

Title: The Psychology of Temptation as the Key to the Darker Side of Human Existence  
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The paper compares the profound psychological aspects of temptation and conscience as recounted in the Biblical narrative of *Genesis* 3:1-19 and the Slovenian poet France Prešeren's ballad of "Lepa Vida" ("Lovely Vida"). The Biblical passage of the Fall is imbued with moral insight, and its didactic influence is undeniable. The story provides an explanation of many of the facts of universal experience by seeking the key to the darker side of human existence. Prešeren's ballad is based on folk songs dedicated to the Lepa Vida motif, and is generally regarded as the stylistic high point of variations on this theme. Like the passage in *Genesis*, Prešeren's "Lepa Vida" clearly portrays the general human phenomenon of being attracted to that which is unattainable or forbidden. It is this tragic existential fact that leads us into temptation, that is, into attempting to transcend the self by overstepping human limits.

The ballad begins with the motif of the seduction that is omnipresent in the human, while entailing more than mere sensual pleasure. Wearied by the trying aspects of her life, Lovely Vida complies with the offer of seduction. Her seducer reveals the connection between the limits of the present situation and the longing for a new lifestyle to which she had not previously had access. Extremely susceptible to temptation, Lovely Vida – like Eve – succumbs to the offer. The immediate result of this fall is the opening of her eyes and the awareness that she has made a fatal error. The poem is suggestive rather than explicit in its exposing of the dire consequences of Lovely Vida's desire for new experiences. In the event, her new reality is awareness that her state of innocence has been lost. Yet in spite of Lovely Vida's tragic fall, the text reveals her essential dignity and magnitude; her bitter weeping at the poem's conclusion represents a symbolic cleansing and thus lessens the tragedy. True tragedy would be shown through a failure to demonstrate any awareness of her guilt and wrongdoing. In symbolic and psychological terms, the ballad reconciles the opposition between Lovely Vida's awareness of what she truly wants and the consequences of her thoughtless actions. Resolution is achieved through the comprehension and feeling of reconciliation of the soul at the point where she stands with an intuitive apprehension of a transcendent realm of values.