

Adam and eve essay sample



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In Genesis 1 God creates the universe in seven days, reserving for his sixth-day labor the climax of creation: man and woman. On the seventh day God rests and so establishes the holiness of the Sabbath. God fashions a man from the dust (Heb. *adamah*) and blows the breath of life into his nostrils, then plants a garden (the Garden of Eden) and causes to grow in the middle of the garden the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life.

God sets the man in the garden “to work it and watch over it,” permitting him to eat from all the trees in the garden except the Tree of Knowledge, “for on the day you eat of it you shall surely die.” God brings the animals to the man for him to name. None of them are found to be a suitable companion for the man, so God causes the man to sleep and creates a woman from a part of his body (English-language tradition describes the part as a rib, but the Hebrew word *tsela*, from which this interpretation is derived, has multiple meanings; see the Textual Note, below).

Describing her as “bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh,” the man calls his new help-mate “woman” (Heb. *ishshah*), “for this one was taken from a man” (Heb. *ish*). This sundering, a making of two from one, predicates reunification in marriage, in which two will be made one: “On account of this a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his woman.” The chapter ends by establishing the state of primeval innocence, noting that the man and woman were naked and not ashamed, and so provides the departure point for the subsequent narrative in which wisdom is gained through disobedience at severe cost.

The Serpent, “ slyer than every beast of the field,” tempts the woman to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, telling her that it will make her more like God and it will not lead to death. After some thought about the fruit’s beauty and succulence, and its ability to grant wisdom, the woman decides to eat it the forbidden fruit. She then gives the fruit to the man, who eats also, “ and the eyes of the two of them were opened. ” Aware now of their nakedness, they make coverings of fig leaves and hide from the sight of God.

God asks them what they have done, and man and woman defer responsibility. The man blames the woman for giving him the fruit, but implies a sentiment that God is also at fault for making the woman in the first place (“ The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate”), while the woman blames the serpent for seducing her to disobedience (“ The serpent beguiled me and I ate”). God curses the Serpent “ above all animals,” causing it to lose its legs and to become an eternal enemy of the human race.

God then passes judgment for the disobedience of the man and woman, condemning the man to sustain life through hard labor and the woman to create new life through painful childbirth, and banishes them from the garden. The woman is given the name Eve (Heb. hawwah) “ because she was the mother of all living [Heb. hay],” and Adam receives his name when the text drops the definite article from the word for “ the man,” changing “ ha-Adam” to “ Adam”. Eve/woman is also established as subordinate to Adam/man, ending utopian unity between the sexes.

God then posts 2 cherubs, with flaming swords, at the entrance to the Garden of Eden in order to block the way to the Tree of Life, “ lest he put out his hand ... and eat, and live forever. ” Genesis 4 tells of the birth of Cain and Abel, Adam & Eve’s first children, while Genesis 5 gives Adam’s genealogy past that. Adam & Eve are listed as having three children named Cain, Abel and Seth, then “ other sons and daughters” (Genesis 5: 4, NIV). Adam lived for 930 years.