

ADAM AND EVE: EARTH'S FIRST COUPLE—AND ITS FIRST SINNERS

Presented by

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For the past several weeks, Tyler and I have been involved in our Sunday-morning Bible class in a “journey through the Old Testament.” And what an intriguing journey it has been so far! We already have learned some incredible things. For example, we have learned, as the writer of the book of Hebrews would put it many years later, that “the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear” (Hebrews 11:3). God—by “the word of His power” (Hebrews 1:3)—called matter and energy into existence, and then used them to create everything in the Universe! How fascinating is **that**?! We also have learned that the crowning glory of God’s entire creation were two humans whom He created as the last thing on the last day of His creative activity. To use an old human expression, God apparently “saved the best for last.” We know that those two humans were “the best” because Genesis 1:27 informs us that they were the only creatures on Earth to be created “in the image of God.” Out of all the creatures that God formed to inhabit the land, skies, and seas, only humans were endowed with an immortal soul that, at the death of the body, “returns to God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Say what you will, but there is no denying the fact—**that is impressive!**

Because God had created the first man from the dust of the earth, He named him “Adam,” which means “of the red earth.” And because all future humans would come from that first woman, God named her “Eve,” which means “mother of all living.” After God created Adam and Eve, He placed them into an earthly paradise known as “the Garden of Eden.” In that garden, their every need had been met. They had a beautiful home in which to live, luscious foods to eat, and a temperature that was so ideal that they did not even need to wear clothing. Everything was...in a word...**perfect!**

Upon placing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God gave them three positive commands. First, He told them to tend and keep the garden (Genesis 2:15). It was their home, and as its stewards, they were to take good care of it. Second, God told them that they were to “subdue the earth” by having “dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). Third, they were to “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28).

But God also gave Adam and Eve a single **negative** command. He told them that they were **not** to “eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” because if they did, they would “surely die” (Genesis 2:17). You would think that—with everything God had done for them, and because there was only one thing they were **not** supposed to do—Adam and Eve would have been able to obey God and keep His commands. But that is not what happened.

Genesis 3 tells us the sad story of how the devil disguised himself as a serpent, came to Eve one day while she was in the garden, and asked her, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the

garden’?” Genesis 3:1). It is obvious, of course, from the way Satan worded his question, that he already knew the answer. Eve answered correctly when she responded, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die’” (Genesis 3:2-3). Satan then said to Eve, “You will **not** surely die. God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” That, of course, **was an outright lie!** In fact, it was this lie that, thousands of years later, caused Jesus Christ to refer to Satan as “the father of lies” (John 8:44)—because Satan is the one who told the **very first lie** on Earth!

Unfortunately, however, Eve chose to believe Satan instead of God. Genesis 3:6 tells us that “when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and that it was a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband, and he ate.” As a result of Adam and Eve’s sin, they were cast out of their perfect paradise in the Garden of Eden, and angels were placed with a flaming sword at the entrance of the garden to keep Adam and Eve from ever returning to live there again. God placed a curse on Eve by causing her to have to endure increased pain in childbirth from that point on (Genesis 3:16). God also placed a curse on Adam by causing him to have to work the land for his food, all the while seeing it bring forth what the Bible calls “thorns and thistles” (Genesis 3:17-18).

When Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, they lost access to the tree of life that stood in the midst of the garden, which would have allowed them to “live forever” (Genesis 3:22). That very day, in keeping with God’s promise, they began to die. In fact, we later read the following statement in Genesis 5:5—“All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; **and he died.**” Adam and Eve **could** have lived forever in the Garden of Eden in a covenant relationship with God. But instead, they chose to break God’s law. The Bible calls that “sin,” which is identified as “transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). When the apostle Paul wrote the book of Romans, he referred back to that sin when he wrote that “through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men” (Romans 5:12).

Tyler and I have learned a lot of wonderful and exciting things so far in our journey through the Old Testament. But I have to tell you—the things I have discussed with you here about Adam and Eve are **not** among them! As Tyler and I learned what Adam and Eve did, it made us very sad. Fortunately, however, tucked away in a single verse in Genesis 3—the chapter that tells us about the terrible sin of the first humans—there is a single verse that turned our sadness into joy. But, that is another story—one that Tyler will explain to you in his sermon. For my part, I just want to point out that God does **not** want us to disobey Him and break His commandments like Adam and Eve. Rather, His message for us today is this: “Keep my commandments—**and live**” (Proverbs 4:4). Oh, **if Adam and Eve had only done that!**