

# Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

First, notice what God said:

"From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat..." (Genesis 2:16-17)

The issue was not that the tree itself was evil. In fact, God had declared everything He made "very good" (Genesis 1:31). The tree was good as part of God's creation.

The question is: **Why place a forbidden tree there at all?**

## 1. Love requires a real choice

If there had been no possibility of disobedience, Adam and Eve could not truly choose obedience.

God wanted people who could freely love and trust Him, not robots programmed to obey.

The tree created a genuine decision:

- Will I trust God's wisdom?
- Or will I determine good and evil for myself?

The tree was less about fruit and more about trust.

✨ Love that cannot be rejected is not really love.

## 2. The tree represented God's authority

Notice the name:

**"The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil."**

Many scholars believe this doesn't simply mean knowing right from wrong. Adam and Eve already knew God's command.

Rather, it refers to the authority to **determine** good and evil.

The temptation was:

"You will be like God..." (Genesis 3:5)

In other words:

"Why let God define reality? Define it yourself."

The first sin was not merely eating fruit—it was humanity attempting to take God's place as the ultimate moral authority.

Sound familiar? Humanity has been doing that ever since.

## 3. God wanted trust before understanding

Think about the command.

Adam and Eve were given only one prohibition in a garden full of blessings.

God was essentially saying:

"Trust Me about this one thing."

Every relationship involves trust.

A child trusts a parent.

A student trusts a teacher.

A believer trusts God.

The tree provided an opportunity for trust to be exercised.

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## 4. The tree reveals what is in the heart

God already knew what Adam and Eve would do.

But Scripture often shows that God tests people not so He can learn something, but so they can reveal what is in their hearts.

For example:

- Abraham and Isaac
- Israel in the wilderness
- Job

The tree exposed whether humanity would trust God or seek independence.

## 5. God had a greater plan than Eden

This is where the story gets really interesting. God knew the Fall would occur, yet He created anyway.

Why?

Because God's ultimate goal was not merely innocent humans in a garden. His plan was redeemed humans who freely love Him.

Before the world was created, God already intended redemption through Christ. Paul says God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4).

The cross was not God's backup plan.

✨ The God who planted the tree already knew there would one day be another tree—a Roman cross.

## 6. The two trees of Scripture

Notice the Bible's beautiful symmetry:

### Genesis

- Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil
- Humanity reaches out in disobedience
- Death enters the world

### Revelation

- Tree of Life restored
- Humanity redeemed through Christ
- Eternal life restored

The story begins in a garden with a forbidden tree and ends in a city with a freely accessible tree.

### One more thought

I've often wondered if the tree was also a daily reminder that Adam and Eve were creatures, not the Creator.

Every time they passed it, they were reminded:  
"God is God, and I am not."

That is still the central question for humanity today.

Will we trust God's definition of good and evil, or will we insist on creating our own?

The tree was not placed in the garden because God wanted them to fall. It was placed there because God wanted a real relationship built on trust, obedience, and love. Without the possibility of saying "no," their "yes" would have had no meaning.