



The Garden of Eden

Last week we heard about how God made the world, and it was very ...?

"Good."

It was very good, wasn't it? Well, God put the man that He had made, whose name was Adam, into a beautiful garden called the Garden of Eden. It was full of all sorts of plants and trees. There were fruit trees; there were pear trees, and there were banana trees, and plum trees, and apple trees, and orange trees, and I think there were probably lots and lots of other trees as well. There were masses and masses of beautiful flowers, and beautiful plants, and beautiful trees. And in the middle of the garden there were two very, very special trees. One of them was the Tree of Life, and the other tree was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And God told the man, "I want you to take care of my garden. You can eat fruit from any of these trees, any of the trees in the whole garden, except for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I don't want you to eat the fruit from that one. OK? If you do, then you will die."

Well, that didn't seem to be too hard, did it? There were lots and lots of nice things to eat; that was going to be OK. So the man took care of the garden, and God brought all the animals He had made to keep him company. In fact He said, "You can decide what they are to be called." So along came an animal with big antlers, and he said, "Well, I think I'll call that one a 'deer'." And then along came an orangey coloured animal, and he said "I think I'll call that one a 'fox'." He didn't actually speak English, so it was a different word probably, but you get the idea. So we've got – what have we got? You tell me...

"A squirrel."

"A rat."

I think it's meant to be a ferret or something like that. What about this one, I bet we all know what this one is.

"A rabbit."

Ah, who knows what this one is, with a stripy face?

"A badger."

How about this one, what do you think this one is?

"A frog."

Yes, a frog – or a toad. OK. There was even a ...

"A snake."

Yes, a snake: he comes into the story later. And there was a zebra, there was even an elephant. And I think that Adam had quite a joke with God, about inventing an animal that picks things up with its nose! They had a great time, God and Adam, looking at all these animals. But God decided that Adam needed someone who was a

bit more like him. So he could talk to them, and share things with them: much as he liked the animals. And so God decided to make another human being. Now in the Bible it says that what God did was that He made Adam fall in to a deep sleep, and He took one of his ribs, that's the bones here, round your chest, and made him a woman out of it. I don't know how God did that, but that's what it says in the Bible: I think that what it means, is that it's Gods plan, when a man and a woman are made to be together, they come together, and they get married, the idea is that they stick together: they stay together. They stick together like they are only one person instead of two. I think He is saying that the woman is meant to be so close to the man's heart, like his ribs, so that they are close to each other and they stay close to each other for always. And I know it doesn't always work out like that – some of you have got parents that have split up and are not together any more; and God is really sad when that happens, just the same as you are as well, because it wasn't His plan. His plan was that we should stick together.

So Adam and Eve, they were in this beautiful garden with all the fruit, and the animals, and the flowers and everything, and they were having a great time. They were best friends with God and it was all brilliant. And if you want to know what happened next, you've got to come back next week.

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