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Before the Serpent Became Satan # 6

By Jim Myers

Continued from Issue Number 54.

What did **not** happen when the man ate the forbidden fruit? He **did not** fall overt dead! Yahweh **did not** come over and execute him! The man **does not** appear to have gained divine wisdom!

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3:7).

What happened? *The eyes of both of them were opened. **What wisdom did they gain?** They knew they were naked. **What did they do?** They tried to cover themselves up by making a covering.*

Hadn't they been "unclothed" and in each other's presence before? Why hadn't they feel the need to cover themselves before? The Bible doesn't record any discussion between the man and woman immediately after eating the fruit, but it seems they both came to the same conclusion at the same time. Was it the way they viewed each other that had changed or was it the way they imagined that Yahweh would now view them that had changed? Whatever happened, the man would live a total of 930 years before he actually died. Seth would not be born until he was 130 years old.

The one thing that had clearly changed was the way the man viewed his relationship with Yahweh. He was now afraid of his Creator and

wanted to hide from him. But, even in his new situation, when Yahweh called, he responded.

*And Yahweh Elohim called unto the man, and said unto him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard your voice in the garden, and **I was afraid**, because I was naked; and I hid myself (Genesis 3:9-10).*

I find Yahweh's response very interesting:

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded you that you should not eat?" (Genesis 3:11)

What did you think about Yahweh's first question? – "Who told you that you were naked?" It appears that Yahweh is under the impression that man's newly acquired knowledge did not come supernaturally as a result of eating the forbidden fruit, but that someone told him. Did they eat the fruit and then someone told them they were naked and needed to cover themselves? Did the author leave out a few details? Is there a connection between eating and hearing?

Professor Cassuto says, "The purpose of the interrogation is only to force him to make a complete confession." The man responds:

And the man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat (Genesis 3:12).

The man didn't answer Yahweh's first question about someone telling him that they were naked. Instead, he just skips it and begins justifying his actions by arguing that nothing would have happened if Yahweh hadn't have given him the woman in the first place. Next, of course, he argues that if she hadn't have given it to him, he wouldn't have eaten it. Interestingly, he doesn't blame the serpent for anything.

Human nature seems to be consistent from the very beginning. Everything he said was true, except for the fact that he left out -- Yahweh had commanded him not to eat the forbidden fruit. After hearing the man's response Yahweh turned to the woman:

*And Yahweh Elohim said unto the woman, "What is this you have done?"
And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Genesis 3:13).*

The woman's response is very interesting. First, she doesn't rationalize the situation, like the man. She acknowledges that she had been tricked by the serpent. Without hesitation she admitted that she ate the forbidden fruit.

The things she failed to mention are also interesting. She didn't mention the fact that someone had given her some incorrect information about touching the fruit. She didn't say anything about being the one who gave the fruit to the man. She also didn't point out that the man was present the whole time and never said one word to help her. The man blamed her, but she does not accuse him to Yahweh.

Yahweh turned his attention next to the serpent. Notice the different manner in which Yahweh dealt with wild animals. He doesn't ask the serpent why he beguiled the woman. The reason is apparent -- he is a wild animal and it was his nature to beguile and enchant -- it was in his name **NACHASH**. This, however, doesn't mean that he will escape punishment for his actions and becomes the first one to be punished. Pay close attention to the specific penalties:

And Yahweh Elohim said unto the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above every wild animal of the field; upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life: and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel (Genesis 3:14-15).

The first penalty is a change of position in the animal kingdom. The serpent goes from being the wisest of the wild animals to the most cursed. Next, his diet is changed from plants to dust. Keep in mind that when man was created, he was described as the "man of dust." Every time man sees a serpent crawling on its belly, he will remember what happened in the Garden.

The final penalty also alters the relationship between the serpent and the woman. No longer will he be in a position of trust, now there will be hatred and a conflict that will extend to the next generation. I am sure the woman will also remember how the man failed to protect her. Surely she would wonder why he didn't tell her exactly what Yahweh had commanded -- and why he would silently let her eat first?

I find it very interesting that the text doesn't report that Yahweh caused the serpent to lose his ability to speak. If he hadn't been able to communicate with the woman nothing would have happened in the first place. The fact that words set the whole event in motion is very significant. Just think of how many important events in our lives began with "words."

We won't learn about it until later, but the author will reveal later that the problem is with the "imagination" of man. The right words or wrong ones can create very different pictures in one's imagination. Conflict and hatred has become part of mankind's future. Heels will be bruised and heads will be crushed in the new world. They and their descendants would reside in a world very different from the Garden! **BHC**

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