Meet Me Under the Tree, Lesson 1 (Margie Wall)

Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

Scripture: Genesis 2:8-9, Genesis chapter 3

In our previous series “Meet Me in the Garden” we learned about a number of biblical trees including date palms, almond, fig, olive, apple, juniper, myrtle, mustard and pomegranate trees. In this series we will look at some of the specific tree stories, starting with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Garden of Eden: The Hebrew word for “Eden” means “delight”. The exact location is unknown, but the wording of Gen. 2:8-9 indicates a precise location (not a symbolic place). Of the four rivers described – Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates -- only two are known today. Hiddekel has been later named the Tigris River, and the Euphrates continues to bear that name. Scripture seems to put the origin of civilization in the Mesopotamian Valley (modern day Iraq), perhaps just north of Babylon where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run close together. Noah’s flood would have had revolutionary effects on the region’s topography, altering the course of the rivers significantly, or causing them even to disappear. The flood would also have destroyed Eden. (Genesis & Archeology, H.Voss)

Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Everything that God made was good. The tree was not bad, only forbidden. It plays its part in the opportunity it offers, rather than the quality it possesses; like a door whose name announces only what lies beyond it. (“Genesis” by Derk Kidner, p. 63). The type of fruit is unknown. There were many fruit-bearing trees in the garden that Adam and Eve could eat from. In the center or midst of the garden were two trees specially called-out: The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Temptation of Eve and the fall of man: Man was created a free being with the moral ability to love God or to reject God. God made him perfect and placed him in a perfect environment with every need supplied. (The Genesis Record, Henry M. Morris, p. 112)

After Adam and Eve enjoyed the pleasure of Eden for some time, Satan tempted them to sin. Their disobedience brought God’s curse on themselves, their descendents and on nature itself. The rest of Scripture confirms it:

Romans 5:12
I Corinthians 15:21-22
I Timothy 2:13-14
2 Corinthians 11:3
Archeology also affirms it. In the 1800’s a seal was found at Ninevah depicting a man and a woman seated on either side of a fruit tree; to the left of the woman stood a serpent. In 1932 a professor at the University of Pennsylvania found a similar seal at Tepe Gawra in Mesopotamia portraying a man, woman and serpent. (Genesis and Archeology, Howard F. Vos, p. 23).

Adam was not deceived (I Timothy 2:14). Many have suggested Adam also ate of the fruit out of love for Eve, choosing to share her sin and guilt rather than leaving her to face God’s judgment alone. This interpretation would be consistent with the typology suggested that “Christ loved the church and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). Even so, Adam’s sin was deliberate and inexcusable. (The Genesis Record, Henry M. Morris, p. 114)

If you had to sum up the lessons of this story, what would it be?

About obedience:

About judgment:

About perfection:

About choices:

About Satan:

About redemption:

About shame:

About forgiveness:

About consequences: