

HATH

GOOD



SAYID?



# Hath God Said?

Now the serpent was more subtle 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?'"

~Genesis 3:1 (KJ21)

It was, I believe, a Sabbath Day. Whether that first Sabbath documented one chapter earlier (Genesis 2:1-3) or a Sabbath after thousands of years had passed, it seems that it would have to be a Sabbath. After all, The Sabbath is the only day of the week in the early Genesis record that God retreated from His garden and left the man and his wife alone. Every other day we see that God came to fellowship with them.

Of course, this is my opinion. It very well could have been a Tuesday afternoon or a Sunday evening or a Thursday morning. But it seems logical that it would be the one day when God was not present in the garden with man, for had God been there certainly He would have intervened and said: "*Don't listen to the serpent, he is a deceiver!*"

And yet there he was, that slithering devil hanging from the branches of the one tree that was sanctified and set apart—its fruit forbidden by God Himself. There he was dangling and hissing as the woman approached the tree, ready to pose that question that changed history: *Did God really say... ?*

As we examine this question, I am reminded of the words of Edith Schaeffer in her excellent book [Christianity Is Jewish](#), where she says:

Satan is not very original. His subtle question is really the same through the centuries, and in this century. Every human being who has ever heard or read the words in the Bible hears Satan's question at one time or another: "Hath God said this? Is this really the Word of God? Can you trust this as being truth? Or—?" He implants the doubt that is the forerunner of denial that God's communication to man is true truth.

Think, if you will, for just a moment, of the scene playing out in the Genesis record. Think of people who were created perfect and sinless. Think of this woman standing before the tree, knowing that God said not to eat the fruit it bore, and yet here was this creature questioning God.

What possibly could persuade her to reject the commandment of God in favor of a created being? She knew the serpent was not God. And yet she dared to listen to its question, allow it to penetrate deep into her mind and convince her to block out the directive that came from divine authority for the one thing that would destroy her life and the life of every other human being who would ever live on this planet.

Whether you believe in the doctrine of *original sin*—that man is born a sinner in need of a Savior—or you hold to some other less common Christian doctrine, certainly you believe that the message of The Bible is that man is infected with sin and needs to be redeemed. As a Christian or Believer in The Bible you also certainly believe that this redemption is only possible through Yeshua, the promised Hebrew Messiah. Oh, you may call Him “Jesus”, but you still believe that He is the only way to be reconciled with God as a result of the event we call *The Fall Of Man* as recorded in Genesis 3.

But if so many people believe this, why is it that an overwhelming majority of Christians still entertain that question: *Hath God said... ?* I discuss matters of obedience to particular commandments in The Bible with people all the time. Unlike modern preachers who are willing to preach against sins like murder, things that nobody in their congregation is actually struggling with, that they might sound like they stand for holiness without causing contention among their parishioners, I often address the topics that most Christians actually believe they are not required to follow today.

Some say that the only things I ever talk about are *don't eat pork, don't eat shellfish, don't celebrate Christmas and Easter (or Halloween either), don't get tattoos, don't wear wool and linen together, don't work on The Sabbath, etc.* Of course, I have spent as much if not more time on other topics, but when you get right down to it these are commandments of God and to question them today is no different than it was the day the serpent posed its hissing question to that first woman: *Did God really say not to... ?*



## **Imagine Being In Eden**

Take a hypothetical journey with me for just a moment, if you will. Imagine that you were trekking through a dense jungle, enjoying God's Creation all around you, and then you happened on a path. You did not know where it would lead, but you chose to venture down the trail to see where it would take you.

Then, after several miles journey, you see something ahead of you in the distance. As you approach it you see that it is a large gateway. You get closer and then you can see an inscription above the door:  $\text{אֵדֵן}$ . This, of course, is the Hebrew rendering of the word we know in English as *Eden*, the Garden of God.

As you approach the gate you notice that angelic being standing there with a flaming sword, guarding the entrance. You know that if you continue it would mean certain death, so you call out to the angel of God.

“Excuse me, I know that nobody has entered since the beginning of time, but is it possible that I could go in,” you shout. The angel of God looks sternly at you and asks: “Are you a servant of *Yeshua ben Elohim*?” You answer with a confident “Yes!” The angel steps out of the way and the door of the gate swings open.

You can hardly believe it, you are about to enter *Eden*, the Garden of God. You walk through the gate and suddenly the air seems cleaner. You feel more energized, as if the oxygen levels are higher on the other side of the gate. You walk along and see all manner of trees bearing luscious fruit.

Think for a moment of a favorite fruit. Perhaps it is a mango or a pear or a plum. Then you see a tree bearing that fruit, but it is much bigger than what you would see in any grocery store today. You pluck one piece off the tree and you need to pull out a pocketknife to cut pieces off to eat it for the size of that single piece of fruit.

You continue along the path. At this point you are getting a bit thirsty and your hands are a little sticky from the juices of your fruit dripping on them. Then you see that great river that opens into four heads. You approach to see the cleanest water you have ever come upon, rolling over mineral rocks and precious gemstones. You clean your hands in the stream and then cup some water into your mouth. It is so clean and full of mineral nutrients that it tastes better than any water you have ever drank in your life. You stand up and that one drink has infused you with so much energy you feel like you could run for the next ten miles.

You continue on in your journey through *Eden*, the Garden of God, and you notice a clearing ahead. A field. So you approach it, as your curiosity wonders why there is an open space in such a magnificent garden.

Then you see in the midst of this clearing is a hill and on the hill a lone tree. It is a magnificent tree, bigger and fuller than all others in the garden. You wonder: What could it be?

You approach the tree as the sunlight is hitting it in such a way that it appears to be glowing. You notice that there is a peculiar fruit hanging from it, beautiful in color, the sweetest aroma, but something you have never seen in your life.

Then you see it. Slithering through the branches, weaving its way through the tree it has dwelled in for thousands of years. That serpent spoken of in The Bible. Here it is.

Then, just as you get within a few feet of the tree, almost able to reach up and pluck a piece of that fruit—if you would even dare, knowing what happened the first time—that snake whips his head around and locks eyes with you. Here you are, face-to-face and eye-to-eye with the infamous serpent of *Eden*.

You know what he is about to ask. It is the same question he has always asked. The question that caused sin to become a plague upon humanity. The question: *Hath God said... ?*

What would you do in that moment? Think about this if you will.

- If that serpent asked you: *Did God really say not to eat pork, shellfish, or any other ‘unclean’ animal flesh?* Would you stand there and say: “Oh, yeah, Acts chapter 10, 1 Timothy chapter 4, Colossians chapter 2, Mark chapter 7” or any other passages religious people use to justify rejection of the commandment of God?



- If that serpent posed the question: *Did God really say not to get tattoos?* Would you dare reply to it: “Well, nah, that Leviticus 19:28 thing is only for the dead and Isaiah talked about people tattooing God’s name on their hand and Revelation says that ‘Jesus’ has a tattoo on His thigh”?
- If that serpent looked at you and said: *Did God really say not to practice the ways of the nations?* Would you actually look at it and answer: “Oh, *Christmas* and *Easter* are ‘Christian holidays’, it doesn’t really matter if they might have pagan origins, we have turned them into something to worship God with and I don’t think Deuteronomy 12 really applies and besides I’m not *really* worshipping those other gods, I’m worship The Living God of The Bible through these things.”
- If the serpent were to question: *Did God really say to keep The Sabbath on the seventh day?* Would you seriously respond: “Well, maybe He did, but you know, now we go to church on Sunday and even though we really don’t treat it with the same reverence the ancient Israelites treated their Sabbath, it is our ‘Christian Sabbath’ and I think God is cool with that.”
- If the serpent asked: *Did God really say not to wear wool and linen together?* Would you really answer: “Well, you know, that was just some weird ancient ritual thing. I don’t think God really cares if we do that today. After all, that’s an odd requirement and besides we are covered under grace today.”
- If that serpent inquired of you: *Did God really mean that about no other gods? After all, it’s just the company logo on their coffee cups, or just a comic book character in a movie. It doesn’t mean anything, and certainly you are not actually worshipping those things. You are just enjoying a cup of coffee or a movie, right?* Would you actually listen to that demonic spirit hissing at you? Or are you going to stand against the culture and regardless of whatever even all the other “Christians” are doing you are determined to obey The Bible.



Think about it. This is what the majority of Christians do today. They take the commandments of God and while they might follow some that are still culturally acceptable moral standards—like commandments against stealing, adultery, rape, or murder—they reject so many others like food prohibitions, The Sabbath, and the Feasts.

## **Be Holy, As God Is Holy**

I will remind you, the original scenario was to question something God said not to eat. If you read the record of Leviticus 11, once you get past the dietary requirements and to the 44<sup>th</sup> verse you find out that God links these *food laws* directly to holiness. ...*You must dedicate yourselves to me and be holy, just as I am holy. Don’t become disgusting by eating any of these unclean creatures* (Contemporary English Version). Then when you get to Leviticus 19, where we find prohibitions against wearing wool and linen together and against getting tattoos, among other things, the chapter starts with the same statement: *Be holy, as I [God] am holy.*

Some time ago I shared with a number of people a medical report originally published in 1983 that was done on the adverse effects of eating pork and how it is harmful to human health. This led to a lot of discussion, particularly among those with the typical American Christian mindset. In the discussion, one lady said the following:

Some things are literal, some things are symbolic for a bigger meaning. If everything you read is literal, you're going to miss out on the symbolism of what God is really trying to say. He is after your heart. I didn't read that verse and say "God, what do you really mean?"

Now, just take a moment to think about that for a minute. This person is so deceived that they think you can neglect the literal meaning of the commandments of God for some type of "symbolic meaning". Sure, there is symbolism in much of The Bible, including The Law. We see this in the Feasts, as they all point to Messiah and one of the reasons we continue to keep them as Believers today is because of the Messianic symbolism in them. But that does NOT mean that we neglect to literally keep them as prescribed in Torah.

So, I had asked this woman if she followed the practice of tithing, as I know she attends a church that teaches the modern view of tithing (giving ten percent of your income to a local church). Her reply was she does tithe, but because God told her to, not man, and when God tells her to stop something else (like eating pork, as that was the primary topic of discussion) she would.

This is the trap so many today fall into. They want God to "speak to us in their spirit" and "tell them personally, with some audible voice from heaven" what He already told us in The Bible. This person said she did not read a verse of Scripture and ask "God, what did you really mean?" Apparently, she was too busy listening to the serpent of Christian religion: *Did God really say not to eat pork? All the other Christians are eating pork and nobody is getting struck by lightning.*

Let me tell you, what happened with this lady is that in all likelihood it was the serpent that spoke up in her spirit and told her to start paying tithes. How do I know that? Because he is the deceiver. God says to tithe in The Bible, regardless of what is right or wrong about modern views of tithing, God does not need to tell you what He already told you in His Torah.

On the other hand, the serpent will tell you to do one thing in Scripture, especially something that is accepted by a majority, to lead you to believe you need to hear "the voice of God" in your spirit before you will obey something else. At that point you will be deceived into thinking you do not need to obey something plainly commanded in The Bible until you hear that "voice of God", which may never come because He is probably not going to speak to you in a supernatural way to tell you what He already told you. In some cases I suppose it's possible He will have that kind of compassion, but if you express an attitude like that of the woman I was in that discussion with, He probably isn't going to because you have already decided that you need a personal invitation from God to obey the commandments of God. He gave you that invitation already, it's called The Bible. He actually expects you to read it and obey it. I know that's a hard concept for many to accept today.

Too many people have been deceived into the lie that it is some form of *religious legalism* to do what is commanded in The Bible. If you believe it's wrong to get a tattoo, you're a *religious legalist*. If you believe it's an abomination to eat unclean things like pork, shellfish, and anything else listed as such in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 you are a *religious legalist*. If you rigidly think the Sabbath is sunset Friday to sunset Saturday and cannot be Sunday or *whatever 24 hour period you can work into your schedule* then you are a *religious legalist*. If you actually dare to oppose the celebration of *Christmas, Easter, and Halloween* you are definitely a *religious legalist*. Let me help you out: It's not *legalism* to obey The Bible!



It's funny, or perhaps sad, I don't hear anyone accusing anyone of *lawlessness*. Yet *lawlessness*, not *religious legalism*, is what Yeshua said will be the catalyst for the words "Depart from Me, I never knew you". Be careful who you listen to, especially in churches or other religious circles. I remind you, the serpent was hanging out at the tree in the middle of the garden, the centerpiece of the whole thing. It was not sitting outside the border. Most of the devils you will encounter in your life are the people you think are "solid Christian people". For that reason these are also the most deceptive demons too.

And so it is, you come not to the tree in the midst of God's Garden, but you come face-to face with the commandments of God. You open The Bible, and there they are. Clear as day commandments against eating unclean things, breaking The Sabbath, not keeping the Feasts, and engaging with pagan religious practices. There are commandments regarding what types of clothes you should wear and commandments telling you not to cut or tattoo your body. There are commandments to refrain from cross-breeding animals and to prevent hybridization of plants. There are commandments against homosexuality, bestiality, incest, adultery, and fornication. There are commandments telling you not to lie or steal. And you stand with these commandments staring you in the face.

It is at this point you have a decision to make. Will you choose to obey the commandments of God? Or are you going to turn your ear the other way, toward the sound of the hissing, and give yourself over to that other question...



~Blessings and Shalom~  
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