In those moments of life's greatest blessing, marriage, and children, the woman would sense most clearly the painful consequences of her rebellion from God.<sup>16</sup>

### **Setting**

Quite often, the tree (Gen 2:16, 17) is viewed as a means of testing Adam's obedience, as a malevolent device designed to make him trip, as a trick perpetrated by God on humans for some mysterious motive hidden within the inscrutable ways of divinity. Such a view demeans the character of God. The definition of the tree shows that it was provided by God to fulfil a positive function. It was the visible reminder to Adam of his humanity and therefore of the necessity for him to remain subservient to God as his creator.<sup>17</sup> In other words, the tree was a symbol of the one authority structure that permeates all reality and gives it meaning: there is only one God, and to be truly human is to recognize his sovereignty and submit to him. Man's rejection of

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<sup>16</sup> John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version*, ed. Frank E Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 2:56.

<sup>17</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about a Woman's Place in Church and Family*, 29.

divine sovereignty would result in the corruption of his humanity and would ultimately lead to his nonbeing.

As a provider of knowledge, the tree reminded Adam that to function properly according to God's design and to remain true to his own humanity, he should never aspire to be God. He was made in the image of God, but he was not God. He was made by the Creator, but he was not his own creator. He was to live within the sphere of the sovereignty of God. By its very definition, the tree signalled to Adam the danger of competing with God for supremacy over his own life. The moment he attempted to substitute his own authority for God's sovereignty, he would become an abnormality, a freak. He would become dehumanized to the point of obliteration ("the day that you eat of it you shall die"). In the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "man's being like God is disobedience in the form of obedience, it is will to power in the form of service, it is desire to be creator in the form of creatureliness, it is being dead in the form of life"<sup>18</sup> he argues that every attempt to make sin understandable is merely the accusation which the creature hurls against the Creator. He emphasizes that,

The Fall of man in God's creation is both inconceivable and unalterably inexcusable, and therefore the word 'disobedience' does not exhaust the facts of the case. It is revolt, it is the creature's departure from the attitude which is the only possible attitude for him, it is the creature's becoming Creator; it is the destruction of creatureliness. It is defection; it is the fall from being held in creatureliness. This defection is a continual falling, a plunging into the bottomless depths, a being relinquished, a withdrawal ever farther and deeper. And in all this it is not simply a moral lapse but the destruction of creation by the creature. The Fall affects the whole of the created world which is henceforth plundered of its creatureliness as it crashes blindly into infinite space, like a meteor which has torn away from its nucleus.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Interpretation of Genesis 1-3* (London: SCM Press, 1959), 74.

<sup>19</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 77.

As a source of knowledge, the tree pointed to two possible paths: the way of happiness and the way of misfortune. The way of happiness was to be found in Adam's discerning the creation rights of God and in submitting to them. God had granted Adam total freedom except for one limitation: that his freedom is exercised in dependency on God. The way of misfortune would open before Adam should he attempt to dismiss God and substitute his will for God's will. Such an attempt to declare his independence from God would alienate him from the source of his existence and result in death.

Genesis 2:7 states that man was created of perishable matter and was thus mortal. He possessed no natural, innate immortality. But if man continued to be obedient to God, he would have continued to live through some special blessing. This is inferred in Genesis 2:17. "In the day that [when, not necessarily the same] you eat of the tree you shall die" implies that "if you do not eat of it you will not die."<sup>20</sup> Genesis 3:22 also views it as a possibility. Man is thus created mortal, but immortality as a special gift of God was open to him.

What then is the significance of the tree of life? First, to be in the presence of the tree of life and to eat of it may represent continued life in relationship with God, unbroken communion with him. This continued life, however, depends on continual obedience (Gen 2:17). Second, to be separated from the tree of life may represent the broken nature of this relationship and hence the impossibility of continued life. Or, death is the result of sin.

The tree of life is thus the author's vehicle by which life and death are related to obedience and disobedience. In summary, life and death is a matter of one's

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<sup>20</sup> Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood. Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 72.

relationship with God. For Adam, who lives in unity, the knowledge of good and evil is the impossible knowledge of the duality and the rupture of the whole.<sup>21</sup> The question of why evil exists is not a theological question, for it assumes that it is possible to go behind the existence brought upon us as sinners. If we could answer it then *we* would not be sinners. We could make something else responsible.<sup>22</sup>

### **Historical/Geographical Situation**

There is a clear geographical design in Genesis. Chapters 1-11 are set in Babylonia; chapters 12-36 are set in Palestine; chapters 37-50 are set in Egypt.<sup>23</sup> In other words, each part of the Mediterranean world is highlighted in some part of Genesis. The impact created by these broad geographical contours is that Genesis is a book about world history. Genesis is moving us progressively from generation (chapters 1-2), to degeneration (chapters 3-11), to regeneration (chapters 12-50).<sup>24</sup>

The clear-cut division between chapters 11 and 12 has provided sufficient evidence for dividing Genesis into two main bodies. The first is chapters 1-11, designated as primeval history. The second is chapters 12-50, designated as patriarchal history. In chapters 1-11 we read of individuals who had land, but are either losing it or being expelled from it. In chapters 12-50 the emphasis is on individuals who do not have land, but are on the way toward it. One group is losing; another group is expecting.

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<sup>21</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 78.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 11.

The Fall led to catastrophic consequences for the relationship between God and humans. The humans became alienated from God, and each one of them assumed primal dependency on his or her original element.<sup>25</sup> Adam's life became subject to the ground from which he had been made, and Eve's to the man from whom she had been taken. The ruler-subject relationship between Adam and Eve began after the Fall. It was for Eve the application of the same death principle that made Adam slave to the soil. Since it resulted from the Fall, the rule of Adam over Eve has been described as "satanic in origin, no less than is death itself."<sup>26</sup>

As a result of their severance from God, Adam and Eve suddenly found themselves in an environment pervaded with the reality of death. Because death had permeated all realms of life, suffering as a preliminary form of death would be allowed to mar life from its very beginning, in childbirth. Adam was told that the ground that once produced fruit on its own would now produce it through suffering. Conversely, human reproduction would be subject to pain. Life would go on after the Fall, but because of the pressure of death, it would be a struggle from its very beginning.

The fall had spawned the twin evils of woman's suffering in labour and of man's labouring in suffering. Hence, it may be proper to regard both male dominance and death as antithetical to God's original intent in creation. Both are the result of sin, itself instigated by Satan. But in the community of redemption, God's original design of mutuality in equality shall be restored.

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<sup>25</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 43.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4  
EXEGETICAL/INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS  
OF GENESIS 3:16

**Translation of Genesis 3:16**

The Hebrew (Leningrad Hebrew Old Testament) and some translations of Genesis 3:16 are shown below:

אֱלֹהֵי-אִשָּׁה אָמַר הָרְבֵה אֲרַבְּהָ עֲצָבוֹתָ וְהָרַגְתָּ בְּעֲצָב תֵּלְדִי בָנִים וְאֵל-אִשְׁיךָ תִּשְׁוָקֶתָּ וְהָיָא מְשֻׁלָּתָּ:

καὶ τῇ γυναικὶ εἶπεν πληθύνων πληθυνῶ τὰς λύπας σου καὶ τὸν στεναγμὸν σου ἐν λύπαις τέξῃ τέκνα καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα σου ἡ ἀποστροφή σου καὶ αὐτός σου κυριεύσει. (BGT)

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. (KJV)

To the woman he said: I will intensify your toil in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. (NAB)

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." (NAS)

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you." (NAU)

The words of the Lord in Genesis 3:16b, as in the case of the battle between sin and Cain (Gen 4:7), do not determine the victor of the conflict between husband and wife. These words mark the beginning of the battle of the sexes. As a result of the Fall, man no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship. Sin has corrupted both the willing submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband. The woman's desire is to control her husband (to usurp his divinely appointed headship),

and he must master her, if he can. So the rule of love founded in paradise is replaced by struggle, tyranny, and domination. Her desire is to contend with him for leadership in their relationship. This desire is a result of and a punishment for sin, but it is not God's decretive will for the woman. Consequently, the man must actively seek to rule his wife.<sup>1</sup>

Richard Davidson seems right in questioning the interpretations that proceed from the assumption that a hierarchy, whether ontological or functional, existed between the sexes before the Fall; and concludes that "no such subordination or subjection of woman to man's leadership was present in the beginning."<sup>2</sup> The woman's response to the temptation by the serpent in Genesis 3:1-6 reveals her to be intelligent, perceptive, informed, and articulate. The temptation to which both Adam and Eve yielded was in their acting/exercising moral autonomy against the express command of God. Their sin was not in the violation of a man/woman leadership/submission principle, but the eating from the tree which God commanded them not to eat (Gen 3:11).

Similarly, the argument that God approached and addressed man first after the Fall because the man was in a position of representative leadership over the woman<sup>3</sup> does not appear to have persuasive power. A primary reason is that man was the first who directly and personally received the command not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree (Gen 2:17); and naturally, it makes sense that God approached him first. Additionally, the pronoun used in the inquiry, "where are you?" (Gen 3:9) is in the

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<sup>1</sup> Foh, *"What Is the Woman's Desire?"* 383.

<sup>2</sup> Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament*, 65.

<sup>3</sup> James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg, eds., *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 209.

singular. Also, in the dialogue between God and the man (Gen 3:9-12), Adam explains only his behaviour and does not act as the overseer of the woman, but instead, accuses her. Moreover, according to Afolarin Ojewole, the interrogation in Genesis 3:9-13 proceeds in a chiastic (reverse) order from that in which the characters in the narrative are introduced in Genesis 3:1-8, with God in the centre of the structure (which is in harmony with an overarching chiastic structure of the entire chapter and another reversal of order in Genesis 3:14-19).<sup>4</sup>

In spite of its popularity, the view that Genesis 3:16 is only descriptive, not prescriptive, looks unsatisfactory. If nothing, the position fails to take seriously the judgment/punishment context of the passage. The nature of the judgment/punishment context is indicated by the text, making it a divine sentence. The context leading up to Genesis 3:16 appears to call for an inference of prescriptive punishment and not just descriptive/predictive information. God issues to man a prohibition, “you shall not eat” (Gen 2:16-17a); God as the Creator has the authority to impose sanctions if Adam and Eve violate the prohibition (“in the day you eat” Gen 2:17b).

Adam and Eve do violate the prohibition (Gen 3:1-6); God then instigates a legal trial (Gen 3:8-13) in which God examines them (“where are you?,” “Have you eaten?,” “What is this that you have done?”). And they admit their guilt (“I ate”); God then pronounces a legal sentence (“Because you have done *x*, therefore *y*, Genesis 3:14-19). In fact, since God had explicitly, with threat of dire consequences, forbidden *ha’adam* from eating the tree, Adam’s violation of God’s express command creates an overdetermined context in which God is *expected* to deliver punishment long before

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<sup>4</sup> Afolarin Ojewole, *The Seed in Genesis 3:15: An Exegetical and Intertextual Study*, Adventist Theological Seminary Dissertation (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, 2002), 98.

he does so. Richard Davidson insightfully states, “It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Genesis 3 is consistent with the other narratives in Gen 1-11, including a legal trial (Gen 3:9-13), a divine prescriptive sentence announcing the penalty (Gen 3:14-19), and the carrying out of the punishment (Gen 3:22-24).<sup>5</sup> He further asserts, “Just as in none of the other narratives in Genesis 1-11 are the divine pronouncements merely descriptive or predictive but also prescriptive of what God has ordained to take place as just punishments for sin, so it is in Genesis 3.”<sup>6</sup>

The central place of Genesis 3 is further underscored by its prominence in a chiastic structure of the Scriptures as a whole—as attempted below.

A. Creation by God—Genesis 1

B. Life before the Fall—Genesis 2

C. Temptation, the Fall, and the immediate consequences—  
Genesis 3

B<sup>1</sup>. Life after the Fall—Genesis 4-Revelation 20

A<sup>1</sup>. Recreation by God—Revelation 21-22

In an attempt to understand the immediate consequences of the Fall at Genesis 3:16, it is pertinent to briefly consider the nature of the relationship between the man and the woman prior to the Fall. Genesis 2:18 literally reads: And the Lord God thought it was not good for the Adam to be by himself; “ I will make for him a helper as in front of him.” In this verse “the Adam” is used to describe the male. What the King James Version translates “meet for him” and the Revised Standard Version translates “fit for him” in Hebrew is one word, *כְּנֶגְדּוֹ* (*knegdwo*) “in front of him” (Gen

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<sup>5</sup> Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament*, 68.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 68-69.

2:18). This one word occurs in this form only in verse 18 and is repeated in verse 20. The word is made up of three thought units: the prefix *k* the preposition *neged*, and the suffix *wo*. The prefix *k* signifies comparison, similarity, or proportion. The suffix *wo* is a pronoun signifying “him.” The prefix asks the question, what is the comparison between the helper and “him”? How may the helper be described in comparison to Adam? The preposition *neged* that lies between the prefix and the suffix answers the question. The helper is *neged* to him. What does *neged* mean? The basic root literally describes physical relationships. It refers to “the front” or “the visible.” The preposition *neged* means “in front of,” and “opposite to.” Thus, God has made for Adam a helper “as in front of him.” Does the phrase appear to suggest a submissive relationship or a lower hierarchy? Hardly; hence, Elisabeth Elliot’s conclusion that God’s intention at creation was not affected by the Fall appeared superimposed, a kind of eisegesis.

In Hebrew, prepositions, verbs, and nouns tend to be concentrically related to their root meanings.<sup>7</sup> The meaning of a verb or a noun or a preposition can enlighten the meaning of any other word in the group. *Neged* is not the only possible word to signify “front” which could have been used in Genesis 2:18. In Genesis 2:8 *qedem* is also used to also mean “what is in front,” “to go before, anticipate, meet, encounter.” The writer of Genesis was aware of at least two words for “front.” *Qedem* certainly would have had less authoritative connotations than *neged*. However, the writer chose the unusual combination *knegdwo* instead. Thus, it appears that this word is the word that God chose to describe the female. If Eve had been created in an inferior position, the writer should have used a term to mean “after” or “behind,” such as the

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<sup>7</sup> Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry*, 24.

preposition *'ahar*; or even a more neutral term such as “for”—“a helper for him.”

Moreover, the Hebrew language does not seem to be limited in possibilities; more so that it can be viewed as a figurative language.

Thus, even Genesis 2 that some suppose teach the hierarchy of male and female appears to reveal grammatically, that there is no subordination of the helper to the Adam. Rather, God created woman to be “in front of” or “visible” to Adam, or “comparable to” or even “opposite” of him. Woman was created as “a help *corresponding* to him”; in other words, “equal and adequate to himself.”<sup>8</sup> Viewed this way, it may be argued that God created Adam and his helper with some kind of equality.

Moreover, when the Hebrew text was translated into Greek around 250 B.C. the Septuagint translators also made sure to express this idea of equality. They translated *knegdwo* in Genesis 2:18 with the Greek word *kata* followed by the direct object, which signifies horizontal rather than perpendicular direction.<sup>9</sup> The phrase is used to express equality and similarity. Interestingly, the Septuagint translated Genesis 2:20 with a different but parallel word, *homoios*, which means “of the same nature, like, similar.” Within the general fabric of likeness, *homoios* also signifies equality in force and equality of rank.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>9</sup> A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1934), 608.

<sup>10</sup> Henry S. Jones and Roderick McKenzie, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 1224.

## Analysis of Textual Problems

The problems of textual analysis may be responsible for the six major views that have been advanced for the interpretation of the pronouncement of Genesis 3:16, in relationship to Genesis 1-2 and to the nature of the Fall itself in Genesis 3.<sup>11</sup> The first, and perhaps the most common position, holds that the subordination/submission of woman and the supremacy/leadership of man are a creation ordinance, God's ideal from the beginning (Genesis 1-2) and part of the fall consisted in the violation of this ordinance when Eve sought to get out from under Adam's supremacy/leadership and Adam failed to restrain her. In this view, the waw in אַחֲרַיְוֵהוּ' is coordinative ("and") and the qal imperfect of מַסַּל (yimsol) is a descriptive future ("he shall rule over you"). God describes in Genesis 3:16 the results of sin in the "continued distortion of God's original design for ontological hierarchy or functional leadership/submission between the sexes."<sup>12</sup> Proponents of this school of thought include H. C. Leupold, Carl F. Keil, Franz Delitzsch and John Calvin. This view can be divided into two categories of liberal-critical version and the evangelical version.

The liberal-critical scholars tend to use the terms "supremacy" and "subordination" to describe the status of Adam and Eve respectively; arguing that there existed a divinely ordained ontological hierarchy between the sexes. On the other hand, most evangelicals that subscribe to this view push for ontological equality of Adam and Eve at creation, but argue for functional hierarchy (complementarian relationship).

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<sup>11</sup> Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament*, 60.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

The second view sees the hierarchical relationship between the sexes, that is, submission of woman to the leadership of man, as a creation ordinance, which was violated. According to this view, the judgment sentence in Genesis 3:16 is a “divine” prescription that the man must “rule”—that is, exercise his “godly headship”—to restrain the woman’s desire, that is, her urge [to] get out from under his leadership and control/manipulate him.

Proponents of the view hold that Genesis 3:16 should be interpreted along the lines of the similarly worded statement of God to Cain in Genesis 4:7. In Genesis 4:7, according to this interpretation, God warned Cain that sin’s desire would be to control him, but he must master it; in the same way in Genesis 3:16, woman’s desire would be to control/manipulate man and the husband must master her desire by exercising his godly leadership. Hence, the *waw* in *wehu*’ is adversative (“but”) and the *qal* imperfect of *masal* (*yimsol*) is prescriptive (“he *must* rule over you”). Susan T. Foh, Samuele Bacchiocchi, James B. Hurley, and Walter Vogels hold this view.

The third major view of interpretation holds that the hierarchical relationship between the sexes is a creation ordinance that was ruptured by the fall. Therefore Genesis 3:16 is seen as a divine reaffirmation of the subordination/submission of women to the supremacy/leadership of man as it was in the beginning. The evangelical version of the view believes that Eve at the Fall had broken loose from her role of submission to Adam and is now redirected to her former position under the leadership of Adam, not as a punishment but as a continued blessing and comfort to her in her difficulties as a mother. Consequently, Genesis 3:16c-d may be paraphrased as “you will have labour and difficulty in your motherhood, yet you will be eager for

your husband and he will rule over you (in the sense of a servant leadership to care for and help and not in the sense of domination and oppression).”<sup>13</sup>

The fourth and fifth views have some aspects of similarities. Both views contend that the subordination or subjection of woman to man did not exist before the Fall; but that the original egalitarian relationship of the sexes was disrupted at the fall. But whereas the fourth view agrees that Genesis 3:16 is only a description of the consequences of sin and not a permanent prescription of God’s will for man-woman relationships after the sin,<sup>14</sup> the fifth view understands the judgment statement in Genesis 3:16 as prescriptive and God’s normative pattern for the marriage relationship after the fall.<sup>15</sup>

The sixth view, while agreeing with the fourth and fifth views that God’s original plan was an egalitarian relationship between the sexes, states that even in Genesis 3 no hierarchy between the sexes is either prescribed or described. And that even the word for “rule,” *masal*, is often translated “to be like,” emphasizing the equal rank of man and woman.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the term *תַּסְקֶה* in Genesis 3:16, often translated as “desire” is not the primary issue regarding the institution of patriarchy; it instead introduces the clause that makes this clear. That is, the immediately following line, “and he will rule over

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<sup>13</sup> Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1980), 35.

<sup>14</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 39-58.

<sup>15</sup> Theodorus C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised and enlarged ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 399.

<sup>16</sup> John H. Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed: The Status of Women in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1977), 18, 197-198.

you,” is really the crux. But it appears that the two ideas are intricately related. In fact, all four lines of this verse cannot be properly understood outside of the larger context of the Eden story and especially the deity’s other pronouncements upon the man and the serpent.

It appears that the clue to understanding the Hebrew construction lies in the parallel usage in Genesis 4:7. Rather than translating *thy desire shall be to thy husband*, it may be thy desire shall be “against” thy husband. The preposition ‘*el* is translated “against” in Genesis 4:8, *Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him*. The same preposition (‘*el*) and noun *desire* (*teshuqah*) appear in Genesis 4:7 and are translated *and unto thee shall be his desire*. This clearly shows that the personification of sin has a desire against Cain to destroy him. But God has promised Cain, “but thou shalt rule over him” or “it.” Victory could be Cain’s if he did that which is right. So, here in Genesis 3:16, the woman’s desire will be against her husband and his leadership; she will not willingly submit to his rule.

The third judgment statement on her may actually be a promise in disguise; for God has said *he shall rule over thee*. It may be translated that the rulership can be worked out. A parallel promise with the same wording appears in Genesis 4:7 with the disjunctive *waw* and the verb “to rule” translated “but you may rule over it.” Certainly we live in a day and age when it is obvious that women are expressing their desire against their husbands. Paul says for husbands to love their own wives and for the wives to “submit” to their husbands. Why else would it be commanded, if it came naturally?

It was not until the prospect of victory had been presented, that a sentence of punishment was pronounced upon both the man and the woman on account of their

sin. The punishment consisted in an enfeebling of nature, in consequence of sin, which disturbed the normal relation between body and soul.

To each of the trespassers God speaks a word which involves both a life function and a relationship. Thus, the snake is cursed in his mode of locomotion, and his relationship with the woman and her seed is to be that of hostility. The woman shall experience pain at the point of childbearing and in relationship to her husband. The man will confront disappointments as a worker through his estrangement from the soil.

### **Grammatical Analysis and Lexical Elements**

#### **תַּסְתֵּק (Desire)**

The Hebrew word תַּסְתֵּק now almost universally translated as “desire,” was previously rendered “turning.”<sup>17</sup> The word appears in the Hebrew OT only three times: here in Genesis 3:16, in Genesis 4:7 and in Song of Songs 7:10. Of the twelve known ancient versions, (the Greek Septuagint, the Syriac Peshitta, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Old Latin, the Sahidic, the Bohairic, the Ethiopic, the Arabic, Aquila’s Greek, Symmachus’ Greek, Theodotion’s Greek and Latin Vulgate) almost every one (21 out of 28 times) renders these three instances of תַּסְתֵּק as “turning” and not “desire.”<sup>18</sup>

Katherine C Bushnell is said to have pioneered research on this problem.<sup>19</sup> She traced its origin to an Italian Dominican Monk named Pagnino who translated the

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<sup>17</sup> Walter C. Kaiser Jr. et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 96-99.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Hebrew bible and gave the sexual connotation to the word, תַּסְתַּחֵף. Pagnino “too much neglected the ancient version of scripture to attach himself to the teachings of the rabbis.”<sup>20</sup> Pagnino’s version was published in Lyons in 1528. Except for Wycliffe’s 1380 English version and the Douay Bible of 1609, both of which were made from the Latin Vulgate, every English version from the time of Pagnino has adopted Pagnino’s rendering for Genesis 3:16. Thus the sense of libido was given to the word by Pagnino and his followers.

The Septuagint renders Genesis 3:16 this way: And to the woman he said, “Multiplying I will multiply your pains and your groaning; in pains you will bear children, and to your husband will be your turning, and he will be lord over you.”<sup>21</sup> Commenting on the text, Bryford says the woman would experience only a ‘turning’ (Greek αποστροφή) for her husband, an action that could be understood as either a turning *to* or a turning *away*. Although it is unlikely that αποστροφή with the preposition προς would be interpreted as a turning *away*, the woman’s turning *to* her husband does not connote sexual desire.<sup>22</sup>

תַּסְתַּחֵף, desire, in addition to Genesis 3:16 occurs but twice more (Gen 4:7; Song 7:10, 11) and its meaning is highly disputed. It has been explained as sexual desire on the basis of Song of Songs 7:10, 11 and the reference to childbirth in Genesis 3:15. If so, the adversative of the following clause, “yet he will rule” (NASB, NRSV) would mean that despite her painful experience in childbirth she will still have sexual desires for her husband. In other words, the promissory blessing of

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Susan Brayford, *Septuagint Commentary Series: Genesis* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2007), 41.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 241.

procreation will persist despite any possible reluctance on her part due to the attendant pain of delivery.<sup>23</sup> It seems that תַּסְהֶקֶה (in Gen 3:16) is operating in conjunction with בְּהִסְתָּהּ, return, (in Gen 3:19) to form a type of *inclusion*.

The Hebrew grammar of God's first words in the legal sentencing in Genesis 3:16, "I will greatly increase" (*harba 'arbeh*,—multiplying I will multiply) seems to underscore the divine origin and prescriptive nature of the judgment upon Eve. The use of the first person singular 'I' refers to the Lord, who is pronouncing the judgment, and the Hebrew infinitive absolute followed by the finite verb implies "the absolute certainty of the action."<sup>24</sup> The "I will" as a preface to the consequences in Genesis 3:15 and 3:16 suggests that God is determining and choosing them. Therefore, the judgment upon Eve represents not just a description but a divine oracle/mandate. God is not merely informing the woman of her fate, but ordaining the state of affairs announced in Genesis 3:16. As the judge, God is announcing his penal sentence for Adam and Eve's guilt.

A phrase, אָרְבָּה אֲרַבְּהָ used in Genesis 3:16 also occurs at Genesis 16:10 and Genesis 22:17. The angel promised "multiplying" Hagar's descendants (Gen 16:10), but she had not any at the time. The same statement is made of Abraham (Gen 22:17). Here again, he had no child at the moment that could be multiplied. This seems to suggest that "greatly increase" may not necessarily be from already existing thing. It may be a sure promise of something just about to begin, that may not be a reality at the time of the speech. The phrase, *harba 'arbeh* therefore indicates that God is the one determining, choosing and introducing the *'issabon* of the woman. It may be

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<sup>23</sup> Mathews, *The New American Commentary*, 243-252.

<sup>24</sup> Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 99.

plausible to conclude then that the pangs of childbirth of the woman is concomitant of sin; just as the “desire” of the woman and her rulership by the man consequent upon sin.

Stratton even attempts a punishment spectrum of scholarly interpretations of Genesis 3:16.<sup>25</sup> How can a just God simply scan the future history of a couple that so flagrantly disobeyed his clearly stated will—with attendant consequences already initially foreclosed? It is to be noted that the essential natures and relationships of and among all the three parties involved in the rebellion in Genesis 3 were altered, forever—as long as sin and its effects remain.

#### **לְשׂוֹלֵט (Rule)**

The Hebrew word, לְשׂוֹלֵט, translated as “rule” occurs in this form six times in the Old Testament—Genesis 3:16, Exodus 21:8, Judges 8:23 (twice), Proverbs 17:2, Isaiah 19:4 and Ezekiel 16:44. The verb is in the *qal* imperfect third person masculine singular homonym. And it is an obvious reference to the man, the husband of the woman, the Adam. The verb is followed by a particle preposition suffix in the second person feminine singular, referring to the woman, the object of the sentence. So then,

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<sup>25</sup> Beverly J. Stratton, “Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3.,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series* 208. (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).142-144. He presents the options from one extreme to another:(1) no punishments are inflicted because there is no remorse or response; (2) an etiology describes the reality the couple choose, with God providing the desired knowledge; (3) though punishment is warranted, God gives grace and mercy (4) God announces judgments, which are consequences of their actions; (5) punishments are appropriate, not whimsical like those of the ANE deities; (6) unmitigated punishments signal death for the listeners; and (7) punishments are disproportionate to the creatures’ misdeeds. Biblical evidence supports aspects of options 3-5 to be applicable to Genesis 3:16. The punishments are just, as a result of divine investigation, in contrast to ANE parallels (option 5). The punishments are also intimately linked with (though not just as natural consequences of) the sinful actions of the creatures (option 4). The punishments, though real, are also mitigated by grace and mercy, so that the very punishments become a divine blessing in a sinful world.

the man is here to exercise rulership over the woman. In Exodus 21:8, the word *mashal* is commonly translated as “authority.” Twice in Judges 8:23 the word is translated “rule.” The same interpretation of “rule” is found in Proverbs 17:2; just as in Isaiah 19:14.

The prescriptive nature of the sentence appears in the force of the last line of Genesis 3:16: *wehu’ yimsol-bak*, “he [your husband] shall rule over you.”<sup>26</sup> The verb, *mashal*, in this form here means “to rule” (not “to be like” or “to be irresistible”) and implies submission/subjugation. The masculine pronoun *hu’* has its antecedent, the masculine *tsek* “your husband,” and not the feminine *tesuqatek*, “your desire.”<sup>27</sup> The masculine pronoun agrees in gender with the natural masculine noun without violating the rule of gender agreement. This entails the subjugation or submission of the wife to the husband.

The verb used to describe humankind’s rulership over the animals in Genesis 1:26, 28 is not the same as the one employed in “rule” in Genesis 3:16. In the former passages, the verb is *rada* “have dominion over,” not *mashal* “rule” in the latter. The semantic range of the verb *mashal* makes it possible to understand the divine sentence in Genesis 3:16 as including not only punishment but promised blessings. In Judges 8:22 for instance, the people of Israel are eager to have someone who will “rule” (*mashal*) over them. The occurrences of *mashal* in passages like 2 Samuel 23:3, Proverbs 17:2 and Isaiah 40:10 come with the connotation of servant leadership. The term describes the rulership of Yahweh and the future Messiah in Isaiah 40:10, Micah

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<sup>26</sup> Robert I. Vasholz, “‘He (?) Will Rule Over You’: A Thought on Genesis 3:16,” *Presbyterian* 20 (1994): 51–52.

<sup>27</sup> Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament*, 71.

4:14 and Zechariah 6:13; 9:10. Thus, *mashal* is predominantly a positive concept, not a negative one.

In the context of the use of the generic name for the “man” and “woman,” it seems clear that the biblical author intended to indicate that this judgment was not applicable to just the first man and woman but was to extend beyond to the human race, to remain in force in perpetuity as long as the conditions of the Fall prevailed. Just as humankind will inevitably return to the dust in death; just as God ordains that woman’s birth is to entail going into labour; just as God destines the snake to crawl on its belly; and just as God curses the ground so that thorns and thistles are to grow and it will not spontaneously produce crops but require man’s cultivation; so God pronounces the sentence upon the woman regarding her future relationship with her husband outside the garden.

It also seems that according to Genesis 3:16c-d, a change is instituted in the relationship between the sexes after the Fall. The introduction of *'issabon* (pangs) in Genesis 3:16a sets the tone for the parallel changes prescribed in the remainder of the verse. Was it natural for the serpent to change its form of locomotion to crawling as an automatic result of its role in the temptation and the Fall? Did it naturally follow that “enmity” should exist between the seed of the woman and the serpent, and that there should be bruising of head and heel respectively? Or did it naturally occur that because the man listened to the voice of his wife and ate the forbidden tree, then thorns and thistles should grow on the earth? Except as God ordained it after the Fall, the obvious answer to these questions is no. Hence, the judgment statement on the woman in Genesis 3:16 may be better understood as descriptive prescription of life in the post-fall environment.

## Intertextual Analysis

### תַּשְׁהֻקָּה (Desire)

The meaning of the words תַּשְׁהֻקָּה “desire” and מָסַל “rule” (Gen 3:16) is also found in Genesis 4:7. The parallel is transparently unmistakable: the woman “desires” her husband in the same way sin desires Cain, namely, to dominate. In other words, the relationship between man and woman is cursed with conflict; to love and to cherish is replaced by to dominate and to subjugate. An unregenerate woman desires to rule her husband, but the husband, being physically stronger, will dominate her. This will to subjugate the other is as inevitable as death.<sup>28</sup> This interpretation seems close in agreement to the contextual rendering of the term.

In all probability Song of Songs 7:11 is “written as an intertextual commentary on Gen 3:16c.”<sup>29</sup> In this verse (Song 7:11), the Shulammitte bride joyfully exclaims, “I am my beloved’s, and his desire [*teshuqa*] is for me.” This appears the term is employed in Genesis 3:16c to indicate a positive blessing accompanying the divine judgment; measures taken for the good of the human species in its new situation.<sup>30</sup> This position seems to be confirmed by the use of the same synonymous parallelism between Genesis 3:16c and verse 16d as occurs between verse 16a and 16b. The divine sentence upon Eve concerning her husband’s servant leadership is shown to be a blessing by its placement in synonymous parallelism with Eve’s “desire” for her husband.

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<sup>28</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 266-267.

<sup>29</sup> Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 73.

<sup>30</sup> Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, 163.

The conjunction *waw* linking the first part of the verse (Gen 3:16a and b) with the last two lines (Gen 3:16 c and d) should probably be translated as “yet” as used in NASB and RSV. God pronounces that even though the woman would have difficult “pangs” in childbearing—an ordeal that would seem naturally to discourage her from continuing to have relations with her husband—“yet,” God assures her, “your desire shall be for your husband,” and his loving servant leadership will take care of you even through the roughest times. Ideally the ruptured relationship between husband and wife, indicated in Genesis 3:12-13, is to be replaced by reconciliation and mutual love, with the wife resting in her husband’s protective care. At the same time, it is not inappropriate to return as much as is possible to God’s original plan for egalitarianism in marriage (Gen 2:24), while retaining the validity of the husband servant leadership principle necessary in a sinful world (the same way we take advantage of advances in obstetrics to relieve unnecessary pain and hard labour during delivery and technological/agricultural advances to relieve unnecessary hard labour in farming).

### **מִסְהָל (Rule)**

What is the nature of the man’s “rule”? “Rule” as a verb or derivative is found seven additional times in Genesis, where it may indicate governance (Gen 1:16, 18; cf Ps 136:7-9) and refers to exercising jurisdiction (Gen 24:2; 37:8; 45:8, 26). Human jurisdiction over the lower orders, however, is expressed by the different verb “dominate,” *rada* (Gen 1:28). This suggests that the man does not “rule” his wife in the same sense that he subdues the animals. We cannot understand “he will rule over you” as a command to impose dominance any more than Genesis 3:16a is an exhortation for the woman to suffer as much as possible during childbirth. It is a distortion of the passage to find in it justification for male tyranny. Ancient Israel provided safeguards for protecting women from unscrupulous men (Deut 24:1-4), and

the New Testament takes steps to restrain domination. Paul admonishes men and women to practice mutual submission (Eph 5:22, 23) and cautioned husbands to exercise love and protection without harshness.

Whereas the Hebrew *לָרִשׁוֹת* occurs throughout Genesis with reference to those in leadership positions (e.g., Gen 24:2; 45:8), the Greek *κυριευσει* occurs only here and in Genesis 37:8 where it parallels Joseph's being king over his brothers. Therefore, the husband's relationship to the woman in LXX-G is certainly one of dominance in both status and function. Because both MT and LXX represent the man's role as one of dominance, God's declaration of the husband's power over the woman has had significant influence in defining and maintaining gender roles and has thus provoked considerable debate.

For others, the woman had broken her divinely appointed relationship with the man. Instead of being a help "meet for him, she had become his seducer." Therefore her status of equality with man was forfeited; he was to "rule over" her as lord and master. Hence it seems reasonable to conclude that this "desire" was given to alleviate the sorrows of womanhood and to bind the hearts of husband and wife ever more closely together.<sup>31</sup>

The "rule" of the man could also be a more general reference to patriarchy, which could be a departure from what God intended in creation.<sup>32</sup> Keck understands that patriarchy and related ills came as a consequence of sin rather than being the divine intention. For, he contends that it would have been easy to build patriarchy into the created order.

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<sup>31</sup> "The expulsion from the garden," *SDABC*, 1:234.

<sup>32</sup> Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 363.

## Synthesis of Exegetical Study

Fretheim argues that to give someone or something a name is the expression of power or dominion over that which is named. Adam's naming of the animals expresses his dominion over them. While the woman is seen as the one who corresponds to man, the fact that she is taken from man indicates her dependence on him. Man's dominion over her is expressed in the fact that he names her. But there is the idea complete that man is incomplete without the woman. This is expressed in the need for a helper, and also in the fact that minus one rib he is incomplete without her. The woman completes the man.

And Fretheim, commenting on Genesis 3:16 appears to take an extreme position. He states that "There is no indication here of the cosmic dimensions of evil. It is firmly grounded within the sphere of history."<sup>33</sup> Nothing may be farther from the truth.

Some have argued that the sequence of creation reflects the patriarchal nature of ancient society. Schreiner, for example, argues that when man named the animals he exercised authority over them; and thus when man named the woman he exercised authority over her.<sup>34</sup>

But where the man designates the woman, begins with an affirmation of equality, "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Furthermore, it seems that the man and the woman were created sequentially in Genesis 2 in order to demonstrate the need they have for each other, and not to justify an implicit hierarchy. In Genesis

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<sup>33</sup> Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood. Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 81.

<sup>34</sup> Roland W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, eds., *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005), 87.

2:25 the couple is described as being “naked” and “not ashamed.” It is possible that these themes are introduced in order to prepare the reader for what is to come in Genesis 3, where this harmonious unity would know corruption and distortion due to humanity’s sin. A relationship that was once equally shared in a uniquely complementary design would become burdened with a struggle for authority from which the man would emerge the ruler.

In Genesis 2:18, the Hebrew word translated as “fit for him” or “meet for him” is כְּנֶגְדוֹ. It literally means “in front of,” “in sight of,” and “opposite to.” Thus, God has made for Adam a helper “as in front of him.” In other words, God made a helper “comparable to” or “opposite of,” “corresponding to” Adam. *Neged* is not the only possible word to signify “front” which could have been used in verse 18. In fact, *qedem* is used in Genesis 2:8. It also refers to “what is in front.” The writer of Genesis was aware of at least two words for “front.” However, the writer chose the unusual combination *knegdwo* instead of *qedem*, which certainly would have had less authoritative connotations than *neged*.<sup>35</sup>

However, does the fact that the woman is called “a helper” or “a help” to the man change or alter the apparent lack of subordination in the “meetness”? Perhaps in some cultures being a “helper” inherently signifies subordination. But in the Bible, the term עֹזֵר (one who helps) does not at all imply inherent subordination. In fact the term, *‘ezer* most frequently refers to God (thirteen times) and sometimes to military protectors and allies (four times). At no times does *‘ezer* indicate a subordinate helper unless the two references to “helper” in Genesis 2:18, 20 are considered exceptions.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Spencer, *Beyond the Curse. Women Called to Ministry*, 24.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

It was God who thought it was not good for Adam to be alone. Not all aloneness is loneliness. So God proceeds inductively to educate Adam so that he might appreciate the newest creation. Only someone formed from Adam's side could cause him to exclaim: "this, this time is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." It appears then that God's original intention for the man and the woman was to share authority and tasks. The dominion mandate given in Genesis 1:26-28 is in the plural—for the man and the woman.

What are the effects of the sentencing? Most basically, the sentences pertain to their (man and woman's) primary roles in life; roles of stature among the animals, roles of wife and mother, roles of tiller of soil and provider of food. Every conceivable relationship has been disrupted: among the animals; between an animal and humans; between human beings and God; between the ground and humans; and within the individual self (shame for instance). In less concrete (abstract) terms one could talk of humiliation, domination and subordination, conflict, suffering, and struggle. Indeed the sentences touch every aspect of human life—marriage and sexuality, birth and death, work and food, human and non-human—in all of these areas one could see death encroaching on life. Disharmony reigned as a result. The man and woman were created for relationship. Now the relationship itself is cursed, since it is implicitly valued more than the One that brought it about (at least on the side of Adam).

### **Summary of Analysis and Application**

Quite clearly, Genesis 3:16, and the verse that immediately follow, teach that sin has its consequences. The point that is apparent is that sin and disobedience do not go unchecked and unchallenged. Also, in His great love, God warns before He acts. In this context, God acts and speaks; man rebels; God punishes; God protects and

reconciles. God hates sin, and especially how much displeased he is with those who entice others into it.

The judgment statement in Genesis 3:16 assigns the role of “first among equals”<sup>37</sup> to the man; but this does not contradict the original divine ideal of Genesis 1:26-28 that both man and woman are equally held to accountable dominion; nor does it nullify the summary statement of Genesis 2:24 regarding the nature of the relationship between husband and wife. The judgment/blessing in Genesis 3:16 is to facilitate the achievement of the original divine design within the context of a sinful world.

The text of Genesis 3:16 does not attempt to exhaustively or exclusively define the full scope of either the husband’s or the wife’s roles in society. Each has potential and limitation. There is no new life without women’s productive responsibility, and human life cannot be sustained without men’s protective power. The text indicates a mutually dependent relationship and mutual valuation. God has designed the husband as facilitator and “tie-breaker” to maintain union and preserve harmony of the home.

The divine pattern for husband-wife relationships established in Eden (both before and after the fall) constitutes the assumed paradigm throughout the remainder of the Old Testament and, perhaps, the entire Scriptures. The prescription in Genesis 3:16 represents reality for husbands and wives, thus implicitly including both a divine redemptive call and enabling power to return as much as possible to the pre-fall equality in the marriage relationship, without denying the validity of the servant

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<sup>37</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel, “Equality from the Start: Woman in the Creation Story,” *Spectrum* 7 (1975): 26.

leadership principle as it may be needed in a sinful world to preserve unity and harmony in the home.

God's manner of executing this penalty illustrates his character. God acted in mercy, allowing humans to continue to live. God was true to his word in initiating punishments that led to the eventual execution of the penalty as well as providing a foretaste of death. Thus, God carried out the penalty in sequence of steps: the curses and the punishments, expulsion from the garden, and death itself.

A fundamental challenge to the ideologies of civilized men and women, past and present, is to suppose that their own efforts will ultimately suffice to save them. Genesis 3 shows that mankind is without hope if individuals are without God. Human society will disintegrate where divine law is not respected and divine mercy not implored. Yet Genesis, so pessimistic about humankind without God, is fundamentally optimistic, precisely because God created men and women in his own image and disclosed his ideal for humanity at the beginning of time. This emerged from the larger context of the study - the story of the temptation and the Fall (Gen 3:1-19).

Genesis 3:1-19 reveals that the religion of the Old Testament has in it always a virile optimism. It is not blind to the tragedy of life, but all the while it looks forward to triumph. Moreover, what every soul needs to learn is that it is a constant battle, but a battle which ought to be and may be a winning one.

Another theology from this portion of the book is that man's ancient folly is in thinking he can understand God better from his freely assumed standpoint and from his notion of God than he can if he would subject himself to his Word.<sup>38</sup> "Wherever

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<sup>38</sup> Rad, *Genesis*, 88.

man attacks the concrete Word of God with the weapon of a principle or an idea of God, there he has become the lord of God.”<sup>39</sup>

Genesis 3 teaches that God (and no other deity) created the universe, the world, and everything therein. Why did God allow Man and Woman to be tempted? Was it fair, knowing that they were so utterly naïve? That the God of Genesis tests people will become evident later on in Genesis 22:1. It is to be observed that there is no virtue without the possibility of sin. God tests, evaluates the results, and then doles out consequences. Besides, Ellen White states that, “Satan was not to follow them with continual temptations.”<sup>40</sup> And for us today, God is using even the example of the sinner to instruct the virtuous.

Unsanctified subtlety often proves a great curse to a man. And the more crafty men are to do evil the more mischief they do, and, consequently, they shall receive the greater damnation. Subtle tempters are the most accursed creatures under the sun. He that would be above God, and would head a rebellion against him, is justly exposed here to contempt and lies to be trodden on; and a man’s pride will bring him low, and God will humble those that will not humble themselves.

The context of Genesis 3:16 (Gen 3:1-19) seems to paint the picture that “as soon as there was sin, there was a saviour. Sin brought sorrow into the world; it was this that made the world a vale of tears, brought showers of trouble upon our heads, and opened springs of sorrows in our hearts, and so deluged the world. Had we known

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<sup>39</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 68.

<sup>40</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Toronto, Canada: Pacific Press, n.d), 53.

no guilt, we should have known no grief. Our sorrows are multiplied when our sins are.”<sup>41</sup>

The theme of divine promise clearly seen in Genesis 3:15 unites the patriarchal cycles found in the book. Moreover, the whole of Genesis 3 to Revelation 20 is a combat zone between God and the snake. Meanwhile, Genesis 1-2 introduces the paradisiacal world and the family that inhabits the world.

When man eats of the tree, he decides that the decision with regard to what is good for him or not good for him is for *him* to make. He decides to be autonomous, independent of any will beyond his own. He sets himself up as God over his realm of dominion. Man breaks these confines and enters into that dominion which is God’s. Thus, the tree and the command together constitute a sort of circumlocution for the decisiveness of the will of God for man’s existence.

While freedom is basic to creatureliness; complete freedom is impossibility.<sup>42</sup> Freedom can truly exist only in the presence of limitation, like the limitation of responsibility. Thus, the commandment was not necessary because of sin. Commandment was an essential ingredient of human life before sin entered the picture. Commandment was thus a manifestation of God’s grace. It sets the limits within which man as creature can most truly be man – acknowledgment of God as the giver and centre of life. Since, however, man chose to deny his limit, to be like God, to live and decide for himself, man became the centre. And the commandment became law rather than grace.

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<sup>41</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Toronto, Canada: Pacific Press, 1898), 210.

<sup>42</sup> Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood. Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 77.

Punishment came because of disobedience. But it tends toward the goal of restoration to communion and relationship. God comes to man in his guilt, and does not forsake him. Man's despair would be God walking in the other direction.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

Primogeniture seems an illegitimate model on which to ground man's supposed authority over woman in the context of the creation order. The sequential creation of man and woman in Genesis may be to demonstrate the need they have for each other, not to justify an implicit hierarchy. The argument that the designation of the woman as a "helper corresponding to" (*'ezer kenegdwo*) man in Genesis 2 puts her in a subordinate position may not hold water as God is also sometimes described as *'ezer* for Israel or any other person that appeals to Him.

Moreover, the idea that the naming of the woman by the man is tantamount to exercising authority over her sounds unconvincing. The fact seems to emerge that Eve and Adam are equal in rank, equal in image, before the Fall; and that Genesis 2 declares and explains male and female equality, joint rulership, and interrelationship. God's original intention for man and woman may have been that in work and in marriage they share tasks and share authority. Both serpent and ground are cursed, but the humans, however heavy their punishment, are not cursed. The interest in Genesis 3: 14-21 is etiological: why snakes crawl, why childbirth hurts, why men dominate women, why work is burdensome, why people die.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David W. Cotter, *BERIT OLAM Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry. Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 35.

The result of these judgments is loss of harmony in relationships. The earth does not function in conjunction with the humans. Thus the woman and the man must work against the tendency of the land to produce thorns and thistles. The woman and man, as well, now possess a natural inclination to fight one another, each seeking to exercise their own will against the will of their companion.

The phrase, *thy desire shall be to thy husband*, has been interpreted in several ways; (1) the common view is that of sexual desire on the part of the woman for her husband, knowing now there will be pain in childbearing; (2) some refer to it as psychological dependence upon the husband, that is, the woman will be a willing slave; and (3) Calvin says she will desire only what the husband desires.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, certain points need to be highlighted and emphasized. First, man and woman (in Gen 1-3) were created equally in God's image, albeit clearly in different ways and sequentially. The woman was formed from the man as his corresponding helper or partner. Second, this creation order had no apparent hierarchy of the man over the woman.

It may be observed that male dominance is, perhaps, an unfortunate and undesired reality of a sinfully disordered world. Whereas traditionally the woman's submission to her husband was accepted as an ordinance of creation that was corrupted by the fall and which can only be restored through the Christian gospel, it appears that Eve's submission was an altogether new state resulting from sin.

Third, man's description of his partner as "woman" seems to reflect unity in personhood and diversity in their gender. Fourth, there appears to be neither explicit nor implicit mention of any authority or leadership role of the man over the woman, except as a sad consequence of their sin in the Fall and their ensuing judgments. Fifth,

the only authority given before the Fall was their collective dominion over the rest of creation. Finally, God's judgment on the woman after the Fall seems to indicate that she would have a desire to dominate the man, but he will end up ruling her.

The equality of their union is no more; one flesh is split. The man will not reciprocate the woman's desire; instead, he will rule over her. Thus she loves in unresolved tension. Where once there was mutuality, now there is a hierarchy of division. The man dominates the woman to pervert sexuality. Hence the woman is corrupted in becoming a slave, and the man is corrupted in becoming a master. His supremacy is neither a divine right nor a male prerogative. Her subordination is neither a divine decree nor the female destiny. Both positions result from shared disobedience. God does not only describe this consequence but also prescribes it as punishment. In one way or another, many scholars argue that the Hebrew text itself does not mandate or condone male domination or female inferiority.

Genesis 3:16-17 may be understood as a descriptive prescription of the new order of things, of how life *will* be lived as a result of the Fall, rather than how it should be lived. These are not God's original decisions on how things must be, such that violation of them would be sin. Therefore, in the context of Genesis 3:16, God did not reiterate an original creation order of male dominance over the female. Genesis 3:16 seems a revelatory statement of description of a newly prescribed life as such, feminists better look elsewhere.

In addition, nothing in the text suggests that as a result of the Fall women exhibit overpowering sexual drives towards their husbands. And since God's description, and prescription, of the "desire" and "rule" was only concomitant upon sin, the gospel calls all believers to live with heaven in view; and exercise all authority under the fear and guidance of the revealed will of God (in the Scriptures)

who originally created man and woman sequentially and functionally different but equal.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the policy making body should maintain and uphold the woman's subjection/submission to the man's rulership as long as sin and its consequences endure. This may not be safely ignored. In the course of this research, and aware of the obvious limitations/constraints faced, the following recommendations are hereby made for further research:

1. Bearing in mind such texts as Ephesians 5:22, 23 and 1 Timothy 2:12, 13 whether Genesis 3:16 can be the basis of argument concerning primogeniture.
2. To investigate if sequential creation and functional differentiation necessarily imply subordination and/or hierarchicalism.

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