

Choices: Adam and Eve

Their choice

I have heard of several explanations on Adam and Eve. Are they real? Are they symbolic of humanity? Do they represent tribes of people? Why do we have this story at all? Could we possibly come from two people called Adam and Eve? I look at the Bible slightly different than this. Maybe it's not about the story or if it's real, but it's about the point. Choices in our lives come from stories. Hansel and Gretel made a choice to enter the witches house of candy. Abraham Lincoln chose to run for president. We exist to make choices, and those choices ultimately define us as the people we become.

This story in Genesis 1-3 represents us. You can say we are a type of Adam or that he was really a monkey, I don't care. These characters were presented with a choice between good and evil. There is a very old book called Sir Gwain and the green knight. He is challenged with a choice to defend his king or stay silent. The same can be said of Adam and Eve. God told them that they are free to do anything they want but don't eat from the tree of "The knowledge of good and evil." This choice is the same one we all have to make from time to time.

It's weird but when we make a choice it does open our eyes. I find this whole Adam and Eve story fascinating. God tells Adam not to eat of the tree or he will die. Eve does not exist at that point. A serpent tells Eve that they will not die but that their eyes will be open to the knowledge of good and evil. They will become like God. Well that was true in a way. Adam and Eve did have their eyes open and they realized they were naked. They began to experience shame, deceit, and pride. All the things that could distract them became open in that instant.

I do believe they died that day. All their innocence was washed down the drain as they realized things are not as they appeared. Was being naked important before? Was hiding from

God important? I have made mistakes in life. Some of the things I have experienced have shaped me in a bad way. I am not clean half as much as dirty. I guess I could say half as good as evil. I have the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve are forever changed by the choices they made. We are changed too. What is amazing is that within Genesis 3-5 Adam's children become killers. Adam does die in Genesis 5. There is no mention of the death of Eve. The parents of creation become nothing rather quickly after their choice.

In a way they had everything. Adam and Eve were the closest to God more than anyone has ever been on earth. They had the run of Eden and all God had to offer. There were no birth pains, thorns, and starvation. Shame, guilt, angry, and maybe even crying did not exist. If we are the type of Adam then we had it all in the beginning. It says their genes of sin were passed down through the generations: forever tainted. Even if it's not real, the proof is in the pudding. We are a fallen people. What choice would you make?

Our choice

Once I became a Christian all hell broke loose. That seems weird but its true. I told someone years ago that the Devil had me for many years. They made a statement I have never forgotten "The Devil never bothered you before because you were doing fine on your own." Basically I was acting more like the Devil than Jesus so why should the Devil be bothered. People say the Devil made me do it. Maybe, just maybe I wanted to do it too. It's a choice in life.

The story of Adam and Eve makes sense. For thousands of years people have argued about the validity of the Garden of Eden. Is it real and is Adam and Eve real? The fact that each one of us is faced with the same dilemma that Adam and Eve had is interesting. We could be a type of Adam or Eve in how we live our lives. Maybe those two were real and the first to fall

from temptation. Their choice is a great example of the choices we are faced with every day. Let's look at our choices in two ways.

The first is what we expect. Adam and Eve expected to be like God when they ate the fruit. They saw the outcome through their eyes. The result clouded the consequences. Maybe it did not look like there would be trouble by eating the fruit. God said no but he did not say why. Is it important to know the outcome? How often do we decide because we say "What the heck?" Sometimes I feel we are willing to live with the fallout because the benefit outweighs the risk.

The second is who do you trust? Why did Adam and Eve not trust God more than the serpent? What security did the serpent offer that looked better than God? Some people say we are all sheep. We just follow the next best thing blindly trusting whoever is our Shepard. Is that really true? I know that seems to be the way it is every election. We vote and are disappointed because the promises fall through every time. Did the promises of the Serpent outweigh the promises of God?

Our choices do have weight. I married a girl and in time that choice caused hardship for two boys and me. It did not look that way in the beginning. People warned me but I did it anyways. I have bought something while thinking, at the time, that it was a great deal. Months later it looked like a bad deal. Why do many of us jump before we look? I know that in my choices the benefit always seems to outweigh the risk. Would you risk eating the fruit? What choice would you make?

Lesson learned

Adam and Eve are a sad story really. After Chapter 3 in Genesis, Adam is only mentioned as dying in Gen 5:5. Eve is never mentioned again. The legacy of their choice explodes within the next chapter as their son Cain commits the first murder and kills his brother

Abel. Indeed Adam and Eve's eyes were opened and they knew the difference between good and evil. The serpent told them that they would not surely die but become like God. Yes that is partially true. These two people now knew why knowing good and evil is bad. Their son is sacrificed to know that knowledge. Was it worth the price of eating the fruit? They now know that evil is bad just like God does. However, the far reaching price of evil, they could not see.

The legacy of sin is interesting. I heard a story of two families. One had a history of crime, un-education, and poverty. In a hundred year span the first family bred several murderers, criminals and alcoholics. The second family chose to get educated and bred lawyers, doctors, wealth, and degrees. The difference between the two families began with a choice. One finished high school and the other dropped out. The path for a hundred years was laid in one decision.

We want to feel needed. I would like to leave a legacy of some sort. My Dad always talks about what he will leave. The real stuff he leaves is a mind set over money. My heritage is about hard work and honesty. That is who my Dad really is beyond the money. Our decisions leave a path that is followed if you chart your family history. We are important and we do leave a legacy. Most times it goes well beyond a monetary estate. What kids do with the money comes from how they are raised. Adam and Eve gave Cain the one thing he did not need: how to cheat to get what you desire. Cain was willing to sacrifice Abel. Choices are made and paths are forged.

Exodus 34:7 says this of God **“Keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”** There are several other statements like this saying that future generations will reap what we sow. These truly are interesting financial times that we live in these days.

Many governments in North America are spending to keep people working and happy. The debt is mounting but the people keep voting this type of government in. This leaves two thoughts. One is that it will all work out in the future. The other is that we are screwing future generations. What is the real answer?

The choices we make today, in history, appear to come back and haunt or benefit the next generation. In the First World War the German government took on the world. It seemed possible at the time. Those decisions caused the German people terrible poverty in the end. This eventually led to the rise of a greater evil in Adolph Hitler. Millions of Germans and others died because of these choices. Did the benefit outweigh the risk in World War I? Your next decision is important. All I ask is that you pause for a moment and consider the balance between benefit and risk. Your family and possibly country just might depend on it. What choice would you make?