



## TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

### Talk Genesis 3:1-7: The Temptation of Adam and Eve

---

#### Lesson 9

In these verses we have the account of the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:1-7: *"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?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 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.'" 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 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." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for 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. 7 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."*

#### Background Notes

Is this account of the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to be taken literally, or is this some kind of "Old Testament parable" which is to be taken allegorically? I mean, who ever heard of a talking snake? Well, we believe this account is real history and it is to be taken literally. It is not a parable with symbolic language.

The serpent actually talked to Eve. Satan possessed the body of a serpent, approached Eve and spoke to her through the means of the serpent. "Now, wait a minute," you say, "How do we know this was Satan?" Satan is not mentioned by name once in this chapter. Did you ever realize that? Answer: We know that it was Satan from the rest of Scripture. Let me read a verse of Scripture in this connection: Revelation 12:9. *"So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world..."*

Why did Satan choose the body of a serpent? Why not a nice friendly animal? What is the answer here? We see from verse 1 that the serpent was more naturally "cunning" (or crafty) than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. Thus the serpent suited the purpose of Satan more than any other creature that God had created. Furthermore, we know from the rest of the chapter that before the Fall of man and the judgment that followed, the serpent did not slither along the ground. Apparently it walked, or at least moved in an upright manner. The serpent must have been a beautiful creature before God's judgment in the Garden of Eden.

Another question that logically comes to our minds as we read this chapter is, "Where did Satan come from?" Elsewhere in the Bible (specifically Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28) we are informed us that Satan was created as an unfallen lofty angel, but he rebelled

against God because of pride. It may have been the creation of man in the image of God that triggered the pride and jealousy of Satan. In any case, Satan's strategy in the Garden of Eden was to cause man to turn away from loving God and serving God, and instead be mastered by Satan himself. Satan's plan worked, but not with the results he intended.

## **Doctrinal Points**

### **1. Satan's tactics are the same today as they were in the Garden of Eden.**

In 2 Corinthians 11:3, Paul warns the Corinthians about the tactics of Satan. *"But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."* Satan's tactics in the Garden of Eden were crafty and deceitful, and Satan's tactics today are crafty and deceitful. Ephesians 6:11 says, *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* Notice that Satan tried to get Eve to question God's Word and God's goodness (v 1), *"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"* and *"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"(v5).* Satan was trying to get Eve to question God's Word and God's goodness with a deceptive message, saying (in essence): "Eve, are you sure God said these things? Well if He did, that's not very nice! God is holding out on you. He has put limits on you because He doesn't want you to be truly free. How can God be good?"

Does that sound familiar? That's the same line Satan uses today! Satan tempts us with ideas such as, "Do you really think that the Bible is the Word of God? You have got to be kidding! If the Bible is the Word of God, what kind of God is that? All those laws and restrictions! And you say that God is good? Listen, throw away all those restraints and follow me -- I'll give you all the freedom you want. In fact, you will be like God!" That big lie is the same today as it was in the Garden of Eden: "You can become like God."

Notice how Satan mixed truth and error in the Garden of Eden. Satan said, *"You will not surely die" (v4).* That was a straight-out lie! God had said in no uncertain terms, *"for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die"(2:17).* And now here in Genesis 3:4, the serpent said to the woman, *"You will not surely die."* That was a lie -- but notice that Satan slipped that lie in by adding *"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" (v5).* Now there was some truth to that statement. Their eyes would be opened, and they would know good and evil -- but not in the same way that God knows good and evil.

Here's an illustration: A doctor knows about cancer and so does a cancer patient. Each knows about cancer, but not in the same way. The doctor knows the causes, symptoms and possible cures for cancer, but the patient **has** the disease of cancer within his or her body, and the patient experiences its deadly effect. Do you see the point of the illustration? God is like the doctor and we are the cancer patients. Adam and Eve would lose their state of innocence, and they would know evil experientially. From that day on, they would **not** be able **not** to do evil -- because they would have the disease of sin.

Satan's tactic of mixing truth and error is the same today as it was then. You will find that all false doctrine has some truth mixed in. Satan's tactics are the same today as they were in the Garden of Eden.

### **2. Man's temptations are the same today as they were in the Garden of Eden.**

*"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for 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" (v6).*

Notice the three areas of temptation that appealed to Eve. The forbidden tree was good for food. The forbidden tree was pleasant to the eyes. The forbidden tree could make one wise. These were the three areas of temptation. Eve yielded, and so did Adam.

Now listen to the words of I John 2:16, and you will see that man's temptations today are the same as in the Garden of Eden. I John 2:16, *"For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world."* Do you see the same three areas of temptation? The lust or strong desire of the flesh -- Eve saw that the forbidden tree was good for food. The lust of the eyes -- Eve saw that the forbidden tree was pleasant to the eyes. The pride of life -- Eve saw that the forbidden tree could make one wise. Satan's temptations for mankind today are the same as they were in the Garden of Eden.

Our Lord was tempted in these same three areas, but He did not yield. Read Matthew 4 and Luke 4. In each case Satan quoted Scripture out of context. Satan suggested that Christ turn the stones into bread -- an appeal to the flesh. And the Lord resisted. Then Satan showed Christ all the cities of the world and their glory and offered them -- the appeal to the eyes. The Lord resisted. Finally Satan suggested that the Lord jump off the pinnacle of temple and be miraculously preserved -- an appeal to the pride of life. Again, Satan quoted Scripture out of context, and again the Lord resisted! In all three areas, as He resisted, the Lord quoted Scripture to refute Satan. He didn't yield in the slightest way. What an example for us as we face temptations in these same three areas! Remember, man's temptations are the same today as they were in the Garden of Eden.

### **Practical Application: Are you still wearing fig leaves?**

*"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"(v7).* Adam and Eve fell from their state of innocence. They experienced guilt. They realized that they were naked and they tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves. But God can see through fig leaves!

Do you see the spiritual lesson here? Are you still wearing fig leaves? This question could be asked of Christians and non-Christians alike. If you are not a Christian, are you still wearing fig leaves? Are you still trying to hide your spiritual nakedness behind some fig leaves of your own making? Maybe the fig leaves of good works, or even religion. Listen -- God can see through your fig leaves! He sees your sin. He sees your spiritual nakedness. You need to come to Christ for salvation.

There's a lesson here for Christians, too. Many Christians wear masks. We pretend to be something that we are not. We have our "Sunday mask." We have our "model parent mask." We have our "happy Christian mask." How many have that mask on today? (Well, let's hope that you're not wearing a mask -- let's hope that you really are happy Christians!)

But many Christians wear masks. We try to hide our true character from each other, and the most amazing thing is that we think we can hide our true character from God! Masks are like fig leaves, and God can see through fig leaves! We need to let God change

our character so we don't have to wear masks. It's a good question for all of us, isn't it?  
Are you still wearing fig leaves?