Exile and Mortality as Restorative Justice

More Evidence that God's Justice is Restorative, Not Retributive

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Troubling Questions from the OT

- Why does God even let us die? (Katelyn)
- God actively took human life? (Mako)
- God set up Israel to be vulnerable? (Mako)



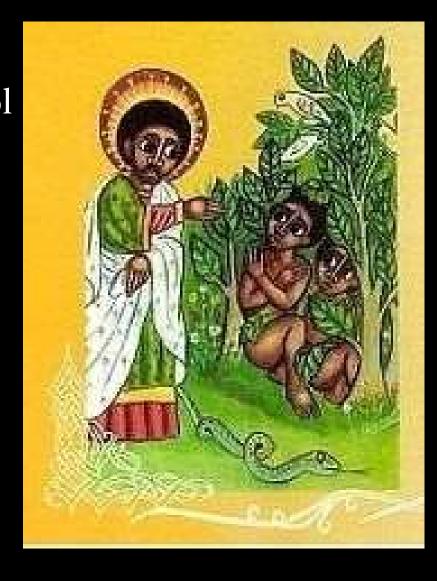
Outline

- Genesis 3:8 24
- Restorative or Retributive?
- Early Church Understanding



Genesis 3:8 – 9

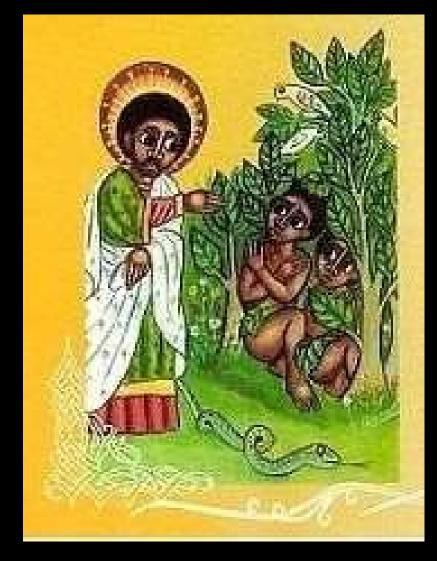
⁸ They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?'





Genesis 3:10 – 11

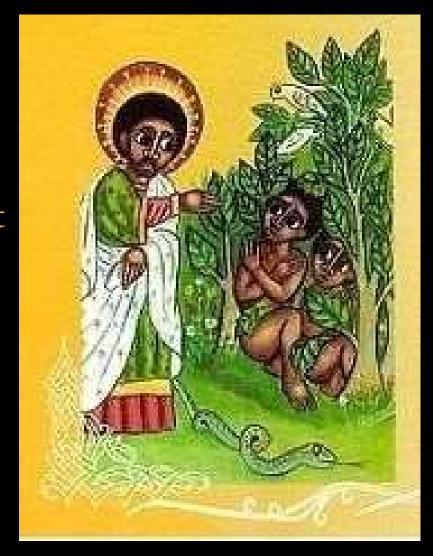
¹⁰ He said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." ¹¹ And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?'





Genesis 3:12 – 13

12 The man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.' 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'





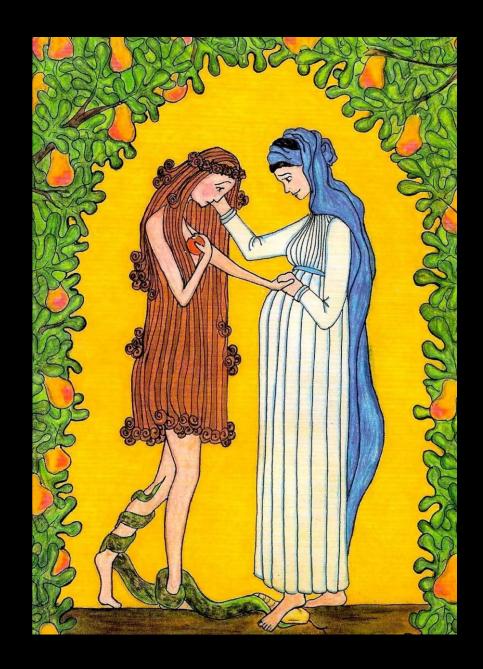
Genesis 3:14 – 15

The LORD God said to the serpent,
 'Because you have done this,
 Cursed are you more than all cattle,
 And more than every beast of the field;
 On your belly you will go,

And dust you will eat

All the days of your life;

¹⁵ And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel.'





Genesis 3:16

¹⁶ To the woman He said,

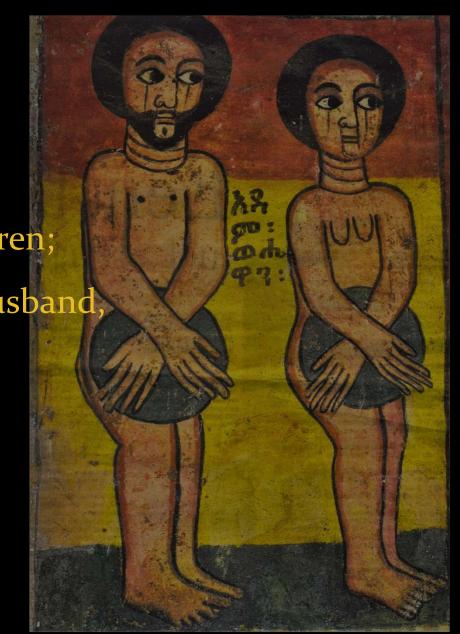
'I will greatly multiply

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.'





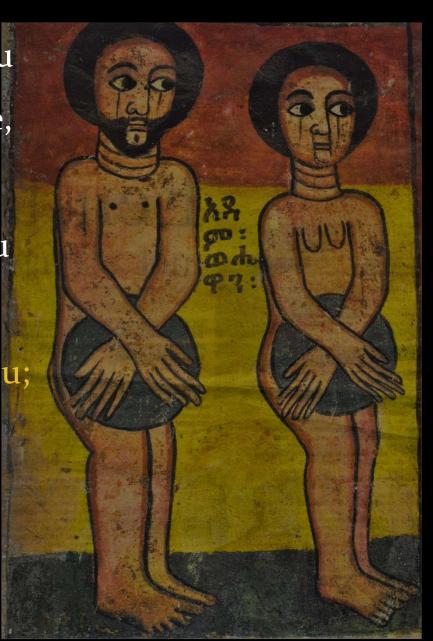
Genesis 3:17

¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you

In toil you will eat of it

All the days of your life.





Genesis 3:18 – 19

¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;

And you will eat the plants of the field;

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face

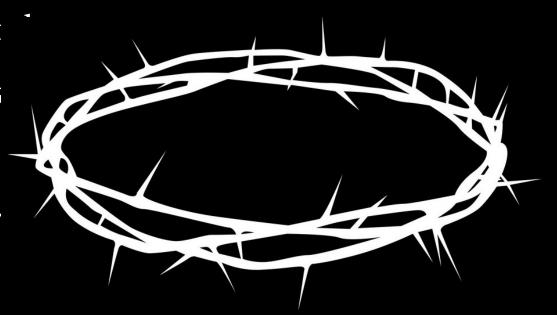
You will eat bread,

Till you return to the groun

Because from it you were to

For you are dust,

And to dust you shall retur





God Curses

- Only the serpent and the ground
- NOT Adam and Eve





Genesis 3:22-24

²² And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." ²³ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from

which he had been taken.





Genesis 3:24

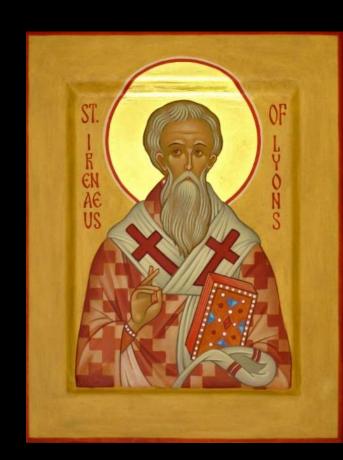
²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.





"Wherefore also God drove him [Adam] out of Paradise, and removed him far from the tree of life, not because He envied him the tree of life, as some venture to assert, but because He pitied him, [and did not desire] that he should continue a sinner for ever, nor that the sin which surrounded him should be immortal, and evil interminable and irremediable. But He set a bound to his [state of] sin, by interposing death, and thus causing sin to cease, putting an end to it by the dissolution of the flesh, which should take place in the earth, so that man, ceasing at length to live to sin, and dying to it, might begin to live to God."

• Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 3.23.6 (2nd century)





"In order, then, that man might not be an undying or ever-living evil, as would have been the case if sin were dominant within him, as it had sprung up in an immortal body, and was provided with immortal sustenance, God for this cause pronounced him mortal, and clothed him with mortality... For while the body still lives, before it has passed through death, sin must also live with it... For the present we restrain its sprouts, such as evil imaginations, test any root of bitterness springing up trouble us, not suffering its leaves to unclose and open into shoots; while the Word, like an axe, cuts at its roots which grow below. But hereafter the very thought of evil will disappear."

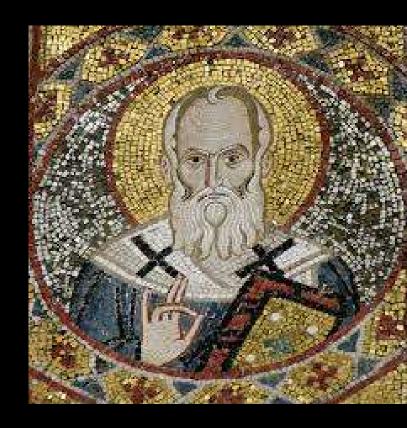
Methodius of Olympus, *Discourse on the Resurrection* 1.4 – 5 (3rd century)





"Yet here too he makes a gain, namely death and the cutting off of sin, in order that evil may not be immortal. Thus, his punishment is changed into a mercy, for it is in mercy, I am persuaded, that God inflicts punishment."

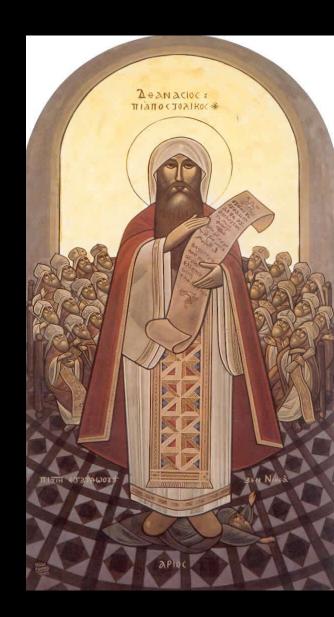
Gregory of Nazianzus, Oration 45
 (4th century)





"For the Word, perceiving that no otherwise could the corruption of men be undone save by death as a necessary condition..."

• Athanasius of Alexandria, *On the Incarnation 8.1* (4th century)



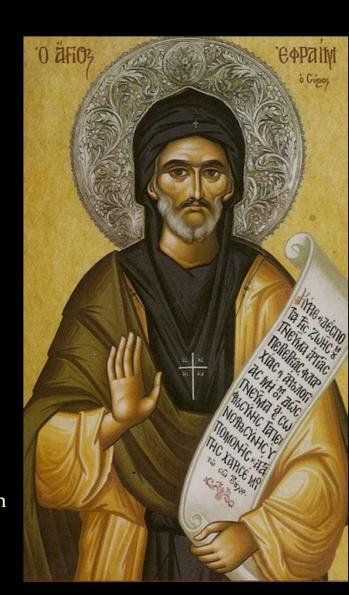


"The Just One saw how Adam had become audacious

because He had been lenient and knew that he would overstep again if He continued thus:

Adam trampled down that gentle and pleasant boundary, so instead God made for Adam a boundary guarded by force."

• Ephrem of Syria, *Hymns on Paradise 4.1* (4th century)





"Praised be the Wise One, who reconciled and joined

The Divine with the Human Nature.

One from above and one from below,

He confined the Natures as medicines,

And being the Image of God, became man...'

"Blessed be the Merciful One, who saw the weapon

by Paradise,

That closed the way to the Tree of Life;

And came and took a Body which could suffer,

That with the Door, that was in His side,

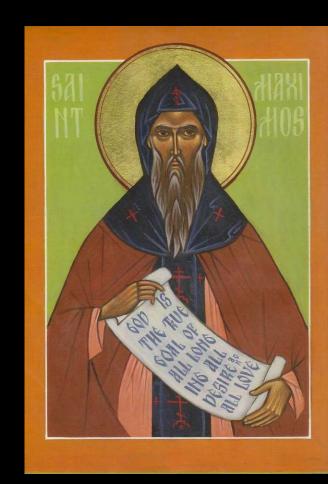
He might open the way into Paradise."

• Ephrem of Syria, *Hymns on Nativity 6.2, 4* (4th century)



"The phrase, 'And now, lest he put forth his hand and take from the Tree of Life and live forever,' providentially produces, I think, the separation of things that cannot be mixed together, so that evil might not be immortal, being maintained in existence by participation in the good."

• Maximus the Confessor, *Ad Thalassios Question 44.5* (7th century)





Genesis 3:24

²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

