

**What's Forever For?**  
**FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD**  
**March 22, 2008**

We are entering into the spring Holy Day season. Each of these has its own special meaning. As we have studied them over the years, we have found there are actually a multitude of meanings.

One thing that every Holy Day has in common – each is commanded to be a statute “for ever”.

As a youngster, I remember staying awake at night pondering the concepts of “eternity” and “endless space”.

The word “eternity” is only used 3 times:

1. **Ecclesiastes 3**

- 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.
  - Here “eternity” is a **future focus** - God put the concept into our hearts.

2. **Isaiah 57**

- 15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.
  - Here “eternity” is a **current focus** – where God lives.

3. **Acts 15**

- 18 Known to God from eternity are all His works.
  - Here “eternity” is a **past focus** – recounting the works God has already done.

Human beings struggle with the challenge of constancy versus change. In politics, we have the conservatives (those who oppose change and cling to “old virtues”) and the liberals (those who embrace change and promote it in all areas of life).

We need change.

We need some constants.

We need to be able to evaluate what needs to change and what needs to stay the same.

That is the essence of the Serenity Prayer.

Forever is a term used 381 times in the Bible - 48 in Torah.

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The concept of living “forever” is introduced very early in the Bible, in Genesis 3.

**Genesis 3**

- 1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"
  - Revelation 12.9 refers to the Devil as Satan and the serpent of old
  - Did Satan take over the body of a serpent and speak to Eve?
- 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;
- 3 "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"
- 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.
- 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
  - Is this a half-truth?
  - The Devil knows that, even though Adam and Eve ate the fruit and would die once, he also knew they could inherit eternal life if they repented.
  - All men, knowing good and evil, have choices to make for themselves.
- 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.
- 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.
  - If they were not able to literally see prior to this, how could Adam have seen and named the animals?
  - How could he have recognized the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
  - The more likely means they had an awareness previously not available – that is why they were embarrassed.
  - Children are not embarrassed to be naked – they learn that.
- 8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam 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 Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"
- 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."
  - Adam was afraid he had been caught!
  - He knew good and evil and knew that he had made a wrong choice.
- 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

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- 12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."
  - The first buck gets passed!
- 13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
  - The second buck is passed!
  - Eve realized the Devil had deceived her.
- 14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust 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 your head, And you shall bruise His heel."
  - The guilty party is punished.
- 16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."
  - Punishment for the deceived is less.
- 17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.
- 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.
- 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."
  - Punishment for the 3<sup>rd</sup> party is even less.
  - Adam is allowed to retain "ruler ship" over Eve.
  - Here is a lesson for how the judicial system "should" work – when all are guilty, all should have a punishment. The "least guilty" should not get off free.
- 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
- 21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.
  - The Lord made the first clothes!!!
- 22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" -
- 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.
  - God expelled them from the Garden of Eden so they could not eat of the tree of life.

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- Adam was already made in God's likeness, but immortality was not part of the deal.
- 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

In Genesis 6, just before the story of the flood, God limits man's life.

**Genesis 6:**

- 3 And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."
  - God places a limit on man's age.
  - Many of us are ½ way there – although, odds are that we will not reach even 90.