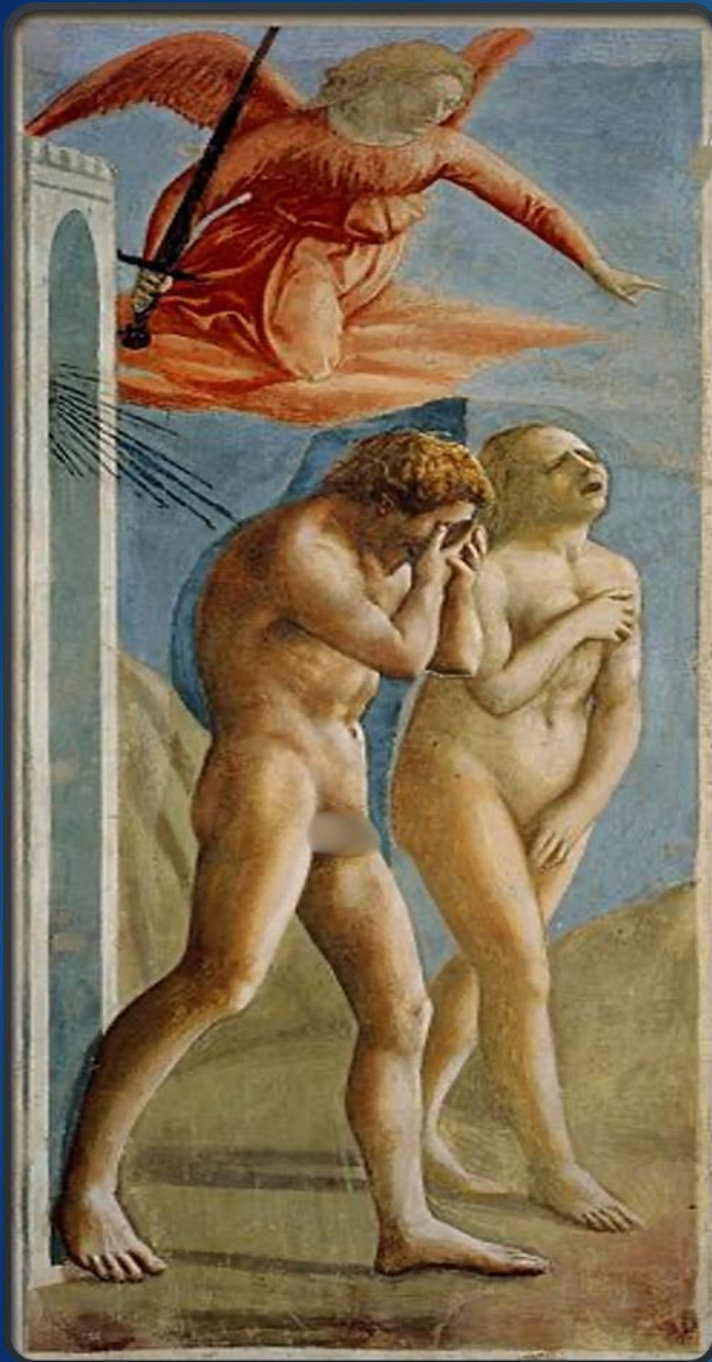




Disobedience, Estrangement, and Exile Genesis 3-4

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Masaccio, *Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden*, c. 1424-27

The Two Panels of Creation

Genesis 1

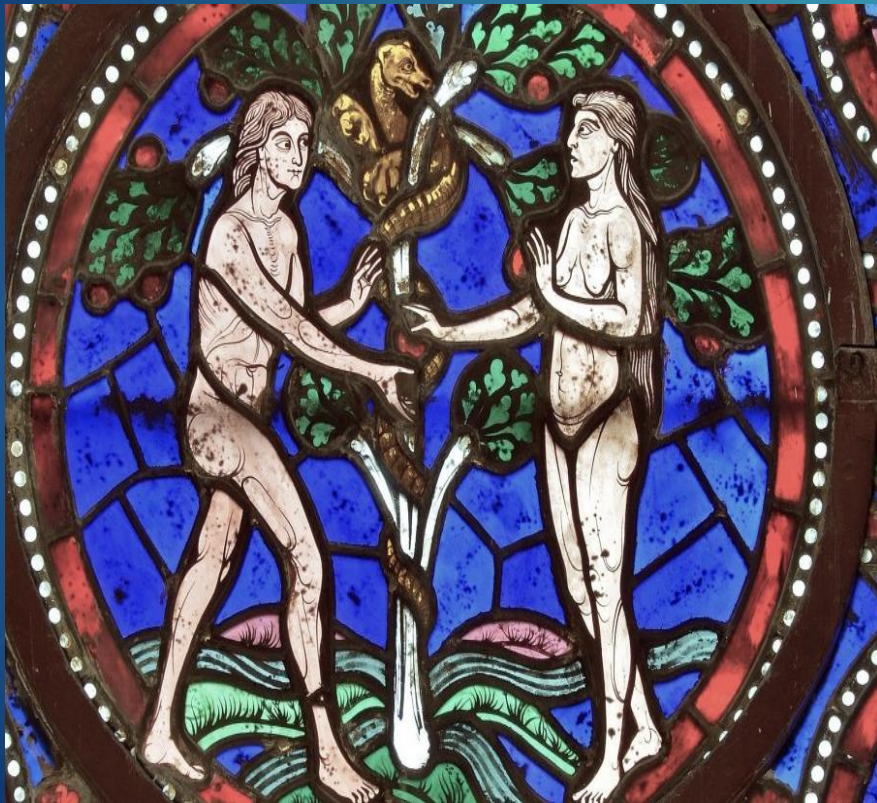


Genesis 2



The Two Panels of Disobedience and Estrangement

Genesis 3



Genesis 4



Divine Freedom and Human Agency

Two Trees . . . Two Choices



Tending to the Serpent

- ▶ “serpent”--The Hebrew is *nahash*—
 - appears 31x in the OT— with no value assigned.
- ▶ In the Ancient Near East, a serpent appears repeatedly in the literature and iconography

The Serpent in Ancient Near East: Egypt

Wadjet, the patron goddess of lower Egypt

- the snake of the Pharaoh's crown

- She was also the protector of kings and of women in childbirth, tasked with guarding them from enemies that could harm them

Apopis, the enemy of the gods

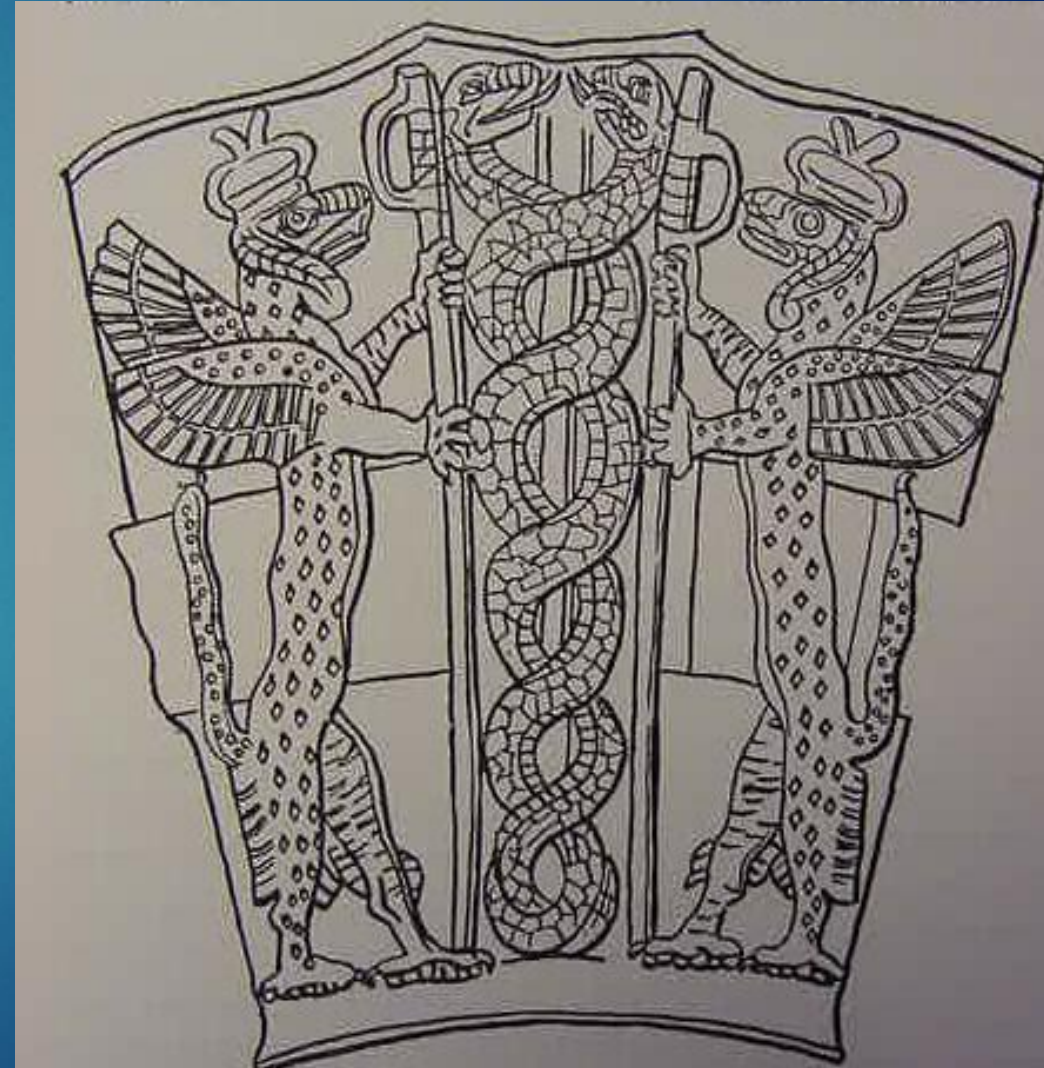
- associated with chaos



Cleopatra

The Serpent in Ancient Near East: Mesopotamia

- Sumerian god *Ningishzida* or Gizzida
--a figure associated with fertility and
can also be associated with
the netherworld



When The Text is Silent....

- ▶ Genesis 3 does not assign any position to the serpent like the other ANE religions do.
- ▶ It is a "wild animal that the LORD God had made"
- ▶ It was 'ārûm
 - term can mean 'cunning,' shrewd,' or 'prudent' (Prov 13:16)
 - both positive and negative connotations
- ▶ In Gen 3, the serpent is not magical or divine—
it brings to speech the options that face the humans

The Conversation in the Garden

- ▶ Who was there?
- ▶ What was said-- a reversal of 2:17
- ▶ What was the crime—ultimately?
 - ▶ Mistrust of God
 - ▶ Mistrust of God's Instruction
 - ▶ Desire to live beyond the bounds established

The Initial Result of Human Disobedience: Broken Relationships

- ❖ 2:24 nakedness ('*arumim*) as a good thing
—an ideal relationship
- ❖ 3:7 nakedness ('*arumim*) as a matter of shame
—a broken human relationship
- ❖ 3:10 nakedness ('*arumim*) as a matter of shame—
--a broken divine-human relationship

Note: The serpent as "crafty" -- '*arum*

The craftiness ('*arum*) of the humans results in a malformed '*arumim*

The Results of Disobediende: Curses Levied

Life function changed for each

Change in Function for each

The Results of Disobedience: Exile to the East

"And the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to serve the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man and at the east of the Garden of Eden he placed a cherubim and a flaming sword." (3:23-24).

Genesis 4: The Ongoing work of Creation

“I have produced/created a man (*ish*) with the help of YHWH”

Notion of interdependence on God and each other

Gen 2: *ishah* from *ish*

Gen 4: *ish* from *ishah*

Cain and Abel: Fulfilling the Creation Mandate

Creation Intent for Humans

2:5 "to serve/till the earth and to keep it"

Description about the Brothers

4:2 "Abel was a keeper (shepherd) of sheep.
Cain was a servant/tiller of the earth."

Offerings to God 4:3-4

- ▶ What happened and why?
- ▶ Traditional Explanations?

Hebrew: sha'ah "to gaze up/look upon"

Cf. 2 Sam 22:42—"They looked (sha'ah) but there was no one to save them.

Creation Gone Awry –Threat of Sin

The Divine Admonition (v. 7)

"Why are you angry and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted . . .

At the door, sin is crouching; its desire is for you, but you—you—must master it."

The Threat of Sin— Theological Implications

1. Freedom of God and
the Preferential Treatment of the Younger Sibling
2. Freedom of Humans in the Face of Sin

The Rest of the Story and the Creation Mandate

- ▶ Gen 2:17 --God put Adam in the Garden to till/serve it and keep it
- ▶ Broken Relationship between Humans—
“Am I my brother’s keeper?.”
- ▶ Broken Relations with the ground—
“You are cursed from the ground. When you till /serve it, it will not longer yield to you its strength.”

The Results of Disobedience: Exile to the East

“Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.” (4:16)

Disobedience, Estrangement, and Exile

Concluding Thoughts

- ▶ Genesis 3-4 force us to confront the destructive power of sin.
- ▶ We might do well to consider where "sin is lurking at the door" in our own lives.
 - ▶ Whether in our desire to be powerful like God
 - ▶ Or in our refusal to be our brother's and sister's keeper?

These texts are a reminder that though we are all East of Eden, we have not been abandoned by God.