

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

By Titus Chu

A LITTLE SERPENT SPOKE IN A HUMAN LANGUAGE TO A FRIENDLY BUT QUITE NAÏVE WOMAN...

Man was Created in God's Kingdom God created man in such a marvelous way. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Man, therefore, possessed the highest, most excellent qualities. Man's body, his outward form, was after God's likeness. Man's inner faculties - his mind, emotion and will - reflected those of God. This is not a small thing. By looking at a man, you should have a realization of who God is: His thoughts, feelings, and desires.

God wanted to keep man in His own kingdom. God Himself would be man's source, supply, and enjoyment. Man, as the center of God's kingdom, would live with all of creation in joy, light, and harmony. Everything would be transparent, apparent, and crystal clear. This kingdom would be so wonderful! Man would not require anything other than God. There would be no struggling for man to know good and evil, because God Himself would meet his every need. In such a realm of simplicity, man could know full satisfaction, rest and joy.

Adam and Eve could trust God completely, remaining continuously in this realm of light and transparency. God, as the real source, the true judge, and absolute authority, would enable the couple to have dominion over His entire creation.

SATAN PLOTTED TO USURP MAN

At the same time God had His plan for man, Satan also had his plot. He had a dream. He wanted to become just like God and usurp God's power and authority. To do this he had to frustrate God's greatest desire and goal. God wanted to live in man and express Himself through man. To accomplish this purpose,

God's relationship with man was most crucial. Through this intimate relationship, God would be able to put His life into man. According to Satan's strategy, it was necessary for him to steal God's highest creation, His greatest treasure - man - and to place man in his own kingdom. Satan could then use man for his own interests, and thus exalt himself.

In God's kingdom, man would express all of God's attributes and virtues. Man could also experience the simplicity, satisfaction, and enjoyment of constant fellowship with God. In Satan's counterfeit realm, man would express Satan's evil personality. Just as God was the Creator and Ruler of His kingdom, Satan desired equal status in a sphere of his own making. He planned to usurp man for this end.

SATAN CAME AS THE BEAUTIFUL AND CUNNING SERPENT

Satan came in the form of a serpent in the garden. His subtle serpentine beauty could not be trusted. His appearance, as well as the source of his personality, differed entirely from the rest of creation. His attractiveness and cunning stemmed from an inner nature that was completely opaque, utterly devoid of light. This serpent was totally focused on frustrating God's desire and accomplishing his own end. This one was the embodiment of Satan, God's enemy.

Therefore, when the serpent approached Eve one day, she was no match for his darkened craftiness. The naïve, childlike Eve was quite unprepared for their encounter.

Satan must have been unlike any Creature she had even seen. He must have allured her with some apparent beauty. Perhaps his body was small unlike hers, but graceful and beautiful nonetheless. He must have danced for her, gesturing to her in a most entertaining and inviting way as he perched on that tree limb. The more he danced, the more she wanted to touch him, to be his friend. He was so smooth, so subtle, unlike all of those lions, tigers and larger beasts.

Eve Never Expected a Hidden Motive from Her “Friend”

While she was petting and cuddling her new friend, the serpent, he asked her a question. Of course, Eve was not very good at answering questions. It is doubtful that she had ever needed to answer this kind of question on God’s kingdom, because everything was so transparent, so clear and so simple. Eve had neither the thought nor the desire to probe into the motive behind this deceitful masquerade. She only knew how to trust, so she responded to the serpent by quoting what God had told her. Once she spoke, she began to realize that she felt stupid, compared to the wisdom of her new friend. Suddenly a new desire was stirred up within her.

“Has God really said, ‘You shouldn’t eat of all the fruit in the garden?’“ the serpent asked. “Look at all of these hundreds, even thousands of fruit trees. Didn’t God say you could eat from any one of them?”

“Well, yes,” said Eve, “every tree except this one. God told us we shouldn’t even touch its fruit, let alone eat it. He knows the way I am . If I touch it, I’m bound to eat it. And if I do that, He said I’d die.”

“No, you won’t,” said the serpent, “In fact, if you eat this great looking fruit, it will make you just like God.”

“Really? How?” Inquired Eve.

“Well, once you eat it,” said the serpent, “your eyes will be opened and you’ll see things the way they really are. You’ll know what is good and what is evil. You’ll be wise, just like God is.”

Eve's "Friend" Seemed So Wise

Eve now felt very simple, and very limited. She suddenly had an overpowering desire to discover this new realm, this new sphere. She wanted to become wise like her friend, and what possible harm could come to her from that? That fruit did look wonderful. Her new friend seemed so wise; he seemed to understand her better than she did herself. Moreover, he seemed to know God much better than she did.

How could such a naïve young girl foretell the consequences of such a seemingly innocent exchange? After all, in a certain sense, the serpent was not completely lying to the woman. He was, in fact, more honest than many of our politicians, considering the fact that after Eve ate the fruit and gave some to her husband, neither died for a very long time; Adam lived, in fact, for another 800 years.

If someone were to accuse Satan of lying, he might be able to say in his defense, "I didn't lie to her, because what you mean by death and what I mean by death are two different things. Besides, everything else happened to her just as I said it would. Her eyes were opened and she became wise, very quickly. True, she ended up in darkness like I did, but nevertheless, her eyes were opened. More importantly, I didn't convince her to try anything beyond what she wanted already. Remember, she made the choice herself."

Eve's Eyes were Now "Opened"

Having been deceived, Eve took the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Her eyes were immediately "opened", but she discovered that she actually could not see so well. Her environment, which had previously been so transparent, so crystal clear and simple, was now strangely opaque and complex. She had no choice now except to grope in the murkiness, trying to learn, trying to understand this new realm into which she had entered. This was a complicated

matter. She was now forced to make discoveries for herself and to experiment within this new realm.

When Eve was with God, everything was so clear. She could rely on God for everything. Now she had to strive to find her own way, to make decisions for herself. In time and with painful study, Eve had to develop her ability to judge, to determine what was good and what was evil. Her new world was darkened. She was no longer in a position to rely completely upon the God who created her. Without God, Eve was left with this “wisdom” as her sole source of enjoyment and satisfaction.

IN OUR EXPERIENCE...

We are all born into an opaque world that is difficult to decipher. From our earliest childhood we are taught how to wander through demanding cultures composed of innumerable customs. We need to study and learn so that we may know how to survive, and “make a living.” In every situation, our immediate question is, “What is good for me and what is bad.”

We enjoy having the insight that makes clear to us what is good in life. We’re fearful and frustrated when our knowledge fails us and evil prevails. We enjoy attaining an education and technical competency. We grope to find lasting relationships. We strive and force our way through careers and family ties. Each stage of life reminds us, however, that our total experience is not sufficient in itself to carry us onward. We have attained is meaningless and that we must therefore grope again.

Adam and Eve fell victims to the opaque one’s influence. His evil, dark outlook became their own. Our sphere of living today is him murky, opaque realm. We spend our lives groping, pioneering, using what wisdom we may have to survive, to find satisfaction, and to attain self-fulfillment. Some temporarily succeed. All will eventually die. Yet we need to realize that God’s desire, His kingdom, can be as real for us today as He had intended it to be for Adam and Eve. He wants to be our source,

our life, our enjoyment. He wants to be our everything. He is all we need. We are still meant to live in this kingdom of brightness, simplicity, clarity and continual fellowship with God.

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