

## 024, The Temptation

12/30/2001 (SUN)

Bible: **Genesis 3:1-5**

### Genesis 3:1-5 (King James Version)

<sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? <sup>2</sup>And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: <sup>3</sup>But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. <sup>4</sup>And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: <sup>5</sup>For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

The record of our own fall, Adam was the head and representative of the human race. In Adam's fall we all fell (Romans 5:12). Nations die, cultures die, marriages die, and animals die, all because of the fall. All of our miseries can be traced back to this one event. To understand this event is crucial to understanding why the world is the way that it is, understanding the human condition, pain and suffering, understanding the methods of temptation that Satan uses against us. What Satan used in Genesis 3, he uses always. In this chapter, we see the mercy and grace of God.

- I. The Background of the Temptation (Gen. 3:1)
  - a. Who is the serpent? – The serpent that is taken notice of, is obviously far more than a simple animal, it was an animal that was indwelt and taken over by Satan himself. The serpent's body was used as a vehicle for Satan. Balaam's donkey was also used as a vehicle for speaking. God himself speaks from Heaven with an audible voice. The NT makes it clear that the true identity of the serpent is none other than Satan Himself (Revelation 12:9)... that old serpent called the Devil. Rev. 20, he laid hold on the serpent.
  - b. Where did Satan come from? – Look at 2 other passages. Ezekiel 28:11-19. Satan indwelt king of Tyrus, and Ezekiel truly addresses Satan who is working in and through the king of Tyrus in his actions and speech. The person he is speaking to is a cherubim, an angel, and he was in the presence of God in heaven. He was cast out of heaven. Satan was one time created by God, he was once in Eden, and he was an extraordinary beautiful individual. And he began to worship himself, and eventually tried to overthrow God. Isaiah 14:12-15 also describes Satan. I will, I will, I will, I will, I will. Satan wanted to be like God and overthrow God from His throne, and he along with many other angels decided to rebel against God. Satan fell, and he fell in terms of being ejected from heaven, and of assuming a corrupt nature, and a fixed malevolence and hatred against God Himself. Satan is not done striking at God, and since He cannot strike at God, he seeks to strike at those who are created in the image of God, Adam and Eve. At some point in time prior to Chapter 3, Satan has fallen, and is now seeking to come after the people of God.
- II. The setting of this temptation
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> aspect – the temptation came to Eve when she was alone.

- i. For some reason Satan came to Eve when she was without her husband, the weaker vessel. We are in most of our temptation when we are alone. Sin and temptation is easier to give into when we are alone, than when we are together. Jesus sent out His disciples in pairs, so they would be much less prone to fall into sin. Many of our sins we fall into when we are alone, and away from those who can strengthen us. David got in trouble when he was alone, Joseph, Samson, etc. When we are by ourselves we get into trouble. Children should be encouraged to do things together. Parents can protect your children when they are alone. Hebrews 3:13 – we need to exhort one another daily, lest we be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Aspect – Eve was in a place of temptation.
  - i. This was a big garden; there were lots of places for her to be. She was right next to the tree. Many of our temptations are associated with a person, a place, or a circumstance. If we avoid the person or place or circumstance, we thereby avoid the sin itself. If you don't want to fall off of the cliff, then stay away from the cliff. Proverbs 4:14-15. Sin is usually associated with a circumstance. What were the circumstances that lead to the sin? Stay away from it!

### III. The Content of the temptation

- a. Satan's initial Thrust
  - i. Gen 3:1 – Satan asks question doing 2 things. He raises the question of God's Word (whether in fact God did say that), raising doubt as to whether he really said it, that somehow God prohibited all of the trees. Puts the focus on the restriction that God put on them. Gen. 2:15-16 shows restriction, of every tree of the Garden you may freely eat. 17, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat of. Satan magnified the prohibition of God, and minimized the things that God had given. No good thing will God withhold from us. God's restraints are for our goodness, and his liberties are large. There is a lot more that we can do, than what we can't do. There are 10 commandments, there are 1,000's of permissions.
- b. Eve's Reply
  - i. Gen 3:2 – 1<sup>st</sup> problem she is discussing the problem with someone who is trying to get her to do wrong. Proverbs 19:27. Proverbs 1:10. This should have been Eve's response. Proverbs 14:7. Why do we listen to those who never do anything for us, and reject the ones who give us everything? With all the credibility that God has, that is all dismissed and Eve listens to a total stranger. We are all too quick to ignore the old voices that are proven.
  - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> problem – she minimizes the permission of God. You may freely eat of every tree, she leaves out the word freely and the word every.
  - iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> problem – she magnified the restriction of God. Did God ever say anything about not touching the fruit.

- iv. 4<sup>th</sup> problem she reduced the certainty of the judgment of God... thou shall surely die! When Satan came around he raised truthfulness about the commands of God, and minimized the permissions of God.
- c. Satan's outright lie
  - i. Satan's explicit lie (Gen 3:4-5). You shall not surely die. He knew about the word surely and inserted it. Doubt leads to denial. Satan does three things:
    1. He denies that there will be any loss if she engages in sin. God does not mean what He says. His threats will not be carried out. Deut 29:19-20. Having pronounced and warning Israel. Satan knew from personal experience that his own sin led to separation from God. People tempt us to sin by saying oh come on, it will be alright. Don't think you can sin and get away with it.
    2. Declares there will be a positive gain – you shall be as God's knowing good and evil. If you go out and drink with the crowd, you'll be special, you'll get the boys, you'll be popular. Sin brings short term benefits, but the long term consequences, we don't think about those.
    3. Disparages God's motives for His command – God doesn't want you to have all of the benefits. God is mean and unjust to withhold this from you. When we begin to believe that sin will be a benefit to us, it's over, you're going to fall into sin. In order to avoid falling into sin, you need to repudiate these lies in your life. Sin has no benefit to you! No good thing will He withhold from you. The devil suggests us to have false hopes and false views of God.

When temptation comes to you, consider the source, the question, and where it will lead you. Eve forgot to consider the source, who Satan is, and what his outcomes were, and where sinning would lead her. Don't follow the advice of someone who has never got there. John 8:44, he is a liar, and he is a murderer. The nature of all sin is that it is always surrounded around lies, and in destruction. Let us think well of God, of the best good, and ill of sin, as the worst evil.