

## “The Chinese Language Tells God’s Story”

The Bible’s first chapters record the factual history of the beginning of the world. It should not be surprising that these stories are repeated in many cultures. In the Chinese language, for example, a number of words show interesting parallels to these early Bible stories. Over many years Chinese people forgot these interrelationship of the Bible with ancient Chinese culture, so that now most Chinese people do not even know they exist. *But we can trust the Bible as God’s true Word, a miraculous book! And we can follow the story in 11 Chinese characters!*

1) In the beginning God **created** Adam as a person who could communicate (talk) and work (move around, walk). This is clear from the Chinese word for create. But the word for talk also includes the strokes for dust, mouth and movement, an interesting parallel with Genesis 2:7, where God made Adam from dust, and breathed life into his mouth so that he would live.

造 zao (create) = 告 gao (talk) + part of 走 zou (walk)

告 gao (talk) = 土 tu (dust) + 口 kou (mouth) + 辶 pie (living or movement)

2) The word for **first** contains the strokes for dust, man and movement. The first human being was Adam, who was made to live from dust!

先 xian (first) = 土 tu (dust) + 儿 er (man or son) + 辶 pie (living or movement)

3) When Adam was created he was in the garden called Eden, and it was a beautiful garden (Genesis 2:8-9). Originally the world was perfect (Genesis 1:31). No wonder the word for **happiness** has a character for God along with characters for the words “one person (in a) garden”. That person was Adam! By the way, when a person comes back to God, that is the pathway to spiritual happiness.

福 fu (happiness) = 一 yi (one) + 口 kou (person) + 田 tian (garden)

4) In the center of the garden there were two trees. Adam and Eve could eat the tree of life, but not the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17). It was **forbidden**, as is clear from the Chinese word for forbidden – a *command* about *two trees*! God has always given people a choice whether they will obey or not: the problem is that we humans often disobey and sin against God.

禁 jin (forbidden) = 林 lin (two trees, a forest) + 示 shi (command)

5) One day Satan (God’s enemy, the devil) came and tried to get Adam and Eve to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. He was a **tempter** – the Chinese word for this is a spirit covered up under two trees, reflecting the fact that Satan tempted Eve right beside the two trees in the center of the garden! Genesis 3:1-5.

魔 mo (tempter) = 鬼 gui (spirit) + 林 lin (two trees, a forest) + 广 guang (cover)

6) Eve listened to Satan’s words and she became **greedy** to get more knowledge so she could be like God (Genesis 3:6). Isn’t it interesting that the Chinese word for greediness shows a woman beside two trees?

婪 lan (greedy) = 林 lin (two trees, a forest) + 女 nu (woman)

7) After Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they heard God talking to them and they had to run and **hide** behind the trees because they were afraid of Him (Genesis 3:8). Their *bodies were* right behind the *tree*, and these three words are part of the Chinese “hiding”.

躲 duo (hiding) = 身 shen (body) + 乃 nai (is) + 木 mu (tree)

8) Adam and Eve were now ashamed and knew that they were **naked** (Genesis 3:7). It is very interesting that the Chinese word for naked includes *both* the ideas of *clothing* and of *fruit* – because nakedness was first associated with eating forbidden *fruit*!

裸 luo (naked) = part of 布 bu (clothing) + 果 gua (fruit)

9) After Adam and Eve brought sin into the human family, God had to judge them and the earth (Genesis 3:17-19). One of the judgments was that Adam would have to struggle against *weeds* as he farmed. Of all the things that **sorrow** could be linked with, the Chinese word links it with *weeds*, a reflection of this ancient Bible story!

苦 ku (sorrow) = 古 gu (ancient) + part of 草 cao (weeds)

10) The words for “eldest son” (兄) and cruel (兇) both sound the same (xiong). This is an interesting point, since Adam and Eve’s eldest son was Cain, who became the first cruel murderer of history in Genesis 4 – he killed his own brother.