

Adam and Eve: The Ideal (Perfect) Couple



SABBATH—JUNE 30

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:18–3:16.

MEMORY VERSE: “That’s [that is] why a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. The two of them will become one” (Genesis 2:24, NIV).

THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE HAS A BEAUTIFUL BEGINNING BUT A SAD ENDING. God gave them everything good. They were a handsome groom and a pretty bride. They were perfect in their characters¹ and bodies. They lived in a beautiful garden home without worrying about anything. God even gave them the hope of everlasting² life. The beginning of their marriage was better than a marriage in any fairy tale.

However, the ending was very sad. The story ends with Adam and Eve losing everything—for themselves and for everyone else in the future. Adam and Eve are a powerful example of the cost of sin. We should learn well from their story about what will happen if we disobey the will of God.

THIS WEEK'S STUDY UP CLOSE: At first Adam and Eve were the perfect image (likeness) of their Maker. What does that mean? Even more so, what happened when that image was spoiled by sin? What can we learn from the sad story of Adam and Eve's fall?

1. characters—who people are; all that people do, feel, and think are what people are made of.

2. everlasting—eternal; without end.

SUNDAY—JULY 1**THE IMAGE OF GOD
(Genesis 1:27)**

“So God created man in His [God’s] own image [likeness]; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis. 1:27, NKJV).

The meaning of the “image of God” can be partly understood from the verse: “male and female He [God] created them” (Genesis 1:27). Male and female together show the image of God. One gender (sex) helps the other gender and is not whole by itself. Male and female humans³ were not meant to live by themselves. God made male and female humans to need one another. This need helps society⁴ stay together and helps human history to keep moving forward.

The Hebrew word for “God” uses masculine (male) forms of verbs. But the Bible also refers to God in ways that describe mothers or wives.

How is God described in Deuteronomy 32:11; Isaiah 49:15, 16; Isaiah 66:12, 13; Hosea 13:8; Matthew 23:37?

Male and female together help us understand the idea that God is more than one Person. The pronoun, or part of speech, used for God shows that God is many: “ ‘Let us make man in our image, in our like-

ness’ ”(Genesis 1:26, NIV).

How might the idea of man and woman together help us understand that God is more than one Person?

Male and female together show that love works when two or more are involved. Like God, man and woman want to join together in love.



Male and female together show us God is more than one Person.

How is love shown to us through the death of Jesus in John 15:13? How does the death of Jesus help us understand what love is?

MONDAY—JULY 2**THE RIGHT HELPER
(Genesis 2:18)**

What reason did the Lord give to make a wife for Adam in Genesis 2:18?

Why was it not good for Adam to

3. humans—men, women, or children.

4. society—all people.

be “alone”? After all, Adam had the animals to keep him company, and even God Himself. Why was this not enough?

Genesis 2:18–22 suggests that God knew that Adam needed a companion.⁵ But God waited to create the woman for Adam until after all the animals were named. God brought the animals to Adam in pairs. Adam gave the same name to the pair, but he had to notice that one was male and one female. They gave companionship⁶ to each other in a way that no other animal or bird could. Adam could not “find a helper that was right for him” (Genesis 2:20, NIV).

As God had created day by day, He was able to say that His work was “good.” He also used the same word for Adam, but He means the word in a different way. God says that it is not “good” that man was alone.



The animals came to Adam in pairs to be named. Adam had no mate. He felt very alone.

5. companion—someone to care about and spend time with; one of two persons in a pair who shares his or her life with the other person in the pair.

6. companionship—the act of spending time with someone you care about.

7. opposite—different in every way; when something or someone is exactly the reverse (different) of another thing or person.

How did God describe the wife He was about to make for Adam in Genesis 2:18?

God made the woman to complete the man. The Hebrew word for helper really means “like his opposite.”⁷ Adam’s partner was not there just to be a helper. She was not made just to prepare the food, to have children, or even to care for the garden. Eve was to be his partner. Eve’s value is for the person she is. Also, the idea of a helper does not make a person less valuable. For example, the Bible often speaks of God as One who helps us (read Psalm 30:10; Psalm 54:4; Psalm 121:2; Hebrews 13:6).

Think about someone you know now who might be lonely. How much of yourself are you willing to give up in order to help?

TUESDAY—JULY 3

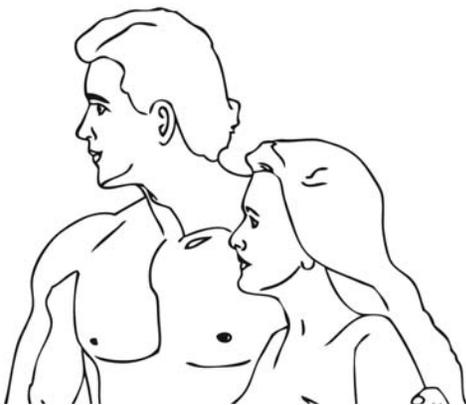
HUSBAND AND WIFE (1 Corinthians 11:11, 12)

In Genesis 2:23 Adam’s feeling when he first saw Eve was not romance but relief. In Hebrew the first word Adam speaks when he sees Eve can mean “now” or “this time.” But the meaning of the word that fits best is “At last!” Now, at last, here was a living person who could

be like him. Eve was not just Adam's partner because she was made from his rib. She was a real part of him. Matthew Henry said that the woman was "not made out of his [Adam's] head to rule over him. She was not made out of his feet to be ruled over by him. But, instead, she came out of his side to be equal with him. She came from under his arm to be kept safe and from near his heart to be loved by him."—Adapted.

What important point is Paul making in 1 Corinthians 11:11, 12 about the unity⁸ that a husband and wife should have in marriage?

What change in loyalty⁹ does Genesis 2:24 ask couples to make when they marry?



The rib Eve was made from showed she was Adam's equal and part of who he was.

The verse is not requiring one to leave the parents' home and join the

spouse's¹⁰ family home, as some people do. The meaning of the verse here requires both husband and wife to love each other more than they love their own parents. This is serious in cultures¹¹ such as in the Old Testament. In these cultures children were taught to always honor their parents. This should continue today, but after marriage, loyalty is to the spouse first over the parents.

About Genesis 2:24, Jesus said that husband and wife "are no longer two, but one" (Matthew 19:6, NIV). Husband and wife are to share in their feelings, in their friendships with others, and in their love for God. In the same way, the Trinity¹² is Three-in-One. This is one way in which husband and wife can show the "image (likeness) of God."

If you are married, what things can you do to be closer to your spouse? What attitudes (feelings) do you need to change? If you are not married, what changes can you make to have better and closer relationships¹³ with the people who love you?

WEDNESDAY—JULY 4

TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE (Genesis 3:1–6)

There are several parts in the story

8. unity—when two or more people or things are joined together as one; when two or more people are in agreement in ideas, feelings, and so on.

9. loyalty—the act of being true or faithful to someone or something such as family, duty, or God.

10. spouse—husband or wife.

11. cultures—the ideas, skills, arts, tools, and ways of life of certain people at certain times; civilizations.

12. Trinity—God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.

13. relationships—our connections (ties) to other people and how deep our feelings are for each one of them.

of Eve in Genesis 3:1–6. One part suggests that Eve was alone when she was tempted¹⁴ by the serpent. (1) The serpent talks only to the woman. (2) Adam does not seem to be there with Eve. He is not mentioned until Eve gives him the fruit. (3) Adam is cursed¹⁵ only for listening to his wife and not for listening to the serpent.

Several versions of the Bible suggest another story. These versions suggest that Adam was with Eve at the time she was tempted in Genesis 3:6. The Hebrew has several words that may be translated “with.” Two important ones are *etzel* and *im*. The second word is used here in Genesis 3:6.

Etzel is the preposition, or part of speech, that is used to show location¹⁶ *beside* or *next to* something. (Read Genesis 39:15, 18.) But *im* shows relationship.¹⁷ “Immanuel” in Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 8:8, 10 begins with the preposition *im* and means “God with us.” Here, *im* means a relationship and not a location. So, Genesis 3:6 does not really mean that Adam is standing next to Eve when she is tempted. Adam used the same preposition, *im*, in Genesis 3:12 to remind God about the woman with him. The use of *im* here refers to a relationship, not to location. If Adam

had been with Eve, she might not have fallen into temptation.¹⁸ “The angels had warned Eve to be careful not to separate [be alone] from her husband while they were working daily in the Garden. If Eve had stayed with Adam, she would have been in less danger from temptation than if she had been alone.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*,¹⁹ pp. 53, 54.



Eve was alone when the serpent tempted her.

Keeping in mind today’s lesson, what are the messages for us in Proverbs 11:14, Ecclesiastes 4:9–11, and James 15:20?

How have you experienced the help, protection,²⁰ and good advice of others? How willing are you to get, or even to give, help when

14. tempted—experienced the desire to do, think, feel, or say what is wrong.

15. cursed—placed under the power of words that tell what kind of suffering will take place in your life before the suffering happens; a curse was spoken by God after Adam sinned, telling Adam what hard times and sorrow he would face because of his sin.

16. location—where something is or will be.

17. relationship—how something relates to, or is like, another thing; how things connect together.

18. temptation—anything that tries to turn us away from God and tries to get us to do, think, feel, or say what is wrong.

19. patriarchs and prophets—patriarchs are early Bible leaders, such as Abraham and Isaac, or other leaders of Israel, such as Moses; prophets are men and women sent by God to warn us about what will happen in the future.

20. protection—the act of keeping someone safe and out of the way of harm.

needed? Share with class an example of how the help of others has made a big difference for you.

THURSDAY—JULY 5

THE CURSE²¹ ON THE RELATIONSHIP²² (Genesis 3:16)

With only one error, Adam and Eve lost everything—innocence,²³ rulership, immortality (eternal life), their garden home in Eden, and security (safety). What they got was guilt, fighting off beasts that once had been friendly, having no home, fear, the struggle for life, death, and more. A couple in a perfectly peaceful love relationship can go through all kinds of hardship together. But in addition to all their other losses, Adam and Eve suffered a broken relationship.

Adam would begin bossing Eve around. And this attitude²⁴ would spoil their perfect relationship. God foresaw²⁵ that some men would show their leadership by using force. This was not planned by God. God told Eve what the result would be of her sin. But this result is not according to God's first plan for husband-wife relationships.

What point is Paul making in 1 Timothy 2:11–14? How does Paul

tie this point to the fall of Adam and Eve?

The Bible says that in marriage a woman is to submit to (obey) her husband (1 Peter 3:1). The example of Sarah obeying Abraham and calling him “master” is a good example of true submission.²⁶ But the Bible also says that wives are not to be afraid of their husbands (1 Peter 3:6, NIV). In the same way, husbands are to treat their wives with love and respect. Peter shows how not doing this “will stand in the way of your prayers” being answered (1 Peter 3:7, NIV). This is how the Bible says husbands and wives should act in marriage since the fall of Adam and Eve.

What if you have caused pain to your spouse²⁷ (or anyone) through a mistake? How can you help that person heal? You cannot change what has happened. But what can you do to make sure you get along better in the future with this person and others?

FRIDAY—JULY 6

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Read Ellen G. White's “The Eden Home a Pattern,”²⁸ pp. 25–28, in *The Adventist Home*.

21. curse—words that tell what kind of suffering or trouble will take place in a person's life before the evil happens.

22. relationship—your connection (tie) to another person and how deep your feelings are for that person.

23. innocence—being free from guilt or sin.

24. attitude—a way of thinking, acting, or feeling.

25. foresaw—to have known about something before it happened.

26. submission—the act of trusting and honoring both God and one's godly husband completely.

27. spouse—husband or wife.

28. pattern—a plan that is used as a guide for living or making something.

“In the creation God had made her [Eve] the equal of Adam. If they [Adam and Eve] had remained obedient [loyal] to God according to His great law of love, they would always have worked well with each other. But sin had brought disagreement [difference] between them. And now their marriage could be kept happy only by one or the other giving in to the other’s will. If people had followed the principles [rules] of the law of God, marriage would have proven a blessing to them. But man’s abuse of the power given to him has often made the life of women very bitter so that her life has often become a burden [heavy load] to her.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*,²⁹ pp. 58, 59.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

❶ Why is it that in homes, in friend-

ships, and in the workplace it seems best to have one who is a leader? What is good about having a leader? At the same time, what are the dangers?

❷ As a class, go over your answers to Wednesday’s lesson. What can you learn from one another? Also, how do you as a class help one another? Discuss how your group could help class members who are struggling with problems.

❸ These lessons are about marriage. But what are the principles³⁰ we have learned that help with other relationships?³¹

❹ What does your church do to help those who live in abusive (cruel) homes? What more could, and should, you do?

29. patriarchs and prophets—patriarchs are early Bible leaders, such as Abraham and Isaac, or other leaders of Israel, such as Moses; prophets are men and women sent by God to warn us about what will happen in the future.

30. principles—laws or rules upon which other laws are based.

31. relationships—our connections (ties) to other people and how deep our feelings are for each one of them.