

The Garden of Eden Story

WHAT IS EVIL?

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I feel that over the centuries Man has lost many of the meanings of symbols GOD passed through earlier generations of Man. The meanings of these symbols are the foundation for understanding higher symbolic concepts. Thus, the higher concepts are hidden from Man today unless the basic concepts are revealed to Man again. GOD must teach Man at the most basic level of Truth Man has and build from that level to higher levels. GOD can't use error to teach Truth nor to build higher Truths. This should be obvious. Instead GOD uses the symbols of the most basic Truths of which Man is familiar to reveal the higher Truths. If future generations of Man don't recognize the true purpose of symbols earlier generations faithfully recorded, the message conveyed by those symbols will be lost. I truly feel this has happened, and the Garden of Eden Story is a typical example. Unfortunately it is difficult for me to explain every new concept I may present or discuss and the way it was revealed to me.

I do know the view I have of the Garden of Eden Story will seem very strange to anyone believing the literal view to be correct. My understanding of this story is the result of years of meditative study and prayer. I can only explain the result of the study and prayer. How I arrived at that result is too detailed to properly explain to others. Consider how often Jesus was misunderstood because what He said was viewed literally. Since Jesus was the WORD made flesh and conveyed concepts with parables and allegories, it should not be surprising that the Bible uses the same basic means for the same purpose since it is the written Word.

Viewing the Bible literally has resulted in so many false interpretations they can't be counted. A literal translation often reveals a self-serving view of Scripture. Neither can we change our view from one part of Scripture to another. We can't say this is literal while that is allegorical and get accurate interpretations. The view we use to get the correct meaning from John 6:53 is the same view we must use for all Scripture. That view reveals purpose not literal meanings. Once we recognize purpose, we then recognize whether the verse or verses relate to spiritual or physical concepts.

One of the major errors of Man today is the same error of Man throughout all history. His self-centered view blinds him to the higher Truths. He attaches purposes to various outer relationships because of his self-centered view and believes he sees Truth. The lies he sees are as real and

certain to him as the Truth **he could see if he would only** learn to **turn from** self-centeredness. To understand what I have just stated is extremely important. The Pharisees in the time of Jesus were almost as certain in their beliefs about Jesus as Jesus was about His Relationship with GOD, the FATHER. Man's self-centeredness always gives him a self-serving view of the Scriptures. Self-centeredness also produces a view of evil in Man, which is completely wrong—another lie. Man, individually, sees evil as an unwanted condition separate from him. Evil beings and Satan are usually seen as the cause for Man's sins through trickery—all a form of the Truth but not the Truth. To maintain this view Man actually slanders GOD.

Consider a rich man who built a home to isolate his children from worldly errors until they were mature enough to reject the errors. All would see him as a good man indeed. It would be obvious that he loved his children. He acted on his love to protect and teach them for their higher good. Suppose this man secretly allowed a known child molester free access to his children's sanctuary while he observed what would happen. Knowing this, would we consider the rich man to have good or evil intentions toward his children? I believe most would view the rich man as evil while masquerading as good.

How did Nathan reveal David's sin to him? I have just used the same technique in an attempt to reveal one of the biggest lies Man's self-centered nature has perpetrated against GOD. Religious Man claims GOD is GOOD while accusing HIM of doing essentially the same as I described above. Of course Man doesn't accuse GOD directly. He uses the guile of Satan. Thus Man rightfully blames himself but for the wrong reason. Man had no control of who entered the Garden, though, if this Garden is viewed as a physical garden. Neither would the children have the ability to recognize the child molester for what he is. If they did recognize him, they wouldn't know how to keep him out.

Why does Man blame himself for the wrong reason? This is merely one major example of Man's self-centered nature at work. We can easily accept the errors made by others. We then use those errors to justify the acts we would rather do while stating that no human can be perfect. I could not believe GOD would do this. I, therefore, looked for another answer, which is apparently something Man hasn't done. Instead Man accepts the literal view under the guise of believing what the Bible says no matter what kind of Being that belief makes GOD. Man's view of the Bible message becomes a higher

The Garden of Eden Story *continued*

source of Truth than GOD for Man. This allows Man to justify his evil practices under the pretense of magnifying the Grace of GOD. I feel I found an answer, which maintains the true, Perfect Nature of GOD. This answer better helps us to understand our spiritual being and helps us to recognize what evil actually is.

We must remember that the Bible's primary message is to tell us about our spiritual being. The symbols in the outer manifestation are the means this message is conveyed. This means that even the physical form of Man can be used as a symbol to convey spiritual concepts. For this to happen the relationship of outer symbols will be as real and true as the message being conveyed by them. All outer manifestation relates to spiritual Life according to a correct purpose though. As I write these words, I am attempting to convey the same ideas to another as I have in my mind. I use relationships of outer symbols to do this in the form of sentences of words. This does not make the written words any less real. Instead they become real as I write them and continue to exist after I create the relationship. Anyone who understands the laws determining the relationship of the words can look at the relationship and the idea I wanted conveyed will be conveyed to him. Is it so difficult to recognize GOD, an Infinite Being, doing the same on a much higher magnitude? Thus, HE reveals to finite beings HIS Nature and their Relationship with HIM?

Why doesn't GOD just talk to us out of the air or use some similar means to communicate with us? Obviously this would not accomplish HIS Purpose and result in our growing in the correct way. Also GOD is CAUSE, which is Expressed to produce a manifestation. Speech we hear is a manifestation, and GOD will not manifest HIMSELF in the created reality except through created Expression. This is the order in the created Relationship, and GOD will maintain the order HE has created because Perfection cannot be changed and remain perfect. This all relates to what is discussed below. The answer to the above question also lies in the difference between obedience out of fear or obedience out of Love. Everything is related to the Ultimate Perfection. It can be a very time consuming discussion. Think about it while striving to maintain the Perfect Nature of GOD. GOD has chosen a way to communicate to which we are blind until we begin viewing life in the correct way. GOD is also CAUSE, and HE therefore communicates as CAUSE, not manifestation.

I see the Garden of Eden story as telling us about our spiritual being. Our spiritual being's purpose is to express GOD finitely. This view does not mean there wasn't a

physical Garden of Eden. More than likely there was because Man must test all Revelations from GOD in the outer manifestation to understand them. It only means that the story's purpose is to reveal spiritual concepts with physical symbols. The physical Garden of Eden, if there was one, and the spiritual concepts it symbolized are as different as this sentence and the idea it symbolizes.

Consider taking something apart to determine all the individual components of which it is made. All components must be removed according to the order of the smaller and smaller relationships. If we then begin putting everything back together, the order is essentially reversed. We can see this in something as simple as conveying ideas from one person to another. In my mind I may have one all encompassing idea to convey such as a car. To convey this to another not familiar with a car, I must break the idea into smaller ideas represented by smaller components of the car. I do this until the parts are small enough for the other person to understand their purpose. I then begin describing how to put the car back together and teach him the purpose of each component in each higher relationship. With this in mind consider that the order of Creation described in the Bible is the reversed order of what was in the beginning. For this reason Christ is called the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last. He was before Creation, and HE is the end of all Creation. The heavens and the earth were the lowest order of relationship or possibly non-relationship. Relationships then began where there weren't any relationships. Now Christ is not physical form, but rather the spiritual Life that is to be expressed through each of us according to our individuality. The outer manifestation is a temporary reality. It has a purpose that is fulfilled when the created spiritual reality has become all that Christ is and was from the beginning. All created beings will then be expressing Christ through their individuality Truthfully.

Adam and Eve are the two characters who were told not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of GOOD and Evil. This is an interesting choice of words that should not be viewed as they relate to the physical world or outer manifestation. GOD cannot create anything evil. HE will express HIMSELF as we express ourselves daily, from what is in the heart. Since GOD is only GOOD, any Way HE expresses HIMSELF will always be GOOD. Therefore, the Tree of Knowledge of GOOD and Evil was not evil or even part evil. We do know that all GOD has created can be viewed to have incorrect purposes. Since GOD put this Tree in what is called a garden, then the Tree must have had a necessary good purpose.

The Garden of Eden Story *continued*

GOD wouldn't create anything that does not have a useful and Good purpose. Is tempting Adam and Eve with the ultimate punishment as the result of failure a good purpose? Adam and Eve were portrayed as innocent children. Man believes the serpent to be an evil, mature living being. Notice how this parallels the story above. How could anyone believe such a lie about GOD? It is our self-centered nature slandering GOD because this belief assumes a purpose for the Tree that is evil for Adam and Eve. It also believes GOD allowed a mature, evil being in the garden to tempt innocent children. There is a much better answer.

The Bible is an interesting Book, for which I am developing a higher and higher respect through understanding its many characteristics. Let us assume everyone reading this discussion believes the Bible to be the inspiration of GOD. If so, then they must believe all statements are true when viewed in the correct way. If we view any statement incorrectly, then there will be another statement contradicting our incorrect view somewhere in the Bible. Jesus used this concept against Satan in the wilderness. Satan quoted Scripture to justify his purposes, and Jesus quoted a different Scripture to refute the self-centered view of Satan. Truth always has two sides. You can't use one side and have the Truth anymore than a bird can fly with one wing. In James 1:13 we are told directly that GOD does not tempt anyone. Therefore, neither did GOD tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden; and this means there was nothing put in the Garden by GOD to tempt them. Neither was anyone allowed in the Garden to tempt them. What happened then? The answer must not contradict any of the two or more sides of Truth.

To create individuality or give a living being a Soul, that Soul must have the ability to make free will choices. The Soul must be able to Love and have many other qualities. I believe I have clearly shown in previous discussions that our spiritual being is capable of viewing life situations as they affect us individually. The only other view is how situations affect a Relationship of which we are a part. Our ability to see life situations as separate from ourselves is necessary for individuality to exist and mature. This ability is Good because we can choose what has value or has no value in the higher Relationship of which we are a part. The living process of making these choices develops our spiritual nature. Our individuality has a Good purpose, but we are not to make self as our focus. If we look around in the world we live, we should clearly see that the expression of self-centeredness as all we call evil.

We should view the Garden of Eden Story as describing our spiritual being and the spiritual reality we learn to know. We should then see that the Tree of the Knowledge of GOOD and Evil is the possibility of the self-centered view. With a self-centered view of life, there will always be certain situations we view correctly or spiritual growth would be impossible. Therefore these two views are both GOOD and evil. The Tree of Life is the correct possibility of only viewing life for the Relationship of GOD and all of Creation. We then serve the Relationship according to our individuality as GOD created us to serve. Sinful Man cannot eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life because his incorrect view prevents the growth of that fruit in him. Once the self-centered view has been experienced, it becomes a part of what we are. Evil has been experienced. That experience cannot be removed without destroying the person. We must then learn that what we experienced is of no value for what we should become. In this way we will be aware or have knowledge of evil without desiring it. We will have moved from a state of innocence to one of knowing both GOOD and evil.

I believe the Bible clearly reveals Satan as being totally evil. This **means he does not have the ability** to view anything except from a self-centered view. This means he cannot be a creation of GOD, or he would be basically Good and redeemable. Satan has no created life from GOD. If he did, then GOD would be in Satan as HE is in us. Satan can only live in the life of other created beings whose focus is self-centered. He is the life that grows in Man from the self-centered view. Self-centeredness results in all evil. Self-centeredness deceives us, blinds us to Truth, and tempts us.

The more difficult reason to explain relates to how GOD views us. We are expression, and Christ lives in us when we have the correct view and beliefs about the outer manifestation and GOD. We then actually respond to external situations as GOD would in the same situation only in a finite way. It is, therefore, our beliefs that determine whether or not Christ lives through us finitely. Consider GOD's statement to Elijah in 1 Kings 19:18. How can anyone kiss something that doesn't exist? GOD said that the children of Israel were kissing Baal, a non-existent god. How is this possible? It is possible because Baal lived in them through their beliefs in him, and they worshipped what those beliefs represented. It is the same with Satan. He lives through us according to the view we have. When we express what he is in our life, we are worshipping Satan and giving him life in us. He is the life in us resulting from our incorrect view. He was called a serpent in the Garden of Eden because our

The Garden of Eden Story *continued*

incorrect view produces a self-deceiving life in **US**.

It is our Life side which gives our spiritual being direction. This side of our spiritual being was called Eve in the Garden of Eden Story. Look up the meaning of the name Eve. With this in mind only the woman could have sinned first. Man cannot be tempted through his intellect. It is always through his feelings. Her self-centered focus tempted her. She then acted on that temptation and gave Intellect or Adam the direction, which he acted on while knowing it was wrong. This may be a strange assumption to most who have only learned to view the outer manifestation as reality instead of the spiritual world or Kingdom of Heaven.

For the definition of Satan presented above, consider what Jesus said to Peter in Matthew 16:23. Also consider how Paul indicates that Jesus lives through us in Galatians 2:20. The same principle that Paul uses here applies to Satan living in us. It is one or the other at any point in time. Thus, Jesus called Peter Satan when his focus was on self-serving purposes. This is why the Bible pictures Christ and Satan as adversaries. There is no third alternative because Satan applies to all, which is not of the Nature of GOD. Jesus said all, who are not with me, are against me.

When we look at the word picture of our spiritual being, we can see that Intellect and Life do not have a direct communication. Their communication is interpreted by our Soul and relayed to each other, so our individuality forms a trinity also. It is our Soul, which channels the incorrect focus. If this happens, it should be Life who reveals the incorrect purpose for what it is. If Life accepts the incorrect purpose, then it should be Intellect who reveals that the outer forms cannot be formed in that way and be acceptable. In the Garden of Eden Story, both Life and Intellect accepted the incorrect focus and acted on the result of that focus to experience a lie. They were tempted as a result of the self-centered focus of their Soul. They ate of the fruit of that incorrect focus by experiencing the lie.

We should recognize Adam and Eve as Intellect and Life while understanding the relationship they have in our spiritual being. Thus, we can better understand why man is considered the family head in the Bible. The outer manifestation is used to reveal Law. Understanding Law reveals purpose. Physical man is representative of spiritual Intellect who expresses Law to form relationships of form. Physical woman represents spiritual Life. Life does not deal with outer form except through Intellect. The relationship of man and woman must properly

symbolize the spiritual relationship of Intellect and Life. Thus the male part must be the channel through which the relationship of both relates to situations external to the relationship they are. When we are learning, Intellect forms or interprets the relationships of form. Life determines the purpose of each relationship after it is formed or interpreted. When we are expressive, Life determines a purpose. Intellect then forms the relationships with the purpose determined by Life. In both cases Intellect dealt directly with the outer manifestation while Life only indirectly through Intellect. Understanding this also explains why most of the key figures in the Bible, including GOD, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are male.

When our spiritual being leaves this world, the male or Intellect side of the relationship will have completed his purpose. The outer symbols will not be needed anymore. For this reason Adam is told that from dust he came and back to dust he will return. It is actually the female side of all of us who will live on in eternity though. Intellect only deals with form, which we know as the physical world. This world will only exist until the spiritual existence has been created to reflect **THE WORD** who was in the beginning. Once this purpose is completed, the physical world will end and so will the need for Intellect as his purpose relates to this life.

Once we begin viewing the Bible from a spiritual view, we don't have the problem of explaining inconsistencies. Who did Cain marry? How old is this creation? Several other similar problems of the literal view are unimportant. When we look around in our world today, we can easily see that Cain is still murdering Abel. They are the children of the opposing views of Mankind.