

## Curiosity

Curiosity is, as the Book of Genesis has it, essentially the source of all evil. Eve was told not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. From that knowledge, as the serpent insisted, mankind will lose its innocence.

Eve, the supremely curious, will follow the script of Genesis and of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. She eats the apple, 'whose mortal taste brought death into this world and all our woe.' The results of Eve's fatal curiosity are written all over mankind's dismal history. We are the argument against thoughtless curiosity.

How should we deal with this stricture against curiosity? What we call modern science, which is at the root of many benefits to mankind, has its roots in curiosity about humanity and its environment. Our present accomplishments in medicine, space exploration, higher studies in the humane sciences, athletic prowess, cuisine—to go random with examples—all testify to the restless and positive thinking of a daring biped who has inspected and queried the meaning rich intricacies of the outspread world.

And so unfettered curiosity has led to what harm?

I write from Nigeria, a country living in two worlds, one archaic, the other postmodern hyper contemporary. For the archaic in Nigeria much is to be gained by keeping your mouth shut and your thoughts to yourself. In silence the gods speak. The Book of Genesis had it right.