

## Osaka International Church

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Series: Beginnings #8

Title: Adam and Eve

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-25

### I. Introduction

Good morning! **John 1:17** says, “**For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**” These words speak of the profound difference between Moses and Jesus. But what I want to point out this morning is that the Bible says that Moses is the author of the “law,” which is what the Jews called the Pentateuch, which is the first five books of the Old Testament. A hundred years ago, many scholars did not accept Moses as the author, and some even thought that writing was not in common use in Moses’ time. However, during the last fifty years, archeologists have discovered that writing was widely used in the Middle East a thousand years before the time of Moses. For example, this photo shows a clay tablet filled with Sumerian writing that dates from about 2,600 B.C, hundreds of years before the time of Moses.



You can still find books that argue against Moses being the author of the Pentateuch, but I think the evidence for Mosaic authorship is strong, both inside and outside the Bible. At the same time, it is certain that Moses had older writings available to him for reference, and it is likely that Moses sometimes included sections from those older writings. But Moses, guided by the Holy Spirit, is the one who put the words into their final form, so Moses is the primary author. (*Painting: Moses and the Ten Commandments, by Philippe de Champaigne, 1808*)



As we study Genesis, it is helpful for us to remember that although Genesis is history, Moses is writing with a purpose that is quite different than that of modern historians. Moses is writing to teach Israel about God, and about how mankind should live. Because of these purposes, Moses occasionally inserts teaching and interpretation into the history, and Moses also uses literary devices such as repetition, poetry, metaphor, figures of speech, and even humor. These literary devices help to make the main points of the teaching easier to understand and remember. Let’s read Genesis 2:15-25.

### II. Scripture: Genesis 2:15-25 (NIV)

[15] The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. [16] And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; [17] but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." [18] The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." [19] Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. [20] So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. [21] So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. [22] Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. [23] The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." [24] For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. [25] The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

### III. Teaching

**Genesis 2:15** says, “**The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**” At this time, Adam is alone in Eden, but he



already has work to do. Although, in this painting, it looks like he is taking a coffee break. The truth is that although we all like to take a break, human beings are not happy when they have nothing to do. We need to have meaningful work to do and we enjoy a feeling of accomplishment when we do it well. Of course, we sometimes get frustrated with our jobs, but that comes from living in a fallen world, where human relationships are difficult and the work does not always go well. But work itself is good.

From last week, we remember that there are two special trees in the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. These two trees represent choice, and they reveal that God has given mankind a measure of free will. Now, in **Genesis 2:16-17**, God gives Adam a command, **“You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”**



The command speaks of freedom, the freedom to eat from any tree in the garden. But there is one exception, **“you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”** And there is a consequence that will come if this command is disobeyed, **“you will surely die.”** The Lord gives Adam wide freedom, but with one rule to obey. Adam can choose to honor God and demonstrate his trust in God by obeying. Or, Adam can choose unbelief and doubt, and destroy his own life through disobedience. Stay tuned. We will see how Adam does next week.

A few weeks ago, back in **Genesis 1:31**, we read, **“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.”** At the end of the sixth day, everything was very good. But in today’s passage, we are still in the middle of that sixth day, and in **Genesis 2:18** the Lord God says, **“It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”** Sometimes the Lord calls particular men and women to a life of singleness, and if you are one of those people, then praise the Lord for that calling. But the general rule is, **“It is not good for the man to be alone.”** We don’t do very well alone. We need help. And most people should probably marry if they are able to find a suitable partner. It doesn’t have to be a Hollywood movie style romance; in fact, those flashy romances often don’t last.

Of course, there are a lot of jokes about marriage. I heard this one recently. *“A Sunday School teacher was talking about marriage with the kids. He asked, “What does God say about marriage in the Bible?” One boy answered, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”* Married life is full of challenges, and we need to be able to laugh about our struggles. But my own opinion is that if you can find a good man or a good woman who believes in Jesus and who is willing to make a commitment to build a happy marriage with you, then you should seriously consider it. A marriage built on love for God and commitment to one another may be much happier 20 years later than a marriage built on a Hollywood moment. Of course, you don’t want to marry someone you don’t like, and you need to pray carefully for the Lord’s leading. But basically a Christian friendship is a good foundation for a marriage. **“It is not good for man to be alone.”**

We need help. God saw that Adam needed help and announced (**Genesis 2:18b**), **“I will make a helper suitable for him.”** Some people see the word, “helper,” and jump to the conclusion that the man is the boss and the woman is his assistant. But that is a big mistake. Notice what **Psalms 118:7** says, **“The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies.”** Here, and in other Scriptures, God is called our helper, but God is certainly not our assistant; God is Lord over all. In the Bible, a helper is the one who comes to rescue you when you yell, “Help, help!” And, although we usually don’t like to admit it, we men need a lot of help. So God provided for us a suitable helper.

But before creating woman, God brought the animals before Adam, and Adam gave them names. This served at least two purposes. First, it established man’s authority over the animals, because in ancient times naming something had the meaning of claiming authority over it. In **Genesis 1:28**, God told the man and the woman to rule over the animals; that authority is confirmed here in Adam’s naming of the animals. Second, to name the animals Adam had to get to know each kind of animal in order to give the animal an appropriate name. Some people think this took place in just a few hours, but personally, I think it must have taken a very



long time. In any case, Adam named the animals, but no suitable helper for Adam was found.

**Genesis 2:21-22, “So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.”** Most English translations say, “**one of the man's ribs,**” but the original language could also refer to a small part of a rib, or even a part of the man's side. Some interpreters treat this as literal while others believe it is a symbolic description; I tend to agree with the second view. Either way, these words have deep symbolic meaning.

As the popular quote says, *“Woman was not made out of man's head to surpass him, nor from his feet to be trampled on, but from his side to be equal to him, and near his heart to be dear to him.”* While the man is in a deep sleep, completely helpless, the Lord God comes and takes part of the man and forms it into a helper for the man. A few years ago, a popular book came out, *“Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus.”* That book emphasized the differences between men and women. But the Bible places more emphasis on what men and women have in common. The woman is different from the man, yet she is made from a part of the man, and is therefore of the same material as man.



The man and the woman are of the same substance, and they are each incomplete without the other. As Paul proclaims in **1 Corinthians 11:11-12, “In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.”** Men and women need each other, and neither is complete alone. They may have different roles in the household and in society, but men and women are equal in value and mutually dependent on one another.

Some Bible teachers strongly emphasize the teaching in Ephesians 5 that speaks of a wife's duty to submit to her husband and a husband's duty to love his wife. That teaching is important, but we need to remember the larger context to make sure that we do not misunderstand it. Paul wrote in **Ephesians 5:21, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”** And **1 John 3:11,** reminds us, **“This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.”** In the full context, the Bible teaches mutual love and mutual submission.

In **Genesis 2:23,** the man joyously accepts the woman as his helper, **“The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.’”** And in **Genesis 2:24,** Moses adds some interpretation, **“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”** In this short verse, we can see three keys to a happy marriage. There is a leaving, a uniting, and a becoming. The leaving speaks of a clear break from the former life. The man leaves his father and mother. He should still honor his parents, but he is independent of them. Then the man is united with his wife by the covenant promises of marriage. Finally there is a process of becoming one; the man and his wife, over a period of years, grow so close to one another that they are one, not just two individuals anymore. Sometimes this process is called, “leaving, cleaving and weaving.” Leaving father and mother. Cleaving to his wife. And weaving the two lives into one.

When married couples struggle, usually one of these steps has been neglected. In Japan, it seems that many marriages struggle because the man has never really left his father and mother. In America, many men either skip the wedding and just live with their girlfriend, or they say the marriage vows but do not take them seriously. And around the world, many husbands and wives fail to share their lives and grow together to become one. Are you struggling in your marriage? Listen to the what the Scripture is saying. Men: leave your father and mother and unite with your wife. And, men and women: weave your lives together into one. If you want a happy marriage, you need to merge your lives into one. This takes time and it can be a scary process because it involves letting go of some of your individuality, but it is also a blessed process with great rewards. But more than anything, the key to a happy marriage is to invite God into the marriage and to seek Him together as a couple.



A few years ago, there was a billboard advertising campaign that was designed to call people back to God and back into church fellowship. One billboard said, *“Loved*

*the wedding, invite me to the marriage,*’ - signed God.” I think that God loves Christian wedding ceremonies. But a Christian ceremony won’t do anything for your happiness unless you also invite God into the marriage. If husband and wife both make walking with the Lord a priority in their lives, then they will soon find that they are also walking with one another in joy.

**Genesis 2:25, “The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.”**

Adam and Eve had nothing to hide from one another; they saw and accepted each other just as they really were. They also had nothing to be afraid of or ashamed of, because they had not sinned; they were innocent before God and before one another. As we saw back in Genesis 1:31, at the end of the sixth day God looked at all that He had created and it was very good.



This includes the relationship between a man and a woman in marriage; which includes the sex. One preacher compared sex with fire. Fire, when it is in the right place – for example, when it is in the fireplace or the cooking stove, is a wonderful thing that warms us and helps us to meet many of our needs. But when fire gets into the wrong place, it can destroy a home or even a city. Sex is very much like that. In the right place, within the fireplace of marriage, it is a wonderful gift given by God to mankind. But in the wrong place, it destroys homes and even societies.



#### IV. Closing

Adam and Eve were naked and they felt no shame. What about us? Even on warm summer days, most of us would never go outside without clothes. Why? Because it is shameful and embarrassing to be naked. These feelings involve deeper issues than just the covering of our bodies. You see, the problem is that we all have things to hide. We have all sinned and clothing is symbolic of our desire to cover our sin. But **Luke 12:2** warns us that in the end, **“There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.”**

Hiding our sins doesn’t work, because one day all of our hidden sins will be revealed. But through the cross of Christ, God has provided an effective solution to the problems of nakedness, sin and shame. **1 John 1:9** promises us, **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”** By the grace of God, through the process of confession and repentance of sin, we can be forgiven, restored, purified and made new.



Let us go to God now and confess our sinfulness and ask for His forgiveness. Let us go to Him and ask Him to heal our marriages and our families. Let us go to Him and ask Him to do a new and wonderful work in our lives, in our homes, and in our society. Let’s pray

#### V. Closing Prayer