

## **“THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL”**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- I. In the garden of Eden, God put all kinds of trees.
  - A. There were many trees to benefit man—especially for food.
  - B. There also 2 special trees in the midst of the garden.
    1. 1<sup>st</sup>, there was the tree of life that would sustain man to live forever when eaten.
    2. 2<sup>nd</sup>, there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
      - a. This tree is named or referred to **specifically only** in the book of Genesis. Gen. 2:9, 17, 3:3, 6, 9-12
      - b. We cannot describe the appearance of the fruit of the this tree, or compare it to any fruit in the world today,
      - c. It would appear that the fruit itself may not have produced death, but the “eating” of the fruit would be a test of man’s obedience to God.
        - 1) Question: Did God eventually desire for man to attain to a knowledge of good and evil?
        - 2) Could it be that in this probationary period that God was **testing** Adam at this early stage, and would have eventually allowed him to eat of that tree when the time was right?
      - d. The **rest** of the Bible tells of the consequences of Adam and Eve having eaten of the forbidden fruit in violation of God’s command.
- II. There are 5 major things WE come to **know** from a study of what God reveals about it through Moses.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **I. 1st, we learn of the EXISTENCE OF EVIL.**

- A. Since God created everything, are we to conclude that He created “evil”, and that IT is good? Cf Gen.1:31
- B The answer is **NO**, because evil was not part of that which God created in the 7 days of creation. Cf Isa. 5:20
  1. Evil existed in the mind and scheme of the devil and though man had not yet committed evil, it existed IN Satan, and he had access to mankind to tempt him to do evil. John 8:44
  2. If this were **not** the case (which it IS), then God was aware of it becoming a problem for mankind.

#### **II. 2<sup>nd</sup>, we learn that EVIL IS CONTRASTED WITH GOOD.**

- A “Good” is from God, as the letters for God are found in the word “good.” Gen.1:31; Jas. 1:17
- B. “Evil” is from the Devil, as the letters for evil are found in the word “devil.”
  1. Gen.2:9 records the first time in the Bible that the word “evil” is used.
  2. Here it is contrasted with “good.” Gen. 2:9, 17; 3:5 , 22; 44:4; Deut. 1:39; 30:15; 1 Sam. 24:17; 1 Pet. 3:10-12

#### **III. 3rd, we learn we must CHOOSE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.**

- A. God would not **force** people to do good, but gives them a choice.
  1. God **knew** the reality of evil, and and wanted man to know about the “good.”
  2. We need to be taught about the goodness of “good” and the evils of “evil.”
- B. Parents cannot force their children to always do the right thing, but they need to be **taught** about the good things, and **warned** of the dangers of evil things.

#### **IV. 4<sup>th</sup>, we are to KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.**

- A. We **must** know the difference between good and evil, so as to **make** the right choice.
1. We can learn by making wrong choices, but then it may be too late to avoid the consequences, and we may have set in motion a pattern of life that may never be changed.
    - a. For instance, the drinking of alcoholic beverages, or experimenting with drugs, may so enslave some that they cannot easily, if ever, stop their pattern of life, and eventually keep them out of heaven. 1 Cor. 6:9
    - b. The practice of fornication, once begun, may lead to a permanent pattern of life. 2 Pet. 2:14
    - c. When Adam and Eve attained knowledge of their nakedness, they were ashamed and sought some clothing, and it's too bad that knowledge is missing in the world today.
  2. But, if we recognize that God exists, and His infinite knowledge and wisdom is best, we can learn by **accepting** what He says.
- B. Several passages of scripture suggest that God wants us to recognized the difference between right and wrong, or between good and evil. Isa. 5:20; 7:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:21-22; Heb. 5:12-14

#### **V. 5<sup>th</sup>, we learn that SOME ARE BRAINWASHED TO DO EVIL.**

- A. Eve listened to the serpent and believed what he said, and CHOSE the evil over the good (simply doing what God said without question).
- B. Many (young and old) listen to the enticing words of evil-doers, and are led into sin and destruction. Col. 2:1-4, 8; 2 Pet. 2:1-3, 18-20

#### **CONCLUSION**

- I. Eating of ANY forbidden fruit will always lead to death. Rom. 6:23; Gal. 6:7-8; Prov. 1:10; 2:1-12
- II. Won't you make the choice right now, to do the Lord's will and allow Him to cleanse your soul as you obey the gospel?

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