**Gen.2:15-17 (WCF 7:1-2, 19:1)  "Promises, Obligations and Warnings in the Garden"**

**For the Children:** In the Garden of Eden, before man sinned, God told Adam and Eve who He was; He gave them promises; He told them how they should live, in obedience to Him; and He warned them of what would happen if they disobeyed.  Later, He made this even stronger by swearing an oath/making a covenant about it.  This was to teach man that he must obey his Creator and Lord.  It also showed that God is gracious to bless man in ways we do not deserve – because He loves us.  His warnings of the penalty for disobedience also spring from His love for us.  **Questions**: What are main elements we find in covenants?  Where do we see these elements in our text?  How should we respond to these truths?

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**Introduction:**

**First Point: The Promise**
1) Of Life: God's promise of life is already found in v.9, by the presence of the Tree of Life in the middle of the Garden.  The Garden itself is a place of abundant life, with abundant water (2:10).  This is a symbol of the physical, spiritual and eternal life that is given by the Lord to those who are in fellowship with Him.  After man falls, that life is only found through Christ's redeeming work.  See Rev.22.

2) A "Sacramental" Tree: The Tree of life is a sign and seal of this God-given life, though suited to the time before man sins, in connection with the "covenant of works."  But it cannot be eaten unless Adam and Eve first demonstrate obedience – or they will be confirmed in unrighteousness.

**Second Point: The Obligation**
1) The Moral Law: The obligations of this pre-Fall arrangement are summed up by the moral law, though the 10 commandments are present at this point in seed-form.  In our text, an aspect of the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment is implied by the command to work the Garden.

2) The Probationary Law: Adam is on probation – tested in order to show how he will deal with temptation to eat the forbidden fruit – a test of whether he would obey purely because God said so.

3) Another Sacramental Tree: This is a test as to whether Adam would learn the nature of good and evil in a godly way; or, through disobedience, learn it in a sinful way.  It is a sign and seal of the fact that God gives true knowledge of good and evil – but not if this "sacrament" is profaned.  If Adam had obeyed, he might have been able to take this fruit in a godly way, later.  Because he failed the test, Christ had to come to another tree, a terrible one- the cross - from which He was *commanded* to take.  The result is that we receive true knowledge and life from Him.

**Third Point: The Warning**
1) You Shall Certainly Die: God warns Adam and Eve against disobedience.  The consequence will be immediate death – spiritual death immediately, which will lead to eternal death if it is not remedied; and the process of physical death starting then as well.  This curse is passed on to Adam's posterity.

2) A Matter of Urgency: The urgency of this warning is seen in its immediacy ("in the day you eat of it"), and the strength of the warning ("you shall surely die").  The Lord speaks strongly out of love.  Since we can only have this penalty removed by Christ, the same urgency applies to the call to turn to Him.

**Fourth Point: The Covenant**
1) The Usual Covenant Elements: This arrangement does not fit the meaning of the words for "covenant" in OT or NT – they imply the existence of sin and death.  But it does fit the theological definition of 2 parties making an agreement that involves promises and conditions.  In fact, it has the same basic elements as the covenant of grace: the Name of the King (Yahweh God); promises; conditions; and warnings.  These elements are put in a way that is suited to the pre-Fall situation.

2) Why The Lord Does This: The reason for this arrangement is that these elements show that even before the Fall, man must know his place – a finite creature who is called to serve and obey His Creator.  In this we see that God graciously condescends to bless and reward man, though he earns no merit by obeying.

**Conclusion:**