

# Premillennialism and Mistaken Identities in Genesis 3–4

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## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will ~~make your pains in~~  
~~childbearing very severe~~ multiply your sorrow and  
your conception; with ~~painful labor~~ sorrow you  
will give birth to ~~children~~ sons. Your desire will be  
for your ~~husband~~ man, and / because he will rule  
~~over~~ with you.”

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your **pains in childbearing very severe**; with **painful labor** you will give birth to **children**. Your desire will be for your **husband**, and he will rule **over** you.”

## Genesis 3:16 proposed translation

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your **sorrow** and your **conception**; with **sorrow** you will bring forth **sons**. And your desire will be for your **man** [the Promised Seed], because he will rule **with** you.”

## Conclusions

1. The  $\psi^{\prime}\aleph$ , “man” in 3:16 is the Promised Seed of 3:15, not the husband.
2. “Rule with you” implies resurrection and rule with the Promised Seed.
3. Resurrection and rule on the earth leads to premillennial conclusions.

## Genesis 4:7 (NIV)

“If you do what is right, will you not **be accepted**? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; **it** desires to have you, **but** you must rule **over it**.”

## Genesis 4:7 proposed translation

“If you do good, [then] **rank / preeminence**. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is **his [the serpent’s]** desire, because you [Cain] will rule **with him [the serpent]**.”

## Conclusion

1. The one desiring Cain is not “sin,” but the serpent.
2. The serpent attempts to seduce humans to rule the earth with him in opposition to the seed of the woman and against God.

# Approach

- Lexical
- Literary / Logical
- Historical

Lexical

Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your **pains in childbearing very severe**; with **painful labor** you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

עֵצֶב (*etsev*)

= sorrow or grief



[NASB95](#)

I will greatly multiply Your **pain** in childbirth, In **pain** you will bring forth children

[NASB](#)

I will greatly multiply Your **pain** in childbirth, In **pain** you shall bring forth children

[NASB 2020](#)

I will greatly multiply Your **pain** in childbirth, In **pain** you shall deliver children

[LSB](#)

I will greatly multiply Your **pain** and conception, In **pain** you will bear children

[LEB](#)

I will greatly increase your **pain** in childbearing; in **pain** you shall bear children

[ESV](#)

I will surely multiply your **pain** in childbearing; in **pain** you shall bring forth children

[NIV](#)

I will make your **pains** in childbearing very severe; with **painful labor** you will give birth to children

[NET 2nd ed](#)

I will greatly increase your **labor pains**; with **pain** you will give birth to children

[NKJV](#)

I will greatly multiply your **sorrow** and your **conception**; In **pain** you shall bring forth children

[KJV 1900](#)

I will greatly multiply thy **sorrow** and thy **conception**; in **sorrow** thou shalt bring forth children

[HCSB](#)

I will intensify your **labor pains**; you will bear children in **anguish**

[CSB](#)

I will intensify your **labor pains**; you will bear children with **painful effort**

[EHV](#)

I will greatly increase your **pain** in childbearing With **painful labor** you will give birth to children

[NRSV](#)

I will greatly increase your **pangs** in childbearing; in **pain** you shall bring forth children

[NABRE](#)

I will intensify your **toil** in childbearing; in **pain** you shall bring forth children

[NLT](#)

I will sharpen the **pain** of your pregnancy, and in **pain** you will give birth

עֵצָב II: עֵצָב II

- MHeb.;
- → עֵצָב II:
- עֵצָבִיךָ, עֵצָבִים:

### 1. hurt:

- עֵצָבִיךָ a hurtful word (מִעֵצָבִיךָ):
- Pr 15:1;

### 2. strenuous work Pr 10:22 (בְּרִפְתַּי), 14:23 (דְּבַר־שִׁפְתַי);

- pl. what is acquired with difficulty Pr 5:10, לֶחֶם הָעֵצָבִים bread acquired with pain, or bread of anxious toil Ps 127:2, cj. Jr 11:19 for עֵץ בְּלֶחֶמוֹ rd. ? עֵצָב לֶחֶמוֹ (R. Houberg VT 25 (1975):676f);

### 3. pain (of childbirth) Gn 3:16 (בְּעֵצָבוֹן). †

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your **pains in childbearing very severe**; with **painful labor** you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

עֵצֶב (*etsev*)

= “sorrow” or “grief”

The root word occurs 34 times in the Hebrew Bible; only one use (Ecc 10:9) has a solid case for physical pain. Every other time, “sorrow” or “grief” works well.

Gen 3:16, 17; 5:29; 6:6; 34:7; 45:5; 1 Sam 20:3, 34; 2 Sam 19:3; 1 Kgs 1:6; Isa 14:3; 50:11; 54:6; 58:3; 63:10; Ps 16:4; 56:6; 78:40; 127:2; 139:24; 147:3; Job 9:28; Prov 5:10; 10:10, 22; 14:23; 15:1, 13; Ecc 10:9; Neh 8:10, 11; 1 Chr 4:9, 10.

- “As a verb, [*atsav*] indicates a state of mental or emotional distress ... [a] serious inward agitation”
- “Associated with [the] heart, ... soul or spirit of a person.”
- Used in contrast to “joy”
- Used in parallel with “vexation” and “mourning”
- “The noun clearly derives from the verb [*atsav*] and refers to emotional or mental suffering”

- “The traditional translations [of Gen 3:16] render both terms with words for physical pain. Since [*etsev*] refers more to mental than to physical pain, however, **this traditional interpretation must be called into question.**”
- Since conception is not painful, “the [*etsev*] connected with pregnancy **cannot mean “pain.”**”

Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in **childbearing** very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

הֵרֹן (*heron*)

= “conception”

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to **children**. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

בָּנִים (*banim*)

= “sons”

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your **husband**, and he will rule over you.”

אִישׁ (*ish*)

= “man” (generically)

or “husband” (contextually)



[NASB95](#)

Yet your desire will be for your **husband**, And he will rule over you

[NASB](#)

Yet your desire shall be for your **husband**, And he shall rule over you

[NASB 2020](#)

Yet your desire will be for your **husband**, And he shall rule over you

[LSB](#)

Your desire will be for your **husband**, And he will rule over you

[LEB](#)

And to your **husband** shall be your desire And he shall rule over you

[ESV](#)

Your desire shall be contrary to your **husband**, but he shall rule over you

[NIV](#)

Your desire will be for your **husband**, and he will rule over you

[NET 2nd ed](#)

You will want to control your **husband**, but he will dominate you

[NKJV](#)

Your desire shall be for your **husband**, And he shall rule over you

[KJV 1900](#)

and thy desire shall be to thy **husband**, and he shall rule over thee

[HCSB](#)

Your desire will be for your **husband**, yet he will rule over you

[CSB](#)

Your desire will be for your **husband**, yet he will rule over you

[EHV](#)

Your desire will be for your **husband**, but he will rule over you

[NRSV](#)

yet your desire shall be for your **husband**, and he shall rule over you

[NABRE](#)

Yet your urge shall be for your **husband**, and he shall rule over you

[NLT](#)

And you will desire to control your **husband**, but he will rule over you

Genesis 4:1b (NIV)

She said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man (אִישׁ).”

אִישׁ (*ish*)

## Genesis 3:16 proposed translation

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your **sorrow** and your **conception**; with **sorrow** you will bring forth **sons**. And your desire will be for your **man** [the Promised Seed], and / because he will rule with you.”

אִישׁ (*ish*)

## Genesis 3:16 (NIV)

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule **over** you.”

בַּיִת (bait)

= in, with, by, among

[NASB95](#)

Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will **rule over you**

[NASB](#)

Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall **rule over you**

[NASB 2020](#)

Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he shall **rule over you**

[LSB](#)

Your desire will be for your husband, And he will **rule over you**

[LEB](#)

And to your husband shall be your desire And he shall **rule over you**

[ESV](#)

Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall **rule over you**

[NIV](#)

Your desire will be for your husband, and he will **rule over you**

[NET 2nd ed](#)

You will want to **control your husband**, but he will **dominate you**

[NKJV](#)

Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall **rule over you**

[KJV 1900](#)

and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall **rule over thee**

[HCSB](#)

Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will **rule over you**

[CSB](#)

Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will **rule over you**

[EHV](#)

Your desire will be for your husband, but he will **rule over you**

[NRSV](#)

yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall **rule over you**

[NABRE](#)

Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall **rule over you**

[NLT](#)

And you will desire to control your husband, but he will **rule over you**

# Preposition בְּ (*bait*)

*HALOT*: 24 major categories + sub-categories (none “over”)

*BDB*: 22 major categories + sub-categories (none “over”)

*DCH*: 18 major categories. Category 14 is “over”

- אין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל “there was no king over Israel” (Judg 18:1)

*HALOT*

- מִשַׁל + בְּ = “rule over”
- “to rule over the day and over the night” (Gen 1:18)
- “a ruler over all the land of Egypt” (Gen 45:8)
- Gen 3:16; 4:7

Actual Meaning

Sorrow

Conception

Sons

With

Man



Translation

Pain

Birth

Children

Over

Husband

## Genesis 4:7 (NIV)

“If you do what is right, will you not **be accepted**? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; **it** desires to have you, **but** you must rule **over it**.”

## Genesis 4:7 proposed translation

“If you do good, [then] **rank / preeminence**. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is **his [the serpent’s]** desire, because you [Cain] will rule **with him [the serpent]**.”



Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] **rank / preeminence**. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is his [the serpent’s] desire, because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].”

שַׂאֵת (*s<sup>e</sup>ayt*)

= rank / preeminence

שַׂאֵת (*s<sup>e</sup>ayt*)

= rank / preeminence

Genesis 49:3

“preeminent in dignity” (NASB, LSB, ESV)

“excelling in rank” (LEB, NRSV, NABRE)

“excelling in honor” (NIV)

“excelling in prominence” (HCSB)

In Genesis, שַׂאֵת is used to identify  
the son carrying the promise

Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] **rank / preeminence**. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is his [the serpent’s] desire, because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].”

שַׂאֵת (*s<sup>e</sup>ayt*)

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Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] rank / preeminence. But if you do not do good, **sin** is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is **his [the serpent’s]** desire, because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].”

חַטָּאת (*ḥatat*)

= sin / sin offering

Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] rank / preeminence. But if you do not do good, **sin** is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is **his [the serpent’s] desire**, because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].”

חַטָּאת (*ḥatat*) = sin (feminine noun)

תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ (*t<sup>e</sup>shukato*) = his desire  
(masculine pronoun)

NASB95 “**sin** is crouching at the door; and **its desire** is for you, but you must master it.”

NASB “**sin** is crouching at the door; and **its desire** is for you, but you must master it.”

NASB 2020 “**sin** is lurking at the door; and **its desire** is for you, but you must master it.”

LSB “**sin** is lying at the door; and **its desire** is for you, but you must rule over it.”

LEB “**sin** is crouching at the door. And **its desire** is for you, but you must rule over it.”

ESV “**sin** is crouching at the door. **Its desire** is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”

NIV “**sin** is crouching at your door; **it desires** to have you, but you must rule over it.”

NET 2nd ed. “**sin** is crouching at the door. **It desires** to dominate you, but you must subdue it.”

NKJV “**sin** lies at the door. And **its desire** is for you, but you should rule over it.”

KJV 1900 “**sin** lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be **his desire**, and thou shalt rule over him.”

HCSB “**sin** is crouching at the door. **Its desire** is for you, but you must rule over it.”

CSB “**sin** is crouching at the door. **Its desire** is for you, but you must rule over it.”

EHV “**sin** is crouching at the door. **It has a strong desire** for you, but you must rule over it.”

NRSV “**sin** is lurking at the door; **its desire** is for you, but you must master it.”

NABRE “**sin** lies in wait at the door: **its urge** is for you, yet you can rule over it.

Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] rank / preeminence. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is his [the serpent’s] desire, because you [Cain] will rule **with him [the serpent]**.”

בַּיִת (*bait*)

= in, with, by, among

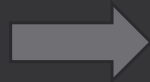
Literary / Logical



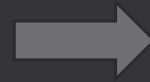
# Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary



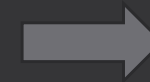
Dwight Pentecost



Charles Baylis



David Klingler



Current PhD  
cohort

# Elements of the Metanarrative of Scripture

Setting:	Heaven and earth	Gen 1–2
Hero:	God the Father	Gen 1–2
Hero's desire:	Image bearers to rule the earth	Gen 1:26-28
Problem:	Image bearers gave their rule to the serpent	Gen 3:6-7
Solution (the plot):	Promise seed will strike the serpent and restore rule to image bearers	Gen 3:15–Rev 19
Turning point:	The Cross	Gospels
Climax:	The Great Tribulation	Rev 6–19
Resolution / denouement:	Image bearers again rule the earth	Rev 20–22

Gen 3:1-5 Temptation by the serpent

Gen 3:6-7 Submission to the serpent

- God's intent: humanity rule the animals (1:26)
- 3:6-7: submit to the serpent
- Handed over their rule of the earth to the serpent
- **Absolute disaster**

## Genesis 3:15

“And enmity I will put between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

- Identifies two teams in the story:
  - Those who share the woman’s hope
  - Those with the serpent
- Until the resolution, these teams will be in conflict

## Genesis 3:15

“And enmity I will put between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

- Prophetic foretelling of God’s plan to resolve the plot problem
- Striking the serpent ends his rule
- Promised seed rules the earth
- **Incredibly hopeful verse**

## Genesis 3:16 (proposed translation)

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your sorrow and your conception; **with sorrow you will bring forth sons**. And your desire will be for your man [the Promised Seed], because he will rule with you.”

- Why sorrow in bringing forth sons?

## Genesis 4:1-2 (NASB)

1 “Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a manchild **with the help of the LORD.**”

2 Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת-חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַרֵּ  
וַתֵּלֶד אֶת-קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר קָנִיתִי אִישׁ  
אֶת-יְהוָה:

וַתִּסֹּף לָלֶדֶת אֶת-אָבֶל  
וַיְהִי-הֶבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה  
עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה:

קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת-יְהוָה = “I have acquired a man, Yahweh”

Eve hoped Cain was the promised seed

## Genesis 3:16

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your sorrow and your conception; **with sorrow you will bring forth sons**. And your desire will be for your man [the Promised Seed], because he will rule with you.”

- Why sorrow in bringing forth sons?
- Eve hoped her son would be the promised seed of 3:15-16
- Instead, the son she hoped in—he joined the serpent



## Genesis 3:16

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your sorrow and your conception; with sorrow you will bring forth sons. And **your desire will be for your man** [the Promised Seed], **because he will rule with you.**”

- Why the desire for the promised seed?
  - They have just lost their rule of the earth
  - Adam and Eve promised death
  - They will be resurrected and restored to their place of rule with the Promised Seed

**An incredibly hopeful verse!**

If Genesis 3:16 really were about pain in childbirth and wives usurping their husbands' authority...

- Why does the first recorded birth not mention anything about pain?
- Why do wives in Genesis not usurp their husband's authority?

## Bible commentary section headings

- God Announces Punishment (3:14-19)
- The Verdict (3:14-20)
- God's Judgments Pronounced (3:14-21)
- Sentence (3:14-19)
- Judgment and Expulsion (3:8-24)

Genesis 3:15 is a HOPEFUL verse!

Genesis 3:16 continues that hopeful expectation

## Genesis 3:16

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your sorrow and your conception; with sorrow you will bring forth sons. And **your desire will be for your man** [the Promised Seed], **because he will rule with you.**”

In the traditional interpretation...

- What is the nature of the woman’s desire?

## Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] rank / preeminence. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is his [the serpent’s] desire, **because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].**”

Who is the “he” who desires?

- ~~God~~
- ~~Adam~~
- Serpent
- ~~Cain~~
- ~~Abel~~

# The Pattern of Ruling with the Serpent

- Cain
- Pharaoh
- Athaliah
- Haman
- King Herod

<b>Side:</b>	Team God	Team Serpent
<b>Seed:</b>	Seed of the woman	Seed of the serpent
<b>Desire:</b>	Woman's desire	Serpent's desire
<b>Rule:</b>	Blessing	Domination

Genesis 4:7 (proposed translation)

“If you do good, [then] rank / preeminence. But if you do not do good, sin is a crouching one at the door; and for you [Cain] is his [the serpent’s] desire, **because you [Cain] will rule with him [the serpent].**”

Serpent-style rule historically  
(and in the present)  
points to premillennialism



# Validation

- Narrative unity of the biblical metanarrative ...
- Narrative unity in Genesis
- Directly contradicts higher critical approaches

## Higher Critical Approaches

- Anti-supernatural presuppositions
- Application of biological evolutionary beliefs to texts
- Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis
- Assumed disunity of Genesis
- Assumed etiologial purposes for parts of Genesis

“That the Book of Genesis is a composite work is now so generally recognized that it would be hard to name a writer of importance who denies it.”

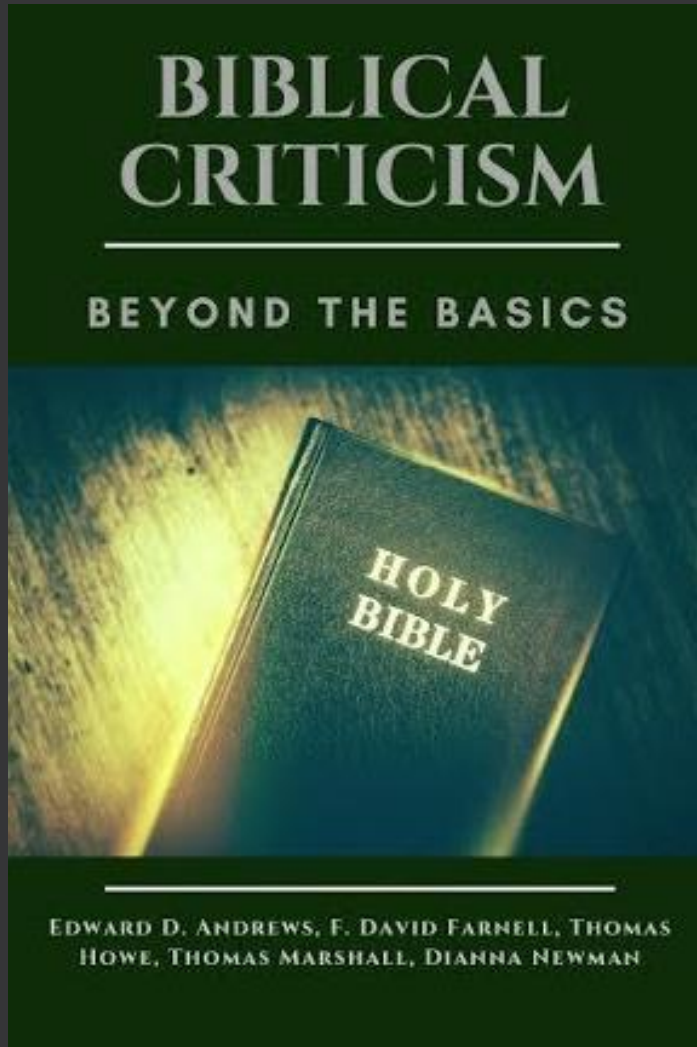
John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Scribner, 1910), xlii.

“A point on which everybody is agreed today is that the real meaning of Genesis is to be sought, not so much in the literary form of the whole book, as in the literary form *of the parts* which compose the book” (emphasis added).

Lucien Ouellette, “Woman’s Doom in Genesis 3:16,” *CBQ* 12, no. 4 (January 1, 1950): 389.

“The conclusion which virtually all modern scholars are willing to accept, is that the Pentateuch was in reality a composite work, the product of many hands and periods.”

E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1964), xxi.



- Warns of the dangers of evangelicals applying the critical methods of liberals
- Highlights evangelicals Darrell Bock, Robert Mounce, Grant Osborne, Craig Blomberg, Tremper Longman III, Craig Evans, and others
- Issue: methodology isn't neutral—methodology is *ideology*

“The etiological nature of v. 15 is apparent, though its relevance for modern western man is perhaps lost because we rarely come face to face with poisonous snakes. Ancient Israelites, who often encountered snakes in their daily activities ... would find the statement quite meaningful as an explanation for the hostility between snakes and humans ... This ongoing struggle, when interpreted in light of v. 15, is a tangible reminder of the conflict introduced into the world by the first humans’ rebellion against God.”

NET Bible (New English Translation), first edition.  
Genesis 3:15, footnote 45.



Questions?