



Truth For These Times



33. THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

The Bible reveals an unseen mastermind behind the trouble, woe and suffering in this world of turmoil. This super-human personality is called the devil or Satan, who was originally created a perfect angel, but fell from his high position. Since his fall, his efforts have been devoted in hardened rebellion against God. The devil is mentioned 71 times in the New Testament. There are some who disbelieve in a personal devil, but if we believe the Bible and Jesus Christ we have no alternative but to believe that such a disastrous creature exists and is actively engaged in his work of destruction.

JESUS BELIEVED IN THE EXISTENCE OF A DEVIL

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Not only did Jesus clearly show the devil's existence, but He also revealed the evil one's character – a murderer and a liar.

Matthew 13:28,39 He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" ...The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

This parable speaks about weeds (called tares) that were sown amongst the wheat, and points out that the weeds were sown by an enemy. The enemy is exposed as the devil. Thus Satan is responsible for 'sowing the seed' or originating evil that culminates in the development of evil men and women (the tares). The wheat represents those who have accepted Christ and through His strength overcome the devil.

1 John 3:8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

The devil is clearly seen as the originator of sin.

HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?

Ezekiel 28:12-15 Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 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 was prepared for you on the day you were created. 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. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you."



Jesus taught that there was Devil who was the author of sin.

The king of Tyre is here used as a symbol of Satan, for although Tyrus was the literal king, the real ruler was Satan himself who had control over the monarch. As Ezekiel looked at the characteristics of Tyrus, he was

given a vision that transcended beyond this earthly ruler. It is quite evident that this text is not speaking about the literal king. Notice the statements, “You were in Eden” – Satan had been there, but Tyrus had not. “You were created” – the devil as a fallen angel certainly was, but not Tyrus – he was born. Also notice “You were the annointed cherub”, and “You were on the holy mountain of God.”

DID GOD CREATE A DEVIL?

God created a perfect being – an angel that excelled in beauty. As it states here “You were perfect in your ways”, but then “iniquity was found in you”. God made a perfect angel, but “Lucifer” (which was his name when God created him) rebelled against God and made a devil of himself. Some will say, “Then is not God responsible?” The answer is “NO”. For example; God made pure grapes, but man allows the juice to ferment and turns it into alcoholic wine. Alcohol robs man of his reason and induces unworthy behavior. Is God to be blamed for the woe caused by alcohol? Of course not! Sin made a devil out of Lucifer. Sin made a race of rebels from perfect humanity. God hates sin and will ultimately eliminate it.



Lucifer in heaven.

Ezekiel 28:17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you.

The devil became infatuated with himself and his own beauty. His whole existence became self centered instead of God centred.

Isaiah 14:12-14 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! 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.”

Lucifer was cast out of heaven because of a long succession of selfish choices. He came to live in one narrow dimension: “I”. This is how Lucifer, the Archangel, perfect and sinless, debased himself into Satan, the devil. So selfish had he become that he aspired to take God’s position of rulership. He wanted God’s power, but not His character of love.



Lucifer and his sympathisers were removed from heaven.

Some then ask, “Why didn’t God make Lucifer without freewill so that he could not sin?” God could have made him like clockwork – a machine – not capable of choosing evil, but then neither could he choose good. Voluntary worship, obedience, and the development of character would not have been possible. God wanted His creatures to give Him spontaneous, chosen love and affection. This could only be possible if he created beings with freewill.

Then the question is often asked, “Why didn’t God destroy Lucifer when he sinned, to save the woe brought about by his evil work?” God could easily have done this, but his destruction would have been misunderstood by the other angels. Satan had boasted of great promise in disobedience to the law of God. His claims

were undermining God’s perfect government. He claimed God was a tyrant, a dictator, with no right to impose His restraints upon His creatures. If the devil had been destroyed immediately, his charges would have been supported. The angels would say, “Satan was right”, and would remain loyal to God through fear instead of love. This type of service God could not accept. God has given His beings the power of choice and accepts the service that comes by love. Time was needed to give sin and its results a chance to grow. When

the universe sees the full outcome of sin, nobody will be left in doubt that it should be eliminated forever. God's government will be proved beyond doubt for eternity.

Revelation 12:4,7,9 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born....And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,... 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.



Eve believes the lies of Satan against God and takes the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

When the devil was cast out of heaven, a large number of angels (a third of the stars of heaven), were cast out with him. These fallen angels are often referred to as demons.

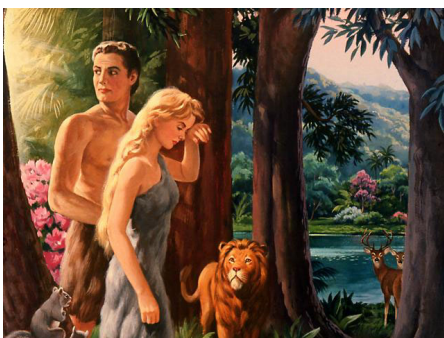
Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

These wicked angels are awaiting the judgment.

THE ORIGIN OF SIN ON PLANET EARTH

Genesis 3:2-6 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' " Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

The devil, speaking through the serpent, deceived our first parents, Adam and Eve, into disobeying God. This brought the troubles, woe and suffering we see in the world today.



Adam and Eve had to leave their beautiful garden home because they disobeyed.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

The one man refers to Adam. The whole human race descends from Adam and Eve and all have inherited the tendency toward evil.

Some will ask "Why didn't God blot out Adam and Eve and start again?" What do parents do with disobedient children? Do they destroy them and adopt others? Of course not! Parents are sorry for their children's disobedience, but they still love them and hope they will turn out right in the end. And so God did not destroy

Adam and Eve. He had a better way. He solved the problem by love. This love sent Jesus to Calvary.

WHY DOES GOD PERMIT SUFFERING?

Job 2:7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

The story of Job shows that God is not primarily responsible for suffering. Sometimes God allows suffering for the development of character as was true in the case of Job. Job said, “When He has tested me I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). God did not prevent the suffering of His own Son on the cross. If Jesus had not suffered and died there would be no hope for us to gain everlasting life. Then much suffering is caused by man’s own folly, such as the consequences of war. Suffering is often caused by disobedience to natural laws. Often sickness comes because of a failure to exercise or eat correct food. The basic cause of suffering is sin, because suffering was unknown before sin existed. The devil is the originator of sin, so he is primarily the one to blame – but not God.



The death of Christ made sure the death of sin and suffering.

WHAT HAS GOD DONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING?

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

GOD HAS DONE SOMETHING

Because of what Jesus has done, there will be an end to sin and the suffering it causes.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

GOD IS DOING SOMETHING about suffering now. Through His earthly representatives the gospel message is being proclaimed. This message extends an invitation to be part of God’s kingdom where there will be no more suffering.

Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH nor SORROW, nor CRYING. There shall be no more PAIN, for the former things have passed away.

GOD WILL YET DO SOMETHING ABOUT SUFFERING. Those who accept the gospel are given the reward of living in God’s eternal kingdom where sin and suffering will never arise. Soon Satan, sin, sinners and suffering will be gone. The wickedness of sin will have filled its cup of iniquity and will prove beyond doubt to the whole universe that sin and its government must be shunned for eternity. Even Satan will be destroyed. His outcome is eternal death. The lake of fire will bring about his destruction. He will be tormented (i.e. to try, or test) for eternity. Torment does not mean torture. His trial in the fire will result in his eternal end.



The Devil is like a roaring lion seeking to devour us.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SIN AND THE DEVIL

Ezekiel 28:18,19 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth A FIRE FROM THE MIDST OF THEE, it shall devour thee, and I WILL BRING THEE TO ASHES upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror and NEVER SHALT THOU BE ANYMORE. (KJV)

The devil is to be destroyed forever.

Nahum 1:9 What do you conspire against the LORD? He will make an utter end of it. Affliction will not rise up a second time.

Sin will never reoccur anywhere in the universe throughout all eternity. Its results in this world will forever put the question beyond doubt, that sin has something worthwhile to offer. It will be brought to an utter end.

Revelation 12:12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.

The devil is having his last fling. His end will come soon.

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

The devil is angry because his time is short.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 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.



Satan and his followers will be destroyed at the end of the millennium.

The devil operates by deception. He has always appeared as a benefactor when his work is bent on destruction. His supreme aim is to prevent people from receiving eternal life. Some ask “What chance do we have against such a crafty foe?”

1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

The devil’s death knell was rung at the cross of Jesus. If Jesus abides in us, we have no need to fear the devil. The Christian is on the winning side, for Christ is far more powerful than Satan.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Here is the solution.

1. Submission to God.
2. Then resist the devil.

To reverse the procedure would bring defeat. We have nothing to fear while we constantly surrender our lives to Jesus Christ. We need never fear the devil – in fact it is better to think of Jesus.



Jesus loves us and will defeat His and our enemy – Satan.

“There are Christians who think and speak altogether too much about the power of Satan. They think of their adversary, they pray about him, they talk about him, and he looms up greater and greater in their imagination. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. Satan is pleased when we magnify his power. Why not talk of Jesus? Why not magnify His power and His love?” *Desire of Ages*, page 493.

Here is good counsel. We can be overcomers at last – not in our own strength – but in His strength. In Rev.12:11 it states “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” Dear friend, will you determine to be on the side of Jesus – the winning side? Satan’s way leads to death – God’s way leads to life.

Review Sheet – The Origin of Evil

ASSIGNMENT – Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. Did Jesus believe in the existence of the devil? John 8:44
You are of your father _____.
2. Who originated sin? 1 John 3:8
For the _____
_____.
3. Did God create a devil? Ezekiel 28:12-15
You were perfect _____
_____.
4. Why did Lucifer choose to rebel against God and become Satan? Isa 14:12-14
(In your own words)

5. Who joined the devil in his rebellion and what was their fate? Rev 12:4,7,9
He was cast to the _____
_____.
6. Who was responsible for the origin of sin on our planet? Romans 5:12
Therefore, just as through _____ (Adam) _____
_____.
7. Why didn't God make the angels and man obey automatically so that they would never have sinned?
(In your own words)

8. Is God responsible for suffering? Job 1-3. Why is there suffering?
(In your own words)

9. Will suffering continue for eternity? Revelation 21:4
There shall be no _____
_____.
10. How will the devil be destroyed? Ezekiel 28:18,19
Therefore I brought _____;
_____ upon the earth.... And shall be _____.
11. Will sin ever raise its ugly head again after the devil is destroyed? Nahum 1:9
An utter end of it _____
_____.
12. How can we overcome the devil today? James 4:7
Therefore submit _____
_____.

Have you chosen to be on God's side – the way that will conquer at last?

YES _____ NO _____