

# THE WAR BEGINS

Genesis 1:1-2 & Ezekiel 28:11-19

From time to time I do something that drives my wife Cathy and my daughter Anna crazy. They'll be watching a chick flick like *Pride and Prejudice* or *Jane Austen* and I'll come in and plop down and start watching with them. Pretty soon I can't help myself and I start asking them, "Who's that?" "Does she like him or is she just leading him on?" "Why is that guy doing that?"

It drives my girls crazy to have me come in half way through the movie and start asking questions, but I can't make heads or tails of what's going on.

For many of us bible prophecy is like coming half way into a movie. We hear about the rapture and the 144,000 and the Antichrist and Daniel's 70 weeks and the Kingdom. We have all these bits and pieces, but we don't see how they all fit together. Without the overall story we don't know where to put the new information we are learning as we study bible prophecy.

For instance, turn with me to Revelation 21:1

**<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.**

**Revelation 21:1**

We have the prophecy that some day in the future God will create a new heaven and a new earth, but in this prophecy it's emphasized that the sea will be no more. Why? Why is that such an important feature of the new earth that John emphasizes that there will be no sea?

That doesn't make sense unless you know the story and how it connects with events that have happened in the past. So if we want to know why there will be no sea in the new earth, we need to turn back in our Bibles to the very first book of the Bible and the very first verses of the Bible. Turn with me to Genesis 1:1-2.

**<sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.**

**Genesis 1:1-2**

The story begins with God. God has always existed as Father, Son and Spirit in perfect unity, harmony and completeness. Before time, before space, before matter, God was and God dwelt in perfect, infinite completeness. God needed nothing. God needed no one. But God in His infinite wisdom chose to create the heavens and the earth.

Verse 2 reveals that *before* the six days of creation the earth was without form and void, it was shrouded in darkness and covered in water. Most Hebrew scholars agree that this is a description of a chaotic state. Did God originally create the earth in a chaotic state or did something occur that caused it to become formless, void, dark and covered with water?

I believe something cataclysmic took place between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 and that these events are critical to understanding the Great Drama of which we are a part in Christ.

Before we continue let me make clear that I do not believe that the gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 is when dinosaurs lived. Dinosaurs were part of the six days of creation *following* the events that occurred between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.

So what took place between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 that plunged the earth into a formless, watery darkness?

It was a betrayal and rebellion of supernatural proportions.

### **THE CREATION OF LUCIFER (EZEKIEL 28:11-14)**

In addition to creating the heavens and the earth, the Bible tells us that God also created a race of beings called angels. Angels were created to serve God. There are three ranks of angels: angels, seraphim and cherubim. The cherubim are the highest order of angels. Cherubim serve at the very throne of God.

The Bible tells us that God created an angel who was so wise and so beautiful that he was described as *filling up the sum of wisdom* and as being *perfect in beauty*. We know this angel as Lucifer. His name means morning star or light bearer. The Bible tells us that God anointed Lucifer, that is, God specifically set Lucifer apart to be not only one of the cherubim, but more significantly, God appointed Lucifer the guardian cherub. (The term *cherub* should not conjure images of Cupid, but rather a magnificent being of beauty and power). The guardian cherub has the honor and privilege of covering the very throne of God in heaven. For this reason alone, Lucifer was by far the most prominent angel of all. But there is more to the story of Lucifer...

The Bible clearly teaches that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven, where God dwells, there is a tabernacle. The tabernacle that Moses constructed here on earth in the Sinai desert was a copy of the heavenly tabernacle. The Bible indicates that Lucifer was appointed the high priest in the heavenly tabernacle. It was Lucifer's privilege to lead the angelic host in glorious worship of their creator God.

Full of wisdom, perfect in beauty.

Guardian cherub over the throne of God in heaven.

High priest in the heavenly tabernacle.

And there's still more to the story of Lucifer...

The Bible indicates that Lucifer was on the original earth that God created and that God gave Lucifer authority over the earth. So once again we have a creature who was:

Full of wisdom, perfect in beauty.

Guardian cherub over the throne of God in heaven.

High priest in the heavenly tabernacle.

Ruler over the earth.

There was no angel his equal. Lucifer was by far the wisest, the most beautiful, the most powerful angel of all the angelic host.

And this is where the story turns sour.

## THE FALL OF LUCIFER-SATAN (EZEKIEL 28:15-19)

The Bible tells us that Lucifer looked at his wisdom, beauty, power and authority and he became proud. The Bible says that his heart was proud because of his beauty and he corrupted his wisdom for the sake of his splendor.

In his pride Lucifer declared...

“I will ascend to heaven;

above the stars of God I will set my throne on high;

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

I will make myself like the Most High.’

It is at this point that Lucifer abused his authority and position as high priest in the heavenly tabernacle and as the Bible says it, *he profaned his sanctuaries*. The Bible reveals that Lucifer conducted a smear campaign going from angel to angel slandering God in order to win their allegiance. This is the beginning of sin and evil. The Bible tells us that eventually Lucifer convinced one-third of the angelic host that God was wrong and that they should follow him, Lucifer. It is at this point in the story that we call Lucifer by his new name, Satan, which means Adversary. And now we understand why Jesus called Satan *the father of lies* for he was the first to lie; Satan lied about God and he lied about himself.

The Bible tells us that God punished Satan for his sin by stripping him of his position and privilege as guardian cherub; stripping him of his position as high priest in the heavenly tabernacle and casting him out of the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven.

Further, the Bible indicates that God stripped Satan of his authority over the earth and in His judgment against Satan God also judged everything under Satan's authority, which meant judgment on the original earth. God's judgment upon the original earth was to cover its entire surface with water similar to His judgment of Noah's flood. That's why the original earth became formless and void, dark and covered with the waters of God's judgment.

And that's why I believe that when Satan is finally defeated and God creates the new earth there will be no sea covering the surface of the earth. The new earth will never come under God's judgment as it did at the time of Satan's fall or as it did later in the days of Noah. There will certainly be water, living water, on the new earth, but not huge seas covering the surface of the earth as the result of God's judgment.

From the moment his pride prompted him to rebel against God to this moment, Satan continues to mount his rebellion against God, his Creator.

Bible prophecy is the revelation of those things that God has done in the past and those things that God will do in the future to win the victory over Satan. And God will win the victory through Jesus our Messiah and Redeemer.

Am I crazy? Where did I come up with this story? It's found in Ezekiel 28:11-19.

<sup>11</sup>Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>12</sup>“Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

<sup>13</sup>You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.

<sup>14</sup>You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.

<sup>15</sup>You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. <sup>16</sup>In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. <sup>17</sup>Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. <sup>18</sup>By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. <sup>19</sup>All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”

**Ezekiel 28:11-19**

### **SATAN USURPS MAN’S AUTHORITY (GENESIS 3:1-4)**

Understanding what happened between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 helps me understand what is taking place as I pick up the story in Genesis 1:3 and read of God’s recreation of the earth in six days following the judgment of the original earth because of Satan’s fall. And then I come to day six and read that God created man on the earth and this time God granted authority over the earth to man.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

**Genesis 1:26**

To whom did God grant authority over the earth? Adam and Eve. Who previously ruled over the earth? Is that a significant point to know? Who would desperately want to get back his authority over the earth? Does this help us understand why Satan attacked Eve and sought to persuade her to listen to Him rather than to God?

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

**Genesis 3:1-4**

Was this the first time God's Words had been misrepresented and contradicted?

Was this the first time Satan lied about God?

Why did Satan want to tempt Eve and Adam to disbelieve and disobey God?

Do you realize that when Eve and Adam heeded the words of Satan they unwittingly relinquished their authority over the earth to Satan?

The Bible records a dual between Jesus and Satan at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Three times Satan tempted Jesus to doubt and disobey God the Father and three times Jesus defeated Satan's temptations. On the third and final temptation, Satan made this statement to Jesus:

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

**Matthew 4:8-9**

How could Satan claim the right to give all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus? When did he receive authority over the kingdoms of the earth? Does it now make more sense why the Apostle Paul refers to Satan as

<sup>2</sup>...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience...

**Ephesians 2:2**

## **MAKE SURE YOU ARE ON GOD'S SIDE OF THIS WAR (EPHESIANS 2:1-10)**

In the same letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul wrote:

<sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

**Ephesians 6:11-12**

That is a description of the world in which we live. The Bible tells us that we are all born into this world and that by nature we are born on Satan's side of the war – we too want to be the god's of our own worlds. As Elder Bob pointed out in his sermon on Romans 1, we all start out in life worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.

Here in Ephesians the Apostle Paul describes our situation this way:

<sup>1</sup>And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup>among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

**Ephesians 2:1-3**

We all start out dead, spiritually separated from God, living like the world tells us to live and the world system is following what Satan influences it to do in disobedience to God. Not only that, we also live according to our own thoughts and desires without caring

what our Creator wants. Because of this we are under God's wrath. Some of you in this room, right now, this morning are dead in your trespasses and sins, completely cut off from God and heading toward God's wrath.

But the story of your life doesn't have to stop there. The Bible goes on to say that

<sup>4</sup>...God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us...  
**Ephesians 2:4**

God loves you and the proof that He loves you is that He sent Jesus, to take your sin in His body on the cross and to die in your place and pay the full penalty for your sin. Jesus was buried and rose again on the third day and defeated death. Jesus promises that just as He rose from the dead so He will also raise all those who believe in Him to eternal life with God. This life can be ours right now if we will believe God and accept what He has done for us in Christ. Ephesians tells us

<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast.  
**Ephesians 2:8-9**

I urge you to put your faith in Jesus Christ today and choose the victorious side of this war.