

# Satan OT and NT

## Introduction

One might well ask the question, "Why would we want to learn anything about the devil?" Would it not be far more profitable to spend our time rather considering the glories of our Lord Jesus Christ? That may well be the case, but just for once, we wish to consider the person and work of our adversary the devil. A study of the devil may well give us a better understanding of much that happens in the bible, in the past, in the present, and in the future. It is an established fact that no general would ever embark on a campaign without first knowing something about his enemy. Our greatest enemy is Satan himself.

We will consider him under the following headings:

1. His names
2. His origins Ezekiel 28
3. His ambition Isaiah 14
4. His work in the past Gen 3, Gen 4, Job, Athaliah, Herod (Matthew 2), Luke 4, Judas, Peter, Paul
5. His work today God of this world. Prince of power of the air
6. His future work Rev 13 – the two beasts
7. His progressive fall Ezek 28, Heb 2, Rev 12, Rev 19, Rev 20, Isai 14

## 1. His names

The devil is a most complex character and I can think almost immediately of at least 14 titles under which he is spoken of in the Bible. If someone were asked to sum up our personality and work, they might come up with 5 or 6 titles at most. They might summarise us as husband, father, grandfather, brother, colleague, and not much else. But Satan is described in many more titles than these:

- The Serpent
- The Devil
- Satan
- The dragon
- Lucifer
- Son of the morning
- The king of Tyre
- The prince of this world
- The god of this world
- The wicked one
- An angel of light
- A roaring lion
- The prince of the power of the air
- The accuser of the brethren

Each title expresses another feature of his character, many of which we shall consider in this study. Needless to say, it would require more than twice as

many titles to fully describe the person and work of our Lord Jesus.

## **2. His origins**

The devil is an angel, a created being. In Ezekiel 28, he is described as the anointed cherub that covereth. One must be clear when we speak of the origins of the devil. God did not make the devil. God created an angel called Lucifer. Lucifer means "the day star" or "the morning star". The Lord Himself is described as "the bright and morning star", exceeding Lucifer in glory. We cannot understand why God did not immediately destroy Lucifer and put an end at once to his rebellion. This is one of the great mysteries of the Bible.

We also learn about Lucifer that he is the highest of all the angelic host. We read of this in Jude's epistle ie where Lucifer stood in relation to Michael the archangel:

Jude 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Lucifer was the light bearer of God's creation. Ezekiel chapter 28 describes him as being perfect in all his ways. God could not create anything that was less than perfect.

15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

He was full of wisdom, perfect in beauty. He was on the mountain of God – mountains in scripture often speak of kingdoms and of rule. Lucifer was at the very heart of the throne of God. He walked upon the stones of fire. But there came the time when it all went wrong – iniquity was found in thee.

## **3 His ambition**

We read of his ambition in Isaiah chapter 14:

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Lucifer did not express his ambitions outwardly – it was enough for him to have such thoughts in his heart, and God read in his heart what was there. Lucifer had been given a unique place in God's creation. He was the highest of all God's creatures, yet he was not content. He wanted to exalt himself higher – to become like the most high God Himself. Five times over in Isaiah 14, Lucifer used the expression, "I will". It is interesting to note that in Ezekiel 28 when God responded to Lucifer's rebellion, that God replied with five "I will's of His own. "I will cast thee out", "I will cast thee down". "I will destroy thee". This is in complete contrast to what we read about the Lord Jesus in Philippians chapter 2. He was active in His humiliation – He took seven steps downward until at last He was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. God

responded to this voluntary humiliation by exalting Him and giving Him a name above every one. There are seven steps recorded in God's exaltation. We see the truth of the Lord's words that "He that exalteth himself shall be abased", but he who abases himself shall be exalted.

What will become of Lucifer's ambition? He will one day be cast into hell. Men make a joke about the devil in hell. He is portrayed as the one who reigns there, to torment all those who are consigned to that place. But Satan will not reign in hell. The kings of earth shall rise up in amazement when he arrives there. "Art thou become as weak as we?" The one who shook nations, who caused the earth to tremble, will have lost all his power.

## 4. His past work

Ezekiel 28 tells us that Lucifer was cast out from heaven, from the innermost throne of God. So what has he been doing ever since? He has been trying in every way possible to thwart the purpose of God and advance his own cause. This began in Genesis chapter 3:

### 4.1. The garden of Eden – Genesis chapter 3

God made a garden in Eden – an earthly paradise. God created a man, Adam, and set him over all the works of His hands. Psalm 8 tells us that God put all in subjection to Adam. This would not be to Satan's liking. Here was a challenge to his ambition and he sought at once to overturn this. God had spoken to Adam and defined clearly the limits of his liberty in Genesis chapter 2:

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

When the Serpent entered the garden, He approached not Adam, but rather Eve his wife. He begins with a question,

Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The wise thing that Eve should have done was to ask the Serpent to go and put the same question to Adam. It was to Adam that God spoke. Eve received the word of God as it was put to her by Adam. But Eve did not repeat the words of God exactly as they had been put to her husband.

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Eve made four mistakes in what she said to the Serpent. God had said to Adam, "Of every tree thou mayest **freely** eat". God is a most liberal and giving God. There was only one restriction placed upon Adam and God was quite specific about it. They were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve omits the word "freely" in her reply. Again, she replies rather vaguely, "of the tree which is in the midst of the garden" ie she does not name it

specifically as God had done. Then she adds a prohibition of her own, "Neither shall ye touch it". God had said nothing about touching it. Finally, God had been quite positive about the consequence of disobeying His command, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die". Eve is rather more vague – "lest ye die".

By her misquoting of the word of God, Eve created an inroad for the Serpent to challenge the word of God.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

By deceiving Eve and causing her to lead her husband into transgression, the Serpent had brought sin into God's creation. Satan must have thought that he had triumphed – he had defeated the purpose of God for mankind. But soon he was to learn that God had not given up His purpose.

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

What did God mean by "her seed?" Who would be this man who would bruise his head? From that day on, Satan would try everything to corrupt the seed of the woman – even to destroy it where possible.

## **4.2 The murder of Abel**

Two sons are born to Eve outside of the garden – Cain and Abel. God told these two young men that there was a way back to having fellowship with Himself and that involved the bringing of a sacrifice. By faith, Abel obeyed and obtained witness that he was righteous. They each came several times – Abel with his lamb and Cain with his fruit of the ground. God accepted Abel's sacrifice but refused that of Cain. God called Cain's disobedience "the way of Cain". Soon the boys fell out and Cain rose up and slew his brother. Why did he do this? The New Testament tells us – he was of his father the devil.

When the devil saw these two men, he must have asked the question, "Is Abel the seed of the woman" that shall bruise my head?" And he instilled the thought of murder into the mind of Cain.

## **4.3 Athaliah attempts to destroy the royal seed**

2Ki 11:1 And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.

2Ki 11:2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons which were slain; and they hid him, even him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

2Ki 11:3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.

As the centuries rolled on from Eden, God revealed that the seed of the woman would also be the seed of David. Judah was the royal tribe and out of the royal seed would come the promised one. Athaliah therefore tries to kill all the royal seed to establish her own dynasty. She succeeded all bar one child, Joash, who

was hidden six years in the house of the Lord. It was no doubt another attempt by Satan to thwart the purpose of God, but again he failed.

#### **4.4 The slaughter by Herod – Matthew chapter 2**

In Matthew chapter 2, Herod learns from the wise men that the king of the Jews has been born. Instead of rejoicing at the news, Herod sends his soldiers to destroy all the male children in Bethlehem from two years of age and under, but God intervenes via the angelic message to Joseph, and the life of the child is preserved by the flight into Egypt.

#### **4.5 The temptation of the Lord in the wilderness**

Mt 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Lu 4:3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

Lu 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Lu 4:6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Lu 4:13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

The devil had managed to bring sin upon the first man in the garden. Could he now succeed once more with this second man in the wilderness? Eve failed by misquoting the word of God, but here was a man who lived by the word of God. He triumphed where Eve had failed. He replied to all three temptations, "It is written".

#### **4.6 The betrayal by Judas**

Judas had sat with the Lord and His disciples in the house in Bethany and watched as Mary broke the alabaster box of costly ointment, pouring it out on His feet. The greed of Judas is aroused. It could have fetched 300 pence in the market place, out of which he could have taken his portion. I believe it was from that moment on that he was susceptible to the idea of betraying the Lord. By the time of the last supper, the devil had already put it into his heart to betray the Lord:

Joh 13:2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

As the evening progressed, Satan went a stage further. He entered into Judas:

Joh 13:27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

Here was Satan's final attempt to destroy the Lord Jesus – the seed of the woman. Little did he know that by dying and rising again, the Lord would become the Saviour of all those who would believe in Him.

## 5 His work today

Satan has been busy during the whole of this dispensation. His entire purpose is to thwart the purpose of God. God's purpose is twofold:

Regarding the Church – to fill heaven with people who are just like His Son. He cannot rob us of our salvation, but he can rob God of any pleasure He might have in His people. And rob us at the same time.

Regarding Israel - God has promised a land to His earthly people, and He will keep His promise.

### 1. Satan's purpose amongst the unsaved

Ephesians chapter 2

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Paul writes to God's children in Philippi,

"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

This is only true of His saints. The rest of humanity – those who are "dead in sins – are under the influence of the Prince of the power of the air. It is a very apt title- he is invisible yet he has the power to influence the lives of the unsaved.

How does he work?

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

That is why men and women can hear the gospel preached over and over again, even being moved by it, and yet not being able to believe. Satan is working within them.

It reminds us of the parable of the Sower.

And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth:

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

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### 2. Satan's work amongst those who believe in Jesus

II Cor 11:14

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

The most dangerous man on earth is the devil with a bible in his hands. See the havoc caused by Mormons and Jehovah's witnesses.

1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring

lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Many Christians in the middle east and far east are seeing Satan as a roaring lion today.

The serpent

Ge 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.

2Co 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

The dragon

From Revelation onwards, Satan is seen as a dragon. He is cast out of heaven and comes down to earth. He has great fury because he knows that his time is short,

How can the Christian resist?

The devil has a great deal of power but not against the Christian. There are various things we can do to resist him.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Having knowledge of Satan's devices should help us to resist

The armour of God

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Finally, we can learn the lessons of Nehemiah chapter 13. Our attention is drawn towards a certain chamber in the temple that had once been used to store the tithes and offerings of the Jews. The room had become empty – the people had given up on their worship. But the room had not stayed empty for

long. Soon it was filled with the household stuff of Tobiah. This man had been a sworn enemy of the people, trying to hinder the rebuilding of the city.

How could this happen? There are several reasons for it.

The word of God forgotten – Moabites were living amongst them.

The failure of leadership – Eliashib

The absence of leadership – Nehemiah

The Sabbath not kept

The unequal yoke

## **5. His future work**

The two beasts of Revelation chapter 13

What about the future work of the devil? Has he given up in his attempt to usurp the place of God? Far from it. In Revelation chapter 13, we see how he raises up two men, each described as a beast, to take the place of God and His Son. The first beast arises out of the sea. We believe him to be a gentile ruler who will rise up in the last days. The dragon will give him his power and his throne and great authority. He is the ruler of a 10 nation confederacy. He will have military power, economic power, and religious power. He is described in II Thessalonians as the Man of Sin who will sit in the temple of God and present himself as God. Through this man, Satan will try to achieve his ambition of usurping the place of God.

The second beast of Revelation chapter 13, the Antichrist, will cause all men to worship the first beast, and gives him power over the economic world. Both men will be destroyed by the Appearing in glory of the King of Kings.

## **6. His progressive fall\* Isaiah 14, Heb 2, Rev 12, Rev 19, Rev 20**

It would have been quite easy for God to have imprisoned Lucifer from the very moment of his ambition being made known, just as we read in Jude's epistle of those angels who are reserved in darkness and in chains until the judgment of the great day. Satan's doom is certain but it has pleased God, for His own reasons, to allow Satan a certain degree of liberty until finally he is cast into the lake of fire. He is, however, on a downward path to destruction as we shall now see.

### **6.1. Ejected from the presence of God**

Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 both emphasise the grand and glorious place that once belonged to Lucifer, the son of the morning. He was at the very heart of divine government, the anointed cherub who covered the throne of God. But because of what he said in his heart, he was cast out from the divine presence. He still retains a place in the air, hence his title, the prince of the power of the air.

## **6.2. His power over death annulled**

Hebrews chapter 2 tells us that through His death, the Lord Jesus destroyed, or rendered powerless, him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

Heb 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Up until the death of the Lord, it is evident that the devil had been given the power over death. Until this point in time, no-one had ever died then risen again from the grave. No doubt that is why in Jude's epistle, we read of the struggle between the devil and Michael regarding the body of Moses. Was this so that Moses could appear on the mount of transfiguration along with Elijah? Who can say for definite?

But in not only dying but also rising again after three days, the Lord Jesus broke the power of death. The devil no doubt tried to exert all his power to keep the Lord in the grave but his power was broken. Today, it is the Lord Jesus and not the devil that holds this power. The Lord says this about Himself in Revelation chapter 1:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

One day, the day of resurrection and Rapture, the Lord will use those keys to raise again the countless millions of the "dead in Christ" who will rise to meet Him in the air. And what a wonderful meeting place the Lord has arranged for us. It is "in the air". We might think how disappointing not to meet Him in Paradise or in the Father's House. But rather, we are going to meet Him in the place where Satan now holds sway as the Prince of the Power of the Air. Satan then will see the countless numbers of the redeemed and he will be helpless to intervene. He will never tempt them again nor persecute them. The saints will be beyond his reach for ever.

## **6.3. Cast out of heaven to earth**

Revelation chapter 12 says the following:

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

In this section of Revelation, we read of heaven taking control. There is war in heaven, a war which is initiated by Michael and his angels. They fight against the dragon and his angels, and the dragon is defeated. As a result, he is cast down to earth. His place as prince of the power of the air has been lost. He is now on earth. He does not take his demotion well. He has great wrath, because he knows his time is short. It begs the question, "If the dragon knows his time is short, why does he persist in his struggles right to the end? I

suppose the answer is that the devil reads the bible – but he doesn't believe it. He still believes he can triumph in the end.

The dragon's time on earth begins a period of time called the Tribulation. The dragon brings to the fore the two men described as "Beasts" in chapter 13. The first mentioned is the great confederate leader, "the Beast": the second is the king in the land, the Antichrist. It will be a time of desperate suffering for all the world.

#### **6.4. Cast into the bottomless pit**

When the Lord returns in glory to the earth to rescue Israel, He will take the Beast and the Antichrist and cast them into the lake of fire. The dragon will be taken and cast into the bottomless pit, where he will be held for a thousand years. Revelation 20 describes the scene:

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

It is another major step in Satan's downfall;

Driven away from the throne of God

Stripped of his power over death

Cast out of heaven to earth

Cast into the bottomless pit

#### **6.5. Cast into the lake of fire**

Revelation chapter 20 describes the final stage of Satan's doom. Earlier in Ezekiel 28, we had considered the five "I will"s of God's response to the five "I will"s of Lucifer in Isaiah 14. We are about to consider the fifth step in the downfall of Lucifer.

But first he is released from the Bottomless Pit. This might seem strange, yea impossible. After one thousand years of constraint when his influence over men has been eliminated, he is set free once more. But how will the world receive him, after one thousand years of the beneficent and righteous rule of the Lord Jesus? The answer lies again in Revelation 20:

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of

the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Despite the universal peace and prosperity of the Lord's reign, Satan is able to raise his standard upon earth and a great army of men rally to his cause. I believe this is done to show the hardness and unbelief still of men's hearts, even after a thousand years. It is man's final rebellion and the final rebellion of Satan. It will all end in disaster, and Satan is taken and cast into the lake of fire, his final destiny.

Re 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.