

Adam and Eve



I want to tell you a story. When I've finished, I want you to tell me if it is true or not.

“Once upon a time, there was a Shoe Factory, owned by a chap named Mr. Brown. Working in the Shoe Factory were two employees, John, and Mary. They were a good team, and they made excellent shoes. Day after day, the three shared ideas, and concerns. All was good, until one day after work, a communist agent met John and Mary in the pub. “Is Mr. Brown paying you enough?” he asked. “Oh yes,” John and Mary replied. “He is very generous, except for what he keeps for himself.” “But that also can be yours,” said the Communist agent. “You can have it all and owe Mr. Brown nothing.” “Oh? How can that be?” asked Mary and John. “Take this monkey-wrench and throw it into the machine that makes the shoes, and it will stop working. Then Mr. Brown will have no shoes to sell, and he will go bankrupt. After he leaves, you can take the monkey wrench out of the machine, start making shoes again, and all the profit will be yours.” John and Mary thought about that, and the extra money they could have—and though they knew it would hurt the relationship they had with Mr. Brown, the lure of the extra cash enticed them. So, they took the monkey wrench, and the very next day they threw it into the machine that made the shoes. The Communist agent was right—the machine stopped—but then it burst into flames, and the Shoe Factory burnt to the ground. John and Mary stood outside looking at the smoking embers, and they were ashamed. They turned and ran. They ran far away, and in their shame, hid in a cave in the far-off hills. They knew they had acted out of sheer selfishness, and they had lost everything. “Mr. Brown sent them letters, begging them to return, but John and Mary tore up the letters. He sent them friends to beg them to return but they didn't believe the friends. Finally, Mr. Brown sent his only Son to ask them to return. John and Mary were impressed by the friendship and love of the son, but they felt their shame too much to return. Just then a fierce lion entered the cave, and John and Mary were frightened. Mr. Brown's son stood his ground and defended John and Mary by killing the Lion. But in doing so, because of his many wounds, the son died too. John and Mary looked at what the brave son had done to defend them, and though still ashamed, they decided to return and ask forgiveness. In a few days, John and Mary stood before Mr. Brown, and confessed their selfishness, telling him of the bravery and love of his son who had given his life for them. “I forgive you,” said Mr. Brown. “Come back.” And John and Mary and Mr. Brown together began to rebuild the Shoe Factory.

All right, is the Story True or not True?

Some of you say it is not true, others say it is true. Well, you are both right.

The story is fiction, since I just made it up, so it is NOT history. But if you check out the meaning, it is very much TRUE. It illustrates that selfishness will damage a relationship, and that forgiveness can restore that relationship. We were meant to have a beautiful growing relationship with God, but that has been damaged by our selfishness, our self-centredness. There is nothing we can do to restore that relationship, but forgiveness can restart that relationship, so that we can begin again. God did that by preparing us by sending the Prophets, and finally by sending His son Jesus to take on Himself the results of that sin, by dying and rising for us. Now, we know that God truly wants us back, and is able to forgive us and restore the relationship with Him, when we are penitent.

With that introduction, consider the Story of Adam and Eve that was just read to us a few minutes ago, as the Old Testament Reading. In that Lesson, we learn that God wanted men and women to live with Him in a holy relationship, but that we sinned by “wanting to be like God,” leaving Him out of the equation. That was the ultimate attitude of self-centredness and resulted in us being “kicked out of the garden” —by our selfishness we broke the relationship with God.

Now is that Story, True or Not True?

Some of you say it is True, and others say it is Not True. Again, you are both right.

The Story of Adam and Eve is Fiction, not History—but it is the Truest Story in the World. It was written almost 4000 years ago, one of the most important and truest stories ever written and it is still True today. It illustrates where we find ourselves—in a broken relationship with God, and there is nothing we can do to restore that relationship. Only God can. Eons ago, He sent the Holy Spirit to inspire religious longing for God throughout all the religions of the world. Finally, He chooses Judaism as the one religion that had the best hope of understanding Him and sent Prophets and Priests to teach people about Him. When enough people had caught on to what God was really like, He sent His only Son (Jesus) to carefully teach us that He loves us and wants us to come Home to Him. Because of our self-centredness, we crucified Him—but Jesus was able to turn his Crucifixion from an execution into a Sacrifice for our Forgiveness. When we come back to the Father in penitence, and claim the Sacrifice of Christ made for us, God is able to forgive us, (to wash us clean in the blood of Jesus, as St Paul says), to restore us to a real and growing relationship together with God.

So, the Story of Adam and Eve is definitely NOT history, but it is greatest and Truest story ever told, describing exactly where we are with God, what sin really is, and the terrible damage our selfishness has caused.

Now it is the clear teaching of Jesus who tells us how much we are loved. God our Father dearly wants us to return to Him, to find forgiveness, to begin a new life with our Father, and be cleansed of our selfishness—the root sin.

Jesus wants us to become the Saints of God, what we were intended to be, to become the men and women that God wants, and what we truly desire when we are thinking straight. In fact, the whole of the Old Testament, following the Story of the Garden of

Eden, is a history of God preparing us for the “rescue” under Jesus His Son. In the New Testament, we have 4 Gospels that teach clearly that God is working to bring us back to Him. Not for His needs, of course, but for ours. He created us to live in a growing relationship with Him—but He knew that we might rebel, might seek to go our own way instead of His, might find ourselves stuck in meaninglessness because of our sin. So, from the very beginning, He prepared the “Great Rescue”—the rebuilding of the human race—the forgiveness of our sins—so that we could build the Kingdom of God right here right now.

Which brings up the question—are you committed to what God is doing? Have we faced up to your selfishness, your own personal sin, which has separated you from the Father? Because believe me we are not yet Saints, (we have a long way to go), the selfishness that is in our soul keeps blocking us from the love of God. This morning is a good time to get rid of that sin that stands in our way, that so easily blocks us from our Lord. In a few moments, we will all kneel before the Lord, and confess our sins as a congregation—but while we are doing that out loud, I want you to quietly apologise to the Lord for the actions or words that you have done this past week that is separating you from God—tell Him you are sorry—confess your sins—and receive the Forgiveness of God in the Absolution in words that you can hear. Then, a few minutes later, when in the mass together we have offered the Holy Sacrifice of Christ to the Father, remembering that He died on the Cross to make our forgiveness real, come to the Altar and humbly receive the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood—the Grace that fills us with His Power and Love.

And never forget: Jesus loves you, He always has, He always will. This morning, let him fill you with His Love, let the Saints of God surround you this morning, let their Prayers bolster your Faith. Decide to be the Adam and Eve that God wanted in the very beginning, living with Him daily, and knowing His Love for ever.

Amen