

Who or what was the serpent in Eden?

Apparently animals that could think and talk were normal to Adam and Eve. Obviously the serpent had already thought of not obeying God. The command about not eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17) was for mankind - maybe it didn't apply to animals, but the serpent wanted Eve to consider the possibility of NOT obeying God. It gave Eve (and Adam) a choice, and the decision belonged to them - not the serpent. It did not force Eve or Adam to make the decision - it just gave them the choice.

Every choice we have (the important choices) has two possible outcomes from our decision for that choice.

1. Obey God.
2. Do not obey God.

Deciding for 1 has secure possibilities, and all will allow good decisions later. Deciding for 2 has infinite possibilities, so there are infinities of results, but they only lead further into the jungle of not obeying God.

When you stand on the North pole, and stay there, you are at North - the ultimate North - you can't go any further north.

If you step away from that place, you are going only one direction - South. There are infinite directions away from that place, but all are going South.

When you do not obey God, you have stepped out of THE WAY, the path He designed for you to go. There are infinite ways to disobey, but all of them are disobedience. There are infinite philosophies and religions and worldviews of disobedience to choose from, but only God has THE WAY.

The serpent influenced Eve, and she influenced Adam, but Adam knew the command. God had directly told Adam in person, before creating Eve, so Adam had the ultimate responsibility to choose to obey - or not. Yes, Eve took and ate, so she also was responsible for her choice. THEY HAD A CHOICE - NO ONE FORCED THEM TO MAKE A BAD DECISION.

When each of them made the decision, and then carried out the decision, then each stepped away from obedience - from North - to disobedience - went South.

When we decide to do something other than God's desire - not staying in THE WAY (which is ignoring His command) - we are set up to experience the consequences. Not because God is angry, but because we stepped off the path, and did not deliberately strive to stay on the path. If I stick my hand in the fire, I get burned - that is not punishment. If I go against the (moral) laws God put in place in the universe, I get the results of what I do. Forgiveness of sin does not erase consequences of sin.

Cain - the firstborn human (Adam and Eve were created - they had no navel) - had an attitude problem about bringing an offering to God. His younger brother Abel brought the best of his flock, but Cain merely brought an offering of the produce and grain he raised - he did not bring his best.

*Genesis 4:5-7*

Upon Cain and his offering Adonai did not look favorably. Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell. Then Adonai said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? You know that if you do what is right, I will accept you. But if you don't, sin is ready to attack you. That sin will want to control you, but you must control it."

Each of us must consciously work to do the right thing, and thus avoid the wrong things. It is that simple - it is up to me to choose the right decision. The path is given to us in His Word. He gave us His Word through the Holy Spirit. We receive His Word when we study it and meditate on it - and that comes through the influence of the Holy Spirit. Only we can decide to obey the Word - God will not force us. Once we agree to live by His Word, to accept our failure and rebellion and turn away from it, we consent to a contract - a covenant. His Word repeatedly says we must be careful about vows since we are responsible to adhere to our vows and not waver from them - ESPECIALLY the contract of accepting His forgiveness by walking in His path - THE WAY.

We will stumble, either from our own foolishness or the influence of other people and events in our lives. We stumble. Yes, so get up, dust yourself off, confess and acknowledge your mistake to God and to anyone you damaged, and move on. That was the point of the sacrifices for sins, and for the ultimate sacrifice when God Himself became one of us as Yeshua.

Yeshua was also there from before the beginning, from before creation, and He was the active agent of creation, since He is the Word of God. Genesis chapter 1 shows "God said" ten times, thus Yeshua (the Word) is the agent of creation. Paul restates that in his letter to the people of Colossae.

*Colossians 1:16-17*

For by Him all things were created - in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen, whether thrones or angelic powers or rulers or authorities. All was created through Him and for Him. He exists before everything, and in Him all holds together.

John also restates this truth.

*John 1:1-3*

In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made through Him, and apart from Him nothing was made that has come into being.

Our obedience to God is how we stay on the path, THE WAY.

Each choice I have allows me to decide to obey or not - my decision results in my consequences. Many times other people also experience the consequences from my decisions, just as I experience the consequences from their decisions. That situation does not make me an evil entity, nor does it make them an evil entity. Bad stuff happens, because of the Fall, because all of us at different times are not living our lives by obeying God's commands.

We all must be mindful of those results of disobedience (ours and others), like driving down a road after a storm and there are hazards from the debris caused by the storm. The storm is our tendency to disobey, and the debris is the consequences of that disobedience. We can't just stop and refuse to go any further; we must navigate around that debris carefully, trying not to cause any MORE damage to ourselves or to others. It's a waste of time to reflect on this situation - dwelling on it will not change anything. Move on, and avoid the dangers up ahead.

How do I move on, when so much has gone wrong? Obey, obey, obey. The only way to obey is to know what to obey - know God's commands. The only way to do that is to study and meditate on the Bible, and then do what it says. No matter what your question is, the answer is always READ THE BIBLE. Know what the right way is - avoid anything else.

Stay North - don't go any of the millions of ways to go South.

But, if you do go South, go back to God's word, confess, acknowledge, repent, change your ways.

*1 John 1:8-9*

If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

That is a form of sacrifice - and it declares that ultimate sacrifice that Yeshua made for you. Yes, you. Just for you. Because God loves you. However you understand Him - Father, Spirit, Yeshua - He is YHVH, and He always wants the best for you.

Repeat this process of confession, repentance, and renewal as needed. God knows that we get distracted - like a dog in a wooded park full of squirrels - so we need to remember His commands. He set up these reminders in His Word, and in the feasts, to keep us on track.

None of the negative situations in my life are the desire of YHVH for me. It's not about bad things happening in my life - it's about how I handle my response to those bad things.

*James 1:23-25*

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror - because once he looks at himself and goes away, he immediately forgets what sort of person he was. But the one who looks intently into the perfect Torah, the Torah that gives freedom, and continues in it, not becoming a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts - he shall be blessed in what he does.

Don't fret over the future - just do TODAY what you should (obeying God's commands), toward achieving your (proper) desires. Don't just sit there.

God will not bother to try to steer a parked car.

The Creator of the universe, long before you existed, set in motion a plan to give you freedom - you can choose death or you can choose life.

*Deuteronomy 30:19-20*

I call on heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have presented you with life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life, so that you will live, you and your descendants, loving YHVH your God, paying attention to what he says and clinging to him - for that is the purpose of your life!

It's your choice - choose wisely.