

In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



The Deeper Life in Christ in Genesis

INTRO: As we consider the various Biblical truths (doctrines) that have their roots in these first three chapters of Genesis we wonder what they may say about the life in Jesus Christ that is promised throughout the New Testament. Abiding in Him, resting in Him, living in Him by the power of the Holy Spirit: are these truths hinted at in Genesis, or do they come later as a benefit of becoming a Christian. Redemptive history, both corporately and personally, is the story of a return to Eden and the recovery of Paradise lost. Therefore we expect to find truths of the deeper life in Christ also hidden in the opening chapters of Genesis, and, indeed we do!

There are three aspects of the deeper life, the overcoming life, the abiding life, that are found in Genesis 1-3:

I. The Sabbath Rest of God (Genesis 2:1-3)

- A. God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because in it He rested from all His work which He had created and made
 1. There is a deeper message here because God, by definition of His essential Being, does not expend quanta of energy and therefore does not need to rest in order to recover. The Sabbath rest is not for Him.
 2. There is no “evening and morning” recorded for the seventh day, it appears to be left open ended to represent a state of being rather than a period of time
 3. God blessed it and sanctified it—the requirement of a Sabbath rest is as old as creation, well before the Ten Commandments, and has never been rescinded
- B. Jesus tells us that the Sabbath Day was made, not for God but for Man...for us! (Mark 2:27)
 1. Adam and Eve were created in the crowning hours of the sixth day, the seventh day began that evening and they awoke in their first full day of life in the Sabbath rest of God—God “took off” to be with them!!!
 2. The Sabbath was not an absence of activity, but a place absent of toilsome labor while living in and enjoying the abundance of God’s provision and the fruit of His effort
 3. We were designed to live in the Sabbath rest of God, where we have ceased from all of our labor and abide in the place of His finished work. (Hebrews 4:9, Ephesians 2:10)

II. Daily Communion with The Living Christ (Genesis 3:8)

- A. Apparently the man and his wife had daily communion and fellowship with God during a time described as the “cool of the day”
 1. The *cool of the day* is literally the *breeze of the day* in the Hebrew
 2. It was a specific time of each day, and time when the *Wind* blew (Holy Spirit presence)
- B. This time was in addition to the abiding presence of the Lord throughout the garden and throughout the day. It was a time set aside for fellowship with God, for conversation and communion, perhaps even for planning and discovery.
- C. Just as Jesus practiced these special times in His life, we are also called to set aside time on a regular basis (daily?) for the specific purpose of communing with God, of walking with Him and listening to His voice. (Luke 22:39, Mark 1:35)

III. The Tree of Life—The Source of Eternal Refreshment (Genesis 2:9, 3:17, 22, 24)

- A. The Tree of Life was a source of eternal life and immortality. It was true food that nourished the whole person and gave the capacity of living forever.
 1. It was in the midst of the garden “opposite” the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
 2. It represented dependence upon God in humility and faith, rather than self-reliance on man-made wisdom
 3. It was available to them from the beginning for food (only the tree of knowledge was prohibited)
- B. References to the Tree of Life only occur in two other books of the Bible (Proverbs & Revelation) and is alluded to in the vision of Ezekiel concerning the Temple (Ezekiel 47:1-12). See also Proverbs 3:18, 11:30, 13:12, 15:4 & Revelation 2:9, 22:2, 14, 19.
 1. In Proverbs the term “tree of life” is used to refer to anything that heals, enhances, and celebrates life (Waltke)
 2. In Revelation the Tree of Life is in the Heavenly Jerusalem and is a source of healing for the nations. It is symbolic of eternal life and restores the Edenic Paradise where one may live forever.
- C. The Tree of Life symbolizes our abiding in Christ and partaking of His Divine nature. We have access to it even now by faith for the one who believes in Him will never die (John 11:25-26)
 1. We are called to abide in Christ, becoming branches to His Vine and Root and bearing fruit arising from the sustenance of His life (John 15)
 2. We have been made partakers of the Divine Nature and are privileged to “eat of His flesh” and “drink of His blood,” the One Who is true food and true drink. (John 6:32-58, I Peter 1:4)

NOTES

Mark 2:27-28 Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." ²⁸ "So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Hebrews 4:8-11 ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. ⁹ So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. ¹¹ Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.

Luke 22:39 ³⁹ And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.

Mark 1:35 ³⁵ In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.

John 15:4-5 ⁴ "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me." ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. How important is the Sabbath day today for Christians?
2. What did Paul mean in Romans 14 when he counseled against judging those who did vs those who did not keep the Sabbath?
3. Explain Jesus' comments in Mark 2:27-28. What was He really saying?
4. Is the Sabbath rest an *occasion* or a *state of being*, or both? Explain your answer.
5. What is the difference between Paul's encouragement to pray without ceasing and Jesus' habit of praying in specific locations at specific times? How does this relate to you having a personal quiet time?
6. What does it mean to partake of the Divine nature and to eat the true food and drink the true drink of Jesus body?
7. How are you doing in your life in experiencing these times of refreshing and blessing in the presence of God? What do you need to change in order to cultivate abiding in Christ more fully?