

# Poison Whispers

## Believing the Lie

When he first whispered in her ear, she believed him. So alluring were his petitions, so attractive his claims, her weakness easily gave way to his rouse. He captivated her. In a moment's time she willingly yielded to her desires, placing her future in his hands. The first drop of sweet juice that trickled down her chin was worth sharing, so she did. The second drop fell, this time from her companion's lips, disclosing the fatality contained in her enticer's sweet words...but it was too late. His poison had entered her blood, her soul, and her life, as it had her companion's. Everlasting happiness with the true Lover of her soul came to an end.

We begin our study of marriage in the place where selfishness and suffering, ambitions and jealousies, broken hearts, embittered lives, unhappiness, warring, and death all began: the Garden of Eden. It was there that the union between man and wife began; it was there that enmity entered into it.

Greater understanding of our fleshly inclinations and inherent nature will make us keenly aware of the role we play in making our marriages the way they are today. If Eve had not gratified her pleasure and pride, we would obey our husbands with humility and meekness.

### The Whisperer

A delusion fell upon Eve as she stared at the tree holding its forbidden fruit. Read the account in Genesis 3:1-24 and then answer the following questions:

The serpent picked his prey with purpose and intent. Why do you believe he chose to deceive Eve rather than Adam? \_\_\_\_\_

The text does not pinpoint the location of the discussion that took place between the serpent and Eve, but Eve spoke as if "the tree" were away from them "*in the midst of the garden.*" (NKJV) After the serpent spoke his parting words in verse 5, what thoughts may have gone through Eve's mind? \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine Eve standing still, puzzled look on her face, going *over and over* his crafty words in her mind. "Is what he said true?" Time passed until Eve could no longer amuse her thoughts. So, she set out in search of the fruit she'd been forbidden to eat.

Before we can be deceived we must entertain the lie. What was happening in Eve's heart? \_\_\_\_\_

The more Eve questioned God's motives and doubted His provision, the more fuel she poured on the fire of self-justification. Then, in verse 6, she stood looking upon the tree that would forever change the union between Creator and created, between man and wife.

**WOMAN: THE GLORY OF MAN  
SHINING IN THE MIDST OF YOUR MARRIAGE**

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Genesis 3:6 gives us a peek into Eve’s thoughts regarding the forbidden fruit. Read 1 John 2:15-17 and then parallel verse 16 with Genesis 3:6 in the chart provided.

GENESIS 3:6	1 JOHN 2:16

Eve’s eyes were wide open but her heart was blind. The “food” trees she had been provided were no longer enough to satisfy. The beauty of her undefiled garden home was no longer worthy of her notice; her eyes were fixed on something much more desirable. No longer did Eve rest peacefully in what God had taught and revealed to her, she needed greater understanding and insight.

Read Obadiah 1:3a.

Define lust. \_\_\_\_\_  
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The first two “loves of the world” in 1 John 2 are based upon lust. Lust can be defined as an intense longing, desire or need; a craving. Like a craving, lust has its way of tangling itself around us until we give in to its pleasures, while simultaneously choking the life right out of us! Read John 12:25.

“I can have more than this!” “I can be more than this!” “I deserve more.” It’s not uncommon to hear statements like these roll off the tongues of unhappy wives. But in so doing our hearts attest our dissatisfaction to our Maker: “I do not trust You to provide me with the best for my life, nor do I trust Your judgment. I am not satisfied with the choices You have made for me. You are not allowing me to achieve my full potential. I know better!”

This brings us to the third “love of the world” listed in 1 John 2. What grave sin is contained in the statements above? \_\_\_\_\_

In her heart, the prideful woman says, “I am more capable than my husband. I am better equipped than he is. I have greater understanding than he does.” Pride is the sin that caused Eve to act independently of her husband. Pride is the sin that causes *us* to exalt ourselves above our husbands.

What are the consequences of pride? Read Proverbs 16:18 and 28:25. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Proverbs 11:19b says, “*So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death*” (NKJV).

Through his whispers, the serpent poisoned Eve with the desires of his own prideful heart. (See Isaiah 14:13-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-19.) Sadly, this “poison” has seeped its way into the midst of our marriages today...

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## Divided

*“So...she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”* (NKJV) Sin entered in when lust and pride were acted upon. Read Mark 7:15 and James 1:13-15.

When the Lord God called out to Adam to give an account of what happened an interesting word enters the picture: *“I.”* When “me” came in, “we” left.

Read 2 Corinthians 11:3.

This verse tells us that when Eve was deceived, she moved away from the purity and simplicity of devotion to God. The word translated *“simplicity”* means “frankness, integrity, fidelity.”<sup>1</sup> How would an absence of these qualities in her relationship with God in turn affect her relationship with her husband? \_\_\_\_\_

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Record Isaiah 53:6b in the space provided. \_\_\_\_\_

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When the time came for Eve to answer for her disobedience she said, *“The serpent deceived me, and I ate”* (NKJV). “But though Satan's subtlety may draw us into sin, yet it will not justify us in sin. Though he is the tempter, we are the sinners. Let it not lessen our sorrow for sin, that we were beguiled into it; but let it increase our self-indignation, that we should suffer ourselves to be deceived by a known cheat, and a sworn enemy, who would destroy our souls.”<sup>2</sup>

In Genesis 3:14-19, God distributes punishment in direct correlation to each individual's sin. (See Jeremiah 17:9-10.) In verse 16, He said to Eve, *“I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children”* (NKJV); *“your desire and your craving will be for your husband, and he will rule over you”* (AMP). And so the struggle between man and wife began.

According to this verse, what state was woman condemned to for gratifying her pleasure? \_\_\_\_\_

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Likewise, what was the consequence for gratifying her pride? \_\_\_\_\_

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*“Desire”* in this context loans the idea of “stretching out after.”<sup>3</sup> It is an urge or longing; a very strong emotion of feeling *to have* or *do* something. Webster's Dictionary states that to *crave* is to “stress the force of physical appetite or emotional need. It is a conscious impulse toward something that [we think] promises enjoyment or satisfaction in its attainment.”

As women we have intense emotional need. We also have a strong desire to dominate our situation and be in control of the outcome. Do you believe attaining these things will bring satisfaction? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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Once sin entered, Adam was to rule—have dominion, govern, control, be in charge of—his household. But from that point forward the woman would not obey with humility and meekness, but instead contend with his authority. She would desire to please her husband, yet he would not regard her. She would not work with him. She would not trust him. She would not follow his lead... And the list goes on.

The union God intended for man and wife was filled with enmity the day Adam willfully chose to disobey and Eve chose to exchange her God-given role as “help meet” for an intense desire to dominate over, and be independent of, her husband.

One day the juice that dripped from mankind’s lips would take the form of blood dripping from a Savior’s wounds. Only then would healing begin.

In closing, read Ephesians 4:21-24.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Let’s apply all we’ve learned to our relationship with our spouse.

1. Eve allowed seeds of doubt and discontentment to fill her as she listened to the serpent’s whispers. Have you done the same in your relationship with God and in your relationship with your spouse?
2. Eve followed her own desires without considering how it would affect her relationship with God or with her husband. What has resulted in these relationships as you have done this?
3. Selfishness is defined as an excessive concern for one’s own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others.<sup>4</sup> In our marriages this means demanding our own way for personal gain and recognition, enjoyment and satisfaction, happiness, health, comfort, and security. In what ways have you sacrificed your husband in an attempt to attain these things?
4. Going “your own way” leaves no room for “we.” Have you divided any aspect of your relationship with your spouse into “you” and “I”? If so, what?
5. As women, the word “subjection” naturally contends with our flesh. Yet, it is demanded of us in our relationships with our husbands. How have you defined what the marriage relationship should look like and how it should function?
6. Do you question the authority of God’s Word on the matter? If so, how?
7. Pride says, “I know better.” Essentially this means exalting yourself (ideals and will) above your spouse. How have you allowed pride to create division in your relationship?
8. Consistent self-assertion says, “I do not trust you” to your husband. How will this destroy your relationship over time?

9. As we've learned, women have great emotional need. What have you done in order to have these needs met? Has "stretching out after" these needs ever ended in success? If not, why? If so, how?

10. How have you exchanged your God-given role as "helpmeet" for a less suitable role?

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<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992. G572.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, E-Sword

<sup>3</sup> Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. H8669

<sup>4</sup> Merriam-Webster, Inc: *Merriam-Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Springfield, Mass., U.S.A. : Merriam-Webster, 1985, c1983