

Eve and the Serpent

(Genesis 3:1a) "Now the serpent was the most cautious of all the wild animals of the field that Jehovah God had made."

This is not talking about Satan. Satan is not a wild animal of the field. The term "*cautious*" is describing an animal; the serpent. Not a specific serpent, but serpents as a species. (Mt 10:16)

Why were these herbivores (Ge 1:30) the most cautious out of all of the animals? Other Bible translations use words like crafty, shrewd, or sensible to describe the serpent, but that infers intelligence. Snakes are definitely not the smartest "*of all the wild animals*."

The serpent was the most cautious because it had to be if it didn't want to get trampled underfoot. Jehovah wanted this animal to thrive and flourish so He provided it with an innate drive to not get stepped on. That meant that it had to be very careful and very aware of its surroundings. In other words, it had to be very cautious.

Genesis 3:1 continues:

(Genesis 3:1b) So it said to the woman:

Why is the word "so" used here? We all know how the word "so" is used, for instance: *I was hungry, so I ate*. In this case: *The serpent was cautious, so it spoke*. But we know that it wasn't the serpent that truly spoke, but it was Satan who spoke through the serpent. (Re 12:9) Therefore: *The serpent was cautious, so Satan spoke*.

That is odd isn't it? It is like saying: *I was hungry, so you ate*. Did the serpent being cautious somehow cause Satan to speak? No. Then what does the serpent's cautious nature have to do with Satan speaking? The answer is found with the word "so". It was because this was the most cautious of all the wild animals that Satan chose it to speak through.

Why? Did he think that Eve was more likely to be swayed by and believe an animal that she considered to be very "*cautious*"? I don't think so. The snake needed to be cautious because it was such a vulnerable animal, crawling on its belly in the grass beneath the hooves and feet of all of the other animals. And it was cautious by instinct, not because it was intelligent. So it wouldn't have been particularly believable or convincing to Eve. If anything, Eve probably felt pity for the snake's hazardous life.

So why would Satan pick an animal to speak through that Eve considered to be so vulnerable that it needed to be extremely cautious? Remember, Eve didn't have a fear of snakes like most humans do today. Basically it was at the bottom of the animal hierarchy with all of the other animals literally above it. Other animals didn't get out of its way, it got out of *their* way. If Satan had chosen a silver backed gorilla, or some other large and powerful animal to speak through, it might have been said that it was out of fear or intimidation that Eve followed its directions to eat

the fruit. But Satan wanted to make sure that wasn't the case, so he chose the animal that, out of necessity, *"was the most cautious of all the wild animals."*

If Satan just wanted Eve to eat the fruit he could have impersonated God, or appeared before her as the powerful angel that he was, or possibly even materialize in the form of Adam to trick her. Then he could have just told her that the ban was lifted, and that she could now eat the fruit. That may have worked, but then Eve would have merely been following the directions of someone who held authority over her, and she would have no culpability.

No, but Satan wanted Eve to be accountable for her actions. That meant that the instructions to eat the fruit could not come from someone who held authority over her. And so that she could not blame fear or intimidation from a large animal Satan chose the least intimidating of all the animals. In Eve's view, the snake was no more intimidating than an earthworm.

That is also why Satan spoke to Eve, and not to Adam. Because when she brought the fruit to Adam to eat it Adam could not blame it on someone with more authority since Eve did not hold authority over him. (Ge 2:18) Remember, Eve knew of the regulation not to eat the fruit, not from Jehovah directly, but through Adam. (Ge 2:16; 3:3)

If Satan had gotten Adam to eat the fruit first, and Adam then brought the fruit to Eve, she could have said that she was just doing what her husband told her to do and possibly skirt the blame for her actions. Adam may even have spurned Satan's persuasion to eat the fruit and then warned Eve to watch out for such an attempt. No, but **Satan's target was *both Eve and Adam***, so he went about it in this cunning manner.

No doubt Satan had been watching Adam and knew how much he loved his wife. Perhaps he, as a spirit creature, could even see what was in Adam's heart and knew how strongly he felt about Eve. He was probably counting on Adam to react the way that he did and eat the fruit that Eve brought him, knowing that she had already eaten it and was therefore condemned to death.

So to sum up: If someone of higher authority (God, Spirit, or Man) told Eve to eat the fruit, than she would just be obeying that authority figure. But if a lowly serpent, who's subjection to her was without doubt, told her to eat, she would retain her guilt since her position of higher authority made her responsible for her own actions. That is why Adam's attempt to blame Eve for his eating of the fruit did not work. (Ge 3:12)

So what do *you* think of this hypothesis?

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