

The Tree of Life

Genesis 3.22-24 / Revelation 22

John 11 - LAZARUS – Alive from DEAD – perhaps ONE Question for Jesus
Lazarus had DIED ONCE > SOME DAY would have to DIE AGAIN....

“Couldn’t you find ANOTHER Dead Guy for this Resuscitation?”

NEXT & LAST Phrase Apostle’s Creed “resurrection of body & LIFE Everlasting”
GIVEN a NEW BODY so we will NEVER DIE AGAIN

PROMISED by PERSON BEST QUALIFIED to Make OFFER > RISEN Jesus
The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*
John 10:10

Life to FULL = ABUNDANT: ETERNAL LIFE is QUANTITY & QUALITY
LIFE the THIEF does NOT WANT any to Choose > ORIGIN of Story EDEN...

1. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

a. Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

1st Verse of Message of MOSES to Israelites > Left Egypt, Entering Canaan
Left Behind > Many gods / Soon Meet > Many More gods > **WHO is True God?**

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that
what is seen was not made out of what was visible. Hebrews 11:3

BELIEVING in CREATOR – or even INTELLIGENT DESIGN – By FAITH
Not Just ACADEMIC CONCLUSION > also SPIRITUAL CONVICTION

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I
praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful,
I know that full well...All the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.” Psalm 139.13-16

GOD BEGINS AND GOD ENDS OUR LIFE / Decision made before our Birth

BEGIN “knit together in mother’s womb” END “all days ordained for me” OVER

CLEAR FOCUS of Genesis / One Awesome, Mighty, Majestic, Mysterious God
Compared to HIM we PALE IN INSIGNIFICANCE

the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground Genesis 2.7

“You would need enough potassium for one shot of a toy pistol, enough fat for 7 bars of soap, enough iron for 1 large nail, enough sulphur to delouse a dog, enough lime to whitewash a chicken coup, enough magnesia for one dose of medicine and enough phosphorus for a few boxes of matches! The total purchase would not fill more than a couple grocery bags.” Dr. Mayo, founder of the Mayo Clinic, USA

HOW COULD DUST BECOME as BRILLIANT as EINSTEIN,
As CREATIVE as MOZART, and as BEAUTIFUL as HELEN of TROY??

MARVEL When LOOK thru MICROSCOPE

COMPLEX PIECE OF DUST

One piece of Skin – 4 centimeters square – 3 million cells, 1 meter of blood vessels, 4 meters of Nerves, 100 sweat glands, 15 oil glands, and 25 nerve endings

QUITE a COMPLEX *ACCIDENT - HAPPENED* to FORM us OUT of DUST

b. Calling

1) Dignity MAN NOT STRONGEST, LARGEST, or FASTEST Creature of God

Image of God = MAN – RULER OVER ALL > Earthly King

MAN DEPENDENT ON CREATION / but also Creation Dependent on Man

GOD’S VICE REGENT ON EARTH / Kommandant / Steward God’s Property

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground” Genesis 1.28

2) Duty

there was no man to work the ground...the LORD God formed the man Genesis 2:5-7

Our CALLING and our CREATION > MADE for God-Ordained PURPOSE
 WORK IS PART OF CREATION, NOT CURSE > Work ITSELF is Gift of God

"Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees,
 That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees" Rudyard Kipling

c. Command

1) Freedom "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden" Genesis 2.16

100's, perhaps 1000's, of trees and fruits available for man to Enjoy

BASICALLY MAN COULD GO ANYWHERE AND DO ANYTHING

FREE TO DO WHAT HE WAS MADE TO DO / Serve & Worship God
MAN WAS NOT MADE A ROBOT OR PUPPET / Choice is Real Possibility

I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. Psalm 119:45

2) Responsibility **ONE SMALL LIMITATION TO MAN'S FREEDOM**

"...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." Genesis 2:17

TREE WAS SYMBOL - God could have pointed to STONE, "Do Not Move!!"
Or Referred to a RIVER "Do Not Jump Across!!"

QUESTION: Source of Knowledge / Where will we learn Good and Evil?
Who'll establish Moral Code? Friends? Society? Films? Parents? Tree? God?

TREE REMINDS THEM THEY ARE NOT GOD / RESPONSIBLE TO HIM

"tree is in the center of the garden" **PRIMACY OF LAW AND JUSTICE**

GOD & HIS STANDARD - NOT MAN & HIS DESIRES - AT CENTERPOINT

3) Consequence v. 17 “when you eat of it, you will surely die”

LORD GOD is the LIFEGIVER / Death = SEPARATION from GOD of LIFE

Consequences of Sin> Increasing Effects of Death: Spiritual, Physical, Eternal

REJECT HIS LORDSHIP at the very RISK of YOUR LIFE

d. Choice

1) Doubt --- Doubt AUTHORSHIP of this message?

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "*Did God really say...*" Genesis 3:1

Perhaps Adam & Eve – DID NOT KNOW REAL IDENTITY OF SERPENT

JESUS DID “the devil...When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” John 8.44

Are you really sure it was God? Maybe another source? Too much pizza last night?

- Doubt AUTHORITY of this message? DEVIL is DISSING GOD

the *LORD God* commanded the man...

Genesis 2:16

Moses declares God as Lord / Master / Covenant Ruler / Rightful Authority
SERPENT does NOT MAKE THIS CLAIM – MERELY GOD, NOT LORD

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the *LORD God* had made. He said to the woman, "*Did God really say...*" Genesis 3:1

“perhaps he did make this place, but it does not give him right to tell us what to do”

- Doubt ACCEPTABILITY of this message?

The LORD God commanded the man, "*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...

Genesis 2:16-17

Serpent: "Did God really say, '*You must not eat from any tree* in the garden'?"

Genesis 3:1

Serpent twists POSITIVE STATEMENT into a NEGATIVE DISTORTION

From "free to eat from any tree" To "you must not eat from any tree"

GOD WANTS TO RESTRICT YOUR FREEDOM / TAKE AWAY YOUR FUN

GOD IS NOT GOOD / DOES NOT WISH THE BEST FOR HIS CREATURES

Woman DID NOT Agree AT FIRST – Serpent's DOUBT put her on DEFENSIVE

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and *you must not touch it*, or you will die.'" Genesis 3:2-3

He is so MEAN we CANNOT Even TOUCH the STUPID TREE!

2) Denial

Serpent's Hits made Eve's Legs Wobbly / Now he'll Deliver the Knock-out Punch Challenge NEW LEVEL > Pin pricks of Doubt to SLEDGE HAMMER of Denial

Powerful Negative: "You will not surely die," the serpent said... Genesis 3:4

GOD is ALWAYS RESTRICTING YOUR FREEDOM / Open Your Mind

NOW EVE MUST MAKE A CHOICE / Someone is Right and Someone Wrong

REAL ISSUE – Does God speak Truth? Can the Judge of Earth be Trusted?

3) Declaration of Independence from God

Last Year > DECLARED my Independence from My THYROID Gland
NOT Know WHERE it was, WHAT it DID, NEVER even SEEN It, NOT Need It!

Got ALONG FINE WithOUT Thyroid Gland: Traveled, Taught, Preached Here
 Even went to BEAUTIFUL BALI --- 6 Weeks No Thyroid --- TIRED....SLOW...
 FREE NOT to have a THYROID --- ALSO FREE to DROP DEAD without IT

World thinks MAYBE we Cannot FUNCTION without God AFTER ALL....???
 Home State Calif: 2 HEADLINES --- Gay Marriage --- Worst Drought Ever – duh!

Serpent: "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you
 will be like God, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:5

REASON for COMMAND – God Jealous of You / You will be as Good as Him

HALF TRUTH – Now they will know both Good AND Evil

PRIOR TO THIS – THEY KNEW ONLY THE GOOD

NOW KNOW GOOD AND EVIL / but Not Like God

GOD – Loves Good and Hates Evil // MAN – Loves Evil and Hates Good

Serpent would have been COMPLETELY Truthful to Say – “You will be like ME”

WHEN EYES Opened > RUN and HIDE from GOD --- GUILT and SHAME

e. Curse

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it
 all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat
 the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food
 until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are
 and to dust you will return." Genesis 3:17-19

SIN TWISTED All Our Relationships > With God, Others, Selves, Our World

Work ITSELF is Gift of God > SWEAT ON BROW – Troubles in Work is Curse

CANNOT EVEN RULE OVER THE COCKROACHES IN OUR KITCHENS

INSTEAD of RULING THE EARTH, MAN HAS OFTEN RAPED the EARTH

Destruction instead of Dominion / Pollution instead of Protection

LANDS & LIVES / HOMES & HEARTS / NATIONS and NEIGHBORHOODS

SIN > DEATH = SEPARATION / NOW from INTIMACY with God
Someday SEPARATED from ETERNITY with God

2. The Tree of Life

FALL – School STARTS – NEW CHALLENGE – EXCITING – ANTICIPATED
MID-JUNE – LET ME OUT OF HERE!!

GOING HOME – HOW EXCITING /// TIME PASSES --- Send me to Kazakhstan!

HEAVEN --- 1st 1000 Yrs OK --- Surfed every Ocean – Play Every Instrument...

ETERNAL LIFE – How BORING!! Same Thing Over, Over, Over, Again...

And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:22-24

a. Blocked

Angelic Cherubim swung FLAMING SWORD > Blocked way to TREE OF LIFE

GUARD the PRESENCE of God > CANNOT ENTER with SIN

Sin MATTERS > DISRUPTS the MOST Important Relationship we HAVE

NOW First Parents KNOW Good and Evil > Previously ONLY Knew GOOD

SINFUL Man MISINTERPRETS this Knowledge, No MORE Communion w/ God

v. 22 He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take from the tree of life

SACRAMENTAL > Life comes FROM God, Life is to be GOD-CENTERED

NO MAGIC in or from the Tree > SYMBOL of God's Realities

b. Banished

v. 23,24 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

God in CONTROL of Situation: His GARDEN, Creatures, His Will be Done

TRAGIC Event > EXPULSION > Rejected God, Given RESULT of Decision

The garden is the abode which God prepared for man, and in the center of that abode, is God Himself. Man's being is to be centered about God...Now man is sent out. He is to go upon the ground until at last the seed of death matures and breaks forth claiming him for its own. He had been a guest in God's garden; he is now a bondslave of death.

E.J. Young

Every DETAIL of this VERSE Actively EXCLUDES the Sinner from God

DRIVEN Out, DEPART with HASTE > Essence of DEATH = Separation

EVERYTHING he Touches on EARTH – IMPARTIAL, INCOMPLETE

Because GOD – Author of TRUTH and LIFE is NOT INCLUDED

Cannot Make PEACE, End DISEASE, Stop HUNGER, POVERTY, SUFFERING

Best HOUSING, JOBS, SCHOOLS, WEALTH, Not SOLVE Man's Problems

LEARNED – Too Late --- SATAN is LIAR and GOD'S WORD is TRUE

c. Blessing > In WRATH, GOD REMEMBERS MERCY

Act of MERCY > To Live FOREVER under CURSE, Not Blessing

The expulsion from Paradise, therefore, was a punishment inflicted for man's good, intended while exposing him to temporal death, to preserve him from eternal death.

Carl Friedrich Keil

WHO would WANT to LIVE FOREVER in this DECAYING BODY of SIN??

TO TASTE THAT FRUIT WOULD HAVE GIVEN THEM ETERNAL LIFE

ACT OF GRACE TO NOT ALLOW THEM TO DO SO
THEY MUST NOT LIVE FOREVER IN THEIR FALLEN STATE

We do not hope simply for some kind of survival after death, as the logical consequence of having an ‘immortal soul,’ or (even sadder) the perpetual repetition of mortal life through reincarnation. Survival is not salvation... What we look forward to is the full revelation of God’s power as creator and as ruler of the world.

Luke Timothy Johnson

3. The Tree of Jesus

LAST WORD of Genesis 3 > LIFE >> REST of BIBLE Story of LIFE Won

MERCY and GRACE of God seen in GARDEN – A & E Woke up NEXT DAY
ADAM lived 930 Years – EVE: Mother of Living
100’s, 1000’s, 1,000,000,000’s of Children > they TAUGHT RABBITS

Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.
Genesis 3:20

a. Sovereignty > God Made the World and Rules over It > Now and Forever

REBELLION in EDEN did not RUIN Plan of God > REVEALED its Magnificence
GOD more than CREATOR > NOW see as Judge & Redeemer / Father, Son, Spirit

PLAN of God – BIGGER than a GARDEN > NEW Heaven and Earth

PEOPLE of God more than Adam & Eve: EVERY Nation, Tribe, Language, People
COMPLAIN “Never had MIRACLE from GOD!” > Holding in your hand: BIBLE
MORE than 1000 years in Making – 40 Different Authors – ONE DIVINE VOICE

Tree of LIFE: Over-run WEEDS of SIN // OFFERED again to Unworthy Sinners
BIBLE > Reveals the GLORY of God’s Plan and Purpose in Christ

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever... Revelation 22.1-5

JESUS is Theme of REVELATION > AND the WHOLE BIBLE!

What God BEGAN in Genesis > comes to Christ-centered Fulfillment in Revelation

River that flowed in Eden > RUNS THRU BIBLE > River of Water of Life

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. Psalm 46.4

A fountain will flow out of the LORD's house

Joel 3.18

What the Apostle sees in this vision is Paradise regained: all that was lost in Adam is restored, and more than restored, in Christ. In Christ man is brought back to the paradise he had lost and forward to the destiny in glory for which he was created.

Philip E. Hughes

Genesis		Revelation	
Heaven and earth created	1.1	New heaven and new earth	21.1
Sun created	1.16	No need of the sun	21.23
Night established	1.5	No night there	22.5
Seas created	1.10	No more seas	21.1
Curse announced	3.14-17	Curse lifted	22.3
Tree of Life blocked	3.24	Tree of Life accessible	22.14
Sorrow and pain begin	3.17	No more tears or pain	21.4

b. Suffering

Garden: SUBSTITUTIONARY PRINCIPLE – Adam and Eve live / Another Dies

without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness Hebrews 9:22

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

Genesis 3:21

ONE ANIMAL HAD to DIE for a SINGLE PERSON / 1 for Adam, 1 for Eve

Jesus: “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

Lord God promised the Serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Genesis 3.15

JESUS Fulfilled Promise on CROSS > Heal Struck but Serpent’s Head Crushed

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is *hung on a tree*’” Galatians 3.13

Garden OPENED by Him who BORE BRUNT of God’s FLAMING SWORD

SECOND ADAM > Obeyed > Life > BLESSINGS to all IN HIM

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness *reign in life* through the one man, Jesus Christ. Romans 5.17

Greek – Language of New Testament – TWO Words for LIFE

BIOS = biological existence // ZOE = life in all its fullness

Eternal NOT throughout all Time = OUTSIDE TIME > WITH God

As it is virtually impossible for us to conceive what it must be like to live outside space and time, it is understandably difficult to think about eternal life. However the main point is this: eternal life means that our present relationship with God is not destroyed or thwarted by death, but is continued and deepened by it.

Alister McGrath

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

1 John 5:11

...believe on him and receive eternal life

1 Timothy 1:16

c. Celebration

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city..." "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star." The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Revelation 22:14-17

Our confidence rests on the fact that God has already raised Jesus Christ from the dead and on the fact that we belong to him.

C.E.B. Cranfield

NEW HEAVEN / NEW EARTH > Fashioned with NEW BODIES

v. 2 On each side of the river stood the tree of life

NOT JUST ONE TREE > A Whole City Full of Trees > GARDEN OF GOD
LEAVES bring HEALING to the NATIONS

Jesus: To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Revelation 2:7

Jesus: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 5:24

Two Trees – Middle of Garden / One Led to Death / Other Tree of Life

Get Tree of Life? > Come to JESUS, the AUTHOR of LIFE was HUNG on TREE

You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalms 16:11

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 John 5:13

the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord Romans 6:23

Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill > Bugler high in Dome of St. Paul's Cath.

Played TAPS > Military Song to Mark END of DAY > Sad, Somber Moment

FINISHED TAPS > Immed played REVEILLE > Tune to BEGIN NEW Day

End of THIS LIFE is Only Beginning of NEW DAY > Eternal Day in Christ

Last Word of Apostle's Creed > **AMEN!** – SO BE IT! YES LORD! GO GOD!

CREED is a PRAYER and a STATEMENT of Faith

The creed will have done its job, and done it well, if it propels us out into God's world, determined to serve him with the same faithfulness and dedication as those who first used this creed all those centuries ago. Alister McGrath

Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called 1 Timothy 6:12



