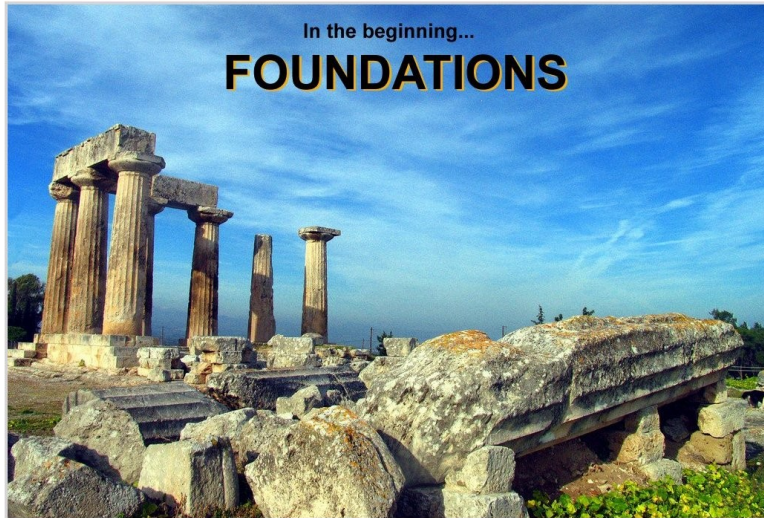




Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

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Psalms 11:3

If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Laying a firm foundation for understanding the beginnings of creation.

Joseph Herrin

This edition of Parables Bookshelf continues the book Foundations. In this chapter we look at the fall of Satan, the adversary of all righteousness. Some have erred greatly in their teaching by claiming that Satan was created evil. This belief does not stand up when tested against the Scriptures.

Scripture Memory

Revelation 12:9

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.

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Foundations

The Fall of the Anointed Cherub



Cherubim Covering the Ark of the Covenant

There are a great many diverse and incompatible doctrines existent today concerning the identity of that being that the Bible calls Satan, the devil, the great dragon, and the serpent of old. Some have suggested that the Scriptural references to this being are to be understood as a metaphor for the carnal mind of man. Others suggest that passages that have traditionally been understood to be descriptions of this angelic being known as Satan/Lucifer are in fact speaking of Adam, of human rulers upon the earth, or of something else entirely different.

It would be exhausting to seek to refute all the diverse views on this subject, so I will limit my discussion to a few of the more common doctrines that I frequently encounter. My main approach will be to build from the Scriptures a composite description of this being that is present from the very first book of the Bible when he tempts Adam and Eve to sin, to the last book of the Bible where he incites humanity to open warfare against God and incurs the just punishment of being cast into the lake of fire. Because Satan is such a central figure throughout the Bible, and has persisted as the chief adversary of humanity, it is important that Christians have an accurate understanding of this being.

The first appearance of man's ancient enemy in the Bible occurs in the third chapter of Genesis where Satan appears in the form of a serpent to tempt the man and the woman.

Genesis 3:1-5

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" 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."

About 14 years ago a brother in Christ that I knew through our participation at the same church began to take some classes at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Mercer began as a Southern Baptist University, but became so liberal in its views that the Baptists eventually ended all association with them. This brother had to take a religion course. He mentioned to me that his professor challenged a statement that he had made in one of his papers. The professor criticized this man's statement that Satan had tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The professor stated that the Genesis account made no mention of Satan, speaking only of a serpent. My friend read the Genesis account and saw that this was true, and asked me what I thought. I responded by telling him about the following Scripture passages from the book of Revelation.

Revelation 12:9

And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who de-

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ceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Revelation 20:2-3

And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 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...

Both of these passages reveal that “the dragon,” “the serpent of old,” “the devil,” and “Satan” are references to the same being. This satisfied my friend who was eager to return to his professor and share this evidence with him. As we look at the behavior of this being described in Revelation, we find that the same activity is ascribed to the serpent in the third chapter of Genesis. In Revelation we read that this being “deceives the whole world,” and “deceives the nations.” In Genesis we read:

Genesis 3:13

And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Satan is a deceiver and a liar. There is a common idiom ascribed to Native Americans that lying white men “spoke with a forked tongue.” In *The History of the American Indians*, published in 1775, the leaders of the Chickasaw tribe spoke ruefully of the white man’s lawyers who they described as “*hired speakers, who use their squint eyes and forked tongues like the chieftains of the snakes, (meaning rattle-snakes) which destroy harmless creatures for the sake of food.*”

This Native American expression is befitting of the being that appears in the opening chapters of Genesis in the form of a serpent. Of this being the Son of

God declared:

John 8:44

Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.

We can understand by these statements the unrighteous nature of Satan, yet the question that remains to be answered is “What kind of being is Satan?” Certainly he is much more than a lowly snake. The beast we recognize as a serpent typifies Satan’s character in the same way that a lamb is used as a symbol for the Son of God, but it would be error to conclude that Satan is an actual snake even as it would be error to conclude that Christ is a literal lamb.



There is much disagreement, and many diverse opinions, as to the relationship of the serpent of Genesis 3 and Satan. Are we to understand that Satan took upon the form of a serpent when he appeared to Eve? Is he able to alter his appearance to that of a beast? Or did Satan enter into this beast in a similar manner as is indicated in the gospels where we are told that Satan entered into Judas, the betrayer of God’s Son?

Luke 22:3-4

And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve. And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them.

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That Satan is able to place very specific thoughts into men's minds is very evident. In the Scripture above we see him leading Judas to a very specific course of action which included speaking words that were in harmony with his own wicked desires. We see a similar profound manifestation of Satan's ability to control men in the book of Job. Once Yahweh granted Satan permission to afflict Job, we are informed of the awesome power of this angelic being to control precisely the thoughts and actions of various groups of men.

Job 1:12-19

Then Yahweh 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 Yahweh. Now it happened on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, that a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

In a single moment of time, in a perfectly choreographed series of events, Satan was able to stir up the Sabeans to attack Job's servants who were

plowing his fields, and to direct three bands of Chaldeans to raid Job's camel herders. Yet we see that Satan did something even more remarkable in its appearance. At the precise moment of his choosing he caused fire from heaven to fall and burn up Job's sheep and those tending them, and to direct a whirlwind on a perfect course to strike the home in which Job's children were gathered. It certainly seems within the power of this "mighty one" to exert an influence over a serpent so that this beast would communicate his message to humanity's first forbears.



Staircase of the Winged Serpents, Bali, Indonesia

Cultures from all over the world, as widely separated as Asia and South America, have myths of dragons and great serpents that are part of ancient forms of worship. A dragon is a winged serpent. It must be observed that the serpent of Genesis did not crawl upon its belly until AFTER Yahweh pronounced judgment upon it.

Genesis 3:14

And Yahweh God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly shall you go..."

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The serpent left the garden on its belly, but it did not enter that way. It seems quite plausible that the serpent was formerly a winged creature. This would explain why Satan is described as both a dragon and a serpent. The serpent on its belly is a dragon that has been cast down and abased. The serpent served as a visual testimony of the judgment that would one day befall Satan for his wicked actions. Even as the serpent was once a heavenly creature but was cast down to the earth, so too would Satan be thoroughly abased when Yahweh's judgment for his wickedness was fully carried out.

Some have interpreted the Genesis account of the serpent to be purely metaphorical, while others have suggested a different understanding of the Hebrew word translated as "serpent." E.W. Bullinger in the appendices of *The Companion Study Bible* states the following:

The Serpent of Genesis 3

Appendix 19 From *The Companion Bible*

In Genesis 3 we have neither allegory, myth, legend, nor fable, but literal historical facts set forth, and emphasized by the use of certain Figures of speech.

*All the confusion of thought and conflicting exegesis have arisen from taking literally what is expressed by Figures, or from taking figuratively what is literal. A Figure of speech is never used except for the purpose of calling attention to, emphasizing, and intensifying, **the reality of the literal sense, and truth of the historical facts**; so that, while the words employed may not be so strictly true to the letter, they are all the more **true to the truth conveyed by them**, and to the historical events connected with them.*

But for the figurative language of verses 14 and 15 no one would have thought of referring the third chapter of Genesis to a snake; no more than he does when reading the third chapter from the end of Revelation (chapter 20:2). Indeed, the explanation added there, that the "old serpent" is the Devil and Satan, would immediately lead one to connect the word "old" with the earlier and former mention of the serpent in Genesis 3: and the fact that it was Satan himself who tempted "the second man," "the last Adam," would force the conclusion that no other than the personal Satan could have been the tempter of "the first man, Adam."

*The Hebrew word rendered "serpent" in Genesis 3:1 is **Nachash** (from the root **Nachash, to shine**, and means **a shining one**. Hence, in Chaldee it means **brass or copper**, because of its **shining**. Hence also, the word **Nehushtan**, a piece of brass, in 2Kings 18:4.*

*In the same way **Saraph**, in Isaiah 6:2,6, means **a burning one**, and, because the serpents mentioned in Numbers 21 were burning, in the poison of their bite, they were called **Saraphim**, or **Seraphs**.*

*But when the LORD said unto Moses, "Make thee a fiery serpent" (Numbers 21:8), He said, "Make thee a **Saraph**," and, in obeying this command, we read in verse 9, "Moses made a **Nachash** of brass." **Nachash** is thus used as being interchangeable with **Saraph**.*

*Now, if **Saraph** is used of a serpent because its bite was **burning**, and is also used of a celestial or spirit-being (a burning one), why should not **Nachash** be used of a serpent because its appearance was **shining**, and be also used of a celestial or spirit-being (a shining one)?...*

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Have we not, in this, a clear intimation that it was not a snake, but a glorious shining being, apparently an angel, to whom Eve paid such great deference, acknowledging him as one who seemed to possess superior knowledge, and who was evidently a being of a superior (not of an inferior) order?...

We cannot conceive Eve as holding converse with a snake, but we can understand her being fascinated by one, apparently "an angel of light" (i.e. a glorious angel), possessing superior and supernatural knowledge.

*When Satan is spoken of as a "serpent," it is the figure **Hypocatastasis** or **Implication**; it no more means a snake than it does when Dan is so called in Genesis 49:17; or an animal when Nero is called a "lion" (2Timothy 4:17), or when Herod is called a "fox" (Luke 13:32); or when Judah is called "a lion's whelp." It is the same figure when "doctrine" is called "leaven" (Matthew 16:6). It shows that something much more real and truer to truth is intended. If a Figure of speech is thus employed, it is for the purpose of expressing the truth more impressively; and is intended to be a figure of something much **more real** than the letter of the word.*

Other Figures of speech are used in verses 14,15, but only for the same purpose of emphasizing the truth and the reality of what is said.

When it is said in verse 15, "thou shalt bruise His heel," it cannot mean His literal heel of flesh and blood, but suffering, more temporary in character. When it is said (verse 15), "He shall crush the head," it means something more than a skull of bone, and brain, and hair. It means that all Satan's plans and plots, policy and purposes, will one day be finally crushed and ended, never more to mar or to hinder the purposes of God. This will be effected when Satan shall be bruised under our feet

(Romans 16:20). This, again, will not be our literal feet, but something much more real.

The bruising of Christ's heel is the most eloquent and impressive way of foretelling the most solemn events; and to point out that the effort made by Satan to evade his doom, then threatened, would become the very means of insuring its accomplishment; for it was through the death of Christ that he who had the power of death would be destroyed; and all Satan's power and policy brought to an end, and all his works destroyed (Hebrews 2:14. 1John 3:8. Revelation 20:1-3,10). What literal words could portray these literal facts so wonderfully as these expressive Figures of speech ?

*It is the same with the other Figures used in verse 14, "On thy belly shalt thou go." This Figure means infinitely more than the literal belly of the flesh and blood; just as the words "heel" and "head" do in verse 15. It paints for the eyes of our mind the picture of Satan's ultimate **humiliation**; for prostration was ever the most eloquent sign of subjection. When it is said "our belly cleaveth unto the ground" (Psalm 44:25), it denotes such a prolonged prostration and such a depth of submission as could never be conveyed or expressed in literal words.*

*So with the other prophecy, "Dust shalt thou eat." This is not true to the letter, or to fact, but it is all the more **true to truth**. It tells of constant continuous disappointment, failure, and mortification; as when deceitful ways are spoken of as feeding on deceitful food, which is "sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth shall be filled with gravel" (Proverbs 20:17). This does not mean literal "gravel," but something far more disagreeable. It means disappointment so great that it would gladly be exchanged for the literal "gravel." So when Christians are rebuked for "biting and devouring one another" (Galatians 3:14,15), something more heart-breaking is meant than the literal words used*

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in the Figure...

If a serpent was afterward called a nachash, it was because it was more shining than any other creature; and if it became known as "wise," it was not because of its own innate positive knowledge, but of its wisdom in hiding away from all observation; and because of its association with one of the names of Satan (that old serpent) who "beguiled Eve" (2Corinthians 11:3,14).

It is wonderful how a snake could ever be supposed to speak without the organs of speech, or that Satan should be supposed able to accomplish so great a miracle.

It only shows the power of tradition, which has, from the infancy of each one of us, put before our eyes and written on our minds the picture of a "snake" and an "apple": the former based on a wrong interpretation, and the latter being a pure invention, about which there is not one word said in Holy Scripture.

Never was Satan's wisdom so craftily used as when he secured universal acceptance of this traditional belief: for it has succeeded in fixing the attention of mankind on the letter and the means, thus blinding the eyes to the solemn fact that the Fall of man had to do solely with the Word of God, and is centered in the sin of believing Satan's lie instead of Jehovah's truth...

This is his object in perpetuating the traditions of the "snake" and the "apple," because it ministers to the acceptance of his lie, the hiding of God's truth, the support of tradition, the jeers of the infidel, the opposition of the critics, and the stumbling of the weak in faith.

[End Excerpt]

Bullinger argues well for the serpent being only a figure of speech, yet I am not persuaded by his words. I find no trouble in allowing for Satan, the shining cherub, to use the serpent as an instrument of his cunning schemes, while agreeing that the serpent itself is a symbol of much greater things. Yahweh has often used actual, literal created beings and objects as symbols of something greater than themselves. As a person who has spent many years considering the parables of Scripture and of creation, I do not find any disharmony in understanding the serpent to have been an actual beast under Satan's influence. In fact, it accords very well with Yahweh's first commandment to the man and woman to "subdue the beasts and rule over them," a commandment that has both a literal and a spiritual application.

As far as Bullinger's claim that believing the serpent to be a beast opens up the Biblical account to "the jeers of the infidel, the opposition of the critics, and the stumbling of the weak in faith," I would counter that Christians should never permit scoffers to influence that which they accept as the truths of God, no matter how fantastic these truths appear. Is a talking serpent any more incredible to the carnal mind than the plagues of Egypt, the worldwide flood of Noah, the sun tarrying an entire day in the sky at Joshua's plea, or reversing its course in answer to King Hezekiah's passionate prayer, the prophet Jonah spending three days in the belly of a great fish, a virgin giving birth, or the dead rising to life again? Would not the same infidels and critics protest that Balaam's donkey could not have spoken with him? That the Bible declares many things to be true that are supernatural in nature, or contrary to the normal experience of man and creation, is part of its inherent character. The apostle Paul declared:

I Corinthians 2:14

But a natural man does not accept the things of the

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Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

I would share somewhat in defense of the serpent being an actual beast. We do not know what the capability of animals were before the fall of man. Without question the powers of every created thing on earth was diminished in the fall of man. The apostle Paul speaks of the effects of man's original sin in the following words.

Romans 8:19-22

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to *futility*, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 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. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

The Greek word translated as "futility," or as "vanity" in the KJV Bible, is "mataiotes." *Strong's Concordance* defines this word as "inutility," which itself means "a lack of ability or usefulness." Mankind losing the power of an immortal life was not the only consequence of his sin. Yahweh in His mercy chose to lessen the powers of man and of the creation that sin would not have such a devastating and powerful impact. Scientists today have postulated that man uses no more than 10% of his brain capacity. If man's powers had not been diminished, humanity would surely have wrought far worse things than nuclear bombs, manufactured plagues, and extermination camps. It is quite plausible that the animals also suffered a great diminishment in their abilities as well, perhaps even losing the power of speech.

Although such possibilities cannot be proven, we

are told plainly that the animals changed in a very dramatic (one could even say "supernatural") manner after mankind sinned. Prior to the sin of Adam every animal was herbivorous. God gave them only the plants of the field for their food.



Carnivores

Genesis 1:30

"And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food."

There are a great many things that must change in an animal's body for it to transform from an herbivore into an omnivore or carnivore. There are changes in teeth and claws, changes in enzymes that must be released into the digestive tract, changes in the length of the large and small intestines, differences in the amount of uric acid and other agents released into the body to aid in breaking down proteins into amino acids, differences in liver function, etc.. If all of these things changed in the animals that became carnivorous after the fall of man, it is not too difficult to imagine that animals may have varied in other significant ways before sin entered the creation. Keep in mind that animals were also immortal, for there was no death on the earth until man transgressed.

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When Yahshua establishes His kingdom on the earth, we will once again see the animals return to a plant based diet.

Isaiah 11:6-9

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze; Their young will lie down together; And the lion will eat straw like the ox. And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.

One objection that Bullinger made is that the serpent does not actually eat dirt. The serpent has an appearance of doing so, for they constantly flick out their tongue as if sampling the air. This is in fact what they are doing, for the snake's sense of smell is in its tongue. Snakes, however, do not exist by eating dirt, at least not yet. Yahweh has declared that in the days to come when all animals return to a herbivorous diet, the serpent will alone be signaled out to eat dirt.

Isaiah 65:25

The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food.

If we are to understand that the wolf grazing with the sheep is to be taken literally, and the lion is to eat straw like the ox, then we must be consistent in agreeing that the serpent's food will be the actual dust of the ground. Why is this beast signaled out for this punishment if the serpent that tempted Eve was only a figure of speech? I am inclined to disagree with Mr. Bullinger on this matter. He has,

however, brought forth many insightful details from this Biblical account. He has demonstrated why the serpent is such an apt counterpart for the shining cherub known as Lucifer, the light bearer.

There has been some disagreement whether Lucifer is intended as a name, a title, or merely a description of that being described by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 14:12

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

KJV

I cannot answer the matter, but it seems hardly to matter. The word "heylel" in Hebrew is translated as "Lucifer," "morning star," "star of the morning," and "shining one," depending on the Bible version one is reading. They all accord well with the meaning of nachash, the Hebrew word for serpent which Bullinger has informed us means "a shining one." I fully concur with Bullinger that it was an angelic being of great power and wisdom that deceived Eve and enticed Adam in the garden. Yet, I would allow for the possibility (I would say "probability") that Satan accomplished his temptation through an agent of his choosing, a beast that bears many symbolic similarities to his own character.

Bullinger provides further information in *The Companion Bible* in the notes associated with Genesis chapter 3. One thing Bullinger had an eye for was patterns in the textual layout of the Scriptures. He has demonstrated that the entire Bible contains repeating patterns of a very noteworthy character. We can at times infer various facts and details as we consider these patterns. Bullinger has shown that the first 24 verses of chapter 3 of Genesis contain a remarkable pattern.

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Genesis 3:1-24 THE FALL (Introversion and Alternation)

- E| 1-5 The Nachash: procuring man's death, in Adam
- F| 6 The Tree of Knowledge. Eating of it.
- G| f| 7-. Effect on both: the man and the woman.
- g| -7. Human provision. man-made aprons.
- H| 8-12. God's inquiry of the man.
- I| 13. God's inquiry of the woman.
- K| 14. Sentence on the Nachash.
- K| 15. Promise of the Seed.
- I| 16. God's sentence on the woman.
- H| 17-19. God's sentence on the man.
- G| f| 20. Effect on both: the man and the woman.
- g| 21. Divine provision. God-made coats.
- F| 22-24. The Tree of Life. Expulsion from it.
- E| 24. The Cherubim: preserving man's life, in Christ.

As you study the pattern above you will note that a mirror image is formed where items mentioned in the first part of this passage have corresponding counterparts in the latter part of the passage. I would draw your attention specifically to the first item labeled "E."

The Nachash: procuring man's death in Adam
The Cherubim: preserving man's life, in Christ.

Keep in mind that "nachash" is both the Hebrew for "serpent," and for "a shining one." Thus, this word speaks of both the beast and the heavenly being we call a cherub (plural cherubim). Observe the parallels between the Nachash in verses 1-5 and the Cherubim in verse 24. This remarkable parallelism lends support to the belief that Satan is that cherub described in the 28th chapter of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 28:13-14

You were in Eden, the garden of God... You were the anointed cherub who covers...

In the first 24 verses of Genesis 3 we observe the following comparisons/contrasts.

- Satan, as the first of the cherubim mentioned in Genesis chapter 3, invites mankind to violate Yahweh's commandment.
- The cherubim in verse 24 stand in the way of man to prevent him from violating Yahweh's commandment.
- Satan, as the first of the cherubim entices Adam to eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- The cherubim of verse 24 block the way before Adam, hindering him from eating of the fruit of the tree of life.
- The result of the first cherub's actions was that death immediately began working in the creation.
- The result of the last cherubim's actions was the future promise of the end of death and an entrance into eternal life in Christ.

A further argument in favor of Satan having acted through an actual serpent is that the things Yahweh spoke as a curse on the serpent are true of the beast in a physical sense even as they are true of Satan in a spiritual sense. The serpent does crawl on its belly. The serpent does seem to lick up the dust, and one day dust will be its only food. There is enmity between humanity and serpents, especially the venomous varieties. All of these things are inexplicable if there was no actual beast present in the temptation of the man and woman.

Had Satan appeared as an anointed cherub in all his glory in the garden, his aspect would truly have been impressive and his enticements persuasive. In such a case, I think Yahweh would have warned

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Adam to beware of cherubim. Instead we find Yahweh exhorting Adam to “subdue the beasts and rule over them.” Such a commandment would have been sufficient had Yahweh known that Satan would attempt to approach the man and woman through one of the beasts God had created. If some are inclined to think otherwise, I am at peace.

Having addressed the identity of the serpent, and the heavenly being that was influencing/controlling it, we can now turn our attention to identifying what type of being Satan was and is.



Replica of the Ark of the Covenant

Ezekiel identifies Satan as “the anointed cherub who covers.” If you were to do a search for images of cherubs on the Internet you would be met with an abundance of illustrations of winged babies. Such is the vanity of human thought. The Bible conveys an altogether different image of a cherub. Cherubim were magnificent winged beings of an angelic order who were possessors of great power, wisdom, and beauty. When Yahweh spoke to Moses and gave him instructions to build the tabernacle in the wilderness, along with all of its furnishings, He spoke to Moses in this way.

Exodus 25:8-22

And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. ***According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.*** And they shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it... And you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. ***And you shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. And the cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat.*** And you shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I shall give to you. ***And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.***

The apostle Paul gives us this further insight into the archetype that served as the pattern for all that Moses was shown.

Hebrews 8:4-6

Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; ***who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on***

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the mountain."

Those things that Moses was instructed to build were patterned after heavenly things. In the heavens there are living cherubim. In the pattern Moses was shown, the presence of Yahweh appeared "between the two cherubim." It was from this position that Yahweh would communicate to His creation. We can infer from this that in the heavens Yahweh also is flanked by covering cherubim. It is here that He chooses to manifest His glory and to make known His will in the heavens.

When David was later given the pattern for the temple that his son Solomon would build, angels and cherubim were infused throughout the design. In the innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, two magnificent cherubim were constructed to tower over it.

I Kings 6:23-33

Also in the inner sanctuary he made *two cherubim* of olive wood, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub and five cubits the other wing of the cherub; from the end of one wing to the end of the other wing were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits; both the cherubim were of the same measure and the same form. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub. And he placed the cherubim in the midst of the inner house, and the wings of the cherubim were spread out, so that the wing of the one was touching the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall. So their wings were touching each other in the center of the house. He also overlaid the cherubim with gold. Then he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, inner and outer sanctuaries. And he overlaid the floor of the house with gold, inner and outer sanctuaries. And for the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood,

the lintel and five-sided doorposts. So he made two doors of olive wood, and he carved on them carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread the gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

The cherubim in the Holy of Holies were approximately fifteen feet high and their combined wingspan was thirty feet. Overlaid in pure gold, they were truly magnificent and awe inspiring to behold. We get an idea of the glorious appearance of these created beings as we read the description set forth by the prophet Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 28:12-18

"Thus says Yahweh God, 'You had 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 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. 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 from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade (slander - Hebrew *rakal*) you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade (slander - Hebrew *rakal*), you profaned your sanctuaries. 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

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all who see you.””

This passage is traditionally understood to be a description of Satan in his heavenly office as an anointed cherub who covers. The passage mentions him in association with sanctuaries even as we see the cherubim in the Tabernacle of Moses and in Solomon’s Temple standing in their sanctuaries (literally - a holy place). For this being to be described in a heavenly setting among the holy angels as having a visage of great beauty and splendor reveals what a truly remarkable sight that he was. Yet, the very glory that adorned him became the cause of his downfall as conceit and pride began to take over his heart.

I Timothy 3:2-6

An overseer, then, must be above reproach,... and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

There is a popular teaching being spread at this hour that asserts that Satan did not fall into sin, but that he was created evil by God. I find this to be a very disturbing teaching, for it maligns the character of Yahweh. This teaching denies that the passage above from Ezekiel is referring to Satan, yet those who hold to this view have the testimony of the apostle Paul to overcome. He clearly speaks of the devil **becoming** conceited and **falling** into condemnation. The testimony of Ezekiel is surely true. Of this anointed cherub who covers, the prophet states, “You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, **until** unrighteousness was found in you.”

Sadly, some men with valuable insights into other truths hidden to many, have embraced this aberrant view of Satan, suggesting that he was created evil from the beginning. Among these men are J. Preston Eby and Bill Britton, both of whom are men

who have published teachings that have been of much encouragement and insight to myself and others. Yet, even as the apostle Peter fell into error in one area that elicited the public reproof of the apostle Paul, we must be ever vigilant to test all that we hear, even when it comes from men who bear an obvious anointing of God and are appointed as ministers by His Son.

Common to the teachings of these men who promote the idea that Satan was created evil from the beginning is a misapprehension of a few select Scriptures that they all cite.

John 8:44

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; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.

The phrase “He was a murderer from the beginning” is used as support of the teaching that Satan was created as an evil being. In an earlier chapter I spoke of the danger of wrongly identifying beginnings in the Bible. What those making this claim about Satan being created evil have done is to wrongly identify what the phrase “from the beginning” is referring to. Christ is NOT referring to Satan’s beginning, but to murder’s beginning. This can be seen as one compares this expression to the parallel statement where it is declared that Satan “is a liar, and the father of lies.”

Yahshua is using the example of a father to demonstrate Satan’s relationship to lying. A father is the source of the offspring that emanate from within him. A father is the beginning and source of the generations that follow him. Implicit within the

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idea of fatherhood is origination and beginnings. Satan is in this sense the father of lying and murder. They emanated from him, and found their origination with him. Satan was NOT created as a liar and murderer. Christ is saying that lying and murder originated with Satan. He was the beginning of these evils, for they first appeared in Satan, and have spread to the creation through him.

To defend against the objection that naturally arises from claiming that God created a being that was evil in its very inception, these men cite another verse whose meaning is similarly misapprehended.

Isaiah 45:6-7

I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: ***I make peace, and create evil***: I the LORD do all these things.

KJV

This passage is used to support the contention that Yahweh creates evil, and by this moral evil is implied. This is NOT what this Scripture verse is declaring. Throughout the Old Testament, a form of Hebrew poetry is employed. Where it is present it provides a great service in helping the reader to understand the original intent of the author. Hebrew poetry is not like English poetry where rhyming words are a common characteristic. Instead, the poetic nature of the Hebrew writing was demonstrated through the use of parallelism. Lines, or clauses, occur in pairs. These pairs either restate the same or similar idea, or they express an opposite thought.

Where some ancient Hebrew word has been obscure and its meaning lost, Bible scholars have often been able to ascertain the meaning of the word when it is used in this Hebrew poetic form. They merely need to compare the clause an unknown word appears in to its parallel phrase and determine whether the phrase was meant to convey the same

idea, or a contrasting thought. We can use the same principle to establish what the prophet Isaiah was intending to convey in the two verses above. Let us examine what is set forth.

I form the light, and create darkness

I make peace, and create evil

Looking at the first line we can see that what is being used is the Hebrew poetic form that uses contrasts. Light and darkness are contrasted with one another. We can therefore infer that peace and evil are also being contrasted with one another, for these are parallel statements. The Hebrew word for peace found here is “shalom” which *Strong’s Concordance* defines as: *safe, i.e. (figuratively) well, happy, friendly; also (abstractly) welfare, i.e. health, prosperity, peace*. None of these things are the opposite of sin, or of moral evil.

The Hebrew word shalom is being contrasted with the Hebrew word “rah.” The KJV translators have rendered this word in a myriad of ways, including the following: *adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, distress, evil, grief, harm, heavy, sorrow, and trouble*. We must ask, “Did they choose the correct word to contrast with shalom in Isaiah 45:7?” Yahweh is saying, I create “Shalom” (*health, prosperity and peace*), and I create the opposite of these things which would be *affliction, poverty, and distress*.

This passage is ***not*** saying that Yahweh creates moral evil, or sin. It is a terrible corruption of the Word of God to suggest it is doing so. Following are two renderings of this same passage from the New American Standard, and the New King James Version of the Bible, both of which have done a better job of conveying the correct meaning of this passage.

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Isaiah 45:6-7

I am the LORD, and there is no other,
The One forming light and creating darkness,
Causing well-being and creating *calamity*;
I am the LORD who does all these.
NASU

Isaiah 45:6-7

I am the LORD, and there is no other;
I form the light and create darkness,
I make peace and create *calamity*;
I, the LORD, do all these things.
NKJV

It is great error to teach that Yahweh is the author of moral evil. The claim that Yahweh created Satan evil in his original form is false. Yahweh is holy and righteous in all His ways.

Revelation 4:8

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."

Leviticus 20:26

"Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I Yahweh am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine."

Psalms 99:9

Exalt Yahweh our God and worship at His holy hill, for holy is Yahweh our God.

Psalms 145:17

Yahweh is righteous in all His ways...

I Peter 1:14-16

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

It is antagonistic to Yahweh's nature for Him to create something that is profane, obscene, or sinful. The Bible tells us that God is not the author of sin.

James 1:13-17

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone... Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

If Yahweh would not tempt any creature to sin, how much more would He not create a being to be sinful in its initial condition? In the opening chapter of the Bible we see the pattern for all that Yahweh creates. Of all that He creates He can testify "It is good." In an earlier chapter it was mentioned that God spoke the creation into existence. Yahshua gives testimony to that which comes forth from inside a person.

Matthew 12:34-35

"You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? *For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings*

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out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil."

Seeing that God is the Father of lights, which is to say that He gives birth only to that which is holy and righteous, and that in Him is no variation or shifting shadow, how could He speak into creation that which is morally evil?

This leads us to the conundrum of trying to resolve how moral evil entered the creation if Yahweh did not create it. Some years back I came across a fictional story that provides some insight into this matter. I have found it to be helpful in conveying this truth to others.

Does evil exist?

The university professor challenged his students with this question. Did God create everything that exists? A student bravely replied, "Yes, he did!"

"God created everything? The professor asked.

"Yes sir," the student replied.

The professor answered, "If God created everything, then God created evil since evil exists and, according to the principle that our works define who we are, then God is evil." The student became quiet before such an answer. The professor was quite pleased with himself and boasted to the students that he had proven once more that the Christian faith was a myth.

Another student raised his hand and said, "Can I ask you a question professor?"

"Of course," replied the professor.

The student stood up and asked, "Professor, does cold exist?"

"What kind of question is this? Of course it exists. Have you never been cold?" The students snickered at the young man's question.

The young man replied, "In fact sir, cold does not exist. According to the laws of physics, what we consider cold is in reality the absence of heat. Every body or object is susceptible to study when it has or transmits energy, and heat is a measure of this energy transfer. Absolute zero (-460 degrees F) is the total absence of heat; all matter becomes inert and incapable of reaction at that temperature. Cold does not exist. We have created this word to describe how we feel if we have no heat."

The student continued, "Professor, does darkness exist?"

The professor responded, "Of course it does."

The student replied, "Once again you are wrong sir, darkness does not exist either. Darkness is in reality the absence of light. Light can be studied and measured, but not darkness. We can use Newton's prism to break light into many colors and study the various wavelengths of each color. You cannot measure darkness. How can you know how dark a certain space is? You measure the amount of light present. Isn't this correct? Darkness is a term used by man to describe what happens when there is no light present."

Finally the young man asked the professor, "Sir, does evil exist?"

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Now uncertain, the professor responded, "Of course, as I have already said. We see it every day. It is in the daily example of man's inhumanity to man. It is in the multitude of crime and violence everywhere in the world. These manifestations are nothing else but evil."

To this the student replied, "Evil does not exist sir, anymore than darkness or cold exist. Evil is simply the absence of God. God did not create evil. Evil is the result of the creation turning away from God. When God is absent in man, the angels, or any part of the creation, then we describe the absence of all that is good in God with the word evil. Evil is like the cold that comes when there is no heat, or the darkness that comes when there is no light. Evil comes when there is no presence of God."

The professor sat down.

The groundwork has now been laid to speak to you of how Satan fell into sin and became darkened in his understanding. We have observed in the types of the Tabernacle and the Temple that the covering cherubim were created to stand in the presence of the glory of God. As long as the cherubim looked to the glory of God they would be filled with light. In the book of Revelation we read of four living creatures that behold the glory of God at all times. They continually exclaim:

Revelation 4:8

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."

Had Satan maintained his focus upon God he would have been filled with the goodness and light of Yahweh. Yet, the prophet Ezekiel reveals to us that this anointed cherub who covers began to set his focus upon his own splendor, beauty, and wis-

dom. As he considered himself, he turned his focus away from Yahweh. The result of turning away from the source of all light is darkness. Satan became darkened in his understanding and began to worship the creature (his own magnificence) rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25).

We observe a Biblical type of the fall of Satan in the life of Absalom, the son of King David. The parallels are profound. Even as David was a sovereign ruler, so we see that Yahweh is THE sovereign ruler. Yet even as David's son sought to ascend to the throne, and to supplant his father, so too do we read of Satan seeking to ascend above the position appointed to him.

Isaiah 14:12-15

"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! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit."

Absalom, like Satan, was renowned for his physical beauty.

II Samuel 14:25-26

Now in all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom, so highly praised; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no defect in him. And when he cut the hair of his head (and it was at the end of every year that he cut it, for it was heavy on him so he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head at 200 shekels by the king's weight.

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Add to this the fact that the sons of the king were arrayed in rich garments, and Absalom was truly an impressive sight to behold. That Absalom paid too much attention to his own physical appearance was evident in the spectacle he made annually of cutting his hair and weighing it. Absalom became conceited, and began to desire for himself that which God had not appointed to him. Absalom surely knew that the throne of his father David had been promised to Solomon, but he conspired to take the throne for himself.



Absalom Stealing the Hearts of the Men of Israel

II Samuel 15:1-6

Now it came about after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men as runners before him. And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate; and it happened that when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And he would say, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king." Moreover, Absalom would say, "Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me, and I would give him justice." And it happened that when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. And in this manner Absalom

dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.

In the passage from Ezekiel chapter 28 that I cited previously, I included the parenthetical note that the Hebrew word translated as "trade" also bears the meaning of "slander."

By the abundance of your trade (slander - Hebrew raka) you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God.

The Hebrew word "rakal" means "to go about from one to another for the purpose of trade or gossip/slander." The Bible reveals that Satan was able to gather many angels to side with him in the same way that Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel. The method both Absalom and Satan used was slander. Absalom gave out an evil and false report of his father David even as Satan gave out an evil and false report of Yahweh. Additionally, as Absalom's actions resulted in war, a war that he lost at the cost of his life, so too do we read that Satan's actions resulted in war in heaven and his being cast down to the earth and consumed in fire. Before the final judgment of God is fully executed upon this rebellious angelic being, Satan will be cast down and imprisoned a total of three times. Three is a number denoting divine completion.

The first time Satan was cast down and imprisoned was upon his initial rebellion which is recorded in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. This occurred prior to the creation of man during the initial creation of the earth. It was then that Satan was cast down to the earth and the world was made formless and void and sealed in darkness. How long the earth lay in this state and Satan remained in confinement, we are not told. Yet the time came when Yahweh released Satan from his prison and re-fashioned the world in six days as it is recorded in the opening chapter of the Bible.

Satan will know a second judgment at the end of this age, before the millennial reign of Christ begins.

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Revelation 12:7-9

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. 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.

Revelation 20:1-3

And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 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 will once again be released for a brief time from his imprisonment. He will gather the nations to a final war against Christ and will be thoroughly defeated and cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:7-10

And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the sea-shore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night to the age of the ages.

Thus will end the rebellious career of this anointed cherub.

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PARABLES PRECEPT— The Significance of Numbers



FOURTEEN

being a multiple of seven, partakes of its significance; and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection.

The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus

Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being the number associated with incarnation.

The same principle may be applied to other multiples of seven, and Bible students can find their own illustrations.

[Source: E.W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*]

The number 14 in the Bible also denotes **TRANSITION**. This is shown in the first occurrence of the number in the Bible.

Genesis 31:41

Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock...

These words were spoken by Jacob as he was fleeing the land of his father-in-law and returning to the land of his father Isaac.

In Matthew chapter 1 we also find that a great transition occurred in the way in which Yahweh dealt with His people at the end of every 14th generation.