

The Temptation of Eve (Spiral page 61; PB page 112)

There is really a lot we can learn from the details the Scriptures provide about the temptation of Eve. Most of the Biblical concepts we have looked at in Chapters 1-4 are reflected in this first-ever recorded trial in Genesis. This particular Supplemental Information material looks at the dynamics and principles of trials as witnessed in Eve's trial, not because we are picking on Eve or because she was a woman. Rather, we are focusing on Eve's trial simply because, compared to Adam, the Bible provides more detailed information on what she was thinking and about what she felt during the trial. This is key information. In the end, the dynamics and principles that God designed to be able to come into play during trials also applies to Adam, and to us.

God's Design Is Demonstrated In Eve's Trial

While Adam and Eve were created without sin, it is clear that God created mankind in the context of the spiritual war that was already raging between God and Satan at that time. When God created us, He designed us so that we would participate in that spiritual war. We see that God designed us with free will - the ability and responsibility to choose between Him and Satan in trials. We see that God designed our hearts to experience His peace, or heart disturbances, so we could recognize when a spiritual battle starts for us. And, we see that God designed us to be able to think for ourselves, but not to be able to think perfectly in trials without centering ourselves in Him during the trial.

We also see that we must seek out the Lord during trials, and when we don't, we can be deceived by Satan. We see that Eve had knowledge of what God wanted and expected, but her knowledge was not sufficient to enable her to overcome Satan's influence and deception. Eve's knowledge did not transform the desires of her heart when Satan attacked. The same is true for us; we are no different. While Adam and Eve were created without sin, they were not created to be free from Satan's deceptive influences... and neither were we! Satan's influences can only be transformed and overcome in the Lord.

Eve - An Unthinking Fool Or A Deceived Thinker?

Imagining what it must have been like to be Eve and to be deceived can be tough. The moment we try imaging being in Eve's situation we are faced with a perspective issue. Either we underestimate the power of Satan's deception or we understand her story with newfound respect. If we start thinking that the godly choice should have been easy for her, then essentially we would be assuming she was a fool. We would be assuming that Satan's ability to deceive is not that great.

We submit that Eve was not a fool. Eve was intelligent, although not experienced in trials. Still, God did not view her (or Adam) as being handicapped in a spiritual sense, just because they had zero experience in trials. They had full access to Him, and that is all that is needed (or that we need) to be held accountable for one's actions and inactions in spiritual battles.

Eve was fully capable of making her own choices, but this did not mean that she was beyond being influenced. While Eve was designed to think, she (like us) was not designed to be able to think of everything during trials. She had to be able to use her heart as well. She had to use her heart to connect with God and to overcome Satan's attack.

Eve's trial demonstrates that it is a mistake to underestimate the power of Satan's influence. While it may be easier to see when Satan's deception is happening to someone else, it is not

always as easy to see in ourselves. Eve's trial shows us that in the onset of a trial, if we do not shift our focus to our hearts, then Satan's deception is likely to be underestimated, and we will sin.

Evaluating UNtruth Within Us Is NOT Sin - Acting On UNtruth Is Sin

Eve's trial demonstrates another important aspect of handling trials. In short, we have to acknowledge ungodly desires in ourselves. We usually don't like this because it can make us feel tainted... dirty... sinful. It is easy to slip into thinking that if we acknowledge sinful desires within us, then we must be sinning. However, Eve's example shows us that we must discern sinful desires within us in order to NOT act on them. This means we have to think and evaluate what is going on in us.

When Satan launched his deception against Eve, she didn't know it. (If we were actually able to always see Satan's deceptions on our own, then it wouldn't be deception.) Eve had to think about the situation she faced, just like any other situation containing multiple possible courses of action. Eve had to evaluate her thoughts and how they were leading her to fulfill certain desires in her heart. Her strong desires were clues - they indicated the onset of a trial. As such, Eve's evaluation process had to include thinking about thoughts containing UNtrue information, which, of course, Satan provided.

Again, thinking with UNtrue information is **NOT sin!** We see this demonstrated in Jesus' temptations. There was no darkness in Jesus (1 John 1:5), yet we know that Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert. Being full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus evaluated the UNtruth in Satan's words and did not act to sin (Luke 4:1-2).

Eve, on the other hand, was lured by the deception of Satan's UNtruth. Eve failed to recognize her heart condemning her, she didn't change, and she sinned. The dynamics involving temptation, the heart and the mind are the same for all human beings. Whether God views a person's actions as sinful or godly will vary depending on the person's situation *and* depending on how the person interacts with those dynamics. This is true whether we are talking about Adam, Eve, Jesus, or us as believers.

Key Words That Reveal What Happened (Spiritually) In The Garden Of Eden

Adam and Eve had thoughts concerning the eating of the fruit. Both chose a particular course of action. The verse below indicates that Eve experienced disturbances in her heart prior to sinning. They provide clues indicating that an UNtruth was active within her unconscious and, subsequently, her conscious thinking. She did not use her heart to discern that UNtruth.

Genesis 3:6 "When the woman saw that the tree was **good** for food, and that it was a **delight** to the eyes, and that the tree was **desirable** to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." (*Italics and bold added by authors*)

The Hebrew word טוב is translated as **good** and can be understood to mean the fruit had good value as a food.³⁻³²⁰² The word **good** can also mean the moral opposite of evil, meaning that in and of itself, the fruit was not evil.³⁻³²⁰² The word **good** is not about Eve feeling good. Rather, it is simply a judgment type of thought. However, this thought becomes part of the chain of reasoning Satan uses to trip Eve up as the trial progresses.

The Hebrew word תאוה is translated into English as **delight**. It means "a longing, desire, craving, i.e. the state having a wish or want for something for the pleasure it brings. It can be selfish or proper."³⁻⁹²⁹⁴ This word, **delight**, indicates a thought combined with a desire/feeling. This word indicates Eve had a heart disturbance, even though the **delight** feels good.

Eve felt good in wanting the fruit; the fruit was a delight! She wanted the fruit in part because of how it made her feel. The way this kind of heart disturbance works is that if, for any reason, Eve considered NOT eating the fruit, then the feeling would change. She would have felt less pleasant. This reveals that her thinking was already interpreting the good feeling as meaning that eating the fruit would be a good thing. And, not fulfilling her good and delightful desire would make her feel like she is accepting a "bad" situation. Therein lays a big part of Satan's deception in this particular trial.

Eve's heart disturbance was one that can feel positive due to the anticipation that one's longing might be fulfilled. It starts as positive, but when it is selfish, as it was with Eve, then it actually masks a negative feeling. This is how 1 John 3:18-24 applies to Eve's situation - her heart was "condemning her." Said differently, her heart was pointing to a fault within her.

The painful side of selfish **delight** is barely perceptible. The painful side of this kind of heart disturbance can become more evident the longer an individual waits to act to fulfill the desire. The longing behind Eve's **delight** is *similar* to (not exactly like) the kind you might experience when desiring a well-prepared meal in a restaurant and you are really hungry, almost to the point of upset. You are really excited about eating. However, when **delight** is selfish, the negative side would emerge if you were at the restaurant, you saw good food on the menu, but you weren't allowed to eat.

Eve's situation was a bit different because hunger wasn't the basis for Satan's deception. Satan's deception hinged on getting Eve to focus outside of herself, instead of inside. Satan worked to get Eve to thinking about taking external action which would make her feel good internally. Underneath all her reasons for eating the fruit was another reason for eating... if she didn't eat, she'd feel bad because she wasn't getting what she wanted. Satan's deception, of course, didn't include telling her that if she sought out the Lord and changed her heart, then she could be at peace without having to eat the fruit!

The Hidden Part Of Satan's Deception Of Eve - A "Personal UNtruth"

The Hebrew word תאוה translates directly into English as **desirable** and is a feeling.³⁻²⁷⁷³ This word also reflects a heart disturbance. Understanding what made the fruit **desirable** to Eve helps us to understand the hidden basis of Satan's deception. We have talked about this in Chapter 4 when looking at the concept of a "personal UNtruth."

Similar to **delight**, the **desirable** heart disturbance tends to feel good the more a person's chain of reasoning justifies the **desirable** action! Eve saw the fruit as desirable for the purpose of making her wise. However, the idea behind "making one wise" inferred she lacks some degree of wisdom. Maybe she did, but Satan's deception was deeper. Eve interpreted having a lack of wisdom as meaning who she was, as a person, was lacking. Satan's deception was aimed against her deeper sense of identity as a child of God (she was already in perfect harmony with God and was without sin). That is not lack, and it relates to what we've been saying about "personal UNtruth."

Having wisdom isn't necessarily sinful; however, in Eve's trial, the real issue was about how she perceived herself in light of her relationship with God! Again, Satan's deception involved the feeling that not fulfilling her "good" desire would be the same as accepting a "bad" situation.

Accepting that she might not "be wise" wouldn't feel as good to Eve (or us for that matter) unless something in her changed! Therefore, transforming her heart disturbance was required in order to avoid sin.

The main point here is that Eve's desire for wisdom was built on Satan's deeper deception: the idea that she was less or that she, as a person, was lacking. Eve slipped into believing she was lacking as God created her, probably without really thinking about it. In truth, she was not lacking! Satan lured Eve into sin by influencing her thoughts and how she interpreted her feelings and desires, i.e., her heart disturbances.

Overcoming Satan's Lie About Our Identity Starts With Transforming The Heart

What God shows us in His written Word, in the beginning, through Eve's trial, is that heart disturbances coincide with a choice between acting on an UNtruth (sin) and acting in God's Truth about who we are or can be. Many variables can make it difficult to understand what is going on when our hearts disturb us, and Satan uses these. So, things are not always what they seem to be during a trial. To understand and overcome the challenges of trials, we must function according to how God designed free will, the mind and the heart, and the reasons why He did so.

God designed the spiritual heart to provide humans with the ability to receive an alert, a warning, the moment our thinking processes contain an UNtruth that can lead us away from Him. The presence of an UNtruth in our thinking is the result of Satan's influence; it is temptation. Heart disturbances were part of God's design to enable Adam and Eve to follow Him and avoid "the fall," and to assist mankind to return to Him if we did end up sinning against Him, which we did. This is why the Bible indicates a change of heart is needed to see through Satan's lie - the personal UNtruth - about who we are or can be in Christ during a trial.

Recognizing the deception that Eve experienced is helpful when it prompts us to work to discern the same in our own trials. The Painful Pattern Tool is designed to help you do that. You won't need to use it forever; however, the more you use it to dive into what is going on behind the external parts of your trials, the more your mind will be retrained to discern the key, need-to-know information God's Spirit would reveal to you. The whole goal of using the PPT is to learn how to discern when Satan is seeking to do to us what he did to Eve.

³ When we look at Hebrew words throughout the book, you will see footnotes such as ³⁻⁸¹²⁰. When the first digit is a 3, then it is Hebrew and the source used is Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)*. electronic ed. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. The digits following the dash (⁻⁸¹²⁰ for example) are Strong's Identifying Number as used in that source.