



BIBLE REFLECTIONS

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This Newsletter

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide you with answers to certain biblical facts which have been misconstrued or misunderstood.

Q: Who are our readers?

A: Anyone interested in matters of faith.

Q: What will our readers want to know?

A: Timely, helpful, problem-solving information regarding the Bible.

When it comes to Christian 'fake news', the driver of such items is a combination of fallacious propositional deductions and established traditions. These are very powerful forces and, when combined with the passage of time, are seen as immutable 'truths'. A fallacious propositional framework is what churches generally refer to as 'doctrines'. The formation of such doctrines is a fascinating process, frequently devoid of genuine biblical basis. The societal climate of the age during which these doctrines are formulated exerts a reciprocal relationship to their formation. Once 'set in stone' and, with sufficient time to maintain their 'validity', tradition is created. During this process the Bible gets reinterpreted to suit this framework and, even when it is biblically untrue, is maintained as essential orthodoxy. Below is one such doctrine.

Fake News: 'Eve ate the forbidden fruit because she wandered away from her husband and was easily beguiled by the serpent.' Patriarchy-based theology has employed this argument as a way of establishing male dominance within the Church. An unfortunate consequence of such belief led to the subjugation of women in the Church, even reducing them to a secondary status.

Fact Check: Gen 3.6 in Hebrew paints a different picture, one where Eve went through a mental process before eating the fruit. She 'saw' or 'looked' (analysing the pros and cons of the fruit), she 'took', she 'ate' and she 'gave' to her husband. The four Hebrew verbs used here evidence a mental process that shows Eve as being rather rational about her decision. With the first verb, 'she looked', we notice three reasons for her evaluation: the fruit of the tree was (1) 'good for food' (she assessed its nutritional value), (2) 'attractive to the eye' (she considered its aesthetic value) and (3) 'desirable of wisdom and prosperity' (she concluded it would add value to the quality of life). This was no spur of the moment decision. Eve carefully and rationally weighed the options and fully processed her decision. Only then did Eve 'take', 'eat' and 'give' to her husband, actions predicated upon her initial evaluation. The verse also establishes another simple fact, 'she gave it to her husband with her'. The Hebrew states, without equivocation, that Adam was beside her and probably agreed with and participated in the process because only one verb is used for Adam, 'he ate'. This was a combined decision (they both 'ate') which does not warrant status reduction for women. I also suggest that Eve was targeted because she was the final piece in the creation puzzle and her downfall would have a domino effect on all creation.

I am drawn to the following assertion of Paul, 'What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with my understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with my understanding.' (1 Cor 14.15 HCSB). I suggest this maxim should be our *modus operandi* when we contemplate theological and biblical truths. In a world filled with 'fake news', the Church should be the bearer of real good news not more 'fake news'.

