

Grace Bible Church
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The next Dispensation: The Tribulation period begins with the Rapture of the Church.

I want to like to continue with our study on principles regarding the next dispensation called the Tribulation Period. One of the main reasons that we are noting this particular period of time is because the time in which we live in right now is the beginning of the end of the Church-age dispensation.

Remember this principle: We are not waiting for any prophecies to be fulfilled but we are waiting to get ourselves prepared for what will happen just before the Rapture.

This is why the apostle Paul said in **TIT 2:11-14**, **For the grace of GOD has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny unGODliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and GODly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great GOD and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.**

One of the words that describe the calling of GOD and how we should look upon it is the phrase in TIT 2:13 which says that we should be looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great GOD and Savior, Christ Jesus.

These principles are in the beginning stage of what is about to happen in the next dispensation which is called the Tribulation period. The Tribulation period begins with the Resurrection of the Church which we call the Rapture. Another part of the mystery doctrine of the Church-age is the doctrine of the Rapture. Not all Christians believe in the Rapture.

The Rapture of the church is basically held by two schools of theology. The pre-Tribulational view and the post-Tribulational view. The pre-Tribulational view says that the Rapture will happen before the Tribulation Period. The post-Tribulational view says that the Rapture will happen after the Tribulation period. There is also the Amillennial and Postmillennial view which both views deny that there is any such thing as a Rapture and does not believe there will be any Rapture of the Church at all. Their position is basically promoted through what is known as the “Kingdom Now Theology,” which adheres to the notion, that once the church cleans up the world then the Millennial Kingdom, the 1,000 years of the Church-age will usher in a world peace.

This is nothing but satanic thinking as Satan is trying to counterfeit everything that the LORD does. It is the understanding of the battles that were fought by the angels in eternity past that provides the answers that we all have

concerning to the questions that give our life meaning, purpose, definition and direction.

The Three Omni's refer to:

1. Omnipresence – He is always with us.
2. Omnipotence – He always provides the power that we need.
3. Omniscience – He always has the answers to all of our problems.

In fact, everything in your life depends upon your understanding and applying the Angelic Conflict. The angelic conflict began before the creation of man and the heavens and the earth but before the creation of the human race, GEN 1:1-2, JER 4:23-26, JOB 38:4-7.

For example, in **GEN 1:1, In the beginning GOD created the heavens and the earth. And the earth [not was formless and void but] became formless and void and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of GOD was moving over the surface of the waters.**

We are now trying to answer the question; How did it all begin? The answers to these questions are found in two more passages. The first one is found in **JER 4:22-27, “For My people are foolish, They know Me not; They are stupid children, And they have no understanding. They are shrewd to do evil, But to do good they do not know. I looked on the earth, and behold, {it was} formless and void; 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. For thus says the LORD, The
whole land shall be a desolation, Yet I will not execute a
complete destruction.**

This tells us how the earth became formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of GOD was moving over the surface of the waters.

This happened because Satan and one-third of the angels started to think more highly of themselves and wanted a time to prove their equality with GOD and with all Three members of the GODhead.

In fact, the LORD used this principle of theology by using Job as an example; JOB 38:4-7, when the LORD said to Job, the same thing that He said to Satan.

JOB 1:6-12, Now there was a day when the sons of GOD came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” And the LORD said to Satan,

“Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing GOD and turning away from evil.” Then Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear GOD for nothing?

“Hast Thou not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in

the land. But put forth Thy hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse Thee to Thy face.” Then the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So, Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

Most of you know that Job won this first battle against Satan as a representative of the LORD.

JOB 1:21-22, Job said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.” Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame GOD.

This was followed by a second test that GOD let Satan test Job with.

JOB 2:1-6, Again there was a day when the sons of GOD came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?”

Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it.” And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing GOD and turning away from evil.

And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.” And Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that

a man has he will give for his life. However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to Thy face.” So, the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.”

Then GOD deals with Job personally in Job 38.

JOB 38:4-7, “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 sang together, And all the sons of GOD shouted for joy?”

These passages and others reveal to us the principle of why we have been created! Why are living during this period of time called the Church-age?

Why is there going to be a Tribulation period?

Why is there going to be a Rapture?

Why is there going to be a Millennial reign?

Why were we born?

Why we will die?

But, most of all, what is this life all about?

Let’s look at two more major passages that tells us more about the reasons all of these events exist and the purpose of them. They are Eze 28 and Isa 14.

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. The LORD goes on and uses the king of Tyre to speak to Satan an a one on one basis as he is possessed by the devil or Satan. This is the LORD speaking to Satan who is indwelling the king of Tyre.

There are a lot of facts that the average believer and of course unbelievers do not know about Satan, so the LORD is about to reveal to us more things to understand under the principle of “knowing your enemy.”

Of all of the creatures to come from the hand of GOD, Satan was the most beautiful, the wisest, the most personable creature ever created.

EZE 28:12-13, ...“Thus says the LORD GOD, You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom [he's a genius] and perfect in beauty [his overt beauty is perfect]. You were in Eden, the garden of GOD.”

Don't mistake this for the Garden of Eden, this Eden was called the Garden of GOD and I believe there was a tremendous difference between the two. Satan was in Adam's Eden, however, he did not appear there as a minister of GOD but as an apostate and venomous serpent eager for the ruin of the new creation. This could have been the same Garden of Eden or may not have been, but all we do know is at this time he was worshipping GOD. In Eden, he was worshipping himself.

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.”

All these stones, as we have noted, were given as a sign of his exaltation from GOD before Satan’s fall.

“The workmanship of your settings and sockets” refers to the fact that he did not need an instrument of praise to glorify his Creator; he was an instrument of praise.

However, please notice the last phrase in **EZE 28:13...On the day that you were created They were prepared.**

Satan was and still is a creature created by GOD. And, in the next verse, we pass from the royalty of Satan to his priestly dignity. He is said to have been the Anointed Cherub that covers by GOD's commission.

EZE 28:14, “You were the anointed cherub [the Messiah's angel, that is 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.”

Satan was in the throne room of GOD. The holy mountain of GOD is the place of GOD's presence in visible glory. Satan's presence on the holy mountain would indicate his enjoyment of the full Cherubic privileges 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 angel was created above all angels to be a proctor 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. I say their father because Satan is the author of lies, etc.

Notice the phrase in **EZE 28:14**, **“You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there.”**

Isn't it interesting that GOD placed Lucifer there knowing that he eventually was going to rebel and start a conspiracy against GOD. You see thinking like this is not something new, these thoughts like “Why did GOD create evil creatures” have been on man’s mind for many years.

EZE 28:15-16, **“You were blameless in your ways [not innocent, but blameless] From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence,”**

The phrase the abundance of your trade refers to his genius plans and ideas. The word for trade is also translated slander, it means to slander, or to try and destroy someone's reputation by trafficking gossip and slander. Satan has come up with many plans. Plans for his angels, plans for the human race, plans for you and me. And these plans are all based upon lies and slander and gossip and maligning.

This is why when Satan sinned one third of the angelic creatures went with him, he had **plans** for them. Slander especially is needed for Satan to lie and secure his allegiance to his program of rebellion and conspiracy against GOD. Satan is a master of conspiracy! In fact, he is the originator of conspiracy!

So, EZE 28:16-17, “By the abundance of your slander You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of GOD [this is future, it has not been accomplished yet...he still has access into heaven]. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart [right lobe] was lifted up because of your beauty.

You corrupted your wisdom means to distort it by reason of his splendor or his breath-taken beauty.

EZE 28:18-19 “By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade [your dishonest transactions, a reference to the fact that Satan entered 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.”

This will all take place before the Millennial reign of Christ and after it as well. GOD records the origin, the rank, the character, and the sin of Satan. One of the reasons is simply because he wants us to see the devastating effects of arrogance and pride. Arrogance basically has to do with thought while pride has to do with action.

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

Let's close this section by noting some very important principles.

1. Through his rejection of the plan of GOD and then his rebellion toward GOD, Satan, as did Adam, became an entirely different being from that which GOD created. This was done through the power of choice or the free will. GOD originally created angels and man to bless them. However, as a part of divine blessing, they must be given a free will or a choice to either accept or reject the offer of GOD. Satan rejected GOD's offer as did Adam and the woman and therefore became an entirely different being from that which GOD intended.

2. When GOD creates a creature to fulfill a certain purpose, GOD gives His creatures everything necessary to fulfill His will. GOD always provides whatever we need to fulfill the purpose He has for our lives.

3. The reason why GOD created Satan as a wise and beautiful angel is not so he would have enough power to deceive us but because GOD originally created Satan to be a protector and defender of the throne of GOD. However, like many of GOD's creatures, Satan used his GOD-given abilities and his GOD-given talents to glorify himself rather than GOD.

Every single one of you listening to my voice have been given time, talents, and treasures as gifts from GOD. You may know what they are, you may not know. However, do you use them for the purpose of GOD's kingdom or do you use them for the purpose of self-exaltation?

Promoting self.

Exalting self.

Blessing self.

Elevating self.

4. By his sin of independence, Satan lost his original holiness and heavenly position but he retained his wisdom and his beauty and he has used his superior qualities to accomplish evil. His wisdom and his beauty have been perverted into lies, deceptions, snares, and conspiracies. Like so many of GOD's creatures, Satan has forgotten where he received his wisdom and abilities from.

5. Satan's office was originally to protect the Throne of GOD and to forbid the approach of any evil or any unrighteousness.

6. However, like most of GOD's creatures, including born again believers, Satan rejected the plan of GOD for his life and chose his own plans over GOD's plans.

7. And every time a believer says NO to the PPOG for his life, he is agreeing with the viewpoint of Satan who said NO to the plan of GOD for his life.

8. The unrighteousness found in Satan was the sin of independence and self-exaltation. We tend to look at sin as some form of immorality. Immorality is sin, however, such sins like the sin of independence from the plan of GOD are the most destructive sins believers can fall into. The sin of independence says, "It's not that important for me to learn GOD's plan for my life, I'll do what I feel like doing."

9. Satan is said to have been upon the Holy Mountain of GOD as the Anointed Cherub that covereth and therefore he was the great High Priest of his realm. He led the angels to worship GOD and therefore he was the high priest in the angelic realm.

10. Satan also was the highest angel and therefore the king over his creation.