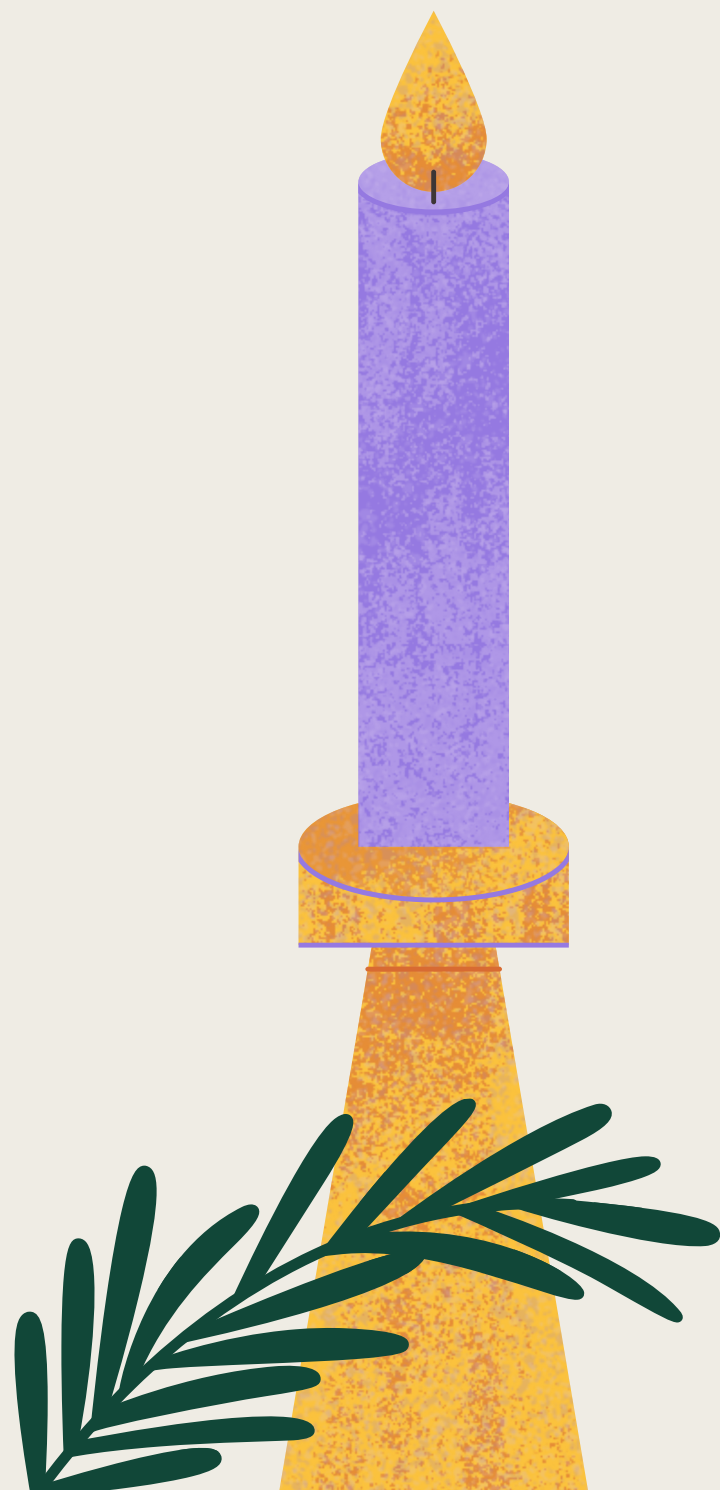


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*The Need for a Savior*

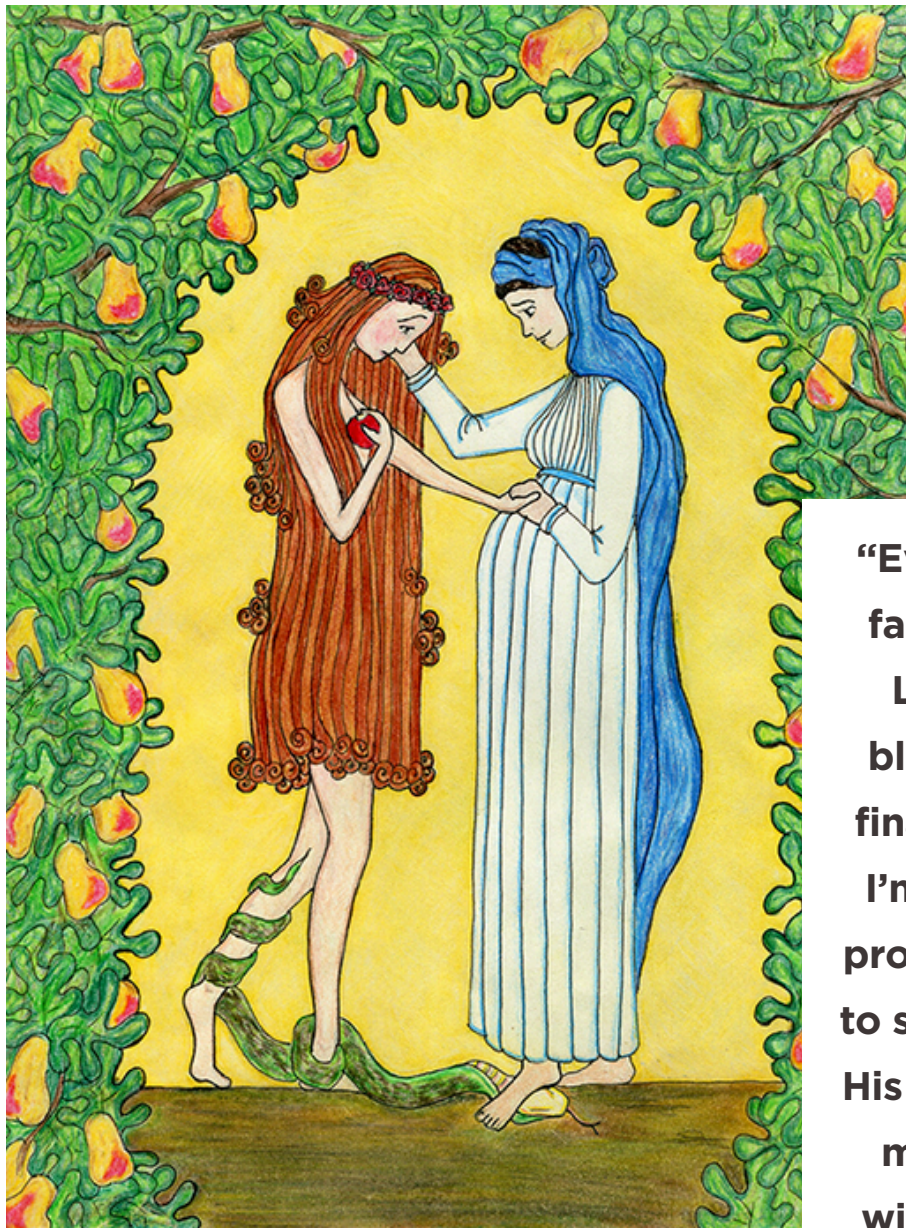
Genesis 3:1-7; Romans 5:10-19



The story of the fall in the Garden of Eden is central to the Christmas story. Without the fall, there would have been no need for a Savior. Both Adam and Eve sin in the Garden. Initially, we see that the serpent is able to prey on some aspects of Eve that must have been developing inside of her, even in the atmosphere of perfect union with God and man. She is quick to doubt that God has the best of intentions for her life and also desires to have the personal knowledge of God, which means she wants the freedom to make her own rules. We also see that she is drawn in by the pleasant look of the fruit—she sees something that looks good and takes it. She was created as a helpmate for Adam and instead of leading him towards the way of life, she encourages him toward the way of death. She held a position of influence and, unfortunately, used this influence unwisely and selfishly. How many of us can understand the grief that comes with the realization that we've used our influence poorly? For his part, Adam does not correct or stop Eve. He follows her into sin without comment as he chooses the voice of Eve over the voice of God, for which God holds him accountable. In response to their sin, we see shame enter their lives for the first time. Before God even comes looking for them, Adam and Eve seek to clothe themselves, which to me indicates that they have even a sense of shame with each other not only with God. Just as Jesus is the second Adam who will bring salvation through perfect obedience, God chooses the girl Mary to have the opportunity to be the second Eve. Her YES to God opens the doorway for redemption. Francesco Bamonte wrote, "God would liberate humanity with the cooperation of a woman."

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This picture entitled “Mary Consoles Eve” by Sister Grace Remington has been popular since its creation in 2005. A group of artists called Rain for Roots wrote a song to go along with the picture:

**“Eve, my sister/ The one who took the fall/ Eve, my sister/ Mother of us all/ Lift up your head/ Don’t hide your blushing face/ The promised One/ Is finally on His way...Eve, it’s Mary/Now I’m a mother too/The child I carry/ A promise coming true/ This baby comes to save us from our sin/ A servant King, His kingdom without end...He comes to make his blessings flow/ As far and wide as the curse is found/ He comes to make His blessings flow.”**

I think the imagery here showcases so much of why we needed Jesus to come save us. Eve is marked by her shame—still naked and holding the fruit that was her downfall. She is wrapped up in sin as the serpent is wrapped around her leg. She cannot be free without a Savior. And she is invited to touch the growing belly of Mary, the one God chose to carry the Savior. Mary is stepping on the head of the same serpent that entrapped Eve...that entraps us all. And regardless of our past sins or those we will commit in our futures, we are invited to reach out and grasp the hand of our Savior. We are invited to live life under the protection and guidance of the Snake Crusher Himself!

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