



BIBLE STORIES EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW

Main and Oklahoma Church of Christ ^ Adult Bible Studies ^ Winter-Spring 2010

January 10, 2010

Adam and Eve, Genesis 1-3

Getting Started

"In the beginning God created..."

How do you get your mind around this? One author said, *"If you can get past Genesis 1:1, the rest is not a problem."* If you want to discuss "Creation vs. Evolution" you will be disappointed in this study. The critics are correct. Believing that God created the heavens, earth and humans out of nothing is primarily not a matter of science or a myth. It is a matter of faith. The story of creation assumes rather than proves the existence of God as creator. Our emphasis is upon God's story--a story of love, deceit, rebellion and salvation. Enter Adam and Eve.

What's the Story?

In the desert, somewhere between Egypt and the Promised Land, God reveals the story of creation to Moses. After six days of creating, God rested and made the seventh day holy. Afterwards, He makes a garden where man, and later woman, can live, worship their Creator, in a relationship with God that many desire.

God gave Adam one commandment: "...you may not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (2:17). This commandment carried a consequence; disobedience brings death. Otherwise, Adam could live in the garden, care for it, eat from the tree of life, and be close with God. Yet, God saw that Adam was alone. His creation needed something more. To help Adam, God made Eve from Adam's side.

The crafty serpent needs just two statements to deceive Eve. She sees the fruit on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil just as pleasing and desirable as the other fruits in the garden. After they eat the fruit, things in the garden are not so nice any more. God finds out about the disobedience and banishes both outside of the garden, away from the relationship with God and their lives will be difficult. Lest we forget, death comes too. Physical death will come in time to Adam and Eve, but spiritual separation from God is immediate. Yet, in God's closing speech, he leaves room for hope: the offspring of Eve will crush the serpent's head (3:15).

What does this Story say about God?

Rather than focus on details such as streams watering the earth without rain, God making a woman from Adam's rib, or where Adam got the name platypus, let us stick to the story. To people living in the desert, trying to follow God in cloud and fire, the Israelites want to know what is going on and why. They need better stories than the myths of Egypt and Canaan. This story tells them that the God that parted the Red Sea also created the Red Sea and everything

around them. As they struggle to follow God's law, they hear that although the first couple had a relationship with God closer than Moses, these two people still disobeyed God's commands. Yet, despite disobedience, God's love means hope of a restored relationship. They hear that their journey through the desert is a continuation of God's plan to restore relationship with His creation, and listening to and learning God's story gives them comfort and hope.

Now, what about our faith?

This story tells many things about God, but it is only the beginning. He made a place that was perfect just so that he could have a relationship with Adam. In the garden, Adam and Eve had purpose, companionship, and an intimate relationship with God. Yet, God set limits on Adam and Eve for their own good. Could you resist the arguments of the serpent? Considering all the sin over the ages, probably not. The serpent would not have had to work nearly as hard to persuade us into disobedience.

In this story, God is neither distant nor uninvolved. He is an active part, creating, leading, relating, loving, and providing hope. The story tells us of the consequences of disobeying God and hope in a future. Hope that the relationship would be regained. Hope that shows how much God loves His creation.

I think that when we get up on Monday morning, we need to remember this story. We need to remember that God is real and that He cares for all of us. Not just a little, but so much that He spoke the world into existence, to give us purpose and meaning in Him, and to provide hope that we can have a relationship just like Adam and Eve's was at the *beginning*. Yes, sin spoils that relationship, but all it takes to overcome it is Jesus' blood. Just keep reading the story.

Monday ~ Review Genesis and read *Getting Started*.

1. Is this a story that you can believe? Why or why not?
2. How do you think 21st Century Christians should view stories from the Bible like these?

Tuesday ~ Read Genesis 2-3 and *What's the Story?*

1. List the parts of the story that make it a story (actors, plot, conflict, etc.)
2. List the details of the story that you believe are important and discuss these with your class.
3. Which details can the story not do without? Which are not as important to the story?

Wednesday ~ Read Job 1-2.

1. Compare the actions of God and Satan in this story. How are they similar or different than in Genesis 2 and 3?
2. How is Job's relationship with God different or similar to Adam's relationship with God?

Thursday ~ Read Exodus 19:1-20:21 and *What does this story say about God?*

1. How is this story related to Genesis 2 and 3?
2. What are the similarities of God's actions here and in Genesis 2 and 3? How are His actions different?

Friday ~ Read Romans 5 and *Now, what about our faith?*

1. What can you tell of God's feelings or intentions toward His creation from this passage?
2. List some ways or times that the story of Adam and Eve will affect your life?