

Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

1 Peter 5:8, “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, **as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.***”

Micah 7:19, “*He [God] will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou **wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.***”

The devil has not always been “*as a roaring lion.*” The Devil is not the ugly creature with horns and a tail that he is so often pictured to be. Ezekiel 28 tells us that when God created him, he was “***perfect in beauty, full of wisdom, great in power and was the guard of the very throne of God.***” He held the highest honor ever given any created being. Verse 15 of Ezekiel 28 says, “*You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created.*” However, he was given the power of choice, for Ezekiel 28 goes on to say, “***until** wickedness was found in you.*”

Verse 17 tells us why he was cast out of heaven. God says, “***Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth.***”

God created the Devil, therefore, he is not self-existent. He is dependent upon God, his Creator. Being created by God, he owed his love and worship to God, but he *rebelled* and sought to take God's place.

Isaiah also tells us of Lucifer, the Devil. In Isaiah 14:12-15 God says, “***How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star! You have been cast down to the earth! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to the depths of the pit.***”

Satan was filled with an over-whelming desire *to take God's place!* He has never lost that desire. It has driven him on and on, until finally it will bring him down to hell. His only hope is Hell, but he is not there today! Satan's being cast into hell is still future. Scripture teaches us that he was “***cast out of his first estate, he left his habitation,***” however, still has his original power and strength. He is the mightiest of all created beings; “*the prince and power of the air; the ruler of darkness and wickedness; and roams the earth as a roaring lion.*”

When man was created, the Devil, (already a fallen creature), came into the Garden of Eden, to tempt man to worship him! The Devil started an *undeclared war* and won first skirmish.

God made His declaration of war in Genesis 3:15 when He said, “***I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he [the seed of woman – the promised Messiah] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.***” God said He would put enmity between Satan and mankind – but that the “***seed of woman (Christ) would destroy him!***”

With the “**Declaration of War**,” God also gave promise of a “*sea of forgiveness*.” He gave man a promise that “*a Redeemer*” would come to redeem mankind from his sin. This “*Seed of woman*” – one born of woman *only* – a virgin born Redeemer – became the Devil’s declared enemy. We see throughout Scripture, from the Garden of Eden to Calvary, how that the Devil made attempt after attempt to destroy that Redeemer. He makes every attempt he possibly can to dam up God’s stream of promised forgiveness for mankind. The Old Testament gives us picture after picture of this spiritual warfare. The Old Testament shows the great pattern of the Devil’s attempt to do away with God’s promised Redeemer – God’s “*sea of forgiveness*” for mankind.

At the very first, when God promised Eve, “**from her seed would come the promised Redeemer**,” the Devil believed that Cain was that *promised* seed. Genesis 4:1 gives this account of Eve’s first child, “*Eve became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, ‘I have begotten a man, even Jehovah Himself.’*” Satan’s plan was to use Cain to kill Able.

1 John 3:12 gives this warning, “**Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother.**” The Devil’s plan to destroy the promised seed failed, and God caused Eve to give birth to Seth.

Satan makes another bold attempt to destroy any possible “*seed of woman*” from being the promised Redeemer. We read of it in Genesis 6 – and it nearly succeeds! The Devil sought, by a union between “*demons*” and “*the daughters of men*,” to so corrupt the entire human race that the promised Redeemer would be an impossibility.

Genesis 6:2 states, “*The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.*” (“*sons of God*” in Old Testament, unlike the New Testament refers to demons. A literal translation would be “*creatures created by God.*”)

Genesis 6:4 continues, “*The Nephilim – [Giants – unusual, not only in size, but different than any usual man - fallen ones] – were on the earth in those days, and these went to the daughters of men and had children by them.*” Satan sought to so corrupt humanity with demon contamination, that the “*seed of woman*” would be half-human - half-demon. And, it almost succeeded. Scripture tells us that, “**Only Noah and his family**” were the only ones who continued to follow God – only *one* family out of the entire earth’s population.

Lest Satan seek to repeat this diabolical scheme, Jude 6 tells us “**God imprisoned these demons and they are kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment in the great Day of Judgment.**”

As one reads the Old Testament, he sees how again and again the Devil attempts to defeat God’s plan – and how each attempt is countered by God. You can be sure that Satan kept close watch, asking himself, “**Whom will God use to bring the promised Redeemer to the world?**”

The Devil tries again and again to dam the stream of God’s promised forgiveness, but God sees to it that this stream of forgiveness kept flowing down through the ages.

God called Abraham and gave him the promise, “*Through you the promised Redeemer will come.*” So, now the Devil begins to concentrate on Abraham’s lineage. First, he attempted to keep Abraham’s wife from having a child. Finally, when Sarah was 90 years old, she had a child,

Isaac. When Isaac, the one whom God said the promised Redeemer would come through, married, his wife could not have children. However, Genesis 25:21 says, “*Isaac prayed... (entreated)... to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren,*” indicating that Satan had something to do with her being barren. However God overcame and we are told, “***The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.***”

Through Isaac was the nation whom God said that the promised Redeemer would come, so the Devil declares an all out war on Israel. Pharaoh did his best to *exterminate all male children under the age of two years old*. God again shows His superiority and Moses is spared.

The Old Testament gives a series of the captivities of Israel, as Satan seeks to destroy that nation, attempting to mix them, assimilate them, among other nations.

One of the thrilling stories of the Old Testament is the romance of Esther. Haman seeks to destroy all the Jews. But, as always, God preserves them through their dark hour.

The “*river of God’s forgiveness*” seemed nothing more than a trickle back in Genesis 3:15, but it grew and came flowing down from generation to generation until finally it burst forth in all its fullness at Calvary!

Job asks the question, “*Who can shut up the sea when it breaks forth?*” (Job 38:8).

There is 400 years of silence between the Old and New Testaments, when it seemed that the Devil was at loss as to where to strike. Then, one day the angel Gabriel winged his way to earth and visits Mary. From that moment on, the Virgin Mary became the ***marked target*** of the Devil. He carefully lays out a plan to kill Jesus at birth, causing a totally unreasonable *tax decree*. Millions of people, living far away from their place of birth, must return to the birthplace to pay their taxes.

Luke 2:1-3 reports, “***In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place - Gyrenius was governor of Syria.) And everyone must go to his own town to register.***”

Satan timed the taxation to correspond with Jesus' birth. An expectant mother would have to travel about one hundred miles on donkey back. Verse 4 continues, “***So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Juda, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.***” This meant a long, tedious trip at the very time of Mary’s expected delivery. The Devil designed this to destroy the child, however, God undertook, as He always did, and protected and strengthened Mary in spite of the Devil’s clever scheme.

Verse 6 says, “***While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.***”

This demonstrates another thing: God uses the devil to carry out His own divine plan. God had said 700 years before this time through the prophet Micah that, “***The Redeemer would be born in Bethlehem.***” The Devil, may seem wise in many ways, but he is dumb when comes to

dealing with God. Satan compels Mary to travel to Bethlehem, hoping to destroy her child and all the time he was serving the purpose of Almighty God.

There is another incident that took place, indicating the Devil attempt to destroy the promised Redeemer – to dam the river of God’s sea of forgiveness. Herod sought to kill the baby Jesus and end His life, but God warned Joseph, in a dream, and Joseph and Mary took the baby Jesus to Egypt and escaped the Devil plot.

At the end of Jesus' life, the Devil, knowing that time was short, thought it’s now or never. And, for the first time in human history, the Devil personally took up his abode in a human being. Luke 22:3 gives the incident, “***Then Satan entered Judas, one of the Twelve.***”

Satan attempts to destroy God’s promise of a Redeemer had all failed, *now* the Redeemer was here on earth and so the Devil levels his attack against Christ. He contested every single foot of ground Jesus took. It had come to a decisive showdown.

The Devil’s masterstroke was when he entered into a man, Judas. He would not entrust this last attack to a lesser demon. He *personally* undertakes to finish Christ once and for all. Calvary was the final showdown!

1 Corinthians 2:8 says, speaking of what happened at Calvary, “***None of the rulers of this present darkness understood it for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.***”

There were times in the history of mankind when it seemed as if the Devil had succeeded in preventing the promised Redeemer from coming into world, now the Cross *appeared* as if he had again succeeded. But, it was at Calvary that opened God’s full flood of His “*Sea of Forgiveness*” and pardon for sin came pouring forth. Let me read it to you from Colossians 1:13, “***He rescued us from the dominion of darkness ... (delivered us from the power of darkness)... and brought us into the kingdom of His Son... [translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son]. In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.***”

The Devil failed every time he attempted to block God’s promise of “*forgiveness*” from coming into the world. However, the Devil is *still* working and doing his best to mislead mankind – to *tempt* you – or to, at least, *hinder* you – from God’s forgiveness. He will make it as difficult as he can for you to accept God’s forgiveness.

The Devil is now under sentence, awaiting punishment. Scripture tells us that, “*The devil that deceived man will be cast into the lake of fire.*”

The Devil's host consists, not only of wicked demons, but every *unbeliever*, as well. These too will be cast into hell. Revelation 21:8 says, “***All unbelievers shall likewise be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.***”

Jesus will say, “***Depart from Me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his followers.***”

It is sin that has brought you under the same sentence as Satan. God’s grace, and His

grace alone, can set you free.

There are three on the committee that will decide where you will spend eternity. The Devil is looking on – and votes for you to go with him to Hell. God votes for you - by giving His only Begotten Son on Calvary – to be with Him for all of eternity.

Your life can be hand in hand with Jesus, the joy of salvation in heart, all your sins buried in the depth of God's sea of forgiveness; *or* you can be bound by demons, a servant of the Devil. It's your vote that decides!

*“He hath cast in the depth of the fathomless sea
All my sins and transgressions, tho' many they be,
Both the great and the small, the first and the last,
In the depths of the sea I know they are cast.
I shall meet them no more, for they never shall rise,
For who shall condemn whom God justifies?
So I sing of His mercy so wondrous and free
He hath cast all my sins in the depths of the sea.”*