

Biblical Anthropology: Part 3 - The Fall

Beginning Observations

1. God “recognized” that there was something about being a man that was incomplete. As a result, God brought “every” beast of the field and “every” bird of the sky to Adam to see what he would call it. The fact that all of this happened on the 6th day would make it most likely that it was only a representative of each species that was brought to him.
2. Nothing else in the animal kingdom was suitable as a companion for the man, giving rise to the creation of woman. Eve was taken from Adam’s side and brought to him by God. Adam gave Eve her name (just as he had the rest of the animal kingdom) and affirmed the fact that she was the right choice.
3. In being the “head” of the human race, all people have descended from Adam (including Eve) and carry his DNA.
4. The uniqueness of being a man and of being a woman, physically, emotionally, and psychologically, is all a part of God’s design. In other words, the fact that men and women are different in the way that they think or express themselves is a part of God’s design. The differences between the sexes are beneficial.
5. One man and one woman in marriage has always been the only plan that God intended. As a couple, they will form the foundation of individual family systems. Any deviation from this plan is inadequate for fulfilling God’s intentions with mankind or for accomplishing all the needed aspects for a healthy family system.
6. There are only TWO sexes: Male and Female. There is no third sex, and one’s sex is not determined by choice. Genetically, we are unchangeably one or the other.
7. Being assertive in an affirming way is a part of what it means to be a man (notice his affirming words in 2:23, where he says, “this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh”, but also notice that he exercised authority by naming her “woman”).
8. Being receptive and responsive under the headship of the man is a part of what it means to be a woman. Eve did not try to correct the man or reject his God-ordained headship. Instead, scripture’s silence here indicates that she displayed a submissive spirit to both her husband and God.
9. This relational difference of being a man or of being a woman is reflected in the physical /sexual makeup of each as well. Man is the assertive one and woman the receptive one.

Post-Creation Situation

Note: The first 6 days of creation are summarized in Genesis 1-2. Beginning in Chapter 3 we do not have an exact timeline. How long the man and the woman stayed there and enjoyed the garden and fellowship with God is not given. Indications are that it was long enough for them to get familiar with the garden and for Satan to get familiar with them.

In verses 1-3 we find Eve in an outer part of the garden. She apparently is all by herself when she encounters the serpent since there is no mention of Adam being with her until verse 6, after she has made her

journey to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This may have taken place the same day or somewhat later, but again we have no timeline here. The process of deception and self-deception normally takes time to bear fruit.

Big Question: Why Eve?

Why would Satan have chosen Eve as his target for deception instead of Adam?

Possibilities:

1. There is something about being a woman that God intended as good, but which makes her more vulnerable and prone to deception (1 Tim. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:3; 2 Tim. 3:6). Because relational security is so critical to the woman, the suggestion that she has been lied to by one whom she trusted would be concerning. Satan presented her with a way that he said could gain her better security on her own, rather than a submissive dependency on someone else.

2. It is also one of Satan's strategies to undermine all authority, since all authority comes from God (Romans 13:1). His goal is to achieve disruption, division, and rebellion within governments, churches, and households (See 2 Sam. 15:1-6). In approaching Eve, Satan could take down both the authority of God and Adam at the same time, and even possibly use Eve to cause Adam to fall for his plan.

3. It may also be that Satan felt Eve was more vulnerable than Adam if she had gotten her restrictions from Adam instead of God. Note in Genesis 3:3 how she adds to the command of God. It could be that Adam had passed along this addition to the command of God to protect Eve, or it may just be that she made up the additional words herself. In any case, the command was contradicted by Satan, who implied that God was holding back something from her that was good.

4. It must also be considered that Satan believed Adam to be a more difficult target because of the personal interaction that he had enjoyed with God, and thereby, was less likely to believe the lie of Satan. There was just something about being a man that still apparently exists, which makes him a more difficult target than a woman. While it is true that all of us, men and women, are susceptible to deception and self-deception, this does not seem to be the case before the fall. Without a sin nature, Adam and Eve lived in a state of untested innocence (not perfection). Red flags should have gone up for Eve when Satan contradicted the Word of God, and she should have gone to her husband about the incident.

Was Adam with Eve at the Deception?

In the study of Genesis 3:1-6, it is important to take notice of the details in the passage. What does it say? What doesn't it say? How can we understand the events taking place in light of the normal way that things happen? What theological implications can be derived from our understanding of the passage?

Some prominent teachers have suggested that Adam was with Eve when the serpent deceived her. That conclusion can only be reached by a shallow reading of the text and has implications that run contrary to good theology and the way that things normally happen.

Here are my six challenges regarding this idea:

1. An attempted argument for this idea comes from verse 6 where we find Adam with Eve together near the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. While it is true that they were together at that point, it is also clear that we are dealing with a compressed timeline of events in these first 6 verses. Their presence near the tree had to have happened hours or even days after Satan had planted the idea into Eve's head because the location of the tree indicated by her at her in verse 3 was "in the middle of the garden". Such a description (rather than "that tree over

there”) is a clear indication that her temptation took place at an area some distance away from the middle of the garden. There is an obvious time gap between verses 5 and 6. While it is certain that Adam was with Eve when she was at the tree, it is an argument from silence to say that he was with her at the deception. Actually, that silence gives greater evidence that he was not with her at that point.

2. If it the suggestion is true that Adam was with Eve at the temptation, we must also then believe that Adam just listened in while the serpent lied to Eve about the command of God and His motives, and then again when Eve misquoted the command of God regarding the fruit of the tree (vv. 2-3)? Would Adam really have just stood there without saying a word? Wouldn't Eve have at least looked at him for his thoughts and approval in the light of the contradiction to what she had been previously told? That would be too incredible, and it implies a far greater nefarious intent by the unfallen Adam than the scripture justifies.
3. Regarding the doctrine of SIN, one could now argue that Adam was just as deceived as Eve had been if he had been with her at the temptation. However, scripture indicates a deliberate act by Adam against the command of God (Romans 5:19; 1 Timothy 2:14). Furthermore, notice that when they defended themselves before God after the fall, only Eve claimed to have been deceived, not Adam.
4. In the normal course of life, Satan finds it easier to plant the seed of a lie in our minds while we are alone. Bodie Hodge affirms this when he says, “Logically, it is easier to deceive one person than two” (answersingenesis.org). Satan would have had an easier target while Eve was alone, since Adam would not have been there to challenge what was being said. Why would he (Satan) have even taken that chance?
5. In our own personal struggles with the sin nature, we find that a temptation is first planted through someone or something else as an idea. The seed of that idea does not normally bear fruit right away, especially if it is a new temptation that runs contrary to what we already believe to be true. As James says, “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then, when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.” (1:14-15).
6. Again, Hodge says, “Note the clever deception by the serpent in that he did not go by way of the Lord God’s creative order. He did not go to Adam first, but instead went directly to Eve.” Again, this is a common approach of Satan: undermining authority from beneath.

While it is unarguable that, since the fall, men have often failed to protect their wives, I’m afraid that those who believe that Adam was with Eve at the temptation have read into this passage something that it doesn’t say in an attempt to make their point. I don’t see Adam as an uncaring husband. It could rightly be argued that Adam had added to God’s command when he passed it on to Eve, which seems a likely protective measure that people commonly employ. Eve’s misquote contained the additional phrase, “or touch it”, which was most likely given to her by Adam as a protection, just as a parent might tell a child not to go near the street when he is really concerned about the child going into the street. However, Adam could have stopped Eve from taking the fruit or even going near the tree following her deception, but he didn’t. We may never know why he didn’t intervene at either of these points or if Eve had somehow persuaded him to follow her lead. He just put his wife’s unfortunate choice ahead of his obedience to the command of God.