

GOD PORTRAYS WOMEN

by

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CHAPTER ONE

EVE

Genesis 2-4

BEFORE WE CAN possibly write about Eve, the first woman named in the Bible, we must first consider God and His work in creating the earth and the first man Adam.

When God created the heavens and the earth, **“He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast”** (Psalm 33:9). But when man was to be created, a special counsel of the Godhead was convened. We hear them say, **“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”** (1:26). The creation of man involved the formation of a definite relationship between man and God. God is a Spirit and the Father of spirits. Paul told the Athenians that **“we are the offspring of God”** (Acts 17:29).

David beautifully describes the creation of the human body in Psalm 139:14-16.

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought [or embroidered with great skill, referring to the creation of blood vessels, muscles and nerves] in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” God, the first Sculptor, stooped to mold man out of the dust of the earth. When that beautiful form was completed **“He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul”** (2:7).

Adam was created an intelligent adult, a moral being with fully developed faculties, capable of enjoying converse with God and assuming responsibility. When God said, **“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”** He also said, **“and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”** (1:26).

God placed Adam in the fruitful Garden of Eden and bade him till the ground and care for it.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (2:16-17).

So Adam was given responsibility, a beautiful home and abundant provision.

When that was accomplished we read, **“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him”** (2:18).

He then proceeded to create all the animals and the fowl of heaven and Adam was asked to name each one, and the names he selected for them continued. As God considered all of these living creatures, there was none among them that could be a suitable companion for Adam. Man requires companionship with a like spirit which neither animals nor materials can supply. Adam was not complete or sufficient of himself; he needed a complement. God did not make another man to meet that need. Instead He made a woman. Marriage was then God’s kind thought for the happiness and well-being of the human race.

God provided the first bride. He decided that she must be made from a part of her husband and the part He selected was the nearest to Adam’s heart. Genesis 2:21 says, **“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam.”** The Great Physician administered the first anesthetic and He performed the first surgical operation on the first man. **“He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman”** (2:21-22).

The Lord must have worked with great pleasure as He anticipated the joy she would be to Adam. I wonder if the Lord while so engaged, looked down through the centuries to the time when His Son would willingly have His side pierced and die on Calvary’s cross in order to obtain His bride, the Church? The writer to the Hebrews (12:2) long afterward wrote of Him, **“Who, for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.”**

God gave the bride away. **“And he brought her unto the man”** (2:22).

As Adam looked at his lovely bride fresh from the hand of God he realized she was part of himself, **“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh”** (2:23-24).

We are not told how long Adam and Eve enjoyed the bliss of innocence. The day came however when they were put to the test. Bear in mind that they were living in an environment that was perfect and in the midst of bountiful provision. In contrast our Saviour was put to the test in a wilderness after a fast of forty days, yet He resisted every temptation placed before Him by Satan.

In chapter 3, when Satan full of subtlety and wisdom entered the Garden of Eden, he appeared in the form of one of the animals over which Adam had been given dominion. He addressed Eve, though according to verse 6 Adam was with her. He said, **“Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”** (3:1).

He injected into her mind a doubt that God really cared for them.

He knew the evils that would follow if only she would entertain that doubt. She replied, **“We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die”** (35-3).

The serpent eagerly seized upon her words to accomplish his own purposes. God had not forbidden them to touch the tree of life and neither had He left any doubt as to the results of eating the forbidden fruit. He had assured Adam if he did so he would die.

Satan said to Eve, **“Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil”** (3:4-5).

Not only did he make God a liar but he insinuated that God was depriving Adam and Eve of knowledge they should have. He appealed to them to exalt themselves. Was this not very typical of his own sin of pride? (Isaiah 14:14).

Verse 6 clearly describes the effect Satan’s temptation had on Eve’s entire personality, body, soul and spirit. Remember his appeals are always in the same realms. **“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food.”**

She undoubtedly gave the tree her undivided attention. It is tremendously important that we choose aright the things on which we concentrate our attention. We need to make a covenant with our eyes.

- It appealed to the gratification of the body, *the lust of the flesh*. **“And it was pleasant to the eyes.”**

- It appealed to the gratification of the soul, *the lust of the eyes*. **“And it was a tree to be desired to make one wise.”**

Surely this would gratify the spirit and satisfy the pride of life. Having made these conclusions, Eve **“took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat.”**

It is characteristic of us that if we sin, we rarely sin alone. We involve others as well.

Was the forbidden fruit a sweet morsel in the eating? They at once gained the knowledge of evil with its attendant shame and fear. There are pleasures of sin but they are only **“for a season”** and afterward there is bitter remorse. The joy in the Garden of Eden was gone for Adam and Eve. Peace with God had fled. They were filled with dissatisfaction with themselves and with each other. They must do something. They knew shame for the first time. So they made for themselves fig leaf aprons. But these did not satisfy them.

“And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden” (3:8).

Like the Good Samaritan, He came where they were. He came to seek them and to announce His way of salvation to the guilty pair.

The Lord did not judge Adam and Eve without giving them a hearing, asking them questions and permitting them to offer any defense they might have. Adam indirectly justified himself, blamed God and the woman God had given him. Eve must have been tremendously shocked to hear her husband's reply to God. The one whose love she hoped to retain in her sin became her accuser to God. Well, what did she do when her turn came? She learned from her husband and blamed another.

Blaming others for our sins is a very common practice. It begins early in life. Parents blame the sins of their children on their companions. Christians blame their shortcomings on the Devil, and do not confess that the evil of which they are guilty springs from their own sinful hearts. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 15:19, "**Out of the heart proceed**"—a terrible list of sins. "Sin is a brat no one is willing to own."

God asked no questions of the tempter and allowed him no defense. He received summary judgment. He who enticed man to false pride was made to eat dust. It was then that God pronounced his final defeat and penalty. "**I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel**" (3:15).

What does it mean to bruise His heel?

The body of our Lord was the only thing that Satan could attack. You will remember that the Saviour said, "**Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell**" (Matthew 10:28). From the birth of Christ to His death, Satan tried to prevent the fulfillment of God's penalty. When Jesus was still an infant, Herod the king slew all the babies who were two years old and under in Bethlehem and all its borders. This was Satan's plan to destroy the Promised One.

Satan's enmity persisted during all Christ's life until He went to the cross. There He atoned for sin (See I Peter 2:24.) He had His heel bruised that He might set the sinner free and snatch us from captivity to sin and Satan, but in doing so He bruised Satan's head. Every child is the seed of man; Christ was the Seed of the woman—an early pronouncement of the Virgin birth of our Saviour.

When the Lord spoke to Eve, she learned that sin brings sorrow. God said, "**In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee**" (3:16). Yet mercy was mingled with this judgment: she heard God say to the tempter that her Seed would be the Redeemer of man. He was to be the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

"**Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.**"

God desired to teach them that the wages of sin is death, and that by the death of another their shame would be covered. Isaiah 61:10 says, **“He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.”**

God must make this provision. He did so at Calvary. Christ became our Salvation through His death.

- **“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”** (I John 1:7).

- **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”** (II Corinthians 5:21).

Outside the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve looked forward to the coming of their first child. As Eve embraced her first son she cried, **“I have gotten a man from the Lord.”** She recognized God as the Author of life. Perhaps she wondered if Cain would be the one to bruise the head of the tempter. With what wonder they must have beheld the utter weakness of that baby!

Someone has said: “The angels must have wondered that God would make anything so helpless as a babe.” A chicken can begin to scratch for itself in a couple of days. But it takes a professional person between twenty and thirty years to prepare to earn his living. A child of a king learns as slowly as the son of a pauper. Why is this so? Is it to exclude boasting lest we be lifted up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the Devil?

As Cain grew, Adam and Eve saw his overbearing and cruel characteristics developing and they became discouraged. When Abel was born they chose a name for him which means *“vanity.”* It is as though they would say, “It is of no use; just see the results of our sin!”

However, they must have instructed the boys in their accountability to God and in the importance God placed in the offering for sin which He provided. But Cain no doubt argued with his parents, for he was a perpetual arguer, over what he thought the offering should be. He would bring what he wanted to, not what God required. Cain’s whole life seemed a defiance. **“The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the Lord”** (Proverbs 19:3). Cain surely proved that the way of the transgressor is hard.

In contrast, Abel obeyed God and was accepted. We are not told that Abel was more excellent than Cain, but that his sacrifice was (Hebrews 11:4).

Cain could brook no rival. He was very wroth and his countenance fell. How difficult Cain and those like him make life for others! Though he put up a religious front, envy ruled within Cain’s breast, not only envy, but all its brood—injustice, prejudice, anger, hatred and murder. Yet we read how God reasoned with such an unreasonable man.

You remember also how, in Luke 15, the father went out to reason with his elder son who was peevish and self-righteous. God holds us accountable for our grouchiness and sullen looks. He said to Cain, **“Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?”** (4:6-7).

If he would even then want to offer a sacrifice that God had specified, God would provide it for him. **“If thou doest not well, sin lieth [a sin offering croucheth] at the door [or, is within your reach].”** Do we not have a wonderful example of God’s patience and grace here?

But Cain would not be turned from his evil way even by the solicitude of God. He rose up and slew his brother. John tells us (I John 3:12) why he did this. **“Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.”** When we are in the wrong do we not hate those who do what is right? Oh, let us keep envy and hatred out of our bosom! Expel every bad seed at its first appearance, or surely it will bring forth a most regrettable crop.

Since Cain had refused to yield to the pleadings of God, he was made to appear before his Judge. God demanded, **“Where is Abel thy brother? Thy brother’s blood crieth to me.”** Abel was the first martyr who suffered for righteousness’ sake. Christ too suffered at the hands of His brethren. His blood also cries to God from the ground. His blood provides pardon for the penitent and justice to the impenitent.

On that sad day Adam and Eve beheld a dead body for the first time. They were deprived of both their sons, for Cain became a fugitive.

They must have had comfort in the thought that Abel had been accepted by God in the offering he brought to Him. It would have been a far greater sorrow had death come to impenitent Cain. Even then God gave him space to repent. But Cain only bemoaned the fact that his punishment, not his sin, was greater than he could bear. He said, **“Everyone that findeth me shall slay me”** (4:14).

A cruel person is always a coward. God sought to win him to repentance by His goodness, but **“Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.”**

Cain’s impenitence must have been a continual grief to Adam and Eve. He and his children, and his grandchildren occupied themselves with their families, city-building, agriculture, arts and crafts and music, and left God out of their thoughts. But all these things can never satisfy the soul who ignores God. He alone can meet our need.

To comfort Adam and Eve God gave them another son, Seth, to take the place of Abel. He responded to the instructions of his parents and feared the Lord. He was evidently a spiritual influence for good to those around him.

“Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.”

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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