

## A Tale of two Biblical Cities

There are two themes in the Bible that we need to be aware of when we read the Word of God. 1) The battle in the heavenlies between the forces of God and Satan; 2) the repercussions on the inhabitants of earth. Why?

Because earth is temporary; heaven is eternal. We exist in a human body and have the impression that the events here are determined by laws of God that are totally separate from the laws that are applicable to the inhabitants of the spiritual world. Nothing could be further from the truth.

For instance, since the Eternal World is the ultimate place where all souls will eventually inhabit, then we can conclude that the Divine World is concrete and permanent whereas the earthly realm is transient and superficial in total reality. This is borne out in the scriptures. We are not earthly beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having an earthly experience. Just like Jesus except we are not divine.

<sup>12</sup>*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 1 Cor 13:12*

<sup>47</sup>*The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup>As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup>Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. 1 Cor. 15:47-49*

<sup>18</sup>*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:18*

So, we know that both humans and earthly things were made to reflect that which can be found in heaven. And of course, it follows that heaven was in existence prior to earth.

After earth was created, God planted a garden in it called Eden. Is there a Garden of Eden in Heaven similar to the Garden that was planted on earth? There is!!

Jesus told His disciples, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). He said this in response to their statement, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name" (verse 17). He both confirmed His "power over the enemy" (verse 19) and His preexistence as the second member of the God family, present at Satan's defeat.

What caused Satan to rebel against God? Two passages in the Hebrew Scriptures help us understand. In Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 we read the details. According to

Isaiah, one named Day Star ( Lucifer ) decided to oppose God. He based his enmity on his desire to "be like the Most High" (**Isaiah 14:14**): "*I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God*" (verse 13).

Ezekiel adds that he was a created being "*the anointed cherub*" who walked perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you" (**Ezekiel 28:14–15**).

That "iniquity," or sin, was pride in his own beauty, resulting in the corruption of his wisdom, and one of the marks of his perversity became violence (verses 16–17). His attempt to dethrone God led to his literal downfall, along with 1/3 of his followers, angels now become demons under the power of "The Adversary" - Satan.

Notice, Satan had a throne located *on the holy mountain of God*. Where were they located? "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Ezekiel 28:12. What happened as a result of Satan and his minions rebelling against God?

<sup>12</sup>*How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!*  
<sup>15</sup>*Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit. <sup>16</sup>Those who see you will gaze at you, They will ponder over you, saying, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms <sup>17</sup>Who made the world like a wilderness And overthrew its cities, Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?' Isaiah 14:12; 15-17*

Now we know that Lucifer's name was changed to Satan whose domain was earth in which he had a throne located on a Holy Mountain. Remember this scene. What happened to earth; what happened to Satan. The earth was destroyed; Satan was cast out of heaven. Where did he go from there? That is an interesting point. Recall, he sinned in heaven where no sin can exist.

The sin may not have occurred in an area where God's throne is located. However, that area must be cleansed from the stain of sin according to all that we know is a "law" of God. It goes much deeper than that. God goes right back to the place where the sin occurred. An example of this is the murder of Adam, Eve and Cain.

God confronted Adam and Eve about their sin which led God to do this: <sup>23</sup>*So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup>After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. Gen 3:23,24*

God confronted Cain with this question? <sup>10</sup>*The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup>Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup>When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."* **Gen 4:10-12**

**L**ook at the consequences of sin: Loss of a secure dwelling place by banishment to foreign locales; loss of position and power; loss of ability to reach an ultimate performance level of their gifts and talents; loss of esteem and alienation from God; loss of quality of life; loss of peace and safety; diminished favor and the blessings of God in addition to the ultimate longevity of life, reduced substantially from what God intended.

In Satan's case, all of earth was destroyed. Where was he banished to? If God is going to judge both sinner and the place where the sin occurred and to restore the universe to its original purpose, how is it going to be accomplished. Is this the really a purpose of God?

Think deeply on the following verses: <sup>19</sup>*For the anxious longing of **the creation** waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup>For **the creation** was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* **Romans 8:19-21.**

Satan is one of the items on the creation list. Here is where he landed at the time of the destruction of the earth. IN HEAVEN!! **What? NO Way!! That's Right.** <sup>6</sup>*One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. <sup>7</sup>The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it."*

<sup>8</sup>*Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." <sup>9</sup>"Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. <sup>10</sup>"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. <sup>11</sup>But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."*

<sup>12</sup>*The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.* **Job 1: 8-12**

We know this interchange took place on the present earth. God actually turns Satan loose to wreak havoc on a man just like you and I. But why would God allow that? In this case we know that it was to deliver Job from fear to a complete trust in Him. However it is proof positive that Satan is still allowed to attack us. He even was allowed to attack Jesus Christ on earth. **Job 1**

WHY? Let's go back to Genesis. The earth was restored. God formed man from the substance of the new earth. God then planted man in His Garden of Eden. In it were two trees. Then Satan reappears in a recreation of the environment where he originally ruled. Remember, what Jesus said about Satan:

<sup>43</sup>*"Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup>"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; he is a liar and the father of lies.* **John 8:43-44**

What is Satan's purpose – to reclaim what was originally "his rights" which is ruler of the earth. He was and is temporarily successful in a more reduced way by taking control of earth through the down fall of Adam and Eve. But we know his time is limited. In the meantime, God is putting everything in place to carry out His own plans.

Meanwhile, Satan will emulate and reproduce a close facsimile of God's works on earth in order to deceive and destroy God's people. For instance, there was a location where the throne was located for the ruler of the earth. Today it is located in the city of Jerusalem. Jesus has declared it as His city.

Adam was banished from the "east side of Eden", which boundary was the Euphrates river. Today it runs from Turkey down along the Euphrates then west the tip of the red sea then to the northern boundary of Lebanon

God has promised this whole area where the Garden of Eden in Genesis was located to the Jews! It seems that this area corresponds to the same location of the original Garden of Eden where Satan ruled. Once again, it's a recreation of the place where God is going to judge both the perpetrator of the "original" sin as well as the location of that sin. We do not know what the name of that specific spot was called at the time of the rebellion, but we do know what it is called today.

It is an alternative city to the City of God (Jerusalem). Satan's city on earth today is known as BABYLON or Babel. More about these two cities and the completion of God's plan in next week's Bible Bite.

**Shalom**