

PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

A LIFE-CHANGING BIBLE STUDY!

THE PRINCE OF PRIDE

2 Sam. 13:1-18, 33

THE STORY ...



Absalom was the most handsome, cunning, and ambitious of David's sons. The Bible says, "Now in all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." 2 Samuel 14:25.

But this determined young prince wanted more than just the admiration of the people for his stunning appearance. He wanted the power of his father's throne. He wanted to be king of Israel—at any price. First Absalom killed his older brother, Amnon, after Amnon mistreated his sister Tamar. Amnon was David's firstborn son and in line to follow David as king. Then, after Absalom wormed his way back into his father's favor, he began to sow subtle seeds of doubt throughout the kingdom about David's leadership, judgments, and laws until he "stole the hearts of the men of Israel." 2 Samuel 15:6.

Finally, his sinister plan erupted into a full-blown rebellion as Absalom tried to assassinate his own father and kidnap the kingdom. David and his followers were forced to flee from Jerusalem. But after a severe battle a few days later, David was once again secure on his throne, and handsome Prince Absalom was slain.

A sad story indeed, but this was not the first such royal family feud. In another great kingdom long ago, very similar events led to the most tragic rebellion of all time. The kingdom was called—heaven!



THE STUDY

Fill in the blanks after reading each Bible text.

1. What was the name of the rebellious prince in heaven, and why did he rebel?

Isaiah 14:12 *How you are fallen from heaven, O _____, son of the morning!*

Isaiah 14:13, 14 *For you have said in your _____, ... I will be like the _____.*

Ezekiel 28:17 *Your heart was lifted up because of your _____; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your _____.*

NOTE: Lucifer was the most powerful and beautiful of God's creatures. He was the highest of the angels and most likely led the heavenly choir. But he allowed his beauty to fill him with pride. (See supplement entitled "Satan Symbolized by the Kings of Tyre and Babylon.")

2. Did God make a devil when He created Lucifer?

Ezekiel 28:15 *You were _____ in your ways from the day you were created, Till _____ was found in you.*

NOTE: God made a perfect angel who, of his own free will, chose to be a devil. It may be hard to imagine, but if we knew Lucifer before his fall, we would have loved him. We don't know exactly how long, but Lucifer may have joyfully served God for eons before he began to cherish seeds of pride and resentment in his heart. The Lord could have made all of His creatures like robots, but a robot cannot love. True love must be willing to take risks. This is why parents decide to have children, knowing that at some time they may choose to disobey. God allowed Lucifer to carry out his rebellion for several reasons. First, to forever settle any question of whether or not God makes His creatures with freedom of choice. Second, if God had destroyed Lucifer as soon as he began spreading doubts about God's love and government, the other intelligent creatures would have forever had lingering questions. They might have thought, "Perhaps Lucifer was right." Therefore, Lucifer was allowed to demonstrate the horrible results of sin. Finally, God does not want His creatures to obey Him merely because He will punish them if they don't. He wants us to obey from principles of love rather than from fear.

3. What finally happened?

Revelation 12:7 *And _____ broke out in _____ : Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the _____ and his angels fought.*

NOTE: Eventually Lucifer and the angels who sided with him were expelled from heaven.

4. What powerful beings work under the devil's command?

Revelation 12:4 *His tail drew a _____ of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.*

Revelation 12:9 *He was cast to the earth, and his _____ were cast out with him.*

NOTE: Satan is so cunning that he was able to deceive one-third of the angels of heaven into following him in his rebellion against God. Now called “devils” and “demons,” these fallen angels carry out Satan’s plans. In our story of Absalom, we notice that he likewise did very little of his own dirty work. Absalom ordered his servants to execute his wishes.

2 Samuel 13:28 *Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine ... then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you?*

2 Samuel 14:30 *So he said to his servants, “See, Joab's field is near mine, ... go and set it on fire.”*

5. What methods does Satan use in his work?

A. Revelation 12:9 *Satan, who _____ the whole world.*

B. Mark 1:13 *And He was there in the wilderness forty days, _____ by Satan.*

C. Revelation 16:14 *For they are spirits of demons, performing _____ .*

D. Revelation 12:10 *For the _____ of our brethren, who _____ them before our God day and night, has been cast down.*

E. John 8:44 *He was a _____ from the beginning. ... For he is a _____ , and the father of it.*

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NOTE: In one respect, Satan has an advantage over God in the battle between good and evil. God uses only truth, but Satan can use truth or lies in any combination, to best serve his purposes. (See supplement entitled “Expect the Unexpected.”)

6. When is the devil most dangerous?

2 Corinthians 11:14, 15 *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an _____ of _____.*

NOTE: Just as the devil did, Absalom pretended to love the people and displayed an interest in their welfare in order to deceive them.

2 Samuel 15:5, 6 *And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. Satan is most dangerous when he poses as a spiritual being working inside the church. (See supplement entitled “A Brilliant Angel.”)*

7. Does Satan know the Bible?

Matthew 4:5, 6 *Then the devil... said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is _____: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you.’”*

NOTE: The devil is an expert at quoting and misquoting the Bible for the purpose of deceiving people. That is why it is essential that God’s people know the Scriptures for themselves to avoid being misled.

8. Whom on earth does the devil hate most?

Revelation 12:17 *And the dragon was enraged with the _____, and he went to make war with the _____ of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

9. What two deadly animals does the Bible use to portray Satan?

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring _____, seeking whom he may devour.*

Revelation 12:9 *So the great dragon was cast out, that _____ of old, called the Devil and Satan.*

NOTE: Both lions and snakes use stealth and diversion to capture their prey. Like the devil, they spring suddenly upon their victims and are ruthless and indifferent to suffering.

10. What is the only way we can resist Satan?

James 4:7, 8 *Therefore _____ to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will _____ to you.*

NOTE: The best ways to draw near to God are through prayer and seeking to know Him through His Word.

11. How did Jesus fight the assaults of the devil?

Matthew 4:10 *Then Jesus said to him, Away with you, Satan! For*

Ephesians 6:17 *The sword of the Spirit, which is the _____ of _____.*

Hebrews 4:12 *For the _____ of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.*

NOTE: Our only safety from Satan's clever deceptions is in storing God's Word in our minds to keep us from sin. The same tools Jesus used to fight the devil are needed and available to us today.

Psalms 119:11 *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*

Ephesians 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

12. How will the final fate of Satan resemble that of Absalom?

2 Samuel 18:17 *And they took Absalom and cast him into a large _____ in the woods.*

Isaiah 14:15 *Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the _____.*

13. Will Satan ever reappear to tempt God's people?

Ezekiel 28:19 *And shall be no more _____.*

Nahum 1:9 *Affliction will not rise up a _____.*

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14. How does God feel about the destruction of the wicked?

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them: “As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I have no _____ in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked _____ from his way and _____. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die?”

15. How did David respond when he learned that his rebellious son Absalom had been slain?

2 Samuel 18:33 Then the king was deeply _____, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had _____ in _____ ! O Absalom my son, my son!”

YOUR RESPONSE

This touching picture displays how our heavenly Father feels about His lost children. Not only was He willing to die in our place; He went one step further—He gave His greatest gift, His Son! God is not willing that any should perish. He is desperate for you to be saved. This is why Jesus died in your place. Most of the world has joined Satan in rebellion against the heavenly Father. Will you choose now to love and serve Him?

ANSWER: _____

SUPPLEMENT

This section provides additional information for further study.

Satan Symbolized by the Kings of Tyre and Babylon

In Isaiah 14:4-15, the Bible uses the king of Babylon as a symbol of Satan, and in Ezekiel 28:11-19, Satan is symbolized by the king of Tyre. In both cases we know that the symbolism goes beyond earthly kings because God's description of the being could not apply to any mortal man. Notice the ways Lucifer (now called Satan) is described in these passages of Scripture:

- fell from heaven (Isaiah 14:12)
- was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (Ezekiel 28:12)
- had been in Eden (verse 13)
- every precious stone was his covering (verse 13)
- was the anointed cherub that covereth (verse 14)
- was upon the holy mountain of God (verse 14)
- was perfect in his ways (verse 15)

Since the kings of Babylon and Tyre exhibited the same policies and suffered the same complete destruction as will Satan's kingdom, God used them to represent Satan himself. Virtually all Bible authorities are in agreement on the symbolism. Incidentally, the Bible records many other references to Lucifer (see Luke 4:5, 6; 10:18; John 8:44; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 3:8; Jude 6; Revelation 12:7-9), but without Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, we would not have the complete history.

Expect the Unexpected

Many people expect Satan to openly appear as God's enemy in the end time, but this is not so. Satan is indeed God's bitterest enemy, but his

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approach will be to feign righteousness (Matthew 24:24). He can appear as a glorious, angelic being (2 Corinthians 11:13-15) and will seek the worship of people (Revelation 13:12). Scripture is clear that his godly front will be so convincing that “all the world” will wonder after the beast (Revelation 13:3). Talk about a tragedy! Satan will be so effective in posing as Christ that virtually the entire world will follow him, thinking all the time that they are following Jesus. Will you be deceived? Not if you heed the Bible warnings presented in this series.

A Brilliant Angel

Satan is delighted when people portray him as an ugly, red, bat-winged creature that is part-man and part-beast, having split hooves and a long, pointed tail, or carrying a pitchfork and stoking the fires of hell. Nothing could be further from the truth. Such concepts come from Greek mythology. No such nonsense can be found in Scripture. The Bible describes Satan as a brilliant, highly attractive angel with an uncanny ability to communicate. He is also well acquainted with Scripture (Matthew 4:5, 6). The devil is a self-proclaimed enemy of God whose aim is to defame His character and capture His kingdom. Satan also despises you and your loved ones and has plans to destroy you. This series will help you understand his plans and learn how to thwart them. Just place your life in the protective care of your mighty Saviour, and pray earnestly for His guidance.