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The Genesis Echo is an ongoing investigation of pre-Babel history as recorded in both the Bible and the characters of the Chinese language.

Sin In The Garden...

In our last article, we saw the DEVIL (guǐ, 鬼), who is the TEMPTER (mó, 魔). Remember, he was the secret life who was with man in the garden. As the tempter, he covered up the truth about the two trees. We read of the serpent's temptation of the woman,

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'? And the woman said to the serpent, 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 touch it, lest you die.' Then the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-5, NKJV)

The temptation provoked in the woman a DESIRE (lán, 婪) for the fruit on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This word is a combination of the TWO TREES (mù, 木木) and the WOMAN (nǚ, 女). It records what is found in the next verse:

So when the WOMAN saw that the TREE was good for food food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree DESIRABLE to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:6, NKJV)

lán

婪

DESIRE, COVET

shǐ

始

BEGINNING

We have previously seen yuán (元), a Chinese word for BEGINNING. This is the beginning of creation, as we see two people (Adam and Eve) in the etymology. Consider another word for BEGINNING – the beginning of sin. Shǐ (始) pictures the WOMAN (nǚ, 女) as she SECRETLY (sī, 丷, ㇇) took the fruit into her MOUTH (kǒu, 口).

After eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked. Genesis 2:25 told us that they were naked and not ashamed. They were pure, not knowing any wickedness at all. We noted guāng guāng (光光), a word for NAKED which pictures two lights

(radiant people). But now, they are aware of their nakedness. The Scripture records, *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were NAKED; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. (Genesis 3:7, KJV)*

The Chinese word luǒ can be written in three different ways – all three acknowledge the sin which took place in the garden. It can appear as 裸, 裸, and 裸. The right side of all three characters is FRUIT (guǒ, 果), a constant reminder of how they became aware of their nakedness. On the left side of the images we see MAN (rén, 亻), BODY (shēn, 身), and CLOTHING (chǎ, 衤) respectively.

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NAKED

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This word for CLOTHING (chǎ, 袵) has an obvious reference to Adam and Eve. In it we see the word for COVER (tóu, 𠂇) and then two PEOPLE (rén, 亻, 人). As was the case in the word for GARDEN (yuán, 園), we the second person is coming from the side of the first. These two, Adam and Eve, needed to be clothed, for they had taken the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and now were aware of their nakedness.

The Genesis narrative continues, as God came to see the man and woman in the garden. We read,

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife HID themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the TREES of the garden. (Genesis 3:8, NKJV)

duǒ

躲

HIDE

Their reaction to the Lord approaching them is captured in a Chinese word for HIDE (duǒ, 躲). This character literally reveals that they hid their BODY (shēn, 身) among SEVERAL (jǐ, 几) TREES (mù, 木).

They did their best to blend their bodies among the trees. As the conversation between God and the couple began (Genesis 3:9-13), we might expect that God called them to COME out from behind the trees. Notice the Chinese word lái (來), meaning COME. It pictures TWO PEOPLE (rén, 人) behind a TREE (mù, 木). What logical reason is

there for “come” to picture two people behind a tree? But when observed in light of the details we have in Genesis, it makes perfect sense.

mù

來

COME

The next several verses in the Genesis account reveal the consequences of sin. To the woman, God said,

I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception, in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. (Genesis 3:16, NKJV)

chǔ

楚

PAIN, SORROW

The consequence of her sin was that she would experience PAIN (chǔ, 楚) in childbearing. As we look at the components of the character, we see a reminder of the TWO TREES (mù, 木) in the midst of the garden. Also, the woman’s place of submission to her husband is addressed, as the lower portion of the image shows that she would be UNDER (xià, 下) MAN (rén, 人). Note, this is not given as part of her punishment, but as a reminder of the place which the Lord had given her when He created her, that she might be “...a helper comparable to...” man.

To the man, God said,

because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: 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. (Genesis 3:17-18, NKJV)

kǔ

苦

SORROW

Adam’s SORROW (kǔ, 苦) would come from his work among the thorns and thistles, here referred to as the ANCIENT (gǔ, 古) WEEDS (cǎo, 艸).

The character also seems to picture Adam feeding himself from among the weeds, as the word gǔ (古) can be further broken down to show TEN (shí, 十) [perhaps his fingers] leading to his MOUTH (kǒu, 口). Two images for THORNS tells us about the curse pronounced to Adam. The first is jīng (荊), which literally shows the WEEDS (cǎo, 艸) PUNISHMENT (xíng, 刑).

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jīng
荆

THORNS

荆). If we take our etymological analysis a step further, this word for punishment has three other characters in it, a KNIFE (dāo, 刀), which is an instrument of punishment and TWO OFFENDERS (gān, 干干). We might expect to find one offender in the word punishment, but the Chinese language tells us of two offenders. Both Adam and Eve were responsible for the coming of the weed punishment, and both would feel the effects of it. Another word for THORNS is jí (棘). This image tells of the TWO TREES (mù, 木木) being COVERED (mì, 冫) from the TWO OFFENDERS (gān, 干干). They once had access to the tree of life, but after taking from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they lost the ability to take fruit from either.

The Lord told Adam,

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, and to dust you shall return. (Genesis 3:19, NKJV)

chū hàn
出汗

SWEAT

A word for SWEAT in the Chinese language is chū hàn (出汗). There are a number of reasons why someone might sweat: a hot day, sitting in a sauna, going for a run, playing a sport, etc.. This images does not picture any of these. We see an OFFENDER (gān, 干) with WATER (shuǐ, 氵) pouring off him, who has been SENT OUT (chū, 出). That is exactly what Adam was!

jì
棘

THORNS

Next time, we will see further results of man's sin, namely the expulsion from the garden of Eden, the penalty of death, the exchange of their former glory for a grave. We'll see the guard placed by the Lord at the entrance to the garden of Eden, and the loneliness of man when he is sent away from the paradise of God. But, we'll also see the beginning of atonement – all displayed in great detail in the etymology of the Chinese language.

Other Resources

Nelson, Ethel R., and C.H. Kang. The Discovery of Genesis: How the Truths of Genesis Were Found Hidden in the Chinese Language. St. Louis, MO : Concordia Publishing House, 1979.

Nelson, Ethel R., Richard E. Broadberry, and Ginger Tong Chock. God's Promise to the Chinese. Dunlap, TN : Read Books Publishers, 1997.

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