

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DEVIL

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Many people, including (unfortunately) well-educated Christians, have an incorrect perception of who and what Satan is, and consequently this misperception carries over to how they see themselves in the context of God's creation. We live in a world of increasing violence, and unspeakable atrocities such as abortions and genocides; terrorism and suicide bombings have become the order of the day - and not a single day goes by, that TWICE the number of innocent lives that perished on 9-11, are not silently murdered *in vivo*.¹

The problem started in the Garden of Eden, when God cursed the serpent and declared war (Genesis 3:14, 15). We know that God created Lucifer and the angels before He created the Earth (Job 38:7). Satan's mission is to "*steal, kill and destroy*" (John 10:10), and he does this by lying, because he is the father of lies (John 8:44).

Therefore, we should not be surprised when we observe lies being told, and even lies being preached from the pulpit, albeit unwittingly. The Devil is the master of lies, and so we should expect nothing less. We see that God's creation began with Lucifer - aka: "*The Son of The Morning*" (Isaiah 14:12), and that he was in the Garden of Eden (Ezekiel 28:13), and was a created being, perfect magnificently beautiful and wonderfully glorious beyond description (verse 13b). He was "*...the anointed cherub that covereth...*" (Verse 14a); in other words, "*...a mighty angelic guardian...*" (NLT) of God's creation. This was so until "*...iniquity was found...*" in him.

The question that arises here is, what iniquity? What was it, precisely, that caused Lucifer to fall? We know that Lucifer is a created being, and that he is not omnipresent (everywhere) like God, because he goes "*to and fro in the Earth*", and is "*walking up and down in it*" (Job 1:7b; 2:2a), and "*...as a roaring lion, walketh about...*" (1 Peter 5:8b).

Now in the face of what all of us were taught, myself included, and in the face of what has been preached no doubt billions of times from pulpits all over the world, I must ask you a question after you read Isaiah 14:12-14; the five "*I wills*" of Lucifer that us his defiance of God, and that question is simply this: Do you believe, or do you think that Lucifer - finite, created being; the most intelligent of all the angelic hosts; do you think that Lucifer, knowing his limits, thought he could be like God? Do you believe that Lucifer just "bugged out" one day, and thought that by plotting and scheming against God - a God who knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9, 10) that Lucifer thought he could usurp God's throne and be worshipped in God's place? I don't think so - not anymore; and I'll explain to you why I don't think so, and I'll back it up with the Bible:

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept; line upon line; line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isaiah 28:10, 11).

We can only examine scripture in context, if we know precisely the sequence of events, and we know that Satan was still Lucifer in the Garden of Eden, before he tempted Eve. Before God created Man, Lucifer was the chief of the angelic beings. However, God was not finished with His plan when He created Lucifer and the angels.

*"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." (Genesis 1:26a).
"...and man became a living soul". (Genesis 2:7b)*

It is at this point that Lucifer became jealous - but it wasn't because he coveted the throne of God, but because he envied Man, who was created in God's image. In Psalms 8:5 it says, *"...for thou [God] hast made him [Man] a little lower than the **angels**..."* (Brackets / emphasis mine). The word in the original Hebrew, which is translated as *"angels"* in the KJV and NKJV, is *"Elohim"* - The masculine plural Hebrew word for God. This word is properly translated in the NLT as *"Gods"*; the same word used in Genesis 1:1 for "God". The verse, properly translated is: *"...for you have made us only a little lower than the **Gods**"*. This proper context is confirmed in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians when he writes, *"Know ye not that we shall judge angels?"* (1 Corinthians 6:3) The Bible does not contradict itself, and so we see that we could not *"judge [the] angels"* if we were created *"a little lower than the angels"*, as it says in the King James translation. We see that it was an error (certainly intentional) of the King James translators, that changed a single word from the original Hebrew, and thereby changed the entire context of the story.

So when God created Man, Lucifer finally realized what his place as a created, finite being would be in the grand plan of God's creation. As *"the anointed cherub that covereth"* (Ezekiel 28:14a), he was, along with all the angels, to be God's protectorate - God's servant to minister to Mankind; and this was the source of the iniquity that was found in him - a jealousy of Man - of us! Lucifer was no longer the highest and most perfect and beautiful creature God created. When God breathed life into Adam, and gave him a mate of his own flesh, and endowed them both out of their love for each other to procreate; to have children, Lucifer became jealous and said, *"No!"*. This is where his pride and arrogance took hold; this is the "iniquity" that was found in him. This is where he said, *"... **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, **I** will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I** will be like the most high....[Not Man, but **me**]"* - Isaiah 14:13b - 14 (brackets / emphasis mine).

Notice, as we can better understand this assertion if we emphasize the **"I"**, and instead of taking it to mean, **"I, not God"**, we now can see that it really means, **"I, not Man"**. Lucifer could not, as a finite, created being, ever de-throne the Almighty God, and he is too intelligent to ever for a moment, have even entertained such a thought. However, Lucifer knew that there was one thing God couldn't do; God could not create a being that could love Him, without also giving that creature the free will to hate Him. Love under compulsion, is not love, but something else. Lucifer, the angels, and Man - all of us can choose:

"I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" - Isaiah 45:7

Why?

"I call Heaven and Earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live".
- Deuteronomy 30:19

Therefore, we see that Lucifer's fall was not because he wanted to be God, but because he was (is) jealous of Man, who is like God - created in the image and likeness of God, and a little lower than God, Himself. Therefore, so Lucifer attempted to throw a monkey wrench into God's plan, but we see that God already knew what would happen. In fact, God knew everyone who was ever born, and who will be born tomorrow, and He knew us before He created the universe, and before He breathed a soul into the dust of the Earth that became Adam at the potter's hand:

"He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will". - Ephesians 1:4, 5

Satan's plan is to destroy God's creation. Satan's entire purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy. Satan lies in order to conceal our true identity as children of God from us; to cause us to believe that there is no God, that the universe created itself 20 billion years ago, and since it has been here so long, it is likely that it will be here another 20 billion years (2 Peter 3 – 5). The Devil wants us to believe that Man, along with all life on earth, was an accident that crawled out of a slimy ocean 4.5 billion years ago, and gradually became men and women who could choose to love God or deny He even exists.

Satan must believe that he can somehow bargain his position as "Top Dog" of all created beings, by proving to God that God made a mistake when He created Man.

In the book of Job, which is probably the oldest book in the Bible, we are made privy to a conversation between God and Satan. Go asks him:

"Hast thou considered my servant Job...?" - Job 1:8, and if I may be permitted to paraphrase Satan's answer (verse 10, 11)

"Do you think Job loves you for nothing? Look at all the goodies you've given him! You protect him and help him prosper in everything he does... but if you take away some of those goodies, I'll bet he will curse you to your face".

So God allowed Satan to test Job. Satan killed Job's sons and daughters; his servants were massacred by the Sabeans, his livestock was consumed with fire, and his camels stolen by the Chaldeans. In a single day, Job's life literally collapsed around him.

"In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" - Job 1:22

After this, in chapter two, we see a similar conversation between God and Satan, and because Job did not curse God, Satan makes another attempt to steal Job from God; he says to God:

"...skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life". - Job 2:4b

So God, with foreknowledge of the outcome, allowed Satan to afflict Job with painful boils (2:8), and it got so bad for Job that his wife tells him, *"...dost thou still retain thy integrity? Curse God and die"* (Verse 2:9). [Talk about being *"unequally yoked"*! - 2 Corinthians 6:14]. Still, Job was true to his faith, and did not blame or curse God. You see, Job didn't know about Romans 8:28:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose".

Even though Job did not have the benefit of this scripture (or any scripture, for that matter), we see that in the end, God blessed Job more abundantly than before for his faithfulness (trust) and perseverance through adversity. We must assume that Satan came away from his little "bet" with God so mad that smoke was coming out of his ears!

Satan's mission is to tempt us as he tempted Job. His intent is to humiliate us before God; to give us grief, despair, hopelessness, strife, conflict, war, crime, murder, sickness, famine, and disharmony within families, feuds between friends, and scandals in the Church. He wants to ruin our lives, and make us *"curse God and die"* just as Job's wife advised him to do; but take heart:

"There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able [to trust]; But with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it". - 1 Corinthians 10:13

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power. and of love, and of a sound mind". - 2 Timothy 1:7

Let us not forget who and what Satan is, and what his fate will ultimately be:

"Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee saying, Is this the man that made the Earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the Earth as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" - Isaiah 14:15 - 17

In other words, people will look at this Satan with utter contempt, and say, *"This is him? Is this the no-account little twirp that caused all this havoc and chaos for so long? No, it can't be! What a pathetic little nothing!"*

And so we know who will be victorious in the end; all we have to do is choose which side we want to be on. In addition, while we now know who Satan is, and what his agenda is, let's not forget who we are:

"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is Man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" - Psalms 8:3, 4

Indeed, what is Man? Ahh!, Man is something special! He is close to God's heart,; made in God's image and likeness, and a higher being even than the angels of heaven! The Psalm of David continues: *"For thou hast made him [Man] a little lower than the Gods, [Hebrew: "Elohim"] and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hat put all things under his feet". - Psalms 8:5 - 6*

So, dear brothers and sisters, we know who we are, and we know who Satan is. We are no longer deceived, and we can now begin to reclaim our heritage, our birthright, and our destiny by being in Christ. Yes, what is Man? We are God's children, and God, our heavenly father loves us as his family:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". John 3:16

Yes, God loves us. It is our choice to love Him back. God can create the universe and destroy it with a spoken word. He cannot force us to love Him; we must do that of our own free will. Moreover, once you know who your father is, and how much He loves you and cares for you; how can we not love a father like that?

¹ *In vivo* - (Latin) "*in a living body*" - in the womb as used in this context.

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A large, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Todeschini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.