

# Advent Readings Day 4

God made a garden for Adam and Eve to inhabit. He named it Eden. It was lush and vibrant. Trees of all sorts were there, pleasant to the eyes and good for food. Every tree put off perfect fruit, and the air was filled with their fragrance. Myriad flowers gave off their scents, and the garden was abuzz with life and the busyness of the creatures therein.

Adam and Eve knew no lack. God had abundantly supplied them with all they needed. God placed the young couple there to work the land and to see that it was cared for. Each animal presented before the man and given a name. It must have been a sight to see them lined up before him.

Sin had not yet left its wicked mark on the earth or the hearts of man. Shame was not even a thought in the minds of these two humans, naked and bare before each other and their maker. Peace reigned alongside grace and mercy. There was no fear of death, no fear of judgment, no thought of punishment. Love was the flavor of the day, and all things were very good.

In the midst of the garden, God formed two trees. To one, God gave the name "tree of life," and to the other, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ." There was one law, one rule in this paradise. "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat of it, you shall surely die." It was a simple enough rule to keep. After all, the garden was filled with every manner of food and all that would satisfy the belly and thrill the senses. It should not have been a problem for the image-bearers of God to avoid a solitary tree. Furthermore, the tree of life was permissible. One could eat from it and live forever. Surely, such a tree would be more desirable.

So the two lived and dwelt in a land of plenty, awash in abundance and glory. But it would be short-lived. Was it a day or a week before it all fell apart? Did they last a month? On the edge of glory was a coming storm, and beauty was about to be overthrown by ashes