

People of Promise
Adam and Eve
604 words

A False Promise

Adam and Eve:
Our Embarrassed Parents

Genesis 3:4-5

If Adam and Eve are the physical parents of all human beings, they are also the embarrassed parents of all who ever failed to stick with what they knew to be true from the beginning. Their gullibility, their careless thought, their self-interest . . . all stand as timeless markers to any who would separate true promises from false.

Adam and Eve entered a perfect domain when they were created and made tenders of the Garden of Eden. They walked in perfect harmony with God and each other, living in conscious perfection. Their physical nakedness was emblematic of the purity of their thoughts and motives. Think of it: Not one dark deed, not one selfish thought, not one shameful memory had left its wrinkle in their pristine minds. Unknowingly, Adam and Eve lived by the modern dictum, “God said it, we believe it, and that settles it.”

Adam’s and Eve’s purpose was to bear their Creator’s image and express His will on earth as it was in heaven. To that end, God gave Adam and Eve instructions and made them promises. He told them to be fruitful and rule the earth (Genesis 1:28). He designated food for them (1:29) and for the animals as well (1:30). He gave them a method for insuring the propagation of the race and the transfer of the knowledge of God (2:23-24). And he gave them clear consciences, right from the beginning (2:25). Everything was settled for creation’s first couple--until an unsettling creature entered their unified home.

Warnings, by nature, imply danger and consequence--and choice. How strange a warning must have sounded to these neophyte humans, so used to choosing only God’s will. God’s first warning was made even stronger when delivered in the form of a promise: “You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *for when you eat of it you will surely die*” (2:17). At that point, one who was as crafty as they were naked (the same Hebrew word underlies both terms; 2:25; 3:1) put himself into play. The serpent came not to settle what God had said, but to unsettle the innocent minds of God’s children.

Satan, in disguise, gave our parents a false promise. In his pseudo-innocence, he crafted a false premise and spoke a false promise: “You will not surely die” (3:4-5). Unfortunately for Adam and Eve, and unfortunately for us their children, they believed the father of lies (John 8:44). Are they to be blamed? After all, they had no knowledge of

evil. They had never heard a lie in their entire lives! The serpent's craftiness looked so much like their own naked innocence that they probably saw the serpent as purely as they saw everything else. Alas, they are to be blamed, for one reason: They did not cling to the promise of the One they *knew* to be true.

When you find yourself tempted to believe something that doesn't sound to you like God's promise, think of Adam and Eve:

- First, what has God said about the matter?
- Am I being swayed by the mere appearance of innocence and good intentions?
- Will missing the truth by an inch be any less devastating than missing it by a mile?

While Adam and Eve had many advantages in the Garden of Eden, they did not have one that we have: The opportunity to have our senses trained to discern good from evil (3:5, 22; Hebrews 5:14). That doesn't excuse them, and it certainly doesn't excuse us. If you are going to cling to a promise, make sure it is one that is true.