



LIFE LESSONS FROM THE LADIES: Part Two

EVE: LESSON 8

Hi, ladies! What an exciting week we have in front of us as we take a look at Eve, the first woman! She experienced many “firsts” as we will soon see. Before we begin, however, I’d like to throw out a few disclaimers, as well as some additional insight regarding the things we’ll be discussing in our lesson. My intent is to focus mainly on the character of Eve, rather than launching an in-depth discussion on creation. We obviously will talk about the basics of creation, Adam, the fall, and anything else that pertains to Eve to keep our study in context. But my discussion will not include the various views of the Creation account, such as Old Earth/New Earth, etc. You obviously can study Creation and form your own opinion, but for the most part, I’m trying to focus our attention on Eve and all we can learn from her life. But for the record, I do want to say that I take the story of Creation literally, meaning that I reject the modern idea that it is simply an allegory, an ancient myth, or some type of folklore. I believe that the first three chapters in Genesis, which are written by Moses, contain “historical reality,” as Herbert Lockyer puts it. He goes on to write, “If Adam is a myth, so is Christ. How could a mythical son become one of the ancestors of the actual Christ? (Luke 3:23-38).” The fact that many in our culture treat the Old Testament like it’s a myth is, as Lockyer says, “another evidence of the appalling apostasy of our age” and, I believe, demeans the truth of Scripture. What does all this mean? Simply, I believe that God LITERALLY created the world, us, and all that exists, so I’m coming from that belief as I write this lesson!

First Day

1. Before we begin, let’s start with this question. When you hear the name Eve, what are your first thoughts? Don’t think deep to try to sound theological, just your first thoughts. 😊
2. Read Genesis chapters 1 through 3. See if you can write a simple character sketch of Eve.

It's important to know that chapter two is not a separate creation account, but simply an expansion of chapter one. It's a style of writing at the time, whereas you state the facts and then go back and expound on them. The word "Genesis" is from a Greek word meaning "beginning" or "generation." Genesis is the book of generations, or beginnings. Warren Wiersbe wrote, "As the seed-plot for the entire Bible, Genesis records for us the momentous beginnings of the universe, human history, civilization, sin, salvation, sacrifice, marriage, and the family." The first eleven chapters deal with humankind in general and explain the origin of man and sin, while chapters 12-50 deal with Israel in particular. It begins with "the heavens and the earth" but then God chooses to deal with the earth, not the heavens; the theme from then on is God's program on earth. I love what Weirsbe points out regarding Genesis and Revelation. He wrote, "The beginnings recorded in Genesis have their fulfillment in Revelation. God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1) and will one day create a new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1). Satan first attacked man (Gen. 3) yet will be defeated in his last attack (Rev. 20:7-10). God made darkness and light (Gen. 1:5), but one day there will no longer be night (Rev. 21:23; 22:5). There will be no more sea (Gen. 1:10; Rev. 21:1), and the curse will be lifted from creation (Gen. 3:14-17; Rev. 22:3). God drove man out of the Garden (Gen. 3:24), but God's people will be welcomed into the heavenly paradise (Rev. 22:1), and the tree of life will be restored to man (Rev. 22:14). Babylon will be destroyed (Gen. 10:8-10; Rev. 17-19), and the promised judgement of satan fulfilled (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 20:10)."

3. Why did God create Eve? Why do you think God showed Adam all the rest of the things He created and had him name them first, before creating Eve? Any thoughts?

4. We always talk about "partnering" with God in His work. How is Adam getting to name the animals, etc., a good example of God wanting man to be involved?

5. What was Adam's first reaction to the creation of Eve?

6. What are the three names given for Eve in our first three chapters?

The word "helper" in 2:18 is an amazing word, yet a word that is often taken out of context or used incorrectly. The Hebrew word is *ezer* and is often used only to define a woman's role, in

marriage, as well as in relation to men. I love what I learned about this word because it has a much deeper meaning. Carolyn Custus James wrote, “The meaning of *ezer* was diminished when translators rendered it ‘helpmeet’ and restricted it to marriage. A woman’s mission centered on home and family, vital spheres of ministry to be sure, but only a slice of the vast mission God originally cast by calling women to rule and subdue the earth. The thinking regarding *ezer* began to change when scholars pointed out that the word *ezer* is used most often (sixteen of twenty-one occurrences) in the Old Testament refer to God as Israel’s helper in times of trouble. That’s when *ezer* was upgraded to ‘strong helper,’ leaving Christians debating over the meaning of ‘strong’ and whether this affects a woman’s rank with respect to man. Further research indicates *ezer* is a powerful Hebrew military word whose significance we have barely begun to unpack. The *ezer* is a warrior, and this has far reaching implications for women, not only in marriage, but in every relationship, season, and walk of life.” Dr. Hamilton, author of The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, wrote, “The new creation will be neither a superior nor an inferior, but an equal. The creation of this helper will form one half of a polarity, and will be to man as the south pole is to the north pole ... Any suggestion that this particular word denotes one who has only an associate or subordinate status to a senior member is refuted by the fact that most frequently this same word describes Yahweh’s relationship to Israel. He is Israel’s helper.”

I love that *ezer* is a warrior term, because we are definitely in a battle! It’s so appropriate that God would use a military term to immobilize them into action! Together they would exercise dominion and labor to advance God’s kingdom on earth! A strong word emphasizing that women should stand alongside their husbands and other brothers in the battle! Satan was alive and well then, just as he is today!

7. Does this definition of the word *ezer* change your thoughts on what it means to be man’s “helper”? How has that term possibly been distorted over the years? Can you give some examples?

That’s all for today! I hope your thoughts are going crazy right now as you think of all the lessons we can learn from Eve. Allow yourself to see her in a different light, not just “she brought on the curse.” Have you ever made a mistake, doubted God’s Word, or allowed the enemy to deceive you? Yes, on all three counts for me! So let’s not judge her, or see her only through a distorted lens of our preconceived ideas. Let’s ask God to help us read about her with fresh eyes; like it’s our very first time meeting her!

Memory Verse of the Week: “And Adam called his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living.” Genesis 3:20

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. Soon you will see why this verse is so significant.

1. First of all, in whose image was Eve created? What do you think that means?
2. How is that significant for you and me? If this is true, how should it affect how we see ourselves, our lives, and our relationship with God?
3. According to Genesis 2, what commands was Adam given by God? Was Eve present at the time? Notice that this is the first “thou shall not” in Scripture!
4. Who was the tempter in chapter 3? Describe the encounter they had in verses 1-5. What tactics were used to deceive her? Did Eve add or omit anything in her explanation?
5. What did God “really” say in 2:16-17?
6. How do James 1:13-16 and 1 John 2:15-16 relate to this?
7. Why do you think satan targeted Eve rather than Adam? Do you think that her not being present during the command would have made any difference? Why or why not?

8. Paul uses Eve as an example of how satan attacks our minds in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4. How was this an attack on her mind?

Remember that Adam and Eve had no outside influences yet, especially a friend, besides Adam, to discuss things with. Only a creepy ol' serpent to tickle her ear with a lie. It really must have intrigued her, don't you think? I wonder if she simply trusted this serpent ... after all, she hadn't had any reason to distrust anything as of yet. Hmmm ...

9. The serpent caused Eve to doubt God's Word and deny the truth of it. Does he still use this tactic today? What can happen when we begin to doubt and/or deny God's Word? How do we protect our minds?

10. Reflect on this for a bit. Are you prone to doubt or deny God's Word? When things aren't going well, or turning out like you would like, do you doubt His promises? Would you call this a "trust issue"? In light of this story, why is this so important?

11. When we doubt God's goodness because of something He does, how and why does this cause us to doubt His Word even more? (For example... IF God was a God of love, certainly He wouldn't ... fill in the blank.)

Eve forgot that God only has His glory and our good in mind. He wasn't out to "get" her, even if it felt like it. We often forget the love behind God's commands and view His rules as a way of preventing us from experiencing something we want or need.

12. Do you tend to forget the love behind His commands or instructions when they rub you the wrong way? How can knowing God's love, His character, and His Word, help prevent this? Can you think of a time when God told you "no" to doing something, only to later find out it would have compromised your safety, integrity, or relationships?

It's important to remember that God created two perfect humans, but with a capacity to sin. God sets limits in order to test, not tempt, His creation. Kathy Collard Miller wrote, "His desire is to reveal who a person really is inside and give us an opportunity to really love Him through our obedience. Love is not love if there are no opportunities to disobey. So God gives one no-no; the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil must not be eaten. Just think, there is only one thing that Adam and Eve couldn't do and a whole garden of things they could do! The motive behind testing is different from the motive behind tempting. Testing is done to reveal the truth. Tempting is done to make someone fail, become discouraged and give up. Satan is the initiator of temptation and wants us to fail. God tests us to find out about the truth about our weaknesses and strengths. God has also developed instructions for His people to follow, and we have the choice whether to obey or disobey. We grow spiritually and emotionally when we are tested. Even though we wish for a problem-free life, we wouldn't crave or need God if our lives were always without problems." Temptation can be defined as "the enticement of a person to commit sin by offering some seeming advantage." It seems to offer good, but never does.

13. What is the "forbidden fruit" in your life? What are things that you are tempted by? What is the enemy tickling your ear with? How can recognizing your weaknesses help you to stand firm? (Rick Warren said, "Our temptations are unique to our weaknesses, and we need to identify them because satan surely knows them." 2 Corinthians 2:11)

Third Day

Work on your verse.

1. Temptation is something we will always deal with. Let's take a look at how Jesus dealt with temptation in the wilderness in Matthew 4:1-11. Explain how He combated the enemy. How was satan's assault on Jesus similar to the tactic he used on Eve?

2. What can you learn from this regarding temptation? What battle plan can you form when you are tempted?

3. Notice that the serpent doesn't use the word "steal" or something obvious like that. He tempts her to simply "speculate" on God's Word. (Do you think she knew it was a sin?) The enemy always puts a "nicer garment" on the lie he's trying to get us to believe. What "garment" does he tend to use on you?

4. After Eve was deceived by satan, what did she do, according to 3:6? What immediately happened? Why?

5. Read 3:8-13. How did they respond to God when He came looking for them? Why were they hiding? Who did God address first? Why? How did they respond to God's questions?

Scholars differ on their opinions of whether or not Adam was standing there with her while the serpent talked to her, or whether he was there, but not "right" there. I obviously don't know, but either way, the tempted became the tempter. When Eve offered it to Adam, he freely took it, also knowing he was going against God's command. When their eyes were opened, they immediately knew they were naked, and for the first time, felt the emotion of shame and guilt. Can you imagine that? They had never disobeyed God, so there was no reason to be ashamed. God calls them out, giving them every opportunity to own their sin, initiating contact with them to show them He loved them despite their sin, but they failed to choose the option of honesty.

6. Do you think the outcome would have been different if they responded differently?

7. Do you play the "blame game" instead of taking responsibility for your actions? Do you find it difficult to "own up"? Why? (Are you blaming someone right now for certain difficulties?)

8. They tried to "cover up" using fig leaves, but this doesn't do the job. What are some ways that we try to "cover up" our sins?

Notice that although the serpent is the one responsible for tempting her, they are both held accountable for their own actions. We can't blame Satan when we give in to temptation, we are the ones responsible and will answer to God individually. We, like Adam and Eve, use the fig leaves of promises, good deeds, excuses, or rationalization to cover our shame, but forgiveness from God is the only way to "cover" and remove our sins. God questions Adam and Eve to give them an opportunity to clear their conscience, but doesn't ask the serpent anything; He immediately curses him.

9. Read the consequences of their actions in 3:14-19. Rather than spend time on those since we all probably know them, I want to look at the promise found in verse 15 that can be easily overlooked. Can you explain the hope that must have brought them? What was God promising?

Picture how depressed, guilty, ashamed, forlorn, discouraged ... and all the other words that could describe the hopelessness they must have been feeling at that moment. As God pronounced judgement on them, their world was about to change. They would lose their perfect life, home, purity ... all in a moment. Coupled with hopelessness must have been fear. Fear of what existed outside the Garden, fear of their future, fear of the unknown. They also probably thought they were going to physically die which isn't what God meant. God's words to Satan are known as the "first Gospel" or the "protoevangelium" because they are the first announcement of the coming of the Redeemer found in the Bible. To the Old Testament covenant people, this was a beacon of hope (Galatians 4:1-4), but to Satan it was God's declaration of war, climaxing in his condemnation (Romans 16:20). To Eve, it was the assurance that she was forgiven and that God would use a woman to bring the Redeemer into the world (1 Timothy 2:13-15). Satan's purpose is to destroy humans and he will often seem to have victory as he "bruises the heel" of mankind, but it is not complete victory. Satan's power will be defeated in the end times. His power can't do anything to God, but he can try to temporarily cripple God's people. But Jesus' death on the cross has rendered him powerless!

10. How do you think God's words in verse 16 also brought hope to her?

11. What name did Adam give her in verse 20? How did this name express belief and hope? (What if he had named her the mother of all dying???)

God gave them clothes to wear from the skin of animals. This was also a picture of the salvation we have in Christ. There must be the shedding of blood, the offering of innocent life for the guilty (Hebrews 9:22). We can't cover our own sins, only the blood of Jesus can remove them!

12. How does this part of the story bring you hope as well? Have you made some mistakes? Living with regret? Do you believe that God offers you the same forgiveness?

Verse 22 seems strange when you first read it because there had been no mention of another tree called *The Tree of Life*. Many view God's action of putting them out of the Garden as an unmerciful act, almost mean. But this verse actually shows us differently. There was an obvious tree in the Garden that if they ate of it while in their fallen state, would cause them to live forever in that state. (Ugh, who wants that?) So expelling them from the Garden was actually a very loving thing to do. Joni Eareckson Tada wrote, "As painful as it may be, God's judgement is for our own good. Here, God's concern seems to be that man not live forever in his cursed condition. Seen in this light, the seemingly severe punishment of driving the first man and his wife out of the Garden can be understood as an act of grace on God's part."

After the fall, man would now be susceptible to emotional, physical, and spiritual pain. They were the first to experience all these emotions. We are broken people. But God's remedy is to have us live forever with Him! Our outward man may be perishing, but the inward man is being renewed daily! (2 Corinthians 4:16)

Fourth Day

Continue working on your verse. After yesterday's lesson, I hope you see why it's such a hopeful verse!

Today we're going to look at a few different things about Eve. As you answer these questions, imagine you are Eve. How would you have felt? How would you have faced tomorrow? How would you have dealt with your shame and grief? Would you have continued to trust God?

1. Read Genesis 4:1-15 and 25-26. Summarize the story.

Custus James wrote, "So what was it like, the morning after the great crash? After living in the Garden, in harmony with Adam, after enjoying open access to God, what was it like to

awaken that first morning in the wilderness knowing they could never go back there again? Oh, the things we would all take back, if given the chance. Hasty decisions, rash words, and reckless actions that backfired, leaving wounds, closed doors, and estrangements we can't seem to repair. Did Eve relive again and again that fateful moment when she bought the lie and bit into the fruit? Was she depressed over losing Eden and about the rift that would invade her marriage? We don't know anything except that her world changed forever; her life, her body, her marriage, her work, her relationship with God, all changed forever."

2. Eve experienced many losses. What can we guess from the names she gave her sons? Was she bitter against God?

3. How do you handle heartbreaking loss, whether it's your fault or not? What can we learn from Eve? (Jeremiah 29:11)

4. Ok, now here is a random, fun question. Eve is known as the woman of many "firsts." This makes her distinct from any other woman! List as many "firsts" as you can think of. Then make a list of her losses. (Not such a fun list to write.)

5. One of those "firsts" was that she was the first woman to EVER birth a child. Imagine that. What thoughts, emotions, and struggles would have accompanied that, without knowing what to expect?

6. I wish we could explore the story of Cain and Abel but sadly, not enough time. However, Eve was the first mom to experience a dysfunctional family, with one son killing the other. Even after that, she seemed to trust God and acknowledge His will in her life. What does that tell us? Do you have any dysfunction in your family? Are you bitter about it, or have you chosen to trust God through it?

7. The birth of Seth, whose name meant “God has appointed another seed for me” would bring hope to all mankind. Read Romans 5:12-21 for the good news!

8. Part of Eve’s curse was to have pain in childbirth. Most scholars believe that from the wording used, it’s talking about pain that extends far beyond the actual birth. (Such as watching one son kill another, perhaps?) Can you explain the other types of pain mothers experience as they parent? Have you experienced any of this pain? Are you trusting God through it?

9. This was the first marriage in the Bible. (Thank goodness it didn’t end in divorce!) What does it mean to be an *ezer* to your husband? Are you a good *ezer* to yours, if you’re married?

10. God designed men and women to bond together physically, emotionally, and spiritually in marriage. How does our story teach us this?

11. I know we’re concentrating on Eve rather than Adam, but I have to ask ... What was Adam’s part in all this? As a man, a leader, a husband? Why do you think Eve is often blamed entirely for the fall of man?

I wish I could be a fly on the wall and hear all your discussions. I hope you’re having fun talking about the Mother of all Living! I also pray you’re spending time examining your own heart in regard to blame shifting, temptation, trust, and handling loss. See you tomorrow!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory!

I wish we had a lot more time to spend on Eve, but let me end our time with a few more questions. We fault Eve with wanting to be “more like God” when she ate the fruit. I recently read, however, that God’s design for us IS to be like Him! To be more Christlike in our thoughts, actions, passions and desires is something we all want. But Adam and Eve’s sin was choosing to become like God **—without Him—**without walking the long road of faith and obedience and doing the hard work of forging a relationship with Him. So my question ...

1. Are you trying to become more like Him, without Him? Without knowing the Word, without prayer, without seeking after His heart? (Perhaps by doing good deeds, or living morally right, etc?) How do we become more like Him?

2. From Eve’s life, what can we learn about:
 - a. Temptation:

 - b. Testing:

 - c. Consequences:

3. Right now, are you blaming someone, covering up something, or refusing to accept responsibility for your actions in some way?

Here’s my list (not exhaustive) of “firsts” for Eve: Only one to be complete and perfect, never been a child or a daughter, first to birth a child, not born but created, first to be called a wife, only woman created without sin, created sinless yet became the world’s first sinner, first to be tempted by satan, first mourner, first to grieve over sin, first to know intimacy without shame, first to experience life with no pain, first to experience the bliss of a perfect marriage, first to not know evil, etc. etc.! Yes, Eve is distinct above every other woman!

4. What’s your biggest take away from Eve’s life?

