

4 -- THE TRUTH ABOUT ANGELS

(The Origin of Evil)

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We now leave the outer court and advance towards the tabernacle of meeting. As we reverently move the veil aside, we step inside. The building was divided into two apartments by a rich and beautiful veil, suspended from plated pillars. A similar veil closed the entrance to the first apartment. The tabernacle was so constructed that it could be taken apart and carried with the Israelites throughout their wilderness wandering. The walls were made of acacia wood boards set in silver sockets and overlaid with gold (Exodus 26: 15-19, 29). The roof was made of four layers of coverings—linen, goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skin (verses 1, 7, 14). In the holy place, woven into the curtain (Exodus 36:8) and veil (Exodus 36:35), were cherubim (angels) of artistic designs. While in the most holy place, we find upon the ark of the testimony, two angels of solid gold (Exodus 25:18-22). These angels lift our thoughts to the real celestial host who dwell in the realms of day. The sanctuary calls us to the study of angels and to one in particular: the prince of angels known as Lucifer. Let us pull back the veil of time and space and look into the heavenly realm to the origin of sin.

1. Under the symbolism of the king of Tyre, God describes the creation of Lucifer. What kind of being was Lucifer when he was created?

Ezekiel 28:12, 13 You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes [voice] was prepared for you on the day you were created.

Note: Lucifer was a beautiful, perfect angel whose name means “bearer of light.” This text reveals to us that this angel was no ordinary angel. He was known for his special wisdom, beauty and musical ability.

2. What station did Lucifer hold in the courts of heaven?

Ezekiel 28:14 You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

Note: The “covering cherubs” describe the golden angels that were stationed on the ark of the testimony on either side of the mercy seat. (Exodus 25:20) The mercy seat was a symbol of the throne of God. Lucifer was one of the “covering” cherubs, or angels, who stood on either side of God’s throne (Psalms 99:1). This text, amongst others, indicates that Lucifer was heaven’s highest ranking angel. His beauty was flawless and breathtaking. His wisdom was perfect. His brightness was awe-inspiring.

3. Does the Bible tell us the name of the angel who would later rebel and the reason for his rebellion?

Isaiah 14:12 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

Isaiah 14:13, 14 For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.”

Ezekiel 28:17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; ...

Note: In these texts, Lucifer is symbolized by the king of Babylon and the king of Tyre. Though gifted with wisdom, beauty and talent, this most powerful and beautiful of God's creatures allowed these gifts to fill him with pride instead of using them to glorify his Maker.

4. What happened to Lucifer; did God create a devil?

Ezekiel 28:15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

Note: No, God did not create a devil. Lucifer made himself into a devil by the wrong use of his freewill. There was no external tempter; he became his own tempter. Honored and loved by God and his companions, with every incentive to do right, and with no excuse for sinning, Lucifer chose to withdraw his affections from God and focus them upon himself. Little by little, by welcoming these selfish thoughts and repeating these selfish actions, he, at length, became infatuated with himself. His whole existence became self-centered instead of God-centered. He came to live in one narrow dimension—"Me." Thus, by a long succession of selfish choices, Lucifer, the mighty angel, debased himself into Satan, the devil.

Many often ask why God didn't just destroy him right at the onset. God gave Lucifer freedom and allowed him to carry out his rebellion for two main reasons: first, to forever settle any question of whether or not God has given His creatures the freedom of choice and second, to allow Lucifer time to demonstrate the horrible results of sin (rebellion). If God had destroyed Lucifer as soon as he began spreading doubts about God's love and government, the other intelligent beings would have forever had lingering questions regarding God's justice.

Many also wonder why God didn't just make Lucifer without freewill so that he couldn't sin. God could have made Lucifer without freewill, like a piece of clockwork, or a machine. That way Lucifer would have been incapable of choosing evil, but he would also have been incapable of choosing good. Voluntary worship, obedience and love would have been impossible. God did not want mechanical angels any more than we parents would want mechanical children. God wanted beings who could give Him spontaneous, chosen love and affection, and this can only exist in an environment of freedom. Love can never be forced, manipulated or programmed.

5. What finally happened?

Revelation 12:7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought.

Note: Eventually, Lucifer, and the angels who sided with him, were expelled from heaven.

6. What powerful beings work under the devil's command?

Revelation 12:4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.

Revelation 12:9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Note: Because of his influence and cunning, Lucifer was able to deceive one-third of the angels of heaven into following him in his rebellion against God. God had no choice but to oust Lucifer and his angels. This was, by far, the greatest battle ever fought. Lucifer's aim was to usurp God's throne. After his expulsion from heaven,

Lucifer was called Satan (adversary) and devil (slanderer), and his angels were called demons. After his ouster, Satan focused his attention on the newly created earth.

7. What methods does Satan use in his work?

Revelation 12:9 ... Satan, who deceives the whole world; ...

Mark 1:13 (KJV) And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan, ...

Revelation 16:14 (KJV) For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, ...

John 8:44 (KJV) He was a murderer from the beginning, ... for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Note: Lucifer is earth's first psychopathic serial killer who will do anything and use anything to destroy those whom God loves.

8. When is the devil most effective in his deceptions?

2 Corinthians 11:14, 15 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Note: He is most dangerous when he presents himself as a champion of truth but preaching *his* version of it-- a "truth" that is mixed with error.

9. Does Satan know the Bible?

Matthew 4:6 ... If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: "He shall give His angels charge over you."

Note: The devil is an expert at quoting and misquoting the Bible for the purpose of deceiving people. That is why it is essential that God's people know the Scriptures for themselves, to avoid being misled.

10. Whom on earth does the devil hate most?

Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

11. What two deadly animals does the Bible use to portray the devil?

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Revelation 12:9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Note: Both lions and snakes use stealth and diversion to capture their prey. Like the devil, they spring suddenly upon their victims and are ruthless and indifferent to suffering.

12. What is the only way we can resist the devil?

James 4:7, 8 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Note: The only way to truly draw near to God is through prayer and by seeking to know Him through His Word. As we surrender our life to God's leading, we will find the power to resist the devil's temptations.

13. How did Jesus fight the assaults of the devil?

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written. ..."

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...

Psalms 119:11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Note: Our only safety from Satan's clever deceptions is in storing God's Word in our minds to keep us from sin. The same tools Jesus used to fight the devil are needed, and available, to us today.

14. What end will Satan finally meet?

Isaiah 14:15 (KJV) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

15. Will the devil ever reappear to tempt God's people?

Ezekiel 28:19 You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.

Nahum 1:9 Affliction will not rise up a second time.

Note: It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet, enough can be understood concerning both the origin and the final eradication of sin to make fully manifest the justice and goodness of God in all His dealings with evil.

16. How does God feel about the destruction of the wicked?

Ezekiel 33:11 "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die ... ?"

Note: We will discover in our lessons that in the end, the destruction of the wicked is voluntary. God's desire is to save all, but the choice belongs to man. God will never force salvation upon anyone. Through these studies, we will come to understand that the final destruction of the wicked is the last and only thing that love can do.

17. How did King David respond when he learned that his rebellious son Absalom, who attempted to take the throne by force, had been slain?

2 Samuel 18:33 Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son Absalom--my son, my son Absalom--if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!"

Note: This touching picture exemplifies how our heavenly Father feels about His lost children. Not only was He willing to die in our place, but He went one step further--He gave His greatest gift, His Son! God is not willing that any should perish. He is desperate for you to be saved. This is why Jesus died in your place, my friend.

Your Response to Jesus

Sadly, most of the world has joined Satan in his rebellion against our loving heavenly Father. Won't you, dear friend, make the choice today to love and serve Him?

ANSWER: _____

Satan Symbolized by the Kings of Tyre and Babylon

(Additional Study)

In Isaiah 14:4-15, the Bible uses the king of Babylon as a symbol of Satan, and in Ezekiel 28:11-19, Satan is symbolized by the king of Tyre. In both cases, we know that the symbolism goes beyond earthly kings because God's description of the being could not apply to any mortal man. Notice the ways Lucifer (now called Satan) is described in these passages of Scripture:

- fell from heaven (Isaiah 14:12)
- was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (Ezekiel 28:12)
- had been in Eden (verse 13)
- every precious stone was his covering (verse 13)
- was the anointed cherub who covers (verse 14)
- was on the holy mountain of God (verse 14)
- was perfect in his ways (verse 15)

Since the kings of Babylon and Tyre exhibited the same policies and suffered the same complete destruction as will Satan's kingdom, God used them to represent Satan himself. Virtually all Bible authorities are in agreement on the symbolism. Incidentally, the Bible records many other references to Lucifer (see Luke 4:5, 6; 10:18; John 8:44; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 3:8; Jude 6; Revelation 12:7-9), but without Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, we would not have the complete history.

Expect the Unexpected

Many people expect Satan to openly appear as God's enemy in the end time, but this is not so. Satan is indeed God's bitterest enemy, but his approach will be to feign righteousness (Matthew 24:24). He can appear as a glorious, angelic being (2 Corinthians 11:13-15) and will seek the worship of people (Revelation 13:12). Scripture is clear that his godly front will be so convincing that "all the world" will wonder after the beast (Revelation 13:3). Talk about a tragedy! Satan will be so effective in posing as Christ that virtually the entire world will follow him, thinking all the time that they are following Jesus. Will you be deceived? Not if you heed the Bible warnings presented in this series.

A Brilliant Angel

Satan is delighted when people portray him as an ugly, red, bat-winged creature that is part-man and part-beast, having split hooves and a long, pointed tail, or carrying a pitchfork and stoking the fires of hell. Nothing could be further from the truth. Such concepts come from Greek mythology. No such nonsense can be found in Scripture. The Bible describes Satan as a brilliant, highly attractive angel with an uncanny ability to communicate. He is also well acquainted with Scripture (Matthew 4:5, 6). The devil is a self-proclaimed enemy of God whose aim is to defame His character and capture His kingdom. Satan also despises you and your loved ones and has plans to destroy you. This series will help you understand his plans and learn how to thwart them. Just place your life in the protective care of your mighty Savior, and pray earnestly for His guidance.