

THE WOMAN'S DECISION

As we've already seen, woman's disobedience does not begin with her seeing something enticing about the tree and then engaging in the act of eating the fruit. The sin starts in her spirit when she begins to entertain the serpent's foul suggestions. As Delitzsch remarks:

The disguised tempter renders the divine command suspicious to her, as being unlovingly strict, and falsely tells her that want of love was its motive and origin. Thus inwardly led into error respecting God, the woman surrenders herself, with her sight and imagination, to the forbidden tree; and this appears to her so delicious to the taste, so attractive to the sight, so enticing to a closer contemplation, that she takes the fruit of it, and eats. In thus surrendering herself up to the tree, her soul is already stained, and sin is received into it. The eating is only the external performance of the deed which had already been internally committed.

In other words, the sin did not begin with sensual desire – although it certainly had to do with that. Rather its origins were in wrong thinking about God. Instead of responding “Let God be true and every serpent the liar!” she just for a moment begins contemplating the serpent's insinuation that no loving reason could stand behind God's prohibition. This wrong thinking about what God is like then leads to a skewed evaluation of the sensory input of her eyes.

Genesis 3:6 – “So 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 to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate”

Pay close attention to the language: “saw” and “delight to the eyes”. She now begins to follow her eyes instead of hearing the voice of God and what He had already spoken! And notice, as far as we can tell, the fruit didn't ‘appear’ any different to her than the other fruit in the garden. In her own judgment, it looked like it would be good (One is reminded of Proverbs 14:12 – “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”)

In her evaluation that “the tree was good for food” we begin to detect some irony, the cunning temptations of the Evil One and how sin works. Genesis 3:6 uses the same Hebrew word as Genesis 2:9, *chamad*, which means good, desirable, or pleasant.

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“And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.” **חמד** (Gen. 2:9)

chamad – desire, take pleasure in

“So 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 to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate,” (Gen. 3:6)

God had already given the couple every desirably green plant and fruit of the trees for food (Gen. 1:29)! Only this one tree He prohibited them from eating. The irony is that the woman is grasping after something she already possessed from God but is now seeking it apart from Him. This is not just true of the fruit but of the wisdom she is seeking. In the words of Collins, “she already had everything she thought the tree had to offer”.

This is how sin works. It starts with wrong thinking about God and then plays on good desires hijacking the things of God's good creation. In this narrative eating is a good thing. Wisdom is good thing. Both are desirable. But when desired apart from God and not through the proper outlets that God has provided and blessed, this is where we get ourselves into trouble. We may thus far note two components to sin:

1. A rupture of knowing/thinking rightly about the goodness and love of God
2. Wanting/desiring something/someone in God's good creation, but in the wrong sort of way – thinking it will ultimately satisfy this desire. Sin is desire for something good, but wrongly aimed.