

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 12/11/05
The Angelic Conflict. Part 3.
How and When the Angelic Conflict began.

We are on point 3 in our study of the doctrine of the angelic conflict which is: **When and How the Angelic Conflict Began.** The angelic conflict began *before* the creation of the human race. It begins during the dateless period between the creation of the heavens and the earth in their perfect form in which they first appeared in Gen 1:1, and the desolating judgments which ended that period, when earth *became* waste and empty in Gen 1:2. Gen 1:1, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* This is not the beginning of God, because God has no beginning; He is eternal; nor is this the beginning of the angels, because we know the angels were already around before God created the heavens and the earth, Job 38:4-7, where the Lord said, “*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars [angels] sang together, And all the sons of God [the angels] shouted for joy?*”

No one in the human race can ever really understand, in depth, the principle of omniscience, and the fact that God knows all things and He has everything under control. The apostle Paul said in Rom 11:33, *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and incomprehensible are His ways!* Remember that it is God's intention that every believer come to understand everything in the Bible, and that is *in time.* Anything which God did not intend for us to know was not included in the canon of Scripture. Deu 29:29, *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may observe all the words of this doctrine.* This is not done all at once, but knowledge of Bible doctrine is built line upon line, precept upon precept, knowledge is accumulated over time, and if you stay with it long enough, it can be done. Every book in the Bible was written by a human author who understood what he was recording; therefore, humans can understand each book if they desire to and follow God's line of command.

Job is about to learn from God that some of the greatest blessings you can have in this life come through suffering, not through prosperity. So the Lord says in Job 38:4-6, “*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars [the angels with authority] sang together, And all the sons of God [beni ha Elohim, the angels] shouted for joy?*” The angels were there when God laid the foundation of the earth! Gen 1 is not a record of the creation of the earth; rather it is a record of the restoration of the earth. So, these were angels that were around before Gen 1:1. At some time in eternity past, before the creation of the earth, God created the angelic host. Notice in Job 38:7, when God laid the foundation of the earth *all the sons of God*, not some, *but all the angels shouted for joy*, because they were undivided at that time. Satan, and all of the angels, had not yet rebelled in arrogance; therefore all the angels shouted for joy. So in Gen 1:1 the universe, the heavens and the earth, were originally created as the domain of the angels. Here they ruled and performed whatever responsibilities and tasks God had for them. It was between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2 that Satan rebelled against God and enticed the angels to follow him. Along with sin and evil, Satan's rebellion brought chaos upon the earth. As part of God's judgment

against these angels, the planet was enshrouded in darkness. Without light or heat, the raging waters of the deep froze into an ice pack, and before the earth could be inhabited again, restoration was necessary. Gen 1:2, *And the earth became [not was] formless and void*, The phrase *formless and void* in the Hebrew is *tohuw waabohuw*, and it comes up in another passage that's important to our subject. Isaiah tells us about a time like this in Isa 24:1, *Behold, the Lord lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface, and scatters its inhabitants*. Look at Jer 4:23-26, *I looked on the earth, and behold, [it was] formless and void [tohuw waabohuw, same as Gen 1:2]; And to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, And all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, And all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness, And all its cities were pulled down Before the Lord, before His fierce anger.*

What made the Lord angry and caused Him to do this to planet earth was the angelic rebellion that took place, and this is when God covered the entire earth with ice. After this Gen 1:2 tells us, *and the Spirit of God began to move over the surface of the waters*. This was actually the beginning of God granting Satan, and the angels who followed him, their appeal. So the earth had to be restored for man's occupancy that came long after the creation of the earth. However, man's occupancy on planet earth didn't last too long before Adam and the woman fell, and Satan became the ruler of the world again, and Satan always considers this one of his greatest victories.

We have already noted Eze 28, where we met Satan in all of his glamour, beauty, and glory to understand what the angelic conflict is all about; however, we still need some principles from it as a part of this doctrine. Doctrine needs to be repeated, remember Phi 3:1, *Finally, my brethren, keep on having inner happiness in the Lord. On the one hand, to be writing the same doctrines to you is not troublesome to me, while on the other hand, it is a safeguard or a basis of security for you*. It is for our safeguard and protection to have doctrines repeated over and over again. So the alert pastor repeats doctrine. Look at Peter's advice in the last days of his life, 2Pe 1:12, *Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you*. Peter is now seventy years old, and he is about to die, and Peter has this advice, *"I shall always be ready"* because he was a prepared communicator of doctrine. No matter how bored the congregation gets, or how annoyed someone might be, a pastor who truly loves the Lord Jesus Christ and who truly loves his congregation will go against the grain and will repeat, repeat, and repeat. This is how inculcation and doctrinal impartation takes place. Repetition of doctrine is the only way of teaching an entire congregation of believers who are at different levels of spiritual growth. Repetition of doctrine is also necessary for converting *gnosis* (knowledge) into *epignosis* (wisdom). Peter considers it his solemn duty to repeat to the Royal Family of God. As long as you have positive volition toward doctrine, and you listen carefully and concentrate under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, something new always breaks through. Only the arrogant person says I've heard that before, as if hearing something before is all that matters. What matters is the inculcation of Bible Doctrine.

2Pe 1:13-15, *And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind*. Whatever we have cultivated in our conscious and subconscious mind, and nourished with repetition, will one day become a reality. It's the repetition of that which we truly believe that leads to assurance and conviction. Once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen; you learn by building the muscle through repetition.

So, in Eze 28, we meet the devil, and see him as he was, and now is, Eze 28:11-12, *Again the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre [The king of Tyre was one the few individuals in human history who was possessed by Satan, just*

like the serpent in the garden and Judas Iscariot who betrayed our Lord] *and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*

This is the Lord speaking to Satan inside the king of Tyre, and the phrase “*You had the seal of perfection*” means Satan was the most beautiful, the wisest, the most personable creature ever created. This also reveals that angels have form, they appear to be made of light and can travel through space, and their bodies are not visible to the human race for the obvious reason of the danger of worshipping angels, as Col 2:18 warns us against. Col 2:18, *Let no one keep defrauding you or robbing you of your prize [escrow blessings] by delighting in self-abasement [false humility] and the worship of the angels [or the type of worship that the fallen angels promote] taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause [arrogant] by his carnal and fleshly system of thinking,*

Satan is a super-genius, and he has the greatest mind that any creature has ever had; in fact, only one mind is more intelligent than his which is made available to creatures and that is *the mind of Christ* (1Co 2:16, Phi 2:5). Satan is the master of deception, the master deceiver, and he loves to cause division and blind God's people especially from what he is doing behind the scenes. No true man or woman of consistent doctrine and prayer ever questioned the existence of the devil and his kingdom of evil spirits. The problem many have is that Satan succeeds in wearing out the saints of the Most High, Dan 7:25, *And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One*, Satan does not do it all at once, but gradually, and continually, so that little by little the saints are worn down. Maybe he'll use someone of the opposite sex as he did against Samson in Jdg 16:16 where Delilah wore down Samson. If we could see in the invisible realm, we would be shocked at the satanic plot to cause Christians not to concentrate. Satan creates discord, breaks up unity, destroys patterns, tears the mind apart, destroys the emotions, attacks the body, and brings in *false concepts* as truth. Satan tells people to live by those false concepts and to be free, and as they begin to live by these concepts, they actually lose their freedom to live. Anything that causes confusion and division and splits your thinking, is *cosmos diabolicus*, of the devil's world system.

So, Satan is very aggressive and tries to wear down the saints. God offers us the mind of Christ, which is much greater than the mind of Satan, and the average believer says "NO THANKS." Is it any wonder why Rev 12:9 says, *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.* He deceives the whole world.

In Rev 13:14, *he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform.*

In Rev 18:23, he deceives the world by using a very popular church in Rome.

In Rev 19:20, he deceives those who had received the mark of the beast.

Just before the Millennial reign begins, a seraph angel is said to throw Satan into the abyss in Rev 20:3, *and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.*

Satan was the *seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.* By the way, his outward appearance hasn't changed. Throw away your concepts of a gruesome creature. Satan was smart enough to know that he was the most beautiful creature that ever came along, and he was smart enough to try to use his beauty and his genius to his own advantage. But, if there's anything that destroys genius, talent, and beauty, it is arrogance. First, there is the thought of arrogance, then the decision of arrogance, and then there is the action of arrogance. As with Satan, first he thought it, then he decided it, and then he did it! Satan led the first great revolt in the universe, started the first conspiracy in the universe, and this is the pre-historic angelic conflict. The original sin among angelic creatures is like the original sin among human creatures; it occurred as a decision in perfect environment!

There are three things that you can *do without*, as far as happiness in life is concerned: 1) You don't have to be a genius to be happy; in fact, it's very hard to be a genius and be happy. 2) You don't have to be beautiful to be happy. 3) You don't need a perfect environment to be happy. People associate happiness with these three things, and yet they are the least important things in life as far as happiness is concerned. The point is that these three factors cannot, and do not, bring happiness to the one who has them. Happiness comes from truth and is a state of mind. Most importantly, happiness is something that all members of the human race are born without. Satan was created an adult with perfect beauty, with the greatest genius of any creature God ever made, and with perfect environment. He didn't have to acquire these; he had them from the start of his life. With self-consciousness, he had perfect beauty, perfect brains, in a perfect environment, as Eze 28:12 says, *he was the sum total of perfection*. He had everything that people ordinarily think would give them happiness. But these things never bring happiness, because people who have all of these things always want something else. They're not happy, something's missing: **They want power, approbation, and they want to be recognized.**

Satan had beauty and brains from the start of his life, and he also had authority being the anointed cherub or the Messiah's angel, but he got tired of being second in charge. He became bored; he had everything except God's power and that's what he wanted most. Arrogance promotes inordinate ambition; this is why the first sin mentioned in God's top seven is **arrogance**, the sin of Satan. Arrogance is satanic, and it is found in tremendous measure among born again believers. Many of them are so busy cleaning up the devil's world, they don't know a thing about the angelic conflict and why they are here. They are fanatical, arrogant fools who want to straighten everything out. They ignore the principle of separation of church and state, a basic concept of freedom. They want everyone to get involved in whitewashing the devil's world.

The lust for power has its roots in arrogance, and the lust for power is simply much more than having the ability to manipulate people. The lust doesn't begin with trying to exercise authority or influence over people; it starts with pre-occupation with self. **Arrogance is a desire for recognition.** Eze 28:13, *"You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared."*

The adorning with jewels suggests his great importance and the glory of his appearance. Even in the Garden of Eden, his title *nahash*, means *the shining one*. The Apostle Paul states that he is even now transformed into an angel of light, 2Co 11:12-15, *But what I am doing, I will continue to do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.*

The precious stones mentioned in Eze 28:13 are displayed three times as recorded in the Bible: 1) In the high priest's breastplate as a manifestation of divine grace. 2) In the New Jerusalem, which reflects the glory of God. 3) As the covering of this great angel, which signalizes the highest of all creation. No distinction could be imposed on any creature more exalting than is imposed by these covering stones. In Eze 28:13, the phrase *the workmanship of your settings and sockets* refers to the fact that he did not need an instrument to praise and glorify God, he was an instrument of praise. Notice the last phrase in Eze 28:13, *On the day that you were created They were prepared*. He is still a creature created by God. In the next verse we seem to pass from the royalty of Satan to his priestly dignity. He is said to have been the Anointed Cherub that covers by God's appointment. Eze 28:14, *You were the anointed cherub [the highest rank of angelic creatures] who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God [third heaven]; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.*

The word anointed means the Messiah's angel. Satan was in the throne room of God. He is also said to have been upon the Holy Mountain of God and to have walked up and down in the midst of the Stones of Fire. The holy mountain of God is the place of His presence in visible glory, where His High Priest would stand before Him to minister (Exo 4:27, Psa 2:6). Satan's presence on the holy mountain would indicate his enjoyment of the full Cherubic privilege of nearness to the throne of God. Remember that the cherubim were the group of angels related to the throne of God as protectors and defenders of His holiness. Therefore, we can conclude that this great angel was created above all angels to be a protector and defender of the throne of God. So, do not be surprised when you run into someone who is supposed to *protect* and *defend* the authority over them but instead attacks it and discredits it; it started with their father the devil.

Notice the phrase in Eze 28:14, *You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there.* It's interesting that God placed Satan there *knowing* that he eventually was going to rebel and start a conspiracy against God.

In Eze 28:14-15, *"You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways [not innocent, blameless] From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you."*

The first sinner of all creatures was Satan; he had everything to make him happy but he lusted for power, and the unrighteousness found within him is told to us in Eze 28:17-19, *"Your heart [right lobe] was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom [distorted it] by reason of your splendor [your breathtaking beauty]. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you [this is future]. By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade [your dishonest transactions, a reference to Satan's entering into conspiracy], You profaned your sanctuaries [that's Satan's first fall; his second fall is mentioned next which will come in the Tribulation period]. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified, And you will be no more. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.*

This passage brings out the fact that God did not create Satan as such, He created an angel who was perfect in all his ways, and that angel sinned by opposing the will of God.