

Satan loves to slander God, and attacks God's reliability, His faithfulness <sup>☐1</sup>, His goodness <sup>☐2</sup>. He likes to suggest that God is harsh and restrictive. In point of fact, it is sin and Satan which are harsh towards us.

<sup>☐1</sup> 3:4  
<sup>☐2</sup> 3:1b

• *The story continues*

The story continues: *'And the woman said to the snake, "We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden<sup>☐1</sup>, but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden God has said 'You shall not eat from it, nor shall you touch it, or you will die'"<sup>☐2</sup>. And the snake said to the woman, "You will certainly not die<sup>☐3</sup>. For God knows that as soon as you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing what is good and evil"<sup>☐4</sup>.*

<sup>☐1</sup> 3:2

<sup>☐2</sup> 3:3

<sup>☐3</sup> 3:4

<sup>☐4</sup> 3:5

**The devil wants to get people away from God**

**Consider the aims of the devil <sup>☐1</sup>**. He wants to insinuate an anti-God approach to life. In every area he wants to get people away from God, and he wants to take over as though he were God himself.

<sup>☐1</sup>  
Genesis 3:1-6

• *As the source of knowledge*

He wants to get us away from God **as the source of knowledge**. Here he is drawing Eve away from God as the one who knows everything that there is to know. He speaks as if he knows more than God. He wants to get Eve away from God's Word as a source of knowledge, and replaces God's revelation by making himself the source of knowledge.

• *As the source of authority*

He wants to get us away from God **as the source of authority**. He acts as if he has a right to speak, and to lay down what is right and what is wrong. He dismisses God as having any authority at all, and yet acts with supreme confidence in himself.

• *As the guide to conduct*

He wants to get us away from God **as the guide to conduct**. He suggests a different style of living for Eve, compared to what God has said.

• *As the one who controls our destiny*

He wants to get us away from God **as the one who controls our destiny**. If Eve eats of the tree which is in the middle of the garden God has said what her destiny will be. *'You shall surely die'*. Satan instead says *'You shall not die'*. God claims to be in control of our destiny and to have the ability to say what will happen to us. Satan wants to get us away from God as the controller of our destiny and he suggests that he knows what our destiny will be and it is other than what God has said.

• *As the source of pleasure*

He wants to get us away from God **as the source of pleasure**. He suggests that a great life is available to us as we follow him. Satan suggests to Eve, and to men and women today, that the pleasurable life is the life that neglects and turns away from God. Actually the Bible claims that at God's right hand there are *'pleasures for evermore'*. We tend to think that the godly life is somehow narrow and restrictive. The devil suggests to us that there is great pleasure if we follow our own way – which in fact is following his way, for he deceives us. He says to us *'All things will I give you if...'* and seeks to get us to believe that the life of joy and happiness is the life that shuns God.

• *As the one we worship*

He wants to get us away from God **as the one we worship**. He suggests that Adam and Eve will become like gods if they follow him. The idea is that God will no longer be any kind of supreme King of the universe. They will become their own gods. God will no longer have to be worshipped as God. Man will be his own god.

• *He wants to keep us in guilt and darkness*

Satan still lies, and he still tells the same lies. He flatters, without our even knowing that it is his voice that we are hearing. Satan is always plausible. He uses rising pressure and comes to us at our weakest point. He wants to control our minds, our worship, our conduct, our experience. He wants to keep us laden with guilt. He wants to hold us in darkness.

**The Way of Defeat**

Consider next **the way of defeat**. How did Satan succeed in getting Eve to sin?

1. *She got talking to the snake*

1. **She got talking to the snake**. But why should she do that? It is a great mistake to have any kind of discussion with Satan. Why should she engage in a dialogue? She replies to him, but there was no need for her to do so. This talking snake that rises up against God has no right to an answer. It is not a genuine sympathizer with Eve. It is a mistake to think we have to answer our enemies all the time. It is not necessary. And it leads to Eve's accepting the snake at face value. She receives the snake's way of presenting itself.

2. *She accepted his perverted use of God's Word*

2. **She accepted his perverted use of God's Word, and even perverted it herself**. She said '*We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden...*'. She felt she had to defend God! Then she said '*...but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden God has said "You shall not eat from it, nor shall you touch it..."*'. No! God did not say anything about not touching it. Eve had been persuaded to think of God as harsh. Now she is the one perverting God's Word.

3. *She keeps listening*

3. **She keeps listening**. As the snake continues, '*You will certainly not die ... your eyes will be opened... you will be like God...*', Eve was still listening! Satan wants to keep us listening to him. He progresses from one level of deceit to another and we are changed not from one degree of glory to another <sup>1</sup>, but into willingness to sin and on to yet greater willingness to sin.

<sup>1</sup> see 2 Corinthians 3:18



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Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)* books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



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