

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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DOCUMENT 188

BEREISHIT (GENESIS) 2:17

THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL AND THE DAY YOU SHALL SURELY DIE

A Covenant Deep Dive into the First Commandment, the First Warning, and the First Death

“What Kind of Knowledge Costs a Covenant? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response”

July 2026

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REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Rabbinic tradition reads da'at tov va-ra (דַּעַת טוֹב וָרָע, knowledge of good and evil) not as intellectual discovery but as the acquisition of moral autonomy — the capacity to determine right and wrong apart from Yahweh's own declaration of it. The prohibition of Bereishit 2:17 is the first mitzvah given to mankind, preceding Sinai by generations, establishing that Torah-obedience, not philosophical knowledge, is the ground of covenant standing.	Christian tradition, following Pauline Adam-Christ typology (Romans 5:12–19), often reads Bereishit 2:17 primarily through the lens of inherited guilt ('Original Sin') transmitted biologically to all humanity. This study examines that reading against the plain sense of the Hebrew text and the covenant-consequence framework the Tanakh itself supplies.	Islam's account of Adam (آدم, Ādam) in the Qur'an (7:19–25; 20:115–123) names the forbidden tree, the deception, and the fall — but explicitly denies inherited guilt: each soul is responsible only for what it has earned (Q. 6:164). Adam is forgiven upon repentance and is not a fallen mediator-figure but the first prophet. The Tanakh's own text, read plainly, stands closer to this position than to the inherited-guilt reading.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the Tanakh — the written covenant of Yahweh. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and theological comparison only. The Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15 two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written Tanakh. Yahweh (יהוה) and Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Hebrew book names are given with English in parentheses. Hebrew transliterations appear in bold italic with English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, New Testament texts, and the Qur'an are cited as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Bereishit (Genesis), Shemot (Exodus), Vayikra (Leviticus), Devarim (Deuteronomy)	Foundation text — the covenant command, its consequence, and the covenant's own vocabulary of life and death
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Yechezkel (Ezekiel), Yeshayahu (Isaiah)	Prophetic confirmation of the nephesh-that-sins-shall-die principle and covenant restoration
Ketuvim (Writings)	Tehillim (Psalms), Mishlei (Proverbs), Kohelet (Ecclesiastes), Iyov (Job)	Wisdom literature's treatment of the tree of life, the fear of Yahweh as true da'at, and mortality

I. THE TEXT AND ITS SETTING — BEREISHIT (GENESIS) 2:15–17

I-A. The Command in Its Garden Context

Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 does not stand alone. It is the second half of a single covenant unit that begins in verse 16:

“Vayetzav Yabweh Elohim al ha-adam lemor (וַיִּצַו יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר), ‘Yabweh Elohim commanded the man, saying’.”

This is the first occurrence in the Tanakh of the verb **tzavah** (צָוָה, H6680, to command) — the verbal root that produces the noun **mitzvah** (מִצְוָה, commandment). Before Sinai, before the Avrahamic covenant, before Noah, the very first **mitzvah** given to a human being is recorded here, in the garden, addressed to ha-adam (הָאָדָם, the man).

“And Yabweh Elohim commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Bereishit [Genesis] 2:16–17 — JPS 1985, adapted for the Name)

The structure is covenantal before it is prohibitive. Verse 16 grants abundance — **mikol etz ha-gan achol tochal** (מִכָּל עֵץ הַגֶּן אָכַל תֹּאכַל, ‘of every tree of the garden, eating you may eat’) — an infinitive absolute construction (**achol tochal**) that emphasizes the totality and freedom of the permission, before a single boundary is named. The covenant of Eden is overwhelmingly a covenant of provision. Exactly one tree, out of every tree Yabweh planted (Bereishit (Genesis) 2:9), is withheld. The ratio itself is the first covenant witness: abundance is the rule; restriction is the singular exception, and the exception exists to make relationships — not mere survival — possible.

I-B. Why a Prohibition at All? The Necessity of a Boundary

A garden with no boundary is not a covenant — it is an ecosystem. Doc 148 (The Problem of Evil and the Covenant of Yabweh) established that **bechirah** (בְּחִירָה, **free choice**) requires a genuine alternative for the choice to carry weight. Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 is the mechanism by which that alternative first enters recorded history. Without a stated command carrying a stated consequence, ha-adam could not meaningfully be said to walk in obedience or disobedience — there would be nothing to obey. The one tree does for Adam what the whole of Torah later does for Yisra'el (Israel) at Sinai: it converts an undifferentiated existence into a covenant relationship with real stakes another words: before this command, Adam's life had no rules — nothing to obey or disobey, nothing riding on his choices. The moment Yabweh gives him one boundary with a real consequence attached, that changes. Now his life

isn't just "existing in a garden" — it's a relationship with actual terms: there's something he's been told, and something that happens depending on whether he keeps it or not.

II. THE HEBREW VOCABULARY OF THE TREE

II-A. Etz (עץ) — Tree, H6086

The word **etz** (עץ), Strong's H6086, is the common Hebrew term for **"tree or wood,"** used over 300 times across the Tanakh. Its ordinariness matters: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is grammatically unremarkable — it is called **etz** like any other tree in the garden. So with the tree: it's covenantal, not botanical. Its importance isn't in what it is, it's in what Yahweh said about it. This anticipates a recurring covenant pattern across the Tanakh: ordinary objects (a rock, a fleece, a rod, an ark, bread and water) are set apart not by their own nature but by the word of Yahweh spoken over them. The command is what gave it weight, not its wood or its fruit.

II-B. Da'at (דעת) — Knowledge, H1847

Da'at (דעת), H1847, derives from the root **yada** (יָדַע, H3045, to know). **Yada** is not a term of abstract intellectual acquisition in Biblical Hebrew — it denotes experiential, relational, often intimate knowing. The same root describes the union of Adam and Chavvah (Eve) in:

Bereishit (Genesis) 4:1 *"And the man **yada**" his wife"*

and describes Yahweh's own covenant knowledge of Yisra'el (**Amos 3:2: "Only you have I yada of all the families of the earth"**). This is decisive against any reading of **da'at tov va-ra** as a merely academic or abstract knowledge of ethical categories that human beings otherwise entirely lacked. Adam and Chavvah (Eve) already possessed moral categories — they understood the command itself as binding, understood the distinction between obedience and its opposite, and were addressed by Yahweh as morally accountable beings from the outset. What the tree offers is not the discovery that good and evil exist. It is something more specific and more dangerous.

II-C. Tov Va-Ra (טוב ורע) — Good and Evil as Merism

Tov (טוב, H2896, good) and **ra** (רע, H7451, evil/calamity — see Doc 148, Section I-B, for the full semantic range) form a merism: a figure of speech in which two polar terms name the totality of the category between them (compare 'heaven and earth' in Bereishit 1:1, or 'day and night'). 'Good and evil' in this construction does not narrowly mean 'moral good and moral wickedness.' It means the entire range of discernment — all things, in every category, from every angle. The construction appears elsewhere with exactly this totalizing sense: in Devarim (Deuteronomy) 1:39, children who 'do not yet know **tov va-ra**' are those too young to exercise full independent judgment in any sphere — not

specifically moral judgment. In 2 Shmuel (Samuel) 14:17, the wise woman of Tekoa tells David his discernment is **‘like the malach Elohim, to hear *tov va-ra*’** — a comprehensive, sovereign faculty of judgment, not a narrow ethical category.

II-D. What the Tree Actually Offers: Autonomous, Total, Self-Legislating Judgment

Read together — *da'at (to know)* as experiential/relational knowing, and *tov va-ra (good and evil)* as a **merism** for total discernment — the tree's offer comes into focus: not the introduction of moral categories to morally blank beings, but the acquisition of the total, self-standing, self-legislating capacity to determine for oneself what is good and what is evil, independent of Yahweh's own declaration of it. This is confirmed by the serpent's own promise found in:

Bereishit (Genesis) 3:5: “*For Elohim knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like Elohim, knowing (yodei) tov va-ra.*”

The serpent does not promise moral awareness where none existed. He promises autonomy — the position of being one's own arbiter of *tov* and *ra*, occupying the seat that belongs to **Yahweh** alone. This is the first and archetypal instance of a temptation that recurs throughout the Tanakh under many names: the substitution of human self-legislation for covenant obedience to the revealed word of **Yahweh**.

Here's the draft, matching the voice and formatting conventions of the rest of Section II:

II-E. The Tree in Later Tanakh Usage — Is “Tree” Ever More Than Wood?

Within the Bereishit (Genesis) 2–3 narrative itself, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil functions as a literal, physical tree — grammatically identical to every other *etz* in the garden, as established above. Nothing in the Hebrew text signals that it should be read as a symbol rather than an object. The plain sense holds: this is a real tree, standing in a real garden, to which **Yahweh** attached a real covenant meaning by His spoken word.

But the Tanakh does not leave *“tree”* behind at Eden's gate. The wisdom literature returns to the image repeatedly, and always in the same direction — as shorthand for whatever brings covenant flourishing and life:

- **Mishlei (Proverbs) 3:18** — wisdom herself is called *“a tree of life to those who take hold of her.”*
- **Mishlei 11:30** — *“the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life.”*
- **Mishlei 13:12** — *“desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”*

- Mishlei 15:4 — *"a gentle tongue is a tree of life."*

None of these later occurrences concerns botany. Each reaches back to Eden's own vocabulary — specifically the *tree of life*, the counterpart tree from which Adam and Chavvah (Eve) were barred after the rupture (Bereishit 3:22–24) — and reuses it as a fixed image for ongoing covenant blessing: *wisdom, righteousness, fulfilled desire, and a gentle tongue* are each named a *"tree of life"* precisely because that phrase had already come to mean access to what Yahweh sustains and blesses. This is not incidental. The Tanakh's own writers treat the trees of Eden as a vocabulary they can draw on long after the garden is closed.

Read together, the two trees of Eden establish a pattern that outlives the garden itself: a real tree, standing for a real and consequential choice. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents the choice between receiving discernment from **Yahweh** or seizing it autonomously; the tree of life comes to represent, throughout the rest of the Tanakh, the ongoing blessing that belongs to those who choose rightly. Neither tree carries power in its own wood or fruit. Both carry meaning because **Yahweh's** word made them mean something — the same covenant principle already established in II-A above, now confirmed by how later Scripture continues to use the image.

III. MOT TAMUT (מוֹת תָּמוּת) — THE DOUBLED WARNING

III-A. The Infinitive Absolute Construction

The Hebrew of the warning clause is *mot tamut* (מוֹת תָּמוּת), an infinitive absolute (*mot*) followed by the finite verb (*tamut*) from the same root, *muth* (מוֹת, H4191, **to die**). This construction — the same grammatical pattern examined in Doc 103's treatment of *pakod pakadti* (פָּקֹד פָּקַדְתִּי, Shemot 3:16) — exists in Biblical Hebrew to intensify and guarantee the certainty of the verbal action. The standard English rendering '*you shall surely die*' captures the force but flattens the grammar: the literal sense is closer to '*dying, you shall die*' — a legal, covenantal certainty formula, not a vague warning of eventual mortality. This is the identical construction used throughout the Torah's covenant law codes for capital covenant violations — for example Shemot (Exodus) 21:12: '*One who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death (mot yumat)*.' Bereishit 2:17 is therefore formulated in the precise legal register of covenant law, not merely the language of natural consequence.

III-B. 'In the Day That You Eat' — Beyom Achalcha (בְּיוֹם אָכַלְךָ)

The clause beyom *achalcha mimenu mot tamut* (בְּיוֹם אָכַלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת, '*in the day you eat of it, dying you shall die*') has generated more theological dispute than nearly any other clause in

Bereishit, because Adam did not fall down physically dead on the calendar day he ate the fruit — Bereishit (Genesis) 5:5 records that *‘all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.’* Three covenant-consistent readings are examined here under the Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15 evidentiary standard, rather than adopting one uncritically.

First: *Yom* (יּוֹם, *day*) as an idiom for immediate, decisive covenant consequence rather than a strict 24-hour clock. Hebrew idiom frequently uses *yom* to mark the moment a decisive process begins or a status changes irreversibly, not only a literal daylight period (compare *beyom hakotah*, Bemidbar [Numbers] 3:13, *‘on the day I struck,’* marking a decisive act with effects reaching forward). On this reading, death began operating in the very moment of disobedience — covenantally, relationally, and physiologically — even though its full physical outworking unfolded across 930 years.

Second: Immediate covenant/relational death — *bester panim* (הַסְתֵּר פָּנִים, *the hiding of the face*), the subject of Doc 84. On this reading, the death that occurred that day was the rupture of unmediated covenant fellowship: Bereishit (Genesis) 3:8 records that immediately after eating, Adam and Chavvah hid themselves from the presence of **Yahweh**, and 3:23–24 records their expulsion from the garden and from access to the tree of life. Whatever else ‘death’ means here, an immediate, same-day rupture in covenant nearness is textually undeniable and requires no reinterpretation of *yom* at all.

Third: The day marks mortality's onset rather than its completion. From the moment of the rupture, physical death became certain and unavoidable where it had not been before (contrast the *tree of life's* role in Bereishit 3:22, from which access is now barred precisely so man will not ‘live forever’ in his ruptured state).

Tehillim (Psalms) 90:4 — ‘For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes, or like a watch in the night’

This is cited here only as comparative wisdom-literature testimony to **Yahweh's** own relationship to time, not as a mathematical decoding formula; the Tanakh nowhere states that Adam's 930 years were reckoned as ‘less than a day’ to **Yahweh**, and this study does not adopt that speculative extension.

The covenant conclusion, corroborated by these three converging witnesses, is not in tension: *mot tamut* was set in motion in full on the day of disobedience — relationally and immediately in the rupture of covenant nearness, and physically and irreversibly in the mortality that followed — rather than being falsified by the 930-year delay.

III-C. Yahweh's Restraint: The Death Deferred, Not Denied, and the First Covering

It is essential to the covenant record that **Yahweh** does not immediately execute the stated penalty. Instead, **Bereishit (Genesis) 3:21** records:

‘And Yahweh Elohim made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin, and clothed them.’

This is the first recorded instance in the Tanakh of a covering provided by **Yahweh** Himself, in place of the fig-leaf covering man had attempted to make for himself (Bereishit 3:7). A life was taken to provide it. This study does not claim Bereishit 3:21 constitutes a sacrificial system — Torah's formal sacrificial legislation begins at Sinai — but the pattern established here (man's own covering insufficient; **Yahweh's** covering costly and **Yahweh**-provided) recurs across the whole Tanakh's sacrificial and atonement structure and is worth the covenant community's sober attention regardless of tradition.

IV. NEPHESH THAT SINS SHALL DIE — THE PRINCIPLE CONFIRMED ELSEWHERE IN TANAKH

Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 does not stand as an isolated statement in the Tanakh; the death-for-covenant-violation principle is directly confirmed and clarified centuries later through the prophet Yechezkel (Ezekiel), applying Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15's multiple-witness standard to this doctrine.

“The nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ, soul/person) that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” (Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 18:20 — JPS 1985)

Yechezkel 18 is the Tanakh's own extended, explicit refutation of inherited, transmitted guilt for another's covenant violation — stated in direct response to a popular proverb of the exile generation (*‘the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge,’* Yechezkel 18:2) which **Yahweh** explicitly forbids the people from repeating any longer (18:3). This is the decisive Tanakh witness against any doctrine that Adam's transgression in Bereishit 2:17 transmits inherited guilt to his descendants as a biological or judicial inevitability. Each *nephesh* stands or falls, in Yechezkel's own explicit covenant terms, on its own relationship to **Yahweh's** instruction — not on the transgression of a distant ancestor.

This does not deny that Bereishit (Genesis) 3 introduced universal mortality, exile from unmediated fellowship, and a world of toil and pain as structural consequences inherited by all humanity (Doc 148, Section V-A) — the ground itself was placed under *arur* (אָרֹר, H779). It denies specifically that Adam's guilt — the moral culpability of his personal act of disobedience — is itself transmitted to and

borne by his descendants as their own sin before **Yahweh**. The consequences are inherited; the culpability, per Yechezkel 18:20, is not.

V. BECHIRAH AND THE FIRST MITZVAH — THE COVENANT FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED

Doc 148 established that genuine moral agency (*bechirah*, בְּחִירָה) requires genuine moral consequence, and that a world without real choice would be a world without covenant. Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 is the historical point of origin for that entire framework. The single tree, the single command, and the single stated consequence together constitute the first exercise of covenant structure in human history — preceding Noach, Avraham, and Sinai. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:15–19's later formula — life and good set against death and evil, with the command to 'choose life' — is not a new theological innovation at the end of the Torah. It is the explicit unfolding, centuries later at the plains of Moav, of the very structure **Yahweh** first established in the garden: **a stated boundary, a stated consequence, and a summons to genuine choice**.

VI. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION HANDLES BEREISHIT 2:17

ELEMENT	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
Primary Reading	The eitz ha-da'at prohibition is the first mitzvah; the fall introduces mortality and exile from Eden but not inherited guilt. Adam's sin is his own; Yisra'el's task is covenant obedience going forward (Devarim 30:11–14 — the commandment is not too difficult, nor far off).	Following Romans 5:12–19 and Augustinian development, Adam's transgression is frequently read as transmitting inherited guilt (original sin) to all humanity, requiring a substitutionary atonement to resolve a legal liability incurred at Eden.	The Qur'an (7:19–25; 20:115–123) records Adam and Hawwa's (Eve's) forbidden-tree episode and expulsion, but explicitly frames it as a single act of forgetfulness (nisyan) that Allah forgives upon repentance (tawbah) — not an inherited legal liability transmitted to Adam's descendants.
Covenant Strength	Correctly preserves individual moral accountability (Yechezkel 18:20) and reads mot tamut as covenant-consequence	Correctly preserves the gravity and universality of the consequences of Bereishit 3 — mortality, toil, exile — as structural realities affecting all	Correctly preserves that each soul answers for its own deeds (Q. 6:164, echoing Yechezkel 18:20) and that repentance restores covenant

	language consistent with the Torah's later legal formulas.	humanity, not merely Adam personally.	standing, resisting a purely deterministic reading of the fall.
Covenant Departure	Some rabbinic and Kabbalistic elaborations (e.g., speculative readings of the yetzer hara's origin) can drift toward treating the fall as a metaphysical event disconnected from the plain covenant-consequence text.	Extending Adam's personal guilt into an inherited legal liability transmitted to every human soul goes beyond what Yechezkel 18:20 permits and risks re-importing exactly the retributive, trans-generational-guilt reasoning Yahweh explicitly forbade the exile generation from repeating.	Where later tradition minimizes the seriousness of Bereishit 3's structural consequences — universal mortality and exile from unmediated fellowship — it understates what the Tanakh's own text plainly records.
Covenant Witness	The command precedes Sinai; obedience to the revealed word of Yahweh, not autonomous moral reasoning, is the ground of covenant standing — for the first man as for Yisra'el.	Strip the inherited-guilt overlay and the Hebrew text's own emphasis remains available: mortality and exile are real, universal, structural consequences of the rupture — and Yahweh's own costly covering (3:21) anticipates His provision, not human self-atonement.	Sabr (صَبْر, patient endurance) and tawbah (repentance) after failure echo the Tanakh's own pattern: Yahweh does not abandon Adam after the rupture but clothes him and preserves his line.

VII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON BEREISHIT 2:17

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The prohibition of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the first mitzvah given to a human being — preceding Noah, Avraham, and Sinai — and establishes obedience to Yahweh's revealed word, not autonomous moral reasoning, as the ground of covenant standing.	Bereishit (Genesis) 2:16–17
II	Da'at tov va-ra is not the introduction of moral categories to morally blank beings but the offer of total, self-legislating,	Bereishit (Genesis) 3:5–6

	autonomous judgment — the position of determining good and evil apart from Yahweh's own declaration of it.	
III	Mot tamut is covenant-legal certainty language, identical in construction to the Torah's capital covenant-violation formulas — not a vague warning but a binding declaration.	Shemot (Exodus) 21:12
IV	The death set in motion on the day of disobedience was, at minimum, an immediate rupture of covenant nearness — hester panim — confirmed by the same-day hiding and expulsion, whatever additional force the idiom of yom carries.	Bereishit (Genesis) 3:8, 23–24
V	Yahweh deferred the stated penalty and provided a costly covering Himself, in place of man's insufficient self-made covering — the first recorded instance of this covenant pattern.	Bereishit (Genesis) 3:21
VI	The consequences of the rupture — mortality, toil, exile from unmediated fellowship — are inherited by all humanity; Adam's personal guilt for his own transgression is not, per the Tanakh's own explicit doctrine.	Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:20
VII	The structure first established in the garden — a stated boundary, a stated consequence, and a summons to genuine choice — is the same covenant structure Yahweh later formalizes for the whole of Yisra'el at the plains of Moav.	Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:15–19

VIII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT BEREISHIT 2:17 ASKS OF THE READER TODAY

Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 is not primarily a puzzle about ancient chronology or a proof-text to be weaponized in inherited-guilt debates. Read plainly, in its own Hebrew vocabulary and its own covenant-legal grammar, it asks a question that has never stopped being current: will the covenant community receive its knowledge of good and evil from **Yahweh's** own revealed word, or will it reach for the autonomous, self-legislating judgment the serpent offered as '*being like Elohim*'? Every generation since Eden has faced some version of this same tree. The covenant answer, consistent from Bereishit 2:17 through Devarim 30:19, has never changed: choose life — by receiving, not self-generating, the knowledge of what is tov and what is ra.

Put into plain terms this isn't really a story about ancient history, or a puzzle about how long a "day" is. Strip away the debates, and Genesis 2:17 is asking one simple, personal question — the same question it's always asked: **where do you get your sense of right and wrong? Do you receive it from Yahweh, or do you decide it for yourself?**

That was the real offer in the garden. The serpent didn't promise Adam and Eve new information about good and evil — they already knew what obedience meant. He promised them the seat of judge. "You'll be like Elohim" meant: you won't need to be told anymore what's right — you'll decide that on your own terms.

That offer never went away. Every generation faces some version of the same tree: the pull to write your own rules instead of receiving them from Yahweh. Genesis 2:17 through Deuteronomy 30:19 gives the same answer every time — **choose life.** **Not by figuring out good and evil for yourself, but by receiving it from the One who defines it.**

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*“And Yahweh Elohim commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;
but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it,
for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”*

Bereishit (Genesis) 2:16–17 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

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Document 188 • Bereishit (Genesis) 2:17 • July 2026

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