

## **Eve, the Mother of the Living**

*And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ~ Genesis 3:20*

Eve is our first character study of “Women in the Bible” and rightfully so. She was the first woman created by God for a specific purpose. Even though she was the last to be created, she had the greatest impact on all creation as a result of her creation, sin, and hope for redemption. As women, we can learn a lot from Eve about our intended purpose in this life, our struggles, and our hope.

As we go through our study, my hope is that we don't judge Eve too harshly. I read some commentaries that talk about Eve with great disdain, but I want to look at her from God's perspective. She was an innocent childlike daughter who made a huge mistake that could not be ignored. Our just and loving Father could not excuse her disobedience but had to apply the appropriate consequences, no matter how harsh.

### **Perfect**

Let's Read Genesis 1:26-31

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over [g]all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that [h]moves on the earth.”

29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is [i]life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

In these verses we see that there was perfection on the earth before the curse. God created mankind in his own image (v. 27). Mankind was not taken from any other living thing, nor developed over time from another animal. Mankind was made with a purpose: to have dominion over every living thing. Here the word dominion in Hebrew is the verb *radah* which has the understanding that mankind is to rule over the animals as compassionate leaders not as cruel dictators (v. 28). Mankind was given every herb and fruit as a food source. (v. 29) Before the curse, these grew naturally and provided all the nutrients we needed for life. There wasn't a concern about weeds, thorns, nor poisonous plants. What God initially created was VERY

GOOD (v. 31) free from sin, death, and corruption. This was the safe and perfect world that Adam and Eve were created to live in and rule over. Eve didn't have to worry about getting hurt, trusting the wrong person, eating the wrong thing, nor having too many pets.

## Wife

Read Genesis 2:8-9; 15-25

<sup>8</sup>The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. <sup>9</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>15</sup>Then the LORD God took <sup>[l]</sup>the man and put him in the garden of Eden to <sup>[e]</sup>tend and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you<sup>[l]</sup> shall surely die."

<sup>18</sup>And the LORD God said, "*It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." <sup>19</sup>Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to <sup>[e]</sup>Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. <sup>20</sup>So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

<sup>21</sup>And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup>Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He <sup>[l]</sup>made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>And Adam said:

"This *is* now bone of my bones  
And flesh of my flesh;  
She shall be called <sup>[l]</sup>Woman,  
Because she was taken out of <sup>[l]</sup>Man."

<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be<sup>[k]</sup> joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

<sup>25</sup>And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

It's interesting to note that Eve was a wife from the very beginning. She never experienced any type of singleness nor independence as we know today. Before the curse, we can see God's initial purpose for the marriage union. God intended for Eve to be Adam's equal (v. 18). God saw that man was alone and intended to "make a helper comparable to him." In the Hebrew, the word helper is 'ê.zer which denotes someone who is the complement of another.

The word comparable is also translated as suitable, like, complementary, corresponding. Although God did not intend for them to be exactly the same because they would fulfill different roles, Eve was intended to have a matching role in creation.

But most importantly, Eve was made specifically to be Adam's wife from the day she was created (v. 22-24). We see a beautiful model of the first marriage ceremony in verse 22, "and He brought her to him," when the Father brings the bride (Eve) to the groom (Adam) shortly after she is created. Then in verse 24, the sanctity of the marriage union between a man and a woman is established, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be<sup>[k]</sup> joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Although mothers and fathers did not exist at this point, they soon would be. Adam and Eve were literally one flesh because she was taken from his rib (v. 23), but also because they would be joined together as one flesh in their children.

Before the fall, Eve had equal "status" in a perfect world with a perfect husband. She was born with a clear purpose and basically had it all. In our world, women often have trouble finding our place in this world. We long to be helpers, but sometimes the help we offer is rejected, refused, or misunderstood, and we become frustrated or hurt. We search for a husband that is comparable to us, but sometimes end up in bad relationships because we don't understand what God's intent was for the marriage union. Some of us long to have children, but that longing is never fulfilled. Others don't even desire to have children for many reasons. All of these sorrows resulted from the fall.

## **Innocent and Open Minded**

Read Genesis 3:1-13

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For 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."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was [a]pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves [b]coverings.

8 And they heard the [c]sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the [d]cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

13 And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Eve was an innocent, trusting soul in a sinless world when the serpent appeared to her with evil intentions. She didn't know to be afraid nor to doubt what she was told because she didn't know the difference between good and evil. But we live in a fallen world, so we cannot afford to be naïve nor raise our children as if the world is perfect. In the last decade or so, there has been a push by the world to protect all children from any pain or disappointment. To NOT know the difference between good and bad. On the surface, this sounds beautiful, but the reality is that we live in a fallen world, and children who don't understand that there is evil in the world are susceptible to the same kind of deception that Eve experienced. This is why it is so important for our children to know God's word, so that they can learn the difference between good and evil, how to recognize evil and how to avoid evil.

But Eve didn't know, she was manipulated, tested, and tempted by the evil one in the serpent and fell. She was not prepared to handle this type of deception. She was very open to having a conversation with the serpent even though the serpent was clearly questioning God (v. 1). She didn't know God's word well enough to deflect the fiery darts of the enemy. At this point, there was only one command Genesis 2:16-17, “<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you<sup>[f]</sup> shall surely die.” But she misquoted scripture when asked (v. 2). Finally, she trusted the serpent more than her husband and more than God (v. 3). She could have said, “Let me double check with my husband,” or called out to God at any moment. Instead, she just trusted the serpent and acted on what the serpent said, “<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was [a]pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.” 1 John 2:16 warns us, “For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” Let us remember that the enemy of our souls is daily attempting to make us question God's sovereignty, manipulate God's word, and trust the societal lies of this world to make us fall. Let's also not forget that he's a pro at it because he's been doing it since the beginning of time.

## **Cursed but Hopeful**

Read 3:14-24

<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent:

“Because you have done this,  
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,  
And more than every beast of the field;  
On your belly you shall go,  
And you shall eat dust  
All the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her Seed;  
He shall bruise your head,  
And you shall bruise His heel.”

<sup>16</sup> To the woman He said:

“I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;  
In pain you shall bring forth children;  
Your desire *shall be* <sup>[e]</sup>for your husband,  
And he shall rule over you.”

<sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’:

“Cursed *is* the ground for your sake;  
In toil you shall eat *of* it  
All the days of your life.

<sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall <sup>[f]</sup>bring forth for you,  
And you shall eat the herb of the field.

<sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread  
Till you return to the ground,  
For out of it you were taken;  
For dust you *are*,  
And to dust you shall return.”

<sup>20</sup> And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, <sup>[g]</sup> because she was the mother of all living.

<sup>21</sup> Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— <sup>23</sup> therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. <sup>24</sup> So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Despite Eve’s naïve nature, there are consequences for sin. After she sinned, she influenced her husband to sin. As a result, all of humanity and the world was cursed. Women not

only have pain during childbirth, but we experience great sorrow in many ways. Our comparable status was weakened and now maintaining a balanced relationship with our husband is sometimes difficult. Some women desire to overcome their husbands, but are frustrated when they can't or become contentious so that they can. (v. 16). The perfect world that God created was corrupted, so now we need to till the soil to grow anything, and we have to fight the weeds and thorns as well. (v. 17-18). And finally, mankind was kicked out of the Garden of Eden, and now must suffer death (v. 19).

But despite the curse, God loved his children and was merciful. He could have destroyed Adam and Eve, or just Eve, but He didn't. He sacrificed the first animal to cover Adam and Eve (v. 21), and thus created a way of atonement that would point to the one who would take on the sin of the world and make a way for salvation through Jesus Christ (v. 15). He allowed Eve to fulfill her role as mother of all living and be included in the Messiah's lineage (v. 20).

In this, we have our greatest hope. If God can forgive Adam and Eve, who condemned the whole world, then He can forgive us. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).