The Trees in the Garden

Eden's Two Trees, and Their Meaning Through All of Scripture

Traces Eden's two trees, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, through the whole of Scripture, from a way barred in Genesis to a way opened in Revelation.

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Author: John Lobota

Research Assistant: Claude Cowork

papertiq@bellsouth.net

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Anchor Passage

> **Genesis 2:9** *And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

Introduction

A. Why This Needs a Study

Two trees stand named, by God's hand, in the middle of the first garden scripture ever describes — not one, and not a symbol invented later by a reader looking for meaning, but two actual, physical, fruit-bearing trees, planted deliberately alongside "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" already filling the rest of the garden. A God who did not want a reader to notice them would not have named them both in a single verse, forbidden one of them by name eight verses later, and then, after the fall, stationed cherubim and a flaming sword to keep a grown man and woman from reaching the other. Scripture does not treat these two trees as incidental garden furniture. It builds a command around one of them, a curse-shaped legal category around the *word* for tree that outlives Eden by thousands of years, and a promise around the other that scripture's very last chapter is still making. This study exists because a placement this deliberate, repeated this often, across this much of scripture, is not something a careful reader is free to walk past without asking what it means — the same working assumption this library's *Who Are the "Sons of God"? Settling the Genesis Six Question* began from when it took Genesis 6:1-4's repeated language seriously enough to trace it in full rather than summarizing past it.

Weighing it: Framing only.

In short: God does not plant, name, forbid, and then guard something in scripture without expecting a reader to ask what it signifies — and this study exists to ask that question properly, all the way through the rest of the Bible, rather than stopping at Genesis 3.

B. The Text Itself

Four passages carry the whole of this study's raw material, and all four deserve to stand in full before anything is said about them:

> **Genesis 2:9** *And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

> **Genesis 2:16-17** *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*
>
> **Genesis 3:1-7** *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*
>
> **Genesis 3:22-24** *And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

Everything this study goes on to trace — the Hebrew vocabulary, the two trees' later reappearances, the cross itself — grows out of these four short passages and nowhere else. Nothing in the chapters that follow is entitled to say more than these verses actually say.

Weighing it: Framing only — the four passages are quoted, not yet argued from.

In short: the entire study rests on four passages, none of them long, all of them quoted here in full, so that every claim made about them afterward can be checked directly against what they actually say.

C. Two Trees, Not One

Popular retelling collapses Eden down to a single tree — "the forbidden tree," eaten from, the source of the fall — and loses something scripture itself never loses: there were two, named separately, standing together, and only one of them was ever forbidden. **Genesis 2:9** names both in a single sentence, "the tree of life *also* in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" — the word "also" doing real work, marking a second, distinct tree rather than a second name for the same one. **Genesis 2:16-17** then forbids only one of the two by its full name, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," while leaving "every tree of the garden" — the tree of life necessarily included — freely available. Whatever else this study finds, it is not free to treat "the tree" as scripture's shorthand for a single object; scripture itself insists on two.

A genuine textual wrinkle sits inside this distinction, and it deserves to be named rather than smoothed over. Genesis 2:9 places the tree of life "in the midst of the garden" — but so, apparently, does the woman, in the next chapter, when she describes the forbidden tree to the serpent: **"of the fruit of the**

tree which is in the midst of the garden" (3:3). Both trees, on the plain reading of the text, stood at or near the same central location. This study does not resolve that placement further than the text itself does — whether "midst" names one exact spot shared by two trees planted close together, or a wider central region of the garden holding both — because scripture does not say, and inventing a floor plan scripture never supplies would go past what the text actually establishes. What the text does establish, without ambiguity, is that two distinct trees stood there, one open, one forbidden, and a reader has to keep track of which is which through everything that follows.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim T, that there were two distinct trees. Genesis 2:9 names both and 2:16-17 forbids only one. Their exact placement is left open, as the text leaves it.

In short: Eden held two trees, not one — a distinction Genesis 2:9's "also" insists on and Genesis 2:16-17's command depends on — and this study treats them as the two separate objects scripture itself names them, even while leaving their exact shared placement as unresolved as the text itself leaves it.

D. Method, and How Arguments Are Weighed

This study follows the standing method of every study in this library: the King James Version as base text; every Hebrew and Greek word checked against its Strong's number and this library's own concordances and lexicons; cross-references drawn from the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge rather than invented fresh; direct statement kept distinct from inference, and inference kept distinct from later church tradition, which this study consults only where named and never as a controlling authority.

Every argument carries a stated weight, in five terms, used with exactly these meanings throughout. Appendix A gathers every one in a single table.

- **Direct statement** — Scripture says it in so many words. The only question is what the words mean.
- **Strong inference** — It follows closely from what Scripture says. The alternative has to strain against the text.
- **Reasonable inference** — It is the more natural reading, but an honest and careful reader can take it otherwise.
- **Corroboration only** — It agrees with this study's position, but it agrees roughly as well with the opposite one. It may be stated; it may not be leaned on.
- **Neutral** — It is often cited by one side or the other and settles nothing.

Every section ends with a short note headed **Weighing it**. Its bold first line says how strong the point is and which claim it bears on (the claims are named in §E). The sentences after it say what another reading can fairly answer. A section that argues nothing says so, with a label such as *Framing only*, *Narrative*, *Method*, *not argument* or *Concession*.

Weighing it: Method, not argument.

In short: every point in the chapters ahead is labelled with how strong it is and which claim it supports, so a reader always knows how much weight it can carry.

E. The Claims, and Where the Study Comes Out

The study makes four claims. They are named here and referred to by these names throughout.

- **Claim T — Two good trees.** Eden held two distinct trees, both good. The sin was not in the nature of the forbidden tree but in seizing what God had withheld, against His word.
- **Claim G — Guarded, then opened.** The tree of life was guarded, not destroyed, and Scripture closes with it offered again.
- **Claim C — The curse on a tree.** Scripture deliberately presents Christ's death in the terms of Deuteronomy's "hanged on a tree," so that the place of the curse becomes the place where the curse is borne.
- **Claim F — Trees as a figure.** Scripture's later trees, for the righteous man, for kingdoms, and for barren show, follow the pattern set in Eden: life drawn from a source outside oneself, or height and appearance seized for oneself.

Here is where the study comes out, so that no reader is kept waiting. Claim T rests largely on **direct statement**, with one **strong inference** about what made the eating a sin. Claim G is a **direct statement** at both ends (Genesis 3:24; Revelation 22) and a **reasonable inference** in the connections drawn between them. Claim C is a **direct statement** in Galatians 3:13 and a **strong inference** in Acts. Claim F is a set of **reasonable inferences**, some of them, such as the fig leaves and the Temple carvings, no stronger than that.

Weighing it: Framing only — takes no side on any claim.

In short: four claims: two good trees, the tree of life guarded and then reopened, the cross as the tree of the curse, and later trees as a figure following Eden's pattern.

F. Other Readings, Stated First

Several other readings of these trees are held by careful readers, and each deserves to be stated at full strength before anything is said against it.

1. **The forbidden fruit was harmful in itself.** On this view the tree of knowledge carried some power or poison in its fruit, and eating it changed Adam and Eve by its own nature, the way a drug would. The opening of their eyes immediately on eating (Genesis 3:7) seems to support it.
2. **The knowledge itself was the forbidden thing.** On this view, knowing good and evil is something God meant man never to have, so that moral knowledge is itself the fruit of the fall.
3. **The trees were figures only.** Some ancient interpreters read Eden's two trees as allegories of wisdom or of the soul, not as real trees.
4. **Eve did not add to the command.** Genesis records God's command only as given to Adam (2:16-17), before Eve was made. God may have said more than is recorded, or Adam may have added "touch" as a fence when he told her. On this view she repeated what she was told.

5. **"Tree" for the cross is just ordinary Greek.** *Xylon* was a normal word for a wooden post or gallows, so its use in Acts may carry no special signal.
6. **The wider connections are coincidence.** Hebrews 10, the Temple's carved palms, Ezekiel's river trees and Christ's cursed fig tree may share imagery with Eden without any intended link.

Weighing it: Opposing case, stated. Points 4, 5 and 6 are the strongest. Point 4 is a fair limit on what the text shows. Point 5 is true of the word, and Chapter 4 §E rests the argument elsewhere. Point 6 is why the study labels each of those connections as inference.

In short: other readers hold that the fruit was harmful in itself, that the knowledge was itself the evil, that the trees were only figures, that Eve repeated what she was told, that "tree" for the cross is ordinary Greek, and that the wider echoes are coincidence. Each is answered where it arises.

G. What Changed in This Edition

This is the third edition of this study. In keeping with this library's rule that error is not left standing, the corrections are listed here and in Appendix A rather than made silently.

- **Revelation 22:14 is now treated as carefully as 22:19.** The earlier edition noted the Greek reading of 22:19 but quoted 22:14, "they that do his commandments," without noting that the oldest Greek manuscripts read "they that wash their robes." Chapter 1 §D now says so, and Chapter 7 no longer leans on the wording.
- **Ezekiel 31 is addressed to Pharaoh.** The earlier edition called it an allegory of Assyria's fall. The chapter is spoken to Pharaoh (31:2, 18), with Assyria's fall held up as the warning. Eden is named four times in it, not three.
- **Revelation's living creatures are not simply Ezekiel's cherubim.** The earlier edition identified them. Ezekiel's have four faces and four wings each (Ezekiel 1:6); John's have one face each and six wings (Revelation 4:7-8). The likeness is now stated as an inference.
- **Chapter 4 §E is rebuilt.** The earlier edition rested the apostles' word choice on *xylon* rather than *dendron*. *Xylon* was the ordinary word for a wooden post, so that contrast proves little. The argument now rests on two stronger facts: the apostles say "tree" where they could have said "cross," and Acts 5:30 and 10:39 repeat Deuteronomy's own phrase, "hanged on a tree."
- **The fig season now rests on Scripture.** Song of Solomon 2:13 replaces an unnamed appeal to "ancient agricultural sources," and the barren fig tree of Luke 13:6-9 is added.
- **Labels added.** The death of an animal for the coats of skins is now labelled a strong inference, and "decisive" in Chapter 2 is replaced by a stated weight.
- **Additions.** Barzillai's "can I discern between good and evil?" (2 Samuel 19:35) is added to Chapter 2. The repetition of Jehoash's fable in 2 Chronicles 25:18 is noted.
- **Apparatus added.** Weighing notes, the claims, the opposing readings, a "what would change this study's mind" section and Appendix A are new. The writing has been tightened throughout.

None of these corrections changes the study's conclusions.

Weighing it: Concession — every item corrects, narrows or adds to the earlier edition.

In short: the conclusions stand; a few slips and overstatements are corrected here in the open.

Chapter 1 — The Tree of Life

A. Named First, Not Last

Genesis 2:9 names the tree of life before it names the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the order is worth pausing on rather than treating as incidental: "the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Scripture's first tree, named in its first mention, is not the one that goes on to cause the fall. It is the one offering continuance — ongoing life, sustained rather than earned, available on exactly the same terms as **"every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat" (2:16)**. Before a single command is given, before a single warning is spoken, life is already standing there, offered, freely available, for the taking.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim G, that the order of naming puts life first. That the tree of life is named first is a direct statement. That the order is meaningful is an inference; another reader can fairly answer that the order may only be the natural way to list the two.

In short: the very first tree scripture names in Eden is not the dangerous one — it is the one holding out ongoing life, freely available, before any command or warning has even been spoken.

B. Word Study: *Etz* and *Chai*

"Tree" translates the Hebrew *etz* (עֵץ, Strong's H6086), a common word covering a living tree, but also, in its wider range, wood, timber, or a wooden article generally — the same word, notably, that later scripture uses for a wooden gallows (Chapter 4 of this study traces that connection in full). "Life" translates *chai* (חַי, H2416), from the root *chayah* (חָיָה, H2421), "to live… causatively, to revive." Strong's definition of *chai* is worth reading in full: "alive; hence, raw (flesh); fresh (plant, water, year), strong; also (as noun, especially in the feminine singular and masculine plural) life (or living thing)." The word does not name a bare absence of death; it names vitality itself — freshness, rawness, ongoing vigor, the opposite of anything stale, spent, or declining. A "tree of *chai*" is not simply a tree that keeps a person from dying. It is a tree that keeps a person *vital* — continuously, actively, freshly alive, the way the word itself names green growth rather than mere survival.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim G, that "life" here means vitality, not bare survival. The range of *chai* comes from Strong's. Another reader can fairly answer that a word's range does not prove every sense is present in every use.

In short: "the tree of life" does not promise bare continuance — its Hebrew vocabulary names freshness, vigor, and active vitality, the same word family used for a plant still green and a year still fresh, not simply a body kept from expiring.

C. Guarded, Not Destroyed

After the fall, God does not destroy the tree of life, poison it, or remove it from the garden. He guards it:

> **Genesis 3:24** *So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

The distinction matters more than a first reading suggests. A guarded object is a real, continuing object — something worth guarding precisely because it still exists and still does what it always did. If the tree of life had simply stopped working once sin entered the world, no guard would have been necessary; scripture would have had no reason to station anything at all. The guard is itself evidence that the tree's life-giving power remained fully intact — dangerous now, in a fallen man's hands, precisely because it still worked exactly as it always had. "To keep the way" translates a Hebrew idiom for guarding or watching over something valuable, not destroying it; the tree of life is fenced off, not annihilated.

The guard itself is worth a closer look. "Cherubims" (the King James form of *cherubim*, the Hebrew plural of *cherub*, כְּרוּב) are not decorative garden statuary; every other place scripture describes them, they stand as guardians of God's immediate presence — worked in gold above the ark of the covenant's mercy seat (**Exodus 25:18-22**), carved into the walls and doors of Solomon's Temple (**1 Kings 6:23-35**) and worked into its veil (**2 Chronicles 3:14**), and named repeatedly in Ezekiel's visions of God's throne (**Ezekiel 10:1-20**). Eden's tree of life is guarded by the same class of being scripture later stations at the entrance to the Holy of Holies itself — the first recorded instance, not a later borrowing, of cherubim marking the boundary of a place too holy, or too dangerous in a fallen condition, for unrestricted human access.

That boundary does not stand forever. The writer to the Hebrews describes precisely this reversal, in language that answers Genesis 3:24 almost point for point:

> **Hebrews 10:19-20** *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

Where Eden's way to the tree of life was barred by cherubim and a sword that "turned every way," the way into God's holiest place is now named "a new and *living* way" — life again, the very thing Eden's guarded tree held — consecrated, not guarded against, opened rather than closed. This study reads that connection as a genuine, if unstated, scriptural echo: the same guarded-access pattern established at Eden's exit is the pattern scripture describes being reversed by Christ — who died, rose, and entered heaven itself as our forerunner (**Hebrews 6:20; 9:24**), opening the way behind him. This is offered as this study's reasoned inference, not a direct cross-reference either text names explicitly, but it is difficult to read Genesis 3:24 and Hebrews 10:19-20 side by side without noticing how precisely the second answers the first.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim G, that the tree was guarded; reasonable inference — that Hebrews 10:19-20 answers Genesis 3:24. The guard is stated outright, and so are the cherubim at the Holy of Holies. Neither Hebrews nor Genesis names the other, and another reader can fairly answer that the shared imagery may be the common language of holy places rather than an intended link (Introduction §F, point 6).

In short: God did not destroy the tree of life after the fall — he guarded it, with the same class of being later stationed at the entrance to his most holy place, which means the way back to it was always meant to be a real, eventual reopening rather than a permanently sealed door.

D. Every Later Appearance

The tree of life does not vanish from scripture once Eden's narrative ends. It resurfaces, by the same Hebrew phrase, four times in Proverbs, once (in substance, if not in exact wording) in Ezekiel's temple-river vision, and in Revelation three times by name in the King James text — four in nearly all Greek manuscripts — the last book of scripture closing, deliberately, with the same tree the first book opened with.

Proverbs uses "a tree of life" (*etz chayyim*) as its recurring figure for whatever most directly sustains and vitalizes a life, in four distinct settings:

> **Proverbs 3:18** *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.*
>
> **Proverbs 11:30** *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*
>
> **Proverbs 13:12** *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*
>
> **Proverbs 15:4** *A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.*

Wisdom (3:18), a righteous life's fruit (11:30), a long-deferred hope finally realized (13:12), and a healing tongue (15:4) are each, in turn, named "a tree of life" — not the literal tree standing in Eden, but scripture's deliberate reuse of Eden's vocabulary for whatever most fully vitalizes the life of the one who has it. The figure only carries its full force because the reader already knows what an actual tree of life once was and did.

Ezekiel does not use the exact phrase, but the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge ties **Ezekiel 47:12** directly back to Genesis 2:9 as the same tree-of-life theme in different words, and the connection holds up on its textual merits:

> **Ezekiel 47:12** *And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.*

Trees growing beside a river flowing out of God's sanctuary, bearing fruit that never fails and leaves used for healing — this is Eden's pattern (a river flowing out of the garden, **Genesis 2:10**; a life-sustaining tree at its center) transposed onto Ezekiel's vision of a restored temple, and it is picked up again, in almost identical language, in Revelation's closing vision below. This study holds the Genesis-to-Ezekiel connection as a strong thematic echo, per the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge's cross-reference, rather than a claim that Ezekiel names the same literal tree — the passage never calls these trees "trees of life", and this study does not overstate what it says.

Revelation closes the canon by returning to the tree of life by name, and each occurrence adds something the others do not:

> **Revelation 2:7** *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*
>
> **Revelation 22:2** *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*
>
> **Revelation 22:14** *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

A textual note belongs with **22:14**, for the same reason this chapter gives one for 22:19 below. The King James reading, "Blessed are they that do his commandments," is the reading of the majority of later Greek manuscripts. The oldest manuscripts read instead, "Blessed are they that wash their robes." Both readings are old and both are found in Greek, so this study does not choose between them, and nothing in its argument rests on either wording.

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge flags a grammatical detail on **22:2** worth carrying forward: the Greek text carries no definite article before "tree of life" — more literally "a tree of life," not necessarily one single specimen — and the verse's description, a tree standing "on either side of the river," reads most naturally as multiple trees of the same kind, lining both banks the way **Ezekiel 47:12**'s trees already did, rather than one tree spanning a river. This study holds that reading as the more textually careful one, without treating it as a point that changes anything this study's larger argument depends on.

One further detail belongs here, honestly rather than smoothed over: **Revelation 22:19**'s warning against adding to or taking from this book reads, in the King James Version, "God shall take away his part out of the *book of life*" — but the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge notes at this exact verse the alternate reading "or, from the *tree of life*." The alternate is in fact the reading of nearly every Greek manuscript. The King James follows the printed Greek text of its day, the Textus Receptus, which in the last verses of Revelation goes back to Erasmus, who had no complete Greek manuscript for them and supplied the wording from the Latin Vulgate, where "book" (*libro*) had displaced "tree" (*ligno*). Either reading carries the same essential warning — removal from what secures a person's final standing — and this study's argument does not depend on choosing between them. But the Greek manuscripts close the Bible's warning with the tree of life itself, one more time.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim G, that the tree of life returns in Proverbs and Revelation; reasonable inference — that Ezekiel 47 echoes it. Proverbs and Revelation use the name. Ezekiel does not, and another reader can fairly answer that river trees are a common picture of blessing. The textual notes on Revelation 22:14 and 22:19 change none of this.

In short: the tree of life does not disappear from scripture after Genesis 3 — it becomes Proverbs' standing figure for whatever most vitalizes a life, echoes through Ezekiel's vision of a restored sanctuary, and returns by name in Revelation, closing the canon exactly where it opened: a tree, offering life, now freely available again to "him that overcometh."

Chapter 2 — The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

A. The Name Itself

The tree's full name is worth reading as a single, deliberate phrase rather than a loose description: **"the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:17)**. "Knowledge" translates *da'at* (דַּעַת, Strong's H1847), a noun built directly from the verb *yada* (יָדַע, H3045) — Strong's definition of *yada* is broad and worth reading in full: "to know (properly, to ascertain by seeing); used in a great variety of senses, figuratively, literally, euphemistically and inferentially (including observation, care, recognition; and causatively, instruction, designation, punishment, etc.)." This is not knowledge in the narrow, purely intellectual sense modern English usually means by the word — *yada* names knowing by direct, often experiential contact, the same verb scripture uses for a man "knowing" his wife (**Genesis 4:1**). "Good" translates *tov* (טוֹב, H2896), an ordinary, broad word for whatever is good, pleasant, or beneficial. "Evil" translates *ra* (רַע, H7451), from the root *ra'a* (רָעַע, H7489), naming whatever is bad, harmful, or morally wrong. Put together, the tree's name names an experiential, direct, first-hand acquaintance with both good and evil — not abstract information about the categories, but the kind of knowing that comes only from actual contact.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim T, that the knowledge named is experiential, not abstract. The range of *yada* is plain in Strong's. Another reader can fairly answer that *da'at* is also used of ordinary understanding, so the experiential sense is the likely one here but not the only possible one.

In short: the tree's full name promises not abstract information about morality, but direct, first-hand, experiential contact with both good and evil — the same kind of knowing scripture elsewhere calls "knowing" a person, not merely knowing facts about one.

B. The Command and the Doubled Warning

God's instruction to the man names the tree in full, forbids it alone, and attaches a warning stated with unusual emphasis:

> **Genesis 2:16-17** *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

"Thou shalt surely die" translates a construction the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge itself flags directly at this verse: "Heb. dying thou shalt die" — the Hebrew *mot tamut* (מוֹת תָּמוּת), an infinitive absolute doubled with the finite verb from the same root (*muth*, H4191, "to die… causatively, to kill"). This is not decorative repetition; it is Hebrew grammar's standard device for maximum emphasis, intensifying a verb past what the plain form alone could carry — the closest English equivalent is something like "dying, you will surely die" or "you will die, without question." God's warning is not a mild caution

wrapped in polite language. It is stated with the strongest emphasis Hebrew grammar has available, attached to the one tree in the whole garden that was ever forbidden at all.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the warning is emphatic. The doubled verb is the Hebrew text, and the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge notes it. This bears on Claim T only in showing how seriously the command was given.

In short: God's warning about this one tree is not phrased casually — its Hebrew grammar doubles the verb "die" for maximum possible emphasis, the strongest way scripture's language has of saying a thing is certain.

C. The Serpent's Twist

The serpent's opening line does not deny God's command outright; it exaggerates it into something God never actually said:

> **Genesis 3:1** *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

"Subtil" translates *arum* (עָרוּם, H6175), and the word carries a wordplay worth drawing out carefully, because Strong's etymology makes the connection explicit rather than merely suggestive. Both *arum* ("subtil, crafty, prudent") and *arom* (עָרוֹם, H6174, "naked") derive from the same root, *aram* (H6191) — and Strong's definition of that root states plainly: "properly, to be (or make) bare; but used only in the derivative sense (through the idea perhaps of smoothness) to be cunning." The root's most basic sense is nakedness, bareness — and only secondarily, by a natural extension most lexicons attribute to the idea of smoothness (a "smooth," unclothed surface becoming, by association, a "smooth," crafty character), does it come to mean cunning. This is not this study's invented pun; it is built into the Hebrew language itself, and the text places the two forms one verse apart on purpose: **Genesis 2:25** closes the previous chapter with "they were both naked (*arummim*, the plural of *arom*)… and were not ashamed," and **3:1** opens the very next verse with "the serpent was more subtil (*arum*)" — the same root, two forms, side by side, inviting exactly the comparison it produces: those who were *bare* and unashamed are about to be tested by the one creature the text names *bare-turned-crafty*.

The serpent's question also does something worth naming precisely: it inflates a specific, single-tree prohibition into a sweeping, garden-wide one — "hath God said, Ye shall not eat of *every* tree of the garden?" — a question no honest reading of Genesis 2:16-17 could produce. This is the first recorded instance in scripture of a technique that recurs throughout the rest of the Bible: doubt introduced not by flatly denying God's word, but by quietly overstating it into something easier to make sound unreasonable.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that "subtil" and "naked" share a root and stand side by side; reasonable inference — that the placement invites the comparison. The shared root is in Strong's. Another reader can fairly answer that a wordplay may be noticed by readers without being intended by the writer, though the placement makes intention likely.

In short: the serpent's name in Hebrew is built from the same root as "naked," a wordplay scripture places one verse away from Adam and Eve's unashamed nakedness on purpose — and his opening move is not denial, but exaggeration, inflating one forbidden tree into an implied ban on every tree in the garden.

D. What Eating Actually Opened

The serpent's promise is worth reading exactly as given, because scripture's later report on what actually happened both confirms and complicates it:

> **Genesis 3:5** *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*
>
> **Genesis 3:22** *And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever...*

This is a genuinely uncomfortable detail, and this study does not smooth past it: God's words in **3:22** confirm, almost verbatim, the specific claim the serpent made in **3:5** — "knowing good and evil" happened, exactly as promised. By a principle used throughout this library (an accurate record can contain an untrue statement without scripture thereby endorsing it — the same principle already applied elsewhere in this library to the serpent's lie and to Job's friends' bad theology), the serpent's statement in **3:5** was a mixture, not a pure lie: the "knowing good and evil" clause was true, confirmed directly by God's later words, while the larger frame around it — "ye shall be as gods" offered as a *desirable upgrade*, with death's reality left conspicuously unmentioned — was the actual deception. **Genesis 3:7**'s own report of what eating produced states the result plainly: "the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" — self-awareness, shame, and a suddenly felt need for covering, not the god-like elevation the serpent's framing implied. What was gained was real; what it cost, and what it actually amounted to once gained, was nothing like what the serpent had sold it as.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim T, that the serpent mixed a true claim with a false frame. God's own words in 3:22 confirm the clause "knowing good and evil." Another reader can fairly answer that "as one of us" in 3:22 may be said with irony; even so, it confirms the knowledge was gained.

In short: the serpent did not simply lie — the specific claim "knowing good and evil" turned out to be true, confirmed by God's later words, but everything the serpent implied that knowledge would feel like was false, and what it actually produced was shame and self-consciousness, not god-like elevation.

E. The Same Phrase Used Elsewhere

"Knowing good and evil," or its near-equivalent "discerning good and bad," is not a phrase unique to Eden. Scripture uses it, or close variants of it, in several other settings — and reading them together changes what Eden's prohibition can and cannot be read to mean:

> **Deuteronomy 1:39** *Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.*

> **2 Samuel 14:17** *...for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad...*
>
> **1 Kings 3:9** *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?*
>
> **Isaiah 7:15-16** *Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.*
>
> **2 Samuel 19:35** *I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?*
>
> **Hebrews 5:14** *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

This is the main point this chapter has been building toward: moral discernment — the capacity to distinguish good from evil — is not, anywhere else in scripture, treated as a forbidden or dangerous thing. It is the very thing small children have not yet developed (Deuteronomy 1:39, Isaiah 7:15-16), the very thing Solomon asks God directly to grant him (1 Kings 3:9), the very mark of wise, mature judgment (2 Samuel 14:17), the very thing an old man feels slipping away (2 Samuel 19:35, Barzillai at eighty), and the very definition of full spiritual maturity in the New Testament (Hebrews 5:14, "them that are of full age... have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil"). If the capacity itself were the problem in Eden, scripture would have no consistent reason to hold it up as something sought after, prayed for, and eventually praised everywhere else it appears.

What this leaves as the actual issue in Eden, then, is not the knowledge itself but its means and its timing. Solomon receives moral discernment as a gift, granted by God, in answer to a request made in humble dependence (**1 Kings 3:5-12**). Hebrews 5:14 describes discernment developed gradually, "by reason of use" — the slow, disciplined product of repeated exercise over time, under God's instruction. Adam and Eve, by contrast, reached for the same capacity by direct, immediate self-assertion — taking it themselves, on their timetable, against an explicit command, rather than receiving it as a gift or growing into it through obedience. The forbidden tree was never "the tree of evil," offering nothing but harm; its full name names knowledge of *good* every bit as much as evil, a knowledge scripture treats as valuable and even necessary everywhere else it appears. What made Eden's reaching for it a sin was not the destination. It was the theft — self-rule substituted for trust, autonomy substituted for the God-given, God-timed maturing this same knowledge arrives by everywhere else scripture describes it.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim T, that moral discernment is not itself evil, against Introduction §F, point 2. Six passages treat it as good, wanted or lacking. Another reader can fairly answer that the knowledge gained in Eden may differ in kind from the discernment praised elsewhere; this study answers that Scripture gives no sign of a different kind, only a different way of getting it.

In short: scripture never treats moral discernment itself as forbidden — it is sought, prayed for, and praised everywhere outside Eden — which means the real issue in the garden was never the knowledge itself, but the self-asserted, God-defying way it was seized rather than received.

Chapter 3 — An Addition and a Denial

A. "Neither Shall Ye Touch It"

When the serpent presses her on the command, the woman's answer adds a restriction God's recorded words never included:

> **Genesis 3:2-3** *And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

Compare this directly against God's actual instruction, already quoted in full in the Introduction: **"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (2:16-17)**. The command God actually gave forbids *eating*. Nothing in it forbids *touching*. "Neither shall ye touch it" is the woman's addition — whether her embellishment, hedging the command with extra caution, or a detail added somewhere between God's original instruction to Adam (given, per **2:16-17**'s own placement, before Eve was created in **2:22**) and its relay to her secondhand, scripture does not say which, and this study does not claim to settle that. What scripture does allow a reader to see clearly is the *pattern* this small addition sits inside, because the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge's cross-references at this verse point to texts worth reading alongside it (Job 1:11 as well as the two below):

> **Job 2:5** *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*
>
> **Colossians 2:20-21** *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not;)*

Job 2:5 uses "touch" for an attack more severe than mere contact — Satan's request to strike Job's body directly, not brush against it — a usage that shows "touch" carrying real weight elsewhere in scripture, not merely trivial handling. But Colossians 2:20-21 is the more pointed cross-reference, and this library's reference tool ties it to this exact verse for a reason worth taking seriously: Paul names "touch not; taste not; handle not" as the *rudiments of the world* — restrictive religious rules that go beyond what God actually commanded, dressed up as extra piety but actually amounting to **"will worship" (2:23)**, self-imposed severity that carries no real spiritual value. Read against that later warning, the woman's extra "neither shall ye touch it" reads as an early instance of exactly the pattern Paul later names and criticizes directly: guarding a command by fencing it with an additional restriction God never actually gave — a well-intentioned instinct, perhaps, but one scripture elsewhere treats as its kind of danger, not a mark of extra faithfulness.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — that the woman's words go beyond the recorded command. The recorded command forbids eating only; that is a direct statement. Introduction §F, point 4 fairly answers that God or Adam may have said more than Genesis records, and this study does not claim to know who added the words. The link to Colossians 2:21 is the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge's own cross-reference, and its application here is a reasonable inference.

In short: the woman's "neither shall ye touch it" adds a restriction God never actually gave — and Colossians later names that exact pattern, adding extra rules beyond God's command, as its spiritual danger rather than a sign of greater carefulness.

B. "Ye Shall Not Surely Die"

The serpent's reply does not merely question God's word, as his opening line had. It flatly reverses it, word for word:

> **Genesis 3:4** *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

Set beside God's doubled, maximally emphatic warning from **2:17** — "thou shalt surely die," *mot tamut*, discussed fully in Chapter 2 — the serpent's answer is not a vague reassurance. It is a direct negation of the specific words God had used — in Hebrew, simply "not" set in front of God's doubled verb, *lo mot temutun*, "not dying shall ye die," the first recorded flat contradiction of God's stated word anywhere in scripture. Every later instance of doubt, distortion, or outright denial of God's word that scripture goes on to record — and there are many — has its first specimen here, in the garden, spoken by the same voice that had, three verses earlier, already inflated the command past what it actually said. The two moves together — first exaggerate the command (**3:1**), then flatly deny its consequence (**3:4**) — form a single, recognizable strategy: destabilize confidence in what God actually said, then substitute a confident-sounding alternative in its place.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the serpent negated God's words. The Hebrew sets "not" before God's own doubled verb. That it is the first such denial in Scripture follows from its place in the record.

In short: "ye shall not surely die" is scripture's first recorded flat denial of God's spoken word — not a vague doubt, but a direct reversal of God's words, made by placing "not" in front of them, setting the pattern every later distortion of God's word in scripture goes on to follow.

Chapter 4 — The Tree as the Place of the Curse

A. Deuteronomy's Law

Long after Eden, the Law attaches a specific, named curse to a specific use of a tree — the same Hebrew word, *etz*, already met in Chapter 1 as the word for the tree of life itself:

> **Deuteronomy 21:22-23** *And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.*

"Accursed" translates *qelalah* (קְלָלָה, Strong's H7045), a noun from the root *qalal* (H7043, "to be… light… vile"). The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge's note on this exact verse states the practice plainly: this is not a law prescribing death *by* hanging — the Hebrews, per this source, understood it as hanging a man's body up publicly *after* execution by other means (typically stoning), for the same reason a modern

reader might display a warning: public, deliberate shame, reserved for the most heinous offenses. The same source names the reason for the same-day burial requirement directly: a body left hanging overnight, exposed "between heaven and earth," would be read by any onlooker as evidence of a man abandoned by both — hence the requirement to bury before nightfall, removing the visible sign of the curse once the sentence's purpose had been served.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim C, that the Law names hanging on a tree as the mark of a curse. The practice of hanging after execution comes from the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge's note and Joshua 10:26, not from Deuteronomy itself.

In short: long before the cross, the Law had already named a specific tree-shaped legal category — public exposure on a tree as the visible mark of God's curse on the worst offenses — with a strict same-day burial rule attached, so the shame would not outlast its purpose.

B. The Conquest Narratives

Israel's conquest of Canaan records this law being carried out repeatedly, against defeated enemy kings:

> **Joshua 8:29** *And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.*
>
> **Joshua 10:26-27** *And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening: and it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid...*

Joshua 10 states outright that the kings were slain first and then hanged; Joshua 8 does not say, though the same order is the natural reading. In both, the bodies came down at sundown, exactly as Deuteronomy 21:22-23 required. These are not isolated incidents improvising a punishment; they are the Law's already-stated category, applied consistently, generations before it is applied to anyone else this chapter goes on to name.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the law was carried out. Joshua 10 states the order of execution and hanging; Joshua 8 implies it.

In short: the conquest narratives do not invent a new punishment — they carry out Deuteronomy's already-established law, on schedule, exactly as written, against the specific enemies of God's people.

C. Esther's Gallows

Centuries later, the book of Esther records the same Hebrew word doing the same grim work, under a different English translation choice:

> **Esther 7:9-10** *...Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.*

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge notes this directly at Esther 5:14: "gallows. Heb. tree." The word translated "gallows" throughout Esther — the tall wooden structure Haman builds for Mordecai's execution and is himself hanged on instead (**5:14; 7:9-10; 9:25**) — is the identical Hebrew *etz* already met as the word for Eden's tree of life and Deuteronomy's tree of hanging. Scripture's vocabulary does not distinguish "gallows" from "tree" as two different objects; it is the same word, doing the same shame-and-judgment work Deuteronomy 21:22-23 had already established, applied here to the most dramatic reversal of fortune the book of Esther records — the very structure built for an innocent man's death instead executing the man who built it.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that Esther's "gallows" is the Hebrew word for "tree." The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge notes it. That it carries Deuteronomy's sense is a reasonable inference, bearing on Claim C.

In short: Esther's "gallows" is not a different word from Eden's "tree" — it is the identical Hebrew *etz*, scripture's single word doing double duty for a living tree and an instrument of judgment, in the very story where that judgment lands on the one who built it.

D. Galatians: A Curse Deliberately Borne

Paul quotes Deuteronomy 21:23 directly, applying its specific legal language to Christ's crucifixion:

> **Galatians 3:13** *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:*

This is not a loose, poetic borrowing of tree-imagery. It is a direct, deliberate legal citation — Paul takes Deuteronomy's named category (a body hanged on a tree, publicly marked as under God's curse) and states, in the plainest possible terms, that Christ entered it on purpose, in the place of everyone the Law's curse would otherwise fall on. "Being made a curse for us" is Paul's chosen phrasing, not softened language about suffering generally — the same *qelalah*-shaped curse Deuteronomy 21:23 names is the curse Paul says Christ was "made" to be, standing in the exact legal position the Law's hanging-on-a-tree category was built to mark.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim C. Paul quotes Deuteronomy and applies it to Christ in so many words.

In short: Paul does not merely say Christ died on a wooden cross — he says Christ was deliberately made to occupy the specific legal category Deuteronomy 21:23 already defined, the curse-marked man hanging on a tree, in the place of everyone who actually deserved that category.

E. "Hanged on a Tree": The Apostles' Word Choice

The earliest apostolic preaching, recorded in Acts, repeatedly reaches for the same tree-language when naming what happened to Christ, rather than the ordinary Greek word for a living tree:

> **Acts 5:30** *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.*

> **Acts 10:39** *And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:*
>
> **Acts 13:29** *And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:24** *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

"Tree" in every one of these texts translates *xylon* (ξύλον, Strong's G3586), "timber (as fuel or material); by implication, a stick, club or tree or other wooden article or substance: staff, stocks, tree, wood." *Xylon* was the ordinary Greek word for a wooden post, stake or gallows, so its use here is not unusual in itself. The earlier edition of this study contrasted it with *dendron* (G1186), the word for a living tree, but that contrast proves little. Two other facts carry the weight.

First, the apostles had another word ready, and in these places they did not use it. *Stauros* (G4716), "a stake or post... a pole or cross (as an instrument of capital punishment)," is the word the Gospels use for the cross throughout, and Paul uses it often (**1 Corinthians 1:17-18; Galatians 6:14; Philippians 2:8**). In the passages above, and in Galatians 3:13, the writers say "tree" instead.

Second, the words in Acts are Deuteronomy's own words. The Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) renders Deuteronomy 21:22, "thou hang him on a tree," with *kremannymi* ("hang") and *epi xylou* ("on a tree"). Peter says Jesus was one **"whom ye slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 5:30)**, and again **"whom they slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 10:39)**, using the same verb and the same phrase. Paul, quoting Deuteronomy directly, writes **"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13)**, again with *epi xylou*. Hearers who knew their Scriptures in Greek would have heard Deuteronomy's law of the hanged man in Peter's words.

So the apostles, four times in Acts and 1 Peter and once more in Galatians, describe Christ's death in the words of Deuteronomy's curse. And *xylon* is also the word John uses for the tree of life (**Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14**), as the Greek Old Testament does in Genesis 2:9. The tree of the curse and the tree of life share one Greek name.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim C. The phrase "hanged on a tree" is Deuteronomy's own, and the apostles use it where they could have said "cross." The other reading can fairly answer that *xylon* was ordinary Greek for a gallows (Introduction §F, point 5); this study grants that, and rests the argument on the phrase and the choice over *stauros*, not on the word alone.

In short: the apostles say "hanged on a tree," Deuteronomy's own words, where they could have said "cross," and the same Greek word names the tree of life.

F. From a Tree of Testing to a Tree of Curse-Bearing

Reading this chapter's material together with Chapter 1's tree of life and Chapter 2's tree of knowledge, a pattern emerges that this study holds as its reasoned synthesis, built from scripture already quoted rather than imported from outside it. Eden's forbidden tree tested Adam's obedience and, failed, brought a curse — **"cursed is the ground for thy sake" (Genesis 3:17)** — into a world that had not

carried one before. Deuteronomy's law, centuries later, names a tree as the specific, visible location where the worst of that curse's consequences (a sin worthy of death) is publicly displayed. And Christ's death, described by apostolic preaching in the Old Testament's curse-shaped vocabulary rather than an ordinary word for wood, completes the pattern: obedience this time, not disobedience, undertaken deliberately at the exact place scripture had already marked as the location where a curse is made visible. Paul's doctrine elsewhere states the same reversal directly in different language — **"as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19)**; **"since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:21)**. A tree, in Eden, is where disobedience first entered a world without a curse. A tree, at Calvary, is where the curse that disobedience earned was deliberately, willingly borne — by the only man ever entitled not to bear it — so it would not have to be borne by anyone who receives what he did there. And the cross was not the end of it: he rose, and ascended to the Father's right hand, and from there the blessing the curse had blocked was poured out — **"that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:14)**.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim C, that Eden's tree and the cross answer each other. Romans 5:19 and 1 Corinthians 15:21 state the reversal of disobedience by obedience; neither names the trees. Another reader can fairly answer that the shared word "tree" may be a natural feature of language rather than a designed echo.

In short: the same word, *tree*, marks both the place obedience first failed in Eden and the place obedience finally succeeded at Calvary — this study's reasoned reading of scripture's repeated vocabulary, not a claim either text states outright, but one the two texts, read together, make difficult to miss.

Chapter 5 — Trees as a Figure for People and Kingdoms

A. The Righteous Man, Planted

Scripture's opening use of a literal tree to sustain life becomes, elsewhere, its recurring figure for a person's whole manner of life — rooted, watered, and therefore fruitful, or else cut off from all three:

> **Psalm 1:3** *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*
>
> **Jeremiah 17:7-8** *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.*

The two passages share not merely a theme but nearly identical phrasing, and Jeremiah's version supplies the contrast Psalm 1 leaves implicit by naming its opposite directly two verses earlier:

> **Jeremiah 17:5-6** *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.*

A tree planted beside a constant water source, drawing on a supply outside itself, is set directly against a desert shrub with no such source — able to survive, barely, but never green, never fruitful, always exposed to the next drought. The figure's logic tracks Eden's two trees more closely than a first reading suggests: one kind of life draws continually on a source outside and beyond itself (trust in the LORD, echoing the tree of life's freely-offered, sustained vitality); the other kind of life relies on its resources alone (trust in man, echoing the self-asserted, self-sufficient reach of Eden's forbidden tree) and withers for it.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that Scripture pictures the trusting man as a watered tree; reasonable inference — for Claim F, that this follows Eden's pattern. The figure is stated in Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17. Neither names Eden, and another reader can fairly answer that a watered tree is a natural picture in a dry land.

In short: scripture's recurring image for a flourishing life is a tree planted by a water source it did not create and cannot control — trust in something outside itself — set directly against a shrub in the desert, surviving on nothing but its resources, and never green for it.

B. Jotham's Fable of the Trees

Judges records the Bible's longest fable (the only other, Jehoash's in **2 Kings 14:9**, repeated in **2 Chronicles 25:18**, is a single verse) — a genre distinct from a parable, using talking trees rather than a realistic human scenario, to make a pointed political argument:

> **Judges 9:8-15** *The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.*

Jotham speaks this fable directly against Abimelech's violent, self-appointed kingship (**Judges 9:1-6**), and its logic is pointed rather than decorative: the genuinely fruitful trees — olive, fig, vine, each already doing useful, valuable work — decline the throne one after another, each unwilling to abandon its real

fruitfulness for the sake of status. Only the bramble, a thornbush producing nothing of value and offering no real shade ("my shadow," ironically, from a plant too low and scraggly to cast one worth trusting), accepts — and its acceptance speech is itself a threat, promising to burn down even the mighty cedars of Lebanon if its claim is not honored. The fable's moral, made explicit in the verses that follow (**9:16-20**), reads Abimelech directly as the bramble: worthless, self-promoting, dangerous precisely because he offers nothing real and demands total submission anyway.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the fable rebukes a worthless man's seizing of power; reasonable inference — for Claim F. Judges 9:16-20 applies the fable itself. Its link to Eden's pattern of seizing is this study's reading.

In short: scripture's longest fable uses trees to make its case for a reason — genuine fruitfulness (olive, fig, vine) has no need to seize a throne, and it is precisely the thornbush, worth nothing and shading nothing, that grasps for power and burns down cedars once it has it.

C. Ezekiel: A Cedar Measured Against the Trees of Eden

Ezekiel 31 is a word to Pharaoh: **"Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; Whom art thou like in thy greatness?" (Ezekiel 31:2)**. To answer, the prophet holds up the fall of Assyria, pictured as a great cedar, and measures it directly against the trees of Eden, by name:

> **Ezekiel 31:8-9** *The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.*
>
> **Ezekiel 31:16** *...and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.*

This is not a passing echo; Ezekiel names Eden four times in this single chapter (31:9, 16, and twice in 18) and "the garden of God" three times more (31:8-9), and treats "the trees of Eden" as a known, standing category — the highest available standard of grandeur scripture's imagination could reach for. Assyria, pictured as a magnificent cedar taller and finer than every tree in Eden's garden, and held up as a mirror to Pharaoh, is cut down for the same root sin this whole study has already traced back to the garden itself: **"thou hast lifted up thyself in height... and his heart is lifted up in his height" (31:10)**, pride reaching past its proper place, exactly Eden's pattern of self-assertion past what was given. The chapter closes by naming the tree's fall explicitly as the fate of **"all the trees of Eden" (31:16, 18)** who envied it — grandeur measured against Eden, and judgment measured the same way. And the last verse turns the lesson on its hearer: **"This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD" (31:18)**.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that Ezekiel measures the cedar against the trees of Eden; strong inference — for Claim F, that its fall is the fall of pride. Ezekiel names Eden four times and names the pride in 31:10. The link to Eden's own sin is a reasonable inference.

In short: when Ezekiel needs a standard of glory large enough to measure a fallen empire against, he reaches directly for Eden's named trees — and the empire falls for the identical sin Eden's tree of knowledge first tempted a man toward: self-exaltation past what was actually given.

D. Daniel's Great Tree

Daniel records a strikingly similar image, this time as a literal dream given directly to a pagan king, interpreted by Daniel himself:

> **Daniel 4:10-12** *Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.*
>
> **Daniel 4:14-15** *He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth…*

Nebuchadnezzar's dream pictures his kingdom's greatness as a single vast tree, sheltering and feeding every living thing beneath it — and its judgment, per the decree of **"the watchers" (4:17)**, is not destruction but a cutting-down that leaves the stump deliberately intact, banded and preserved, until "seven times" pass and the king himself learns **"that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (4:17, 25)**. The pattern follows Ezekiel's in part and then departs from it: pride pictured as excessive height ("the tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven," echoing Babel's ambition, **Genesis 11:4**, already treated in this library's *Who Are the "Sons of God"? Settling the Genesis Six Question*), judgment as a cutting-down — but where Ezekiel's cedar falls for good, Daniel's keeps its stump — the same preserved-remnant logic Chapter 1 of this study already found in the tree of life's guarding rather than destruction — left standing, to grow again once humility is learned.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the tree is cut down and its stump kept; reasonable inference — for Claims F and G, that this mirrors the guarded tree of life. The stump is stated in Daniel 4:15. The comparison with Genesis 3:24 is this study's own.

In short: Daniel's great tree, cut down but deliberately left rooted, follows the logic Chapter 1 already found in the guarded tree of life — judgment on pride pictured as a tree brought low but not destroyed outright, leaving room for a return. Ezekiel's cedar, by contrast, is not given one.

E. The Branch Out of the Stem of Jesse

One further tree-and-stump image belongs here, because it answers the previous two rather than merely repeating their pattern:

> **Isaiah 11:1** *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:*

Where Ezekiel's cedar and Daniel's great tree are both cut down *for* pride, Isaiah's image works in the opposite direction: David's royal line, pictured as a bare stump — the verses just before have shown the forest felled (**Isaiah 10:33-34**), and "stem" here is the Hebrew for a stump (the same word in **Job 14:8** and **Isaiah 40:24**) — is exactly where scripture promises new growth will come from. The imagery is deliberate: not a full tree still standing, but a stump, a root, the same diminished, humbled state Daniel's tree was reduced to — and out of that humbled state, not around it, the Messianic Branch is promised to grow. Grandeur cut down for pride (Ezekiel, Daniel) and humility, already low, raised up in faithfulness (Isaiah) turn out to be the same tree-figure read from two different directions, both converging on the same underlying claim: height self-asserted falls, and growth given from a low, humbled place stands.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that the Branch grows from a stump; reasonable inference — for Claim F, that this answers Ezekiel and Daniel. The Hebrew word for stump is plain. The pairing with Ezekiel and Daniel is this study's reading.

In short: Isaiah's promised Branch grows not from a flourishing tree but from a stump already cut down to almost nothing — the same humbled-tree image Ezekiel and Daniel use for judgment, here turned into the very shape God's promised deliverance is said to take.

Chapter 6 — Trees of Fruitfulness and Barrenness

A. Fig Leaves, and a Fig Tree Cursed

The very first thing Adam and Eve reach for after their eyes are opened is, specifically, a fig tree:

> **Genesis 3:7** *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

Centuries later, in the last week of his earthly ministry, Christ curses a fig tree found without fruit:

> **Matthew 21:18-19** *Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.*
>
> **Mark 11:13-14** *And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.*

This study offers the following connection as its observed resonance rather than a documented cross-reference this library's reference tools draw explicitly — worth naming plainly as such, per this study's method note, rather than overstated. Eden's fig leaves are a covering without substance: a human attempt to hide a real problem (shame, guilt, exposure) with something that looks sufficient but does

nothing to actually resolve it — the same covering God himself replaces, shortly after, with something costlier and more effective, **"coats of skins" (Genesis 3:21)**, a covering that, by strong inference, required an animal's death rather than a plant's leaves. Christ's cursed fig tree, centuries later, is condemned for the identical failure in a different key: leaves without fruit, appearance without substance, a tree that *looked* fruitful — leafy, green, promising — while actually producing nothing at all. Mark's added detail, "for the time of figs was not yet," makes the indictment sharper rather than softer: a fig tree in full leaf, out of season, ordinarily signals that fruit should already be present regardless of the main season. Scripture itself shows the order: **"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs" (Song of Solomon 2:13)**, the early green fruit appearing in spring with the leaves. This tree's leaves promised what its branches did not deliver, and by the next morning it was **"dried up from the roots" (Mark 11:20)**.

Christ had already told a parable on the same theme: **"A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Luke 13:6)**, and after three years the owner said, **"cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" (Luke 13:7)**. A fig tree in leaf without fruit is Christ's own figure for appearance without substance. Both moments — Eden's fig leaves, Christ's cursed fig tree — turn on the same underlying failure: covering or appearance mistaken for, or substituted for, the real thing.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference at most — for Claim F, that Eden's fig leaves and the cursed fig tree are linked. The fig leaves, the cursed tree and the parable are each stated. The link between Eden and the Gospels is this study's own noticed echo, and Introduction §F, point 6 fairly answers that it may be coincidence.

In short: the very tree Adam and Eve first turn to for a covering that does not actually work reappears, centuries later, as the very tree Christ curses for looking fruitful while producing nothing — this study's noticed echo, not a claim scripture states directly, but a hard one to miss once seen.

B. The Vine and the Olive Tree

Two further tree-images carry major weight in the New Testament and deserve at least a direct mention here, even though each is substantial enough to merit its separate, dedicated study rather than the fuller treatment this chapter's scope allows:

> **John 15:1, 5** *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman... I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
>
> **Romans 11:17** *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree...*

Christ's self-description as "the true vine" (John 15) and Paul's extended olive-tree allegory of Israel and the grafted-in Gentile believer (Romans 11) both draw on the same fundamental logic this study has already traced through Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17 — life and fruitfulness as a matter of connection to a source outside and beyond the branch itself, not a resource the branch generates independently.

Neither passage names Eden directly, and this study does not force a connection scripture itself does not draw; both are flagged here as related territory, worth a future study's full treatment, rather than folded into this one at less than their proper depth.

Weighing it: Corroboration only — for Claim F. Neither passage names Eden, and both are left for a study of their own.

In short: the vine of John 15 and the olive tree of Romans 11 both share this study's recurring logic — fruitfulness as dependence on a source outside the branch itself — and are named here as candidates for their future, fuller study rather than compressed into less space than they deserve.

C. Cherubim, Palm Trees, and Open Flowers in the Temple

One further connection belongs here, tying this chapter's theme directly back to Chapter 1's guarded tree of life. Solomon's Temple was not carved with generic ornamentation; its walls, doors, and inner sanctuary were covered with a specific, repeated combination of images:

> **1 Kings 6:29** *And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without.*
>
> **1 Kings 6:32** *...and carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees.*
>
> **1 Kings 7:36** *For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.*

Cherubim and trees, carved together, repeatedly, throughout the one building scripture describes as God's dwelling place among his people — and again in Ezekiel's visionary temple, where cherub and palm tree alternate all the way round the walls (**Ezekiel 41:18-20**) — the same pairing Chapter 1 of this study already found stationed at Eden's exit, cherubim guarding the way to a tree. This study reads the Temple's architecture as a deliberate, symbolic echo of Eden itself: a structure built, room by room, to recall the garden where God's presence had once walked directly among mankind (**Genesis 3:8**), its walls carved with the very images — cherubim and living, fruit-bearing trees — that marked the boundary of that original garden's innermost, most restricted space. Approaching God in the Temple, on this reading, was symbolically approaching Eden's guarded center again — a connection this study offers as inference from the architecture itself, not a claim any single verse states outright, but one the repeated, deliberate pairing of these two specific images makes difficult to read as coincidence.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim G, that the Temple's carvings recall Eden. The carvings are stated. That they were designed to recall Eden is inferred from the pairing of cherubim and trees; another reader can fairly answer that palms were common decoration in the ancient world.

In short: the Temple's walls were carved, repeatedly, with the identical pairing — cherubim and trees — that Chapter 1 already found guarding Eden's tree of life, which reads less like decoration and more like a building deliberately designed to recall the garden it was meant to bring worshippers symbolically back toward.

Chapter 7 — What the Two Trees Together Establish

A. Both Trees Were Good

It is worth stating plainly, because it is easy to lose sight of after tracing the tree of knowledge through the fall it caused: scripture never once calls that tree evil, or corrupt, or poisonous in itself. **Genesis 2:9** names it in the same sentence as "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food," and **Genesis 1:31** has already said it outright: "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Its own fruit, per **3:6**, was "good for food… pleasant to the eyes… to be desired to make one wise" — three straightforwardly positive qualities, not a single warning sign anywhere in the plant itself. Nothing in the text suggests the fruit was bitter, poisonous, or repellent; nothing suggests God planted something defective or dangerous by nature. What made eating from it a sin was never the tree's properties. It was the command attached to it, and the trust — or the refusal of trust — that obeying or disobeying that command actually tested.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim T, against Introduction §F, point 1. Genesis 1:31, 2:9 and 3:6 describe the tree and its fruit as good. That the change in Adam and Eve came from disobedience rather than from the fruit's own power is an inference, but no verse describes the fruit as harmful in itself.

In short: the tree of knowledge was never scripture's "evil tree" — its fruit is described in entirely positive terms, good, pleasant, and desirable — which means the sin in Eden was never about what the tree itself was, but about the command God attached to it and whether that command would be trusted.

B. Two Paths to Becoming "As Gods"

Read together, Eden's two trees offer two genuinely different routes toward the same underlying goal — likeness to God — and the whole of scripture's moral vocabulary can be read as an extended commentary on which of the two actually works. The tree of knowledge offered elevation by self-assertion: reach out, take, decide for yourself, on your own timetable, against the one restriction given — **"ye shall be as gods" (3:5)**, true in its narrow claim, catastrophic in what it actually cost. The tree of life, freely available the entire time, offered the same underlying trajectory — sustained, ever-fresh vitality, the very quality this study's word study in Chapter 1 found built into its Hebrew name — but by an entirely different route: continuance in trust, receiving rather than seizing, dependence on a source outside oneself rather than autonomous self-determination. Chapter 5's Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17, Chapter 6's vine and olive tree, and Chapter 2's finding that moral discernment is praised everywhere else scripture describes it being *received* rather than *grasped* — all trace the identical distinction from different angles: everything genuinely good that Eden's forbidden tree promised was, in fact, available all along, through the tree standing right beside it, on the one condition that it be received rather than taken.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claims T and F. This is the study's synthesis. Another reader can fairly answer that Genesis does not say the tree of life offered likeness to God; this study draws that from the tree's own name and from the rest of Scripture.

In short: Eden did not set trust and elevation against each other as opposites — both trees offered a form of becoming like God, and the entire rest of scripture reads as commentary on the same underlying choice: reach out and seize it yourself, or receive it as the gift it was always meant to be.

C. Guarded, Then Opened Again

This study's governing arc, traced across seven chapters now, comes down to a single shape: a tree, offered freely; a different tree, forbidden and seized anyway; a curse that followed; and a barred way back to the first tree, guarded by cherubim, stated in **Genesis 3:24**, where Chapter 1 began. Nothing in the rest of scripture describes that barred way as scripture's final word. Proverbs keeps calling wisdom, righteousness, and hope by the tree of life's name, refusing to let a reader forget what continuance actually looks like. Ezekiel pictures a restored sanctuary with the same river-fed, unfailing trees Eden itself once held. And Revelation closes the entire canon exactly where this study's Chapter 1 found it heading — the tree of life, no longer guarded against, freely offered to him that overcometh (**Revelation 2:7**) and to those blessed in **22:14**. Around God's throne stand four living creatures (**Revelation 4:6-8**), close kin to the living creatures Ezekiel identifies as cherubim (**Ezekiel 10:15, 20**), though not identical to them: Ezekiel's have four faces and four wings each, John's one face and six wings. If they are of the same order, as this study takes to be likely, they appear in Revelation not as guards but as worshippers. The whole Bible's arc, read through the single lens of these two trees, runs from a way barred to a way opened, from cherubim guarding an exit to living creatures worshipping before an open throne, from **"lest he put forth his hand, and take" (3:22)** to **"let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17)** — the same word in our English Bible, take, once forbidden and now freely extended.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim G, at both ends: the way barred (Genesis 3:24) and the tree offered (Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 17). The arc between them is this study's synthesis.

In short: scripture opens with a hand reaching for a tree it was told not to touch, and it closes with an open invitation to take freely of the life that reaching once cost — the tree of life open, the water of life free, and, at the very end, no guard left standing in the way at all.

D. What Would Change This Study's Mind

A reader should be able to go looking for the evidence that would overturn this study. Here it is.

1. **A verse calling the forbidden fruit harmful in itself.** If Scripture said the fruit carried poison or power of its own, Claim T would need revising. It describes the fruit only as good, pleasant and desirable (Genesis 3:6).

2. **A verse calling moral discernment itself evil.** If any passage treated the knowledge of good and evil as wrong to have, rather than wrong to seize, Chapter 2 §E would fall. Every passage found treats it as good.
3. **The apostles saying "cross" in the Deuteronomy passages.** If the Greek of Acts 5:30 and 10:39 used *stauros* rather than Deuteronomy's "hanged on a tree," Claim C would rest on Galatians alone. It does not.

Weighing it: Method, not argument.

In short: a verse calling the fruit harmful, or calling moral discernment evil, or the apostles saying "cross" where they say "tree," would change this study. None exists.

Appendix A — The Weight of Every Argument in This Study

Every argument made in the body of this study, with its rating, its direction, and what another reading can fairly answer. Ratings use the scale defined in Introduction §D. What the earlier edition stated and this edition corrects is listed at the end.

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
1	Eden held two distinct trees; only one was forbidden	Intro C	Direct statement, Claim T	—
2	The tree of life is named first	Ch1 A	Reasonable inference, Claim G	The order may be only a natural listing
3	*Chai* means vitality, not bare survival	Ch1 B	Strong inference, Claim G	A word's range is not present in every use
4	The tree of life was guarded, not destroyed	Ch1 C	Direct statement, Claim G	—
5	Hebrews 10:19-20 answers Genesis 3:24	Ch1 C	Reasonable inference, Claim G	Shared imagery of holy places, not an intended link
6	The tree of life returns in Proverbs and Revelation	Ch1 D	Direct statement, Claim G	—
7	Ezekiel 47's river trees echo the tree of life	Ch1 D	Reasonable inference, Claim G	River trees are a common picture of blessing
8	The knowledge named is experiential	Ch2 A	Strong inference, Claim T	*Da'at* is also ordinary understanding
9	"Dying thou shalt die" is maximum emphasis	Ch2 B	Direct statement	—
10	"Subtil" and "naked" share a root, placed side by side	Ch2 C	Direct statement; intent a reasonable inference	Wordplay may be noticed, not intended

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
11	The serpent mixed a true claim with a false frame	Ch2 D	Strong inference, Claim T	"As one of us" may be ironic
12	Moral discernment is good everywhere else in Scripture	Ch2 E	Strong inference, Claim T	Eden's knowledge may differ in kind
13	The woman's "touch" goes beyond the recorded command	Ch3 A	Reasonable inference	God or Adam may have said more
14	"Ye shall not surely die" negates God's doubled verb	Ch3 B	Direct statement	—
15	Deuteronomy marks hanging on a tree as a curse	Ch4 A	Direct statement, Claim C	—
16	Esther's "gallows" is the word "tree"	Ch4 C	Direct statement; its sense a reasonable inference	—
17	Paul applies Deuteronomy 21:23 to Christ	Ch4 D	Direct statement, Claim C	—
18	The apostles use Deuteronomy's "hanged on a tree" rather than "cross"	Ch4 E	Strong inference, Claim C	*Xylon* was ordinary Greek for a gallows
19	Eden's tree and the cross answer each other	Ch4 F	Reasonable inference, Claim C	A shared word may be only language
20	The trusting man as a watered tree follows Eden's pattern	Ch5 A	Reasonable inference, Claim F	A natural picture in a dry land
21	Jotham's bramble seizes power	Ch5 B	Direct statement; Eden link a reasonable inference	—
22	Ezekiel's cedar falls for pride, measured against Eden	Ch5 C	Strong inference, Claim F	—
23	Daniel's stump mirrors the guarded tree of life	Ch5 D	Reasonable inference, Claims F and G	The comparison is the study's own
24	The Branch grows from a stump	Ch5 E	Reasonable inference, Claim F	The pairing is the study's own
25	Eden's fig leaves and the cursed fig tree are linked	Ch6 A	Reasonable inference at most, Claim F	Coincidence
26	The vine and the olive	Ch6 B	Corroboration only	Neither names Eden
27	The Temple's carvings recall Eden	Ch6 C	Reasonable inference, Claim G	Palms were common decoration
28	Both trees were good; the fruit was not harmful in itself	Ch7 A	Strong inference, Claim T	The eyes opened on eating
29	Two paths to being "as gods"	Ch7 B	Reasonable inference, Claims T and F	Genesis does not say the tree of life gave likeness to God
30	The way barred is opened again	Ch7 C	Direct statement at both ends, Claim G	The arc between is synthesis

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
31	*Corrected:* Revelation 22:14 quoted without its textual note	Earlier edition Ch1, Ch7	Note added	The oldest manuscripts read "wash their robes"
32	*Corrected:* Ezekiel 31 called an allegory of Assyria; Eden named "three times"	Earlier edition Ch5	Corrected	Spoken to Pharaoh; Eden four times
33	*Demoted:* Revelation's living creatures identified with Ezekiel's cherubim	Earlier edition Ch7	Stated as inference	Different faces and wings
34	*Withdrawn: xylon* chosen over *dendron* as the signal	Earlier edition Ch4	Replaced by the phrase and the choice over *stauros*	*Xylon* was ordinary for a gallows
35	*Corrected:* fig season resting on unnamed "agricultural sources"	Earlier edition Ch6	Replaced by Song of Solomon 2:13	—
36	*Demoted:* "decisive" in Chapter 2 §E; the animal's death for the coats stated as fact	Earlier edition Ch2, Ch6	Stated weights	—

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Sources Consulted

The King James Version is this study's base text throughout, per this library's standing method. Every Hebrew word study was run against Strong's Hebrew numbering and cross-checked against this library's Strong's Hebrew Concordance (KJV) for its full definition — *etz* (H6086), *chai/chayah* (H2416/H2421), *da'at/yada* (H1847/H3045), *tov* (H2896), *ra/ra'a* (H7451/H7489), *arum* and *arom*, both traced to their shared root *aram* (H6175/H6174/H6191), *muth* and its infinitive-absolute construction in Genesis 2:17 (H4191), and *qalal/qelalah* (H7043/H7045). The Greek words *xylon* (G3586), *stauros* (G4716) and *dendron* (G1186) in Chapter 4 were checked against this library's Strong's Greek dictionary file, and the Septuagint's rendering of Deuteronomy 21:22 (*kremannymi*, *epi xylou*) against the standard text. Cross-references throughout were checked against the *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, which directly supplied several of this study's most load-bearing findings: the "dying thou shalt die" note on Genesis 2:17, the Job 1:11/2:5 and Colossians 2:21 cross-references on Genesis 3:3's "touch it," the extended historical note on Deuteronomy 21:22-23 tying it directly to Christ's death, the "gallows. Heb. tree." note on Esther, and the grammatical note on Revelation 22:2's missing definite article along with the "book of life / tree of life" reading at Revelation 22:19. The history of that reading (Erasmus's Latin-

based text of Revelation's last verses), and the two readings of Revelation 22:14, are standard in the textual scholarship of the Greek New Testament. Verse blocks and quotations were checked against the 1769 text of the King James Version. This study's connections between Genesis 3:24 and Hebrews 10:19-20, between the fig leaves of Genesis 3:7 and the fig tree Christ cursed, between Eden's two trees and the Temple's cherubim-and-palm-tree carvings, between the tree of life and the cross sharing the Greek word xylon, and its closing synthesis in Chapter 7, are this study's reasoned inferences from scripture already quoted in full, flagged as such at each point rather than presented as direct scriptural statement or an established cross-reference from this library's reference tools.