

A Worldview in Touch with Reality: Part Two  
(Genesis 2-3)

In Genesis chapter two and verses fifteen through twenty we find that God took Adam and placed him in the Garden of Eden. Through the years there has been a great deal of controversy concerning Adam and his sin. Due to this controversy, I feel that it's important for you to understand that Adam was created innocent, not righteous. In fact, Adam was so innocent in the beginning that he had no concept of righteousness or unrighteousness. The concept of right and wrong didn't come into play until chapter 2 verses sixteen and seventeen. And it is in those two verses that we learn a great deal about Adam.

God had no doubt given Adam the ability to choose. In theology we call this principle "free will" – Adam had the ability to make a choice. Therefore, Adam was able to choose the right or the wrong thing – Adam in the garden was able to sin. Many great theologians would say, "Man in the garden was able to sin. After the Fall, man was not able not to sin."

God told Adam to do four things in Genesis 2:15-20: First, dress or cultivate the garden (2:15); second, keep it – that is, guard its sanctity (2:15); third, eat its fruit, except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17); and fourth, name the animals (2:19-20).

God could not have been clearer in His expectation of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve could eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden, including the tree of life (2:9). But they could not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17).

Satan apparently knew of God's restrictions on Adam and Eve. Therefore, Satan used the serpent to tempt Eve to eat from the forbidden tree (3:1). The serpent was no doubt a beautiful creature in its uncursed state, and it "was more subtil [clever, but not in a degrading sense at this point] than any beast of the field" (3:1). Now verse 1 also said, "he said unto the woman." That is, the "serpent" spoke, or I should say, Satan spoke through the serpent. (Now there is a point here in which we must be careful and not dramatize the text.) It is quite possible that Eve did not realize that animals could not speak. Regardless of the fact, it is true that Eve was not alarmed.

Eve was not surprised that Satan spoke through the serpent. Therefore, the serpent began with a question designed to plant doubt in her mind – to instigate a reexamination of God's expectation and warning (3:1).

The serpent followed up with a lie and a distortion of the truth (3:4, 5). It is true that after Adam and Eve ate the fruit, their eyes were opened (3:7). They did become like God in

knowing good and evil (3:22). However, there was a downside to this new knowledge: suffering, death, and worst of all, separation from God (3:24).

Now Eve succumbed to three lines of temptation that are found in 1 John 2:6 and Genesis 3:6. “Good for food” was the appeal to the “lust of the flesh.” “Pleasant to the eyes” was the appeal to the “lust of the eyes.” And “desired to make one wise” was the appeal to the “pride of life.”

Eve took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband Adam, and he ate it (3:6). Their eyes were opened to evil since they had just experienced it firsthand. Immediately, they were overcome with their own guilt and their own shame – they realized for the first time that they were naked (3:7). Therefore, “they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (3:7).

What Adam and Eve did illustrates the futility of humanity in dealing with its sin problem apart from God. Understand this, dealing with the sin problem must begin with God!

Jerry Arnold  
All Rights Reserved