

The 'Crafty' Serpent and the Thorns of Adam and Eve

In the Bible, the book of Luke, chapter eight, the verses one to eight provides us with the parable of the sower. This parable speaks of a farmer who was scattering seeds. Along the way, scattering the seeds, some fell on the farmer's path, some on rocky ground, some on thorns, and some on good soil. This will be studied in accordance with the book of Genesis in the Bible, chapter three. This is where the serpent was used by satan to deceive the first of mankind into sinning. How the different areas the seeds fell provides a greater understanding of Adam and Eve's regarding the Genesis account. This will be examined and discussed in this essay. In the Genesis account, the serpent will be concentrated on in this study, comparatively of these two biblical texts. Parables are "earthly stories with heavenly meanings" as the subtitle of Kemp's (2024) book, 'The Parables of Jesus' clearly defines and states¹. This essay will prove to be an example of how the earthly stories contain heavenly meanings and the heavenly meaning behind the parable of the sower should be clearly understood by the end of this essay. To note; heavenly meanings in this context refer to divine and spiritual meanings with immense hidden wisdom.

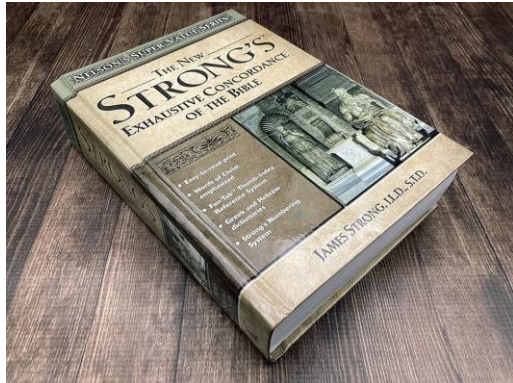


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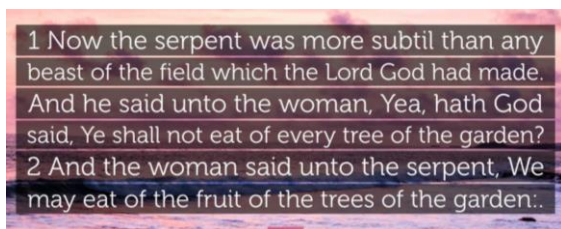
Michael Kemp, The Parables of Jesus: Earthly Stories with Heavenly Meanings, (Lulu.com, 2024).

Firstly, it is important to understand 'The Strongs Exhaustive Concordance'². According to Collins dictionary, a concordance is a list of words used in a text. The concordance of the Bible under discussion was assembled by James Strong. He used the King James Version (KJV will be the abbreviation used) of the Old and New Testaments to create this concordance. Strong separated the concordance in two halves. The Hebrew words for the Old Testament and the Greek words for the New Testament. The Hebrew half of this concordance ranges from number one to eight thousand, six hundred and seventy-four Hebrew words extracted from the Old Testament from the King James version Bible translation, as well as the Greek half of this concordance ranging from one to five thousand, six hundred and twenty-seven Greek words extracted from the New Testament in the same version. This concordance provides definitions to each word noted and contains sources of where these words were used, in the Bible and where you can find similar references to the word searched. All this information is verified by 'The Strong's Exhaustive Concordance' itself³. The source itself provides more information on the use of the concordance.

² James Strong, 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; Together with A Comparative Concordance of the Authorized and Revised Versions, Including the American Variations; Also Brief Dictionaries of the Hebrew and Greek Words of the Original, with References to the English Words, (London, UK: Hunt & Eaton, 1890).



The book of Genesis, chapter three, verse one is as follows, “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (KJV). A couple of fair thoughts which may arise in one’s heart and mind is, “why was it mentioned that the serpent used to deceive Adam and Eve was ‘subtil’? why was the serpent used to deceive Adam and Eve in the first place?” To answer these questions, we will use the texts themselves alongside the concordance already spoken of.



Firstly, why the mentioning of the serpents subtility will be discussed. As we study the meaning of the word ‘subtil’ used for the serpent in the Genesis account, the thought is well satisfied. ‘Subtil’ is number six thousand, one hundred and seventy-five in the Hebrew half of this concordance. The Hebrew word for it is ‘arum’. According to the concordance in use, the Hebrew word ‘arum’ means ‘crafty, shrewd, sensible’. Verse one of the Genesis account mentions the serpents subtility in comparison to any other beast of the field, revealing the serpent was the most crafty, shrewd and sensible of all the beasts of the

field. With the serpent having a reputation for being the most sensible and wise in his category, he may have been made to appear to be trustworthy to Adam and Eve.

Humans often refer to logic and the process of elimination according to Stenning, Keith, & Lambalgen, Michiel, V's 2012 thesis⁴. This is important to note as it explains why Adam and Eve trusted the serpent. Their logic would have made them trust the serpent due to his impressive reputation alongside the devil speaking the process of elimination through the serpent to Adam and Eve. The devil spoke the process of elimination through the serpent to Adam and Eve by confronting any questions they had concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Words of God concerning the tree and having used the serpent to work through so that any appearance of a threat would be void and eliminated. Resulting an alignment of the Word of God and human tendencies demonstrating great reliability. To summarise the answer to the thought under examination, the serpents subtility led to Adam and Eve's trusting the devil-possessed serpent, consequently resulting in the fall of mankind.



The latter thought, “why was the serpent used to deceive Adam and Eve in the first place?” will be discussed beginning with definitions of secular and biblical meanings of meditation. Secular forms of

⁴ Keith Stenning, & Michiel, V, Lambalgen, Human reasoning and cognitive science. (Cambridge, US: MIT Press, 2012).

meditation are defined as the emptying of one's mind to be filled by with worldly means of peace (in actuality, it leads to the vulnerability of being used by the devil, according to Hedding, (1986)⁵), but biblical meditation is to fill your mind with the Word of God. It is important to note the secular definition of meditation because this was how the serpent was open to the use of the devil. Due to the serpent's inability to fill its mind with the Word of God as he was an animal, thus in a consistent state of worldly meditation, it was vulnerable to being possessed by the devil, which happened. In conclusion, the serpent's inability to fill his mind with the Word of God resulted in his constant vulnerability to be used by the devil.



The devil's use of the serpent to trick and deceive Adam and Eve correlates with the book of Luke, the verses referenced in this essay previously providing the parable of the sower. The parable of the sower is an image of the several different ways people receive the Word of God. To note; the sower is representative of God, the seed is representative of the Word of God and the four different placements of the seeds are representative of the different people who hear the Word of God and what the heart position of the people hearing the Word of God is like.

⁵ Edward, L, Hedding, The Uniqueness of Christian Meditation. (Virginia: Liberty University Graduate School of Religion, 1986).



The seeds which fell on the path represented those who hear the Word of God, then the Word of God is taken out of their hearts by the devil, so they do not receive the Word of God at all, but deny it, thus denying themselves of God's salvation.



The seeds which fell on the rocky ground represented those who hear the Word of God, then receive the Word of God with joy, but having not been rooted in the Word of God as they initially believed, they lost their faith after trials and tribulations came to test them. These people are denied of God's salvation consequently.



The seeds which fell on the thorns represented those who hear the Word of God, then allow the troubles and worries of life, and desires for material things such as riches and comfort, to disable them from maturing in their faith in God, thus producing no fruit. This is important to pay attention to as Jesus tells us in the book of Matthew, chapter six, verses eighteen to nineteen, “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire”. ‘The fire’ is representative of hell, as Jesus says, “to go into hell, where the fire never goes out” in the book of Mark, chapter nine, verse forty-three.

Also, the fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control according to the book of Galatians, chapter five, verses twenty-two to twenty-three. This all perfectly intertwines as this means those who are represented by the thorns will believe they are going to Heaven as they believe in the Word of God, but their lives and hearts reveal that they will not. This is shown by God revealing, through His Word, that all who will go to Heaven have flourishing fruits of the Spirit and those who do not, so who are anxious, greedy, unkind, impatient, passive-aggressive, and many more will be going to hell regardless of what they think. Thus, they too are denied of God’s salvation.



Lastly, the seeds which fell on the good soil are those who hear the Word of God, then retain the Word of God and by their continuing in their retaining the Word of God, produce a bountiful harvest of the fruits of the Spirit, thus revealing them to have eternal life in Heaven in the very presence of the One True Living God.



This parable is important in revealing the hearts of Adam and Eve in the Genesis chapter three account. Looking at their decision in accordance with the four reactions to hearing the Word of God, Adam and Eve's heart placements are revealed to show that they focused on their own desire instead of retaining the Word of God already spoken to them, which was, "you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" - Genesis 2:17, (NIV). This

means that their reaction to hearing the Word of God was to respond as those represented by the thorns, thus further explaining their spiritual deaths and causing separation from God for all people until Jesus Christ came into the form of a human being, while retaining His fully Deity nature, to live how Adam and Eve first should have.



Succinctly, the devil used the serpent's 'crafty' nature, which made the serpent trustworthy to those around him, to trick and deceive Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve's walls of defense and suspicion were brought low, and they believed the serpent over the Word of God. As the book of Luke, chapter eight has revealed, Adam and Eve were acting in alignment with those represented by the seed having fallen among thorns. This led to the fall of all and the spiritual death all people faced. However, to conclude on a truthful and joyful note, Jesus came and undid all that the devil used the serpent to do and the thorn-like faith Adam and Eve had. Essentially, through believing in Jesus Christ, we are reunited in relationship with God and now spiritually alive for all eternity, so long as we make this our decision daily.



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