

# The Fall of Adam and Eve

translated by Ælfric, abbot of Eynsham

late tenth century

This text of Ælfric's translation of Genesis 3:1–19 is from British Library MS Cotton Claudius B. iv, a magnificently illustrated collection of translations from the Old Testament. The manuscript was published in facsimile by C. R. Dodwell and P. A. M. Clemoes, *The Old English Illustrated Hexateuch*, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, xviii (Copenhagen, 1974). If you are working with the *Guide to Old English*, compare the text in that book (printed from a different manuscript) with this one. Can you spot the substantive differences?

[1] Æac swylce sēo nāddre wæs gēapre ðonne ealle ðā oðre nȳtenu ðe God geworhte ofer eorðan. And sēo nāddre cwæð tō ðām wīfe: “Hwī forbēad God ēow ðæt gē ne æton of ælcum trēowe binnan Paradīsum?”

[2] Þæt wīf andwyrde: “Of ðāra trēowa wæstmē ðe synd on Paradīsum wē etað:

[3] and of ðæs trēowes wæstmē þe is onmiddan neorxnawange, God bebēad ūs ðæt wē ne æton, ne wē ðæt trēow ne hrepodon, ðī lās ðe wē swelton.”

[4] Ðā cwæð sēo nādre eft tō ðām wīfe: “Ne bēo gē nāteshwōn dēade, ðeah ðe gē of ðām trēowe eton.

[5] Ac God wāt sōðlice ðæt ēowre ēagan bēoð geopenode on swā hwylcūm dæge swā gē etað of ðām trēowe; and gē bēoð ðonne englum gelīce, witende ægðer ge gōd ge yfel.”

[6] Ðā geseah ðæt wīf ðæt ðæt trēow wæs gōd tō etenne, be ðām ðe hyre ðūhte, and wlitig on ēagum and lustbære on gesyhðe; and genam ðā of ðæs trēowes wæstmē and gēæt, and sealde hyre were: hē æt ðā.

[7] And heora bēgra ēagan wurdon geopenode: hī oncnēowon ðā ðæt hī nacode wæron, and sȳwodon him ficlēaf and worhton him wædbrēc.

[8] Eft ðā ðā God cōm and hī gehȳrdon his stemne, ðær hē ēode on neorxnawange ofer midne dæg, ðā behȳdde Adam hine, and his wīf ēac swā dyde, fram Godes ġesihðe onmiddan ðām trēowe neorxnawonges.

[9] God clypode ðā Adam, and cwæð: “Adam, hwær eart ðu?”

[10] Hē cwæð: “Dīne stemne ic ġehīre, lēof, on neorxnawange, and ic ondrāde mē, for ðām ðe ic eom nacod, and ic behȳde mē.”

[11] God cwæð: “Hwā sǣde ðē ðæt ðū nacod wære, ġyf ðū ne æte of ðām trēowe ðe ic ðē bebēad ðæt ðū ne æte?”

[12] Adam cwæð: “Ðæt wīf ðe ðū mē forgēafe tō ġefēran sealde mē of ðām trēowe, and ic ætt.”

[13] God cwæð tō ðām wīfe: “Hwī dydest tū ðæt?” Hēo cwæð: “Sēo nǣdre bepæhte mē and ic ætt.”

[14] God cwæð tō ðære nǣddran: “For ðan ðe ðū ðis dydest, ðū bist āwyrġed betweox eallum nȳtenum and wildēorum. Ðū ġæst on ðīnum brēoste and ytst ðā eorðan eallum dagum ðīnes līfes.

[15] Ic sette fēondrādenne betwux ðē and ðām wīfe and ðīnum ofspringe and hire ofspringe; hēo tōbrȳtt ðīn hēafod and ðū syrwt onġēan hire hō.”

[16] Tō ðām wīfe cwæð God ēac swylce: “Ic ġemænifylde ðīne yrmða and ðīne ġeēacnunga; on sārnyse ðū ācenst cild, and ðū bist under weres anwealde and hē ġewylt ðē.”

[17] Tō Adame hē cwæð: “For ðān ðe ðū ġehȳrdest ðīnes wīfes stemne and ðū æte of ðām trēowe ðe ic ðē bebēad ðæt ðū ne æte, is sēo eorðe āwyrġed on ðīnum weorce. On ġeswyncum ðū ytst of ðære eorðan eallum dagum ðīnes līfes.

[18] Ðornas and brēmelas hēo āsprȳt ðē, and ðū ytst ðære eorðan wyrta.

[19] On swāte ðīnes andwlitan ðū brȳcst ðīnes hlāfes oð ðæt ðū ġewende tō eorðan, of ðære ðe ðū ġenumen wære, for ðān ðe ðū eart dūst and tō dūste ġewyrst.”

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