

### Pulpit Commentary

Verse 22. - And the Lord God said. Verba insultantis (Augustine); ironica reprobatio (Calvin). **But "irony at the expense of a wretched, tempted soul might well befit Satan, but not the Lord" (Delitzsch)**, and is altogether inconsistent with the footing of grace on which man was placed immediately upon his fall. Behold, the man is become as one of us. Not the angels (Kalisch), but the Divine Persons (cf. [Genesis 1:26](#)). **It is scarcely likely that Jehovah alludes to the words of the tempter ([Genesis 3:5](#)). To know good and evil. Implying an acquaintance with good and evil which did not belong to him in the state of innocence.**

The language seems to hint that a one-sided acquaintance with good and evil, such as that possessed by the first pair in the garden and the unfallen angels in heaven, is not so complete a **knowledge of the inherent beauty of the one and essential turpitude of the other** as is acquired by beings who pass through the experience of a fall, and that the only way in which a finite being can approximate to such a comprehensive knowledge of evil as the Deity possesses without personal contact - can see it as it lies everlastingly spread out before his infinite mind - is by going down into it and learning what it is through personal experience (cf. Candlish, in loco)....

### Luther's Works, Volume 1

*22. And the Lord God said: Behold, man has become as one of Us, so that he knows good and evil. And now, lest perchance he stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever—*

**This is sarcasm and very bitter derision.** Therefore the question is asked: Why does God deal so harshly with wretched Adam? Why; after being deprived of all his glory and falling into sin and death, is he further vexed by his Creator with such bitter scorn? And is the visible sign not enough to remind him of his present misfortune and of his lost glory? Why must He also add the audible Word?

My answer is: Adam had the promise of mercy; with this he ought to have lived content. **But to make him fear future sin and beware of it, this harsh reminder is given him.** God sees what sort of people his descendants will be. He puts this Word into Adam's mouth for Adam to make it known to his descendants and thus to teach them that when he wanted to become like God, he became like the devil. So they themselves are to be on their guard lest they add their own sin to that of their parents and thus withdraw still farther from God.

As in the case of the pelt, so here, by His very Word, **God calls attention to both past and future evils.** It is not as though He were pleased by so sad a fall, for then He would not warn Adam in this way but would keep silence. **What He wants is that man should long for the lost image of God and begin to hate sin as the cause of this great evil, and that Adam should warn his descendants about what followed after sin, namely, that when he was deprived of his mind by Satan and believed that he would be like God, he became like Satan himself.**

...Hence the opinion stands that Adam and Eve made the attempt to become the image of God. But the image of the invisible God is the Son, through whom all things hold together (Col. 1:15, 17). Therefore through his sin Adam struck against the Person of Christ, who is the true image of God. All this is only briefly and dimly suggested here, but Adam undoubtedly based countless sermons on these words. Similarly, it is plain that the prophets referred to these mysteries in various ways and marvelously veiled what later on the Gospel pointed out clearly.

...When someone escapes the gallows, everybody reminds him of his danger and urges him henceforth to be on his guard. **So after Adam has been comforted again with the hope of life**

through the divine promise, God reminds him by this bitter scorn not to forget this awful fall, not to strive again after the godlikeness he had so unsuccessfully attempted to gain, but to humble himself before God's majesty and henceforth, together with his descendants, to beware of such a sin. For these words are not spoken only to Adam; they also concern us, who, after being baptized and renewed by grace, must make every effort to guard against falling back into our former ungodliness.

#### [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)

Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; which is generally understood as **an irony or sarcasm** at man's deception by Satan, who promised man, and **he expected to be as gods, knowing good and evil**; behold the man, see how much like a god he looks, with his coat of skin upon his back, filled with shame and confusion for his folly, and dejected under a sense of what he had lost, and in a view of what he was sentenced to; yet must be understood not as rejoicing in man's misery, and insulting over him in it, but in order the more **to convince him of his folly, and the more to humble him, and bring him to a more open repentance** for affecting what he did, and giving credit to the devil in it:

**though I rather think they are seriously spoken**, since this was after man was brought to a sense of the evil he committed, and to repentance for it, and had had the promised seed revealed to him as a Saviour, and, as an emblem of justification and salvation by him, was clothed with garments provided by God himself: wherefore the words are to be considered either as **a declaration of his present state and condition, in and by Christ, by whose righteousness he was made righteous, even as he is righteous, though he had lost his own**; to whose image he was conformed, now bearing the image of the heavenly One, though he was deprived of that in which he was created, having sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and was now restored to friendship and amity with God, favoured with his gracious presence, and having faith and hope of being with him for evermore; the eyes of his understanding were enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, to know the good things which God had provided for him in Christ, and in the covenant of grace, a better covenant than that under which he was made, and which he had broke; **and to know the evil nature of sin, its just demerit, and the atonement of it, by the death and sacrifice of the promised seed**:

**or else the words are a declaration of man's past state and condition**, and may be rendered, "**behold, the man was as one of us**" (o); as one of the Persons in the Deity, as the Son of God, after whose image, and in whose likeness, he was made; both as to his body, that being formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind, and which was not begotten, but made out of the virgin earth; and as to his soul, **which was created in righteousness and holiness**, in wisdom and knowledge, and was like him in the government he had over all the creatures: and besides, he was in many things a type of Christ, a figure of him that was to come; especially in his being a federal head to his posterity, and in his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and being created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him, and having the law of God inscribed on his heart, **he knew what was good and to be done, and what was evil and to be avoided**: but now he was in a different condition, in other circumstances, **had lost the image of God**, and friendship with him, and his government over the creatures; and had ruined himself, and all his posterity, and was become unholy and unwise; for being tempted by Satan to eat of the forbidden fruit, under an expectation of increasing his knowledge, lost in a great measure what he had.