



## Home Help Addiction Intervention

### Bible Study (1)

#### SO JUST WHAT IS IT ABOUT PEOPLE?

Parallel to the first series of lectures in this Home Help Addiction Intervention program where we tried to identify the difference between user, abuser, and chemically dependent people, we now come to a corresponding Bible Study which is aimed at levelling the ground between people in general. This study is firstly aimed at establishing the foundations and roots of prevalent behaviours beliefs and attitudes usually pointed out in people who suffer from what is known as Substance Abuse and/or Chemical Dependence. Secondly it raises the question; 'how do you differentiate the good (sober) from the bad (drunk)?

As you take up the Scripture to read, try to keep in mind that you are reading into a context of people, at the beginning of time, in transition from innocence before God and intimacy with Him, to guilt and separation from God, that's why Paul wrote:

**1 Corinthians 10:11 <sup>11</sup> *Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.***

With this in mind, that everything we are about to examine happened to the people involved as 'an example to them' but they were written down as instructions to us, I would ask that you read from Genesis 2:15 to 3:13, firstly on your own (out loud) and then (out loud again) with your small group if you have one.



## Genesis 2 (English Standard Version)

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” <sup>19</sup> Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature that was its name. <sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

<sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

**Genesis 3:1** ‘Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

<sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup> He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” <sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Lord, assist us to receive, understand, and apply Your Word to our life for your glory, Amen.



## SO WHAT IS IT ABOUT PEOPLE?

### From Genesis 2:15 – 3:13

(English Standard Version)

*To spring board us into our study from Genesis 2:15 let me just back-track a little to Genesis 1:11 where we are told how all herbs and vegetation of the earth came about: ‘And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so’. Everything we see being created at this point is in its most pure form; there was no atmospheric, industrial, or spiritual pollution at all – it is physically and literally coming into existence, falling from the mouth of God. At this point in time, everything God is creating is Blessed of God; it has His favour, it has His approval, it has His finger-print on it, the entire earthly created order contains His Divine DNA if you like.*

*Please store that thought in mind as we now go into up our interactive study<sup>1</sup> of Genesis 2:15 to 3:13 ...* **<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it** *God has a plan for man but in order for the man to work and keep the garden, common sense dictates that there would need to be physical contact and interaction between himself and the vegetation of the garden.* **<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying -** *The all-knowing all-seeing all-powerful God is now communicating with the man – He is relating to the man – they are now in ‘relationship’ with each other. The all-knowing all-seeing all-powerful Creator has chosen to enter into a relationship with the finite and naïve man who at this point did not even know that the garden would need attention!* **“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,<sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”** *God only told the man not to eat of this tree, He has not told him not to touch it. If it was in God’s law that Adam must not touch the tree we would need an explanation from God as to how the man could fulfill the first command ‘tend the garden’ without breaking what would have been the second commandment, ‘don’t touch this specific tree’*

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<sup>1</sup> Scripture is copied and pasted directly from my on-line Bible and is seen in black bold, interactive comments are inserted in blue italic to create an explanatory journey through the text.



**<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” <sup>19</sup> Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature that was its name. *We can safely conclude from this verse that at this moment in time, from the ground upwards, everything was approved of by God.***

**<sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed. *The Hebrew word for naked in this instance is ‘aw-rome’, in its original sense it implies nudity, either partially or totally but it brought no defensive reaction.***

**Question: How long were Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before they sinned?** *The Bible does not explicitly tell us how long Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden before sin. God did not see fit for that information to be given. We can only really guess, but it seems as if they were in the Garden for a short amount of time due to there being no children from them at that time. Adam and Eve did not conceive any children until after what we now call ‘The Fall’ (Genesis 4:1-2), so it is unlikely they were in the Garden for very long.*

## The Fall

*We are about to explore Genesis 3 and we are about to read about an anti-God influence.*

*God has given what we call ‘dominion’ (the position of dominance) over the entire earthly creation to the man, this included the animal, mammal, reptile and vegetable realms.*



*I feel safe to trust that Adam will have had the ability to communicate with the animal, mammal, and reptile occupants of The Garden at that point and them with him because he had been given dominion over them. I make this point because we are about to read how a serpent went into divisive dialogue with God's daughter about God's nature.*

*So who or what was this anti-God influence that we about to see hissing from the serpent? God's enemy, Satan!*

*Where did Satan come from and when, and why would he want to thwart God's relationship with His children?*

Answers to questions like these can always be found at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org) and here's what they teach on the Satan question:

*Satan's fall from heaven is **symbolically described** in Isaiah 14:13-14 - <sup>13</sup>You said in your heart, **I will** ascend to heaven; above the stars of God **I will** set my throne on high; **I will** sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; <sup>14</sup>**I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** make myself like the Most High.'*

*And again in Ezekiel 28:12-18 <sup>12</sup>"Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king<sup>2</sup> of Tyre, and say to him, thus says the Lord God: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom (*absolute in wisdom*) and perfect in beauty (*absolute in beauty*). <sup>13</sup>You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. <sup>14</sup>You were an anointed guardian cherub (*set aside for a specific purpose*). I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. <sup>15</sup>You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created (*pure*) till unrighteousness was found in you. <sup>16</sup>In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence (*enough was never enough*) in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. <sup>17</sup>Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour.*

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<sup>2</sup> In verses 1 to 10 of this same chapter Ezekiel is instructed to address a guy who believed himself to be King, as 'O Prince of Tyre'. God demotes the man in order to expose the ruling spiritual influence in the heart and the mind of this man – Satan, the real king of Tyre.



**I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you.** <sup>18</sup>**By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you.** *While these two passages are referring specifically to the kings of Babylon and Tyre, they also give reference the spiritual power behind those kings, namely, Satan. These passages describe why Satan fell, but they do not specifically say when the fall occurred it is widely accepted that this fall took place before Genesis 1. What we do know is this: the angels were created before the earth (Job 38:4-7). Satan fell before he tempted<sup>3</sup> Adam and Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:1-14). Satan's fall, therefore, must have occurred somewhere after the time the angels were created and before he tempted<sup>4</sup> Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.*

*Therefore, to answer how and why did Satan fall from heaven? Satan fell because of pride and a craving to exert his will; notice the number of "I will" statements in Isaiah 14:12-15.*

*Ezekiel 28:12-15 describes Satan as an exceedingly beautiful angel with wisdom power and authority. Satan was likely to be the highest of all angels, the most beautiful of all of God's created beings. However, he was not content in his position. Instead, Satan desired to be more than God had created him to be, essentially wanting to kick God off His throne. Satan wanted to be God, and interestingly enough, that is precisely what he promised for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5).*

*How did Satan fall from heaven? Actually, a fall is not an accurate description. It would be far more accurate to say God cast Satan out of heaven (Isaiah 14:15; Ezekiel 28:16-17). So right there, before the world began, the spiritual realms were divided into light and dark – and that could explain the need for light in the darkness of Genesis 1:1-3 because the sun and stars are not created until verse 14 (just a thought).*

*Satan did not fall from heaven; rather, Satan was pushed out of heaven and as we proceed, his influence is exhibited from the snake's divisive influence.*

### **Back to Genesis 3**

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<sup>3</sup> I differ in my understanding at this point; 1 Timothy 2:14 tells us how Eve was 'deceived' not tempted. Adam fell for the temptation. Eve slipped Adam dived.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid



**<sup>2</sup> Now the serpent was craftier than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it lest you die.’** *Okay – remember this; in and of herself Eve had no knowledge of evil at this point. Therefore ‘temptation’ is not the problem here; lack of discernment and a poor handling of God’s Word is the problem.* **<sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”** *This ‘anti-God’ influence set out to distort their God given reality, that which was established in accordance to God’s Word, by seductively suggesting a more attractive ‘reality’, all she had to do was ignore the fear on consequences. The foundation of this spiritual attack is simple; he gets her to doubt her beliefs in order to entice her further into believing her doubts.*

**<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked ...**

**For The Record:** *It was only seven verses ago at the end of Genesis 2 that the man and his wife were naked and knew no shame – now we see what would appear to be the same word ‘naked’ but with completely different reactions and consequences, they now feel the urge to hide.*

**<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked;** *In Hebrew we are told that they have moved from ‘aw-rome’ to a condition of ‘ay-rome’, their condition has actually changed, only slightly, but critically. They have gone from ‘aw-rome’, implying partial or total nudity without shame; to a state of ‘ay-rome’ - totally naked and worried by shame. God’s approval which covered them – has clearly and understandably been compromised.*

**And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths *clearly* trying to cover the consequences of dropping the ball <sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the**



**man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**

**Two questions:**

*(1) In verse 8, 'they heard the sound of The Lord God walking in the garden' – how did they know it was Him?*

- *Because they 'recognised' the sound as being that of 'The Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day', we can clearly see and safely conclude that He had done it before. They were His children, why wouldn't He want to meet with them?*

*(2) If Adam had not tried to cover the consequences of his sin, and if he had looked God, his Father, in the eye and simply took ownership and personal responsibility; 'Sir, I've really blown it, as you approach I have to tell you that I'm guilty, ashamed, and I want to run away from you" – what action do you think his Father would have taken?*

- *How many parents, Uncles and Aunties, have silently watched our beloved babies playing out in the garden, building a world of their own, talking away to themselves? Once upon-a-time, not so very many years ago in a South Africa village context, our very own little Georgia-Claire would play out in our lush green garden completely naked, oblivious to any danger, chatting away to her little self and allocating various seats to her various little dolls whilst making tea for them. Nathan-James came along a few years later and whilst the picture stayed the same it actually changed; he told his soldiers where he wanted them and bombs were frequently heard exploding in his imaginary enemy camp – as parents, we stood back and watched and smiled with pride. Inwardly we knew that it was only a case of when we would cringe and run to their aid as the bee stings or when he would fall out of the tree playing Spiderman! And then how many of us have rebuked our children with 'how many times have I told you not to pick up the bee, how many times have I told you not to climb the tree? But then how many of us have melted with compassion when the little ones climb weeping into our laps?*



*So how would you expect God to react to Adam and Eve if they had openly and honestly taken responsibility for their behaviour and confessed to their Father?*

*1 John 1:9 tells us “if we confess our sins He is faithful to forgive us our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness” – that tells us Adam and Eve could have still been alive and righteous in Eden today if they had trusted their Father and owned their vulnerabilities. Adam and Eve heard the sound of their LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden? Oh the breaking heart of a Father when His children don’t trust Him and then try to hide from Him.<sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”<sup>10</sup> and he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”*

**For The Record:** *When we try to make right sound wrong and wrong sound right it never takes long before we are overtaken by fear, shame, and the desire to run away from anything resembling the truth.*

<sup>11</sup> He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” <sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

**For The Record:** *Once we allow right to sound wrong we drift beyond the realms of God’s reality and purposes. Therefore, out in that hostile spiritual territory, even the idea of taking personal responsibility for anything we might subsequently get involved with which is wrong, also sounds wrong and so we begin to play the blame game.*

*Let’s make an attitude and behaviour inventory of humanities mum and dad:*

- **There is a definite lack of gratitude for the things they already owned**
- **They make right sound wrong**
- **They make wrong sound right**



- They are always trying to cover their wrongs
- They try to run and hide from the truth
- They (s)instinctively avoid taking responsibility for their wrongs
- They have a (un)natural inclination towards playing the blame game

Sound familiar? It was Biblical before it was anything.

So let's close this study with this thought:

### **From The Psychiatric World: The Experience of Addiction**

*Interactive*<sup>5</sup> Extracts from: Stanton Peele and Archie Brodsky (Morristown, New Jersey 1977)

It is wrong to blame drugs for addiction. Addiction is a kind of experience that happens inside someone's consciousness. It is triggered *by a desire for a new reality* which seems to be found through a drug or some other stimulus. Addiction happens because the person has learned to react to his or her experience in a certain characteristic way.

To understand why someone could *seemingly fall in love with the influences of a substance and then fall apart when there is an absence of it, and why they appear to find that second experience so unbearable*, we have to ask *what the substance brought. If this search and research is carried out correctly and thoroughly it will eventually<sup>6</sup> bring us to an innate* basic hopelessness experienced *by all people at some point* about their prospects in life—a hopelessness which leads millions of people to desire a new reality. These feelings and beliefs of hopelessness are intensified as people get deeper into the addiction.

Addiction is caused by *Spiritual and* environmental factors - more common in our time than any other - which are destructive of the wholeness of the individual.

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<sup>5</sup> *Bold italic blue* is this author's adjustment for the purposes of this exercise and is in no way any level of disrespect for Peele & Brodsky's original intent.

<sup>6</sup> Not just by psychiatrists and psychologists, by seasoned and trained addiction specialists



In their *Addiction is a Social Disease*, Peele and Brodsky quote R.D. Laing, a Scottish psychiatrist, who wrote extensively on mental illness. Laing's views on the causes and treatment of serious mental dysfunction ran counter to the psychiatric orthodoxy of the day. I would argue Laing's description of many mental health issues as being rooted in 'basic uncertainty about one's own being, one's place in the world' must also be considered common place within the drug culture, because of humanities status and positioning outside of God's reality and purposes (Eden).

According to Laing, severe alienation (*that which I believe to be the Adam and Eve complex*) causes desperate attempts to unite, even destructively with another person, to devour or be devoured, in order to find an identity outside oneself. Laing, of course, is talking about the most extreme form of reaction to the strains of modern living. But we (Peele & Brodsky) believe that the psychological mechanisms he analyses have a broader applicability. For addiction, in its various forms, is an adaptive mechanism widely resorted to by "normal" individuals in our society—by all of us, perhaps? It constitutes a search for something external and secure to give reassurance in the absence of a deeply felt *Spiritual* connection with *our life-source*.

What addiction substitutes for is a strong sense of one's own reality and the reality of the world in which one lives. *Peele and Brodsky then go on* - The best antidotes to addiction are joy and competence: joy, as a capacity to take pleasure in people and things and activities, and competence, as a mastery of relevant parts of one's environment and a confidence that one's actions make a difference for oneself and others. Both joy and competence require a real connectedness with life in the concrete – *I feel the Psychiatric/Psychological world is here falling short in attempting to identify joy and competence as something to be achieved from one's own attributes and external conditions. Joy, as an internal subjective reality, from a Biblical perspective, is that state of being only given to people within God's reality and purposes, people who truly know God. Where Peele and Brodsky refer to competence as their second suggested antidote to addiction, I would argue that they are trying to produce fruits without roots. In their original condition, within God's reality and purposes, Adam and Eve will have existed with innate sensations of Significance and Joy, yet they will not have realized it until they lost that connection to their life source, their Father.*



When this sense of being in touch is lacking, feelings of uncertainty, self-doubt, and anxiety can arise which create a desire to escape from oneself and one's situation. This is where the need for an external solution arises.

The reason why heroin is so powerful an addictive agent for some people, and why it is so sorely missed by withdrawn addicts, is that it offers a soothing *(Eden-like)* sensation that everything is all right. Anything which provides a strong dose of comfort, regularity, and external structure can serve the same function. Where life seems a pointless struggle, full of threats rather than opportunities, an addiction is a way to give up the struggle. The difference between being predisposed *not* to be addicted and being predisposed to be addicted is the difference between seeing the world as your arena and seeing the world as your prison.

Further Reading: The Biblical Link to Addictions, available in PDF through this Home Help Addiction Intervention page on [www.bethesda4recovery.com](http://www.bethesda4recovery.com)



## **Doctrinal Standpoint**

Before I try to expound any level of Biblical teaching, I need you to understand where I come from with regards to Biblical Interpretation; I'm Dispensationalist with regards to understanding in how and why God deals with us. This means I believe God has related to and dealt with man-kind in various ways according to their historical timeline, culture context and the direction He wanted for them. His dealings with mankind have been and still are dependent upon whichever dispensation (time span) we were/are in.

I believe there are 7 Dispensations, with key individuals playing key roles in God's communication with humanity, as follows:

1. The dispensation of Innocence – Genesis 1:28 to 3:13
2. The dispensation of Conscience – Genesis 3:23 to 7:23
3. The dispensation of Human government – Genesis 8:20 to 11:9
4. The dispensation of Promise – Genesis 12:1 to Exodus 19:8
5. The dispensation of Law – Exodus 19:8 to Matthew 27:35
6. The dispensation of Grace – John 1:17 to Today and following
7. The Millennial Reign of Christ leading to final judgement – Ephesian 1:7-10

Today, as evil spreads globally, we live in the penultimate Dispensation, if ever there was a time to return to God's Reality and Purposes, it is now, and we are running out of time. The Kingdom is still open to receive penitent sinners who are willing to raise a hand and say; 'Lord, I'm here, hiding from you. I've blown it, my life is riddled with self-centred sin and I cannot beat it, I cannot stop it; I can only throw myself at your feet in need of Grace and Mercy.