

***Satan, the World's Greatest Enemy***

**Introduction:**

1. The Word of God begins with God Almighty creating our wonderful universe (*Genesis 1*).
2. God Almighty, as an eternal being, is the first personality identified in the scriptures.
3. The second and third persons introduced in the Word of God are Adam, the first man and Eve his wife
4. Our first parents were placed in the Garden of Eden by God.
5. In the Garden, the peace and beauty of the whole creation were available for their enjoyment.
6. They had the benefit of the grace and favor of God, and life was very good. Adam and Eve enjoyed a life of holiness and happiness with God.
7. But, they were created with the power and privilege of free choice.
8. Adam and Eve could continue to enjoy their special fellowship with God by choosing to respect and obey God's will, or they could break their fellowship by choosing to disobey God.
9. Adam and Eve had only one prohibition from God (*Genesis 2:16-17 NKJV*).
10. This scene was altered by the introduction of Satan into the world.
11. In Genesis the third chapter we have an account of the sin and misery of our first parents, the wrath and curse of God against them, the peace of the creation disturbed, and its beauty stained and sullied forever.
12. Our intention in this lesson is to examine Satan's role in the fall of Adam and Eve, and to identify the strategy he uses in tempting mankind today.

**I. WHO IS SATAN?**

- A. The best description of Satan is given by the Apostle John in Revelation 12:9:
  - 1) **Great Dragon** – Destroyer and Enemy of Man;
  - 2) **Serpent** – Treachery; Deceiver
  - 3) **Devil** – Accuser; Slanderer
  - 4) **Satan** – Adversary of God and Man
- B. Satan is a malignant spirit, by creation an angel of light and an immediate attendant upon God's throne, but by sin become an apostate from his first state and a rebel against God's crown and dignity.
- C. Satan is enraged against God and His glory, and envious of man and his happiness.

**II. SATAN ATTEMPTS TO DISTORT EVE'S VIEW OF GOD**

- A. The tempter was the Devil, in the shape and likeness of a serpent (*John 8:44*).
- B. The game which Satan chose to play was to draw Adam and Eve into sin, and by so doing to separate them from their God.
- C. Thus the Devil was from the beginning, a murderer, and the great mischief-maker. Satan intruded into the lives of Adam and Eve with the specific intention of encouraging them to sin and thus to adopt his attitude of rebellion against God.

- D. The deception of Satan is evident in his first conversation with Eve. Satan did not tell a direct lie to Eve; but led Eve to lose her faith and trust in God through half-truths and innuendos; and ultimately caused Eve to adopt his attitude toward God (*Genesis 3:1 NKJV*).
- E. Eve is approached by the Devil while she is alone and at a distance from her husband, but near the forbidden tree.
- F. Satan tempted Eve so that by her he might tempt Adam. It is his policy to send temptations by hands we do not suspect, and by those that have most influence upon us.
- G. Satan questioned whether it was a sin or not, to eat of this tree.
- H. He did not disclose his design at first, but he proposed a question which seemed innocent. Satan changed the emphasis from God's generosity of the freedom to eat of "every tree in the garden" to draw Eve's attention to the one tree from which she was forbidden to eat, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."
- I. Satan questions the kindness and goodness of God toward Adam and Eve and portrays God as oppressive and restrictive. "*Is it true that God has restricted you in using the fruits of this delightful place? This is not like one so good and kind. Surely there is some mistake.*"
- J. Satan questioned whether it was a sin or not to eat of this tree, and whether really the fruit of it was forbidden. Satan's desire was to destroy Eve's faith in God, and that by their own voluntary transgressions, he could destroy Adam and Eve.
- K. Eve's response to Satan's question shows that Satan's poison was beginning to do its work (*Genesis 3:2-3 NKJV*).
- L. Eve stated that they may eat of the trees of the garden, but she left out the word "every", which emphasized God's bounty towards Adam and Eve. Eve supplemented God's original prohibition with the phrase "nor shall you touch it," which God did not say.
- M. Eve overlooked the evidence of God's love and deep concern for the first pair and had begun to adopt Satan's distorted view of God's character and actions. Satan wanted to portray God as harsh and repressive.

### **III. SATAN QUESTIONS THE RELIABILITY OF GOD'S WORD**

- A. The great means of safety to man is continual belief in the truth of God's declarations.
- B. Adam and Eve knew God's will. It is the technique of Satan to speak of God's law as uncertain or unreasonable, and so to draw people to sin.
- C. Satan insinuated a doubt as to Eve's interpretation of God's will (*Genesis 3:4 NKJV*).
- D. Satan questioned the consequences of disobedience to God's command. Satan denied that there was any danger. Satan is a liar (*John 8:44*).
- E. The lie has always been Satan's best method of enticement.
- F. Satan told Eve there was no danger in disobedience and rebellion against God; he said that which he knew, by his own woeful experience, to be false.
- G. Satan conceals his own misery, that he might draw men into sin and into their own ruin.
- H. Satan endeavors to shake that which he cannot overthrow, and invalidates the force of divine warnings by questioning the certainty of them; and, when once it is supposed possible that there may be falsehood or fallacy in any word of God, a door is then opened to downright unfaithfulness.
- I. Satan teaches men first to doubt and then to deny; he makes them skeptics first, and so by degrees makes them atheists. Satan's chief deception is to cause men not to fear God's warnings.

#### IV. SATAN CASTS DOUBT ON GOD'S MOTIVES

- A. The Devil insinuates to Eve that God had no good purpose for her and Adam, in forbidding them this fruit (*Genesis 3:5 NKJV*).
- B. Satan is trying to create discontent with Eve's present condition.
- C. This was a great offense to God, and the highest indignity that could be done him, a reproach to his power, as if God feared his creation, and much more a reproach to his goodness, as if he hated the work of his own hands and would not want those whom he had made, to be happy.
- D. It is incredible that Eve would believe that Almighty God who was so bountiful and good to Adam and Eve would forbid the provisions necessary for their happiness and comfort.
- E. The Devil intended to alienate Eve's affections from God, and so to remove her from her allegiance to God.

#### V. SATAN CREATES A DESIRE FOR THE FORBIDDEN

- A. Satan suggests to Eve an attractive alternative to God's command.
- B. The Devil urges Eve to act and "to see for herself (*Genesis 3:5 NKJV*).
- C. Satan suggests advantages by partaking of the forbidden fruit:
  - 1) **Your eyes shall be opened** – Eve would have much more of the power and pleasure of knowledge than she now possessed. Eve's understanding would be greatly enlightened and improved;
  - 2) **You shall be as gods** – Eve would be as mighty as God, not only omniscient but omnipotent also. She shall be as God himself; she shall be sovereign and no longer subject to God, self-sufficient and no longer dependent upon God."
  - 3) **You shall know good and evil** –The tree would give Eve an exalted knowledge of the natures, kinds, and origins of good and evil; and, everything that is desirable to be known.
  - 4) **In the day you eat of it** –Eve will discover a sudden and immediate change for the better. Satan could not convince Eve to run the risk of violating God's command if he had not suggested the great probability of improving herself. Satan insinuates the great improvements she will have by eating the forbidden fruit.

#### VI. SATAN APPEALS TO EVE'S PRIDE AND HER DESIRE TO BE INDEPENDENT

- A. Satan is encouraging Eve to violate God's command and assert her independence (*Genesis 3:6*).
- B. Eve's response to the Devil was to examine the tree.
- C. Eve chose to rely on her senses rather than on God's command.
- D. There are three universal avenues of temptation: 1) *Lust of the flesh*; 2) *Lust of the eyes*; 3) *Pride of life*.
- E. Eve saw that the forbidden tree was "good for food." The fruit smelled delicious. The fruit was "pleasant to the eyes." It looked beautiful and increased the appetite.
- F. Eve also believed that it would "make one wise."
- G. All natural and moral evil originates from these three sources.
- H. The majority of the world today still relies on their own senses rather than trusting God's written word.

- I. If something feels good or is enjoyable, man assumes that it must be good, even though God's word tells us that it is really harmful and destructive to our spiritual life.
- J. One of the Devil's consistent strategies is to get individuals to decide on the basis of appearances and feelings and to reject the clear moral guidance provided in the Word of God.
- K. The fact that the tree was "desirable to make one wise" was most attractive to Eve. Eve sought to be more than she had been, more than God intended her to be. Eve was desirous of independence from her loving Creator.
- L. Eve failed to realize that it is only in faithfulness to God and his will that any person can find happiness and fulfillment in this life.
- M. Eve took of the fruit and ate and gave to Adam, her husband and he ate.
- N. It does not appear that Satan tempted Adam directly. Adam received the fruit from the hand of his wife; he knew he was transgressing, he was not deceived.

## VII. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DOING EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

A. What were the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin?

- 1) **Guilt and Shame** (*Genesis 3:7-8*)
- 2) **Broken Relationships** (*Genesis 3:9-13*)
- 3) **Spiritual Death** (*Genesis 3:22-24; Ephesians 2:1-3*)
- 4) **Physical Suffering** (*Genesis 3:14-19*)
- 5) **Physical Death** (*Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12*)

B. Adam and Eve did evil in taking and eating of the forbidden fruit and they immediately began to experience or "to know" the evil consequences of their choice.

## VIII. HOW CAN CHRISTIANS WITHSTAND SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS?

A. Satan is hungry and eager for the souls of mankind today.

B. What can a Child of God do to withstand the strategies and temptations of Satan?

- 1) The Christian must have knowledge of God's word and let it be his daily guide.
- 2) The Christian must maintain confidence in God's goodness and generosity toward mankind.
- 3) The Christian must trust that God's commands are motivated by love and truly define what is best for man.
- 4) The Child of God must remember that we need not experience sin to understand its destructive properties.
- 5) The Child of God must heed the warnings provided by God in his divine word.
- 6) The Child of God must reject every temptation to act independently of God's will.
- 7) The Christian must remember that God is Lord and that we are merely his creation (*James 4:7 NKJV; 1 Peter 5:8-9 NKJV*).

## **REVIEW**

1. What does the creation of the world and mankind say about the nature of God?
  
2. How was mankind created in the “image” and “likeness” of God?
  
3. Why did God prohibit Adam and Eve from eating of the “tree of knowledge?”
  
4. Describe the nature of Satan.
  
5. Why do you believe Satan intruded into the world of Adam and Eve?
  
6. How does Satan attempt to distort Eve’s view of God?
  
7. Explain how Satan questions the reliability of God’s word to Adam and Eve.
  
8. How does Satan cast doubt on God’s motives?
  
9. Summarize the process Satan used to create a desire for the forbidden.
  
10. What are the three universal avenues used by Satan to tempt mankind?
  
11. List the consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin.
  
12. How can a Child of God today overcome Satan’s temptations?