

A Biblical Case Study: Leadership Failures of  
Adam in the Garden of Eden  
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## CASE STUDY OF ADAM

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“Then God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was very good” (Gen. 1:31, NIV). God had created everything in the world; spiritually, therefore, it was a world without sin, corruption, disease, or death, but one of righteousness, and holiness, perfect in His sight.

Adam was introduced to the reader in Genesis 2:4, after God created the heaven and the earth, mentioning that he had not caused it to rain as there was no one physically present on earth to till the ground. Genesis 2:7 states that “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (mind, will and emotions).”

After which God planted a garden eastward in Eden. “And out of the ground the Lord made every tree grow that was pleasing to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2: 8-9). God proceeded to place Adam in the garden of Eden, with instructions, stating that he can freely eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for if you eat of it you will surely die (Gen.2: 17). As mentioned earlier, this is the first mention of death, as a consequence of disobedience and sin, reinforcing the righteous state in the Garden of Eden.

God then decided man should not be alone; He proceeded to form all the animals, and birds of the air, and they were named as Adam had purposed. After being put in a deep sleep, a rib was taken out of Adam, from which God made into a woman. At this point Adam was appointed as leader of his family. In Genesis 3:1, the serpent presents himself to deceive the woman, by asking her “Has God indeed said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” The woman answered by stating that, “we may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat it, nor shall you

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touch it, lest you die. “The woman took the fruit and ate from the tree of good and evil. She also gave to her husband with her” ( Gen. 3: 6). This indicates that Adam was with the woman while the serpent was tempting her, therefore in hearing their conversation, he failed to step up as the leader and authority of his family, to correct the woman’s’ interpretation about what God said about consuming fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, or immediately resisting and stopping the serpent by submitting to God.

Immediately their eyes were open, and they knew they were naked and became ashamed, indicating an immediate change in their spiritual condition. For as God was looking to commune with His creation in the Garden, they hid themselves from Him, indicating that their fellowship was broken because of their sinful act. To make matters worse, Adam blamed both his wife and God by saying , “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit, and I ate” (Gen. 3:12). Adam failed to take responsibility and ownership of the first sin committed on earth.

As a result of Adam’s disobedience God said, “because you have heeded the voice of your wife” (Gen. 3:16), that is, heeded to her counsel, suggestions, and leading, failing to lead her according to Gods commandment, “you shall not eat of it” (Gen. 3:16). Essentially, he put his wife before God, an act of idolatry, breaking the first commandment, “you shall have no other Gods before me” ( Exod. 20: 3). Thus, God spoke:

Cursed is the ground for your sake;

In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground,

For out of it you were taken; For dust you are,

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And to dust you shall return.” (Gen. 3:17-19).

God clothed them and sent him out of the garden to till the ground from which he was taken.

Adam failed to demonstrate his spiritual leadership by not protecting or stopping Eve, giving in to sin, and his refusal to take responsibility for what he had done, or failed to do. He failed to be the priest, prophet, and husband, by being silent and inactive against the serpent’s words and presence, being seduced and overcome by the wiles of the devil. He failed to follow the command of God, “ to be fruitful and multiply; to fill the earth and subdue it; to have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen. 1:28).

### **Questions**

1. Did Adam communicate the correct information to Eve, based on Eve’s response?
2. Was the narrative in Genesis 3 a battle of words or doctrine, exemplifying knowing the truth, God’s word?
3. What were the factors that led to and caused Adam to freeze, not to walk in his spiritual authority over Satan?