

9

The Two Trees & Freewill



Although "tree" is a term of common parlance, there is no universally recognized precise definition what a tree is, neither botanically nor in common language. In its broadest sense, a tree is any plant with the general form of an elongated stem, or trunk, which supports the photosynthetic leaves or branches at some distance above the ground. At its broadest, trees include the taller palms, the tree ferns, bananas and bamboo. A tree typically has many secondary branches supported clear of the ground by the trunk. Trees provide shade and shelter, timber for construction, fuel for cooking and heating, and fruit for food as well as having many other uses. Because of their longevity and usefulness, trees have always been revered and they play a role in many of the world's mythologies.

In this lesson we shall discuss **two very special trees that are one of a kind**. They are:

1) The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

2) The Tree of Life

*Then the LORD God planted a garden in the East in a place named Eden. He put the man he made in that garden. Then the LORD God caused all the beautiful trees that were good for food to grow in the garden. In the middle of the garden, he put **the tree of life** and **the tree that gives knowledge about good and evil**. Genesis 2:8,9*

These two trees are first mentioned in Genesis chapters 2 and 3 and they existed in the Garden of Eden. Although they are both trees, we shall see that **their significance is very different from each other and every other tree that ever existed**. We shall first start with **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**.

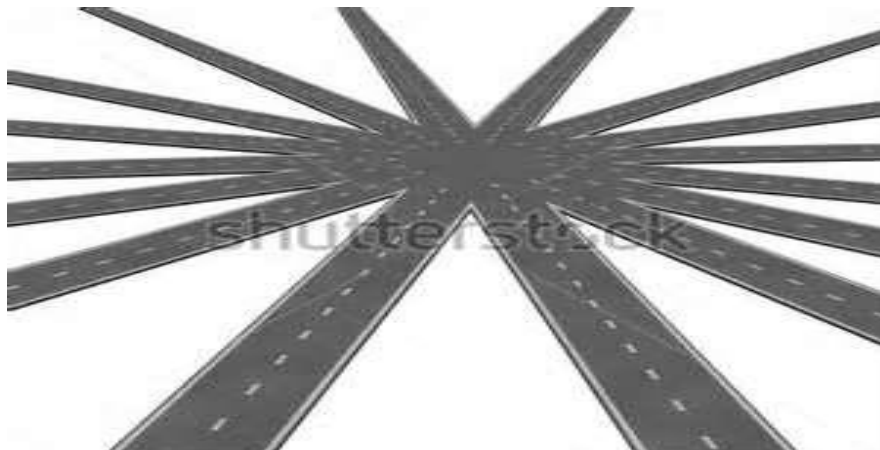


When God created Mankind and established Mankind's representatives (Adam and Eve) in the Garden of Eden, He stated that all of the trees that produced fruit were permissible to be eaten for food with the

exception of **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**. We must keep in mind that Adam and Eve had not sinned, so keeping God's commands did not come with the resistance that we often exhibit in our contemporary society. And although they were created beings, they were not robots that followed commands based on some algorithm. They were Flesh and Spirit beings with the **"freewill" to make independent choices** for themselves independently and collectively.



The scriptures reveal that both created **angelic heavenly beings** and created **earthly human beings both have "freewill"** to choose to **obey** their Creator's commands or not. **Without "Freewill" the world and all of life would be pre-determined** and it would not matter what choices were made by a person because **all choices would lead to the same conclusion.**



One could choose a un-repented lifetime path to murder, rob, abuse....and would eventually end up at the same place as one who chose a repented lifetime path of loving, kind, caring.....behavior.

Although the **All Knowing All Powerful Everywhere God** knows the past, present, and future, **He does not dictate every choice** that we make. Even today we can force someone to obey, but we cannot force someone to love. **God desires our obedience from our love for Him.** Mankind's **choices are not without limits**. For example, we cannot say that we will choose to remake creation but we can choose to manage/damage the creation that God has made. We cannot choose to remake or kill our Creator. What we can choose is our life path in the Creator's Creation. **Our present and future existence can by choice be connected to Him or we can sadly reject that connection.**



The balance of Life must offer at least to two sides of choice for there to be balance. We see this balance of power in our contemporary society. We have positive and negative charge in electricity, Democrats and Republicans in politics, winter and summer in seasons, day and night..... **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil has always existed, whether in Heaven or on Earth. It is the mechanism that allows for**

balance of Life choice with created beings. The created beings, whether heavenly or earthly, can choose the overall path of **Good vs. Evil.** This is a mystery and takes much prayer, study, and absorption to take hold.



In Jewish tradition, **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil** and the eating of its fruit represents the **beginning of the mixture of good and evil together.** Before that time, the two were separate, and evil had only a nebulous existence in potential. While free choice did exist before eating the fruit, **evil existed as an entity separate from the human psyche,** and it was **not in human nature** to desire it. Eating and internalizing the forbidden fruit changed this and thus was born the yeitzer hara, **The Evil Inclination.**

The Lord God said, Look, the man has become like us—he knows about good and evil. And now the man might take the fruit from the tree of life. If the man eats that fruit, he will live forever. So the Lord God forced the man out of the Garden of Eden to work the ground he was made from. God forced the man to leave the garden. Then he put Cherub angels and a sword of fire at the entrance to the garden to protect it. The sword flashed around and around, guarding the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:22-24



Once mankind's representatives Adam and Eve had partaken of **The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil** and sin entered into mankind, another tree that was in the Garden of Eden was discussed. It was **The Tree of Life**. Adam and Eve in their sinful state had to be removed from the Garden of Eden lest they partake of this **Tree of Life** and live forever in this sinful state. **There would have been no opportunity for reconciliation so they were removed for their own sake and ours.** **The Tree of Life** has the power to sustain **Life Eternal**, but one would only want to live eternally with **The Source of Good** vs. living life eternal with **The Source of Evil**. **The Tree of Life** is mentioned in both Genesis and Revelations Chapter 22. And it too is a mystery that takes much prayer, study, and absorption to take hold.



Our natural trees have longevity and provide shade, shelter, timber, fuel, fruit for food and many other uses. But **the two unique mysterious Eternal Trees of the Bible provided us with spiritual**

knowledge (which was too great for us), highlighted our “freewill” to choose, and revealed the opportunity for eternal Life. Mankind in our pre-sin state had “freewill” and initially chose to operate obediently in the parameters that the Creator had outlined. We were willingly in total alignment with His instructions on our own accord. Even though evil was present, it was not a part of our nature and had no power over us. It is this state of alignment with the Creator’s original instructions that we should remember as we try to bridge the gap from Creation Amnesia.



Our representatives chose disobedience and we shall explore why and the consequences in future lessons. But let us remember that we too have a “freewill” choice to decide our lifetime path. We have another representative, Jesus Christ the Messiah, who atoned for the mistakes of our original representatives. I exhort you to choose our atoning Savior with a willing heart.

