

The Church of the Servant King

Prophecy Series (Proph2_Early Prophecies of the Messiah/Redeemer)

Introduction

After Satan's rebellion in eternity past and the subsequent creation of an inferior creature, man, who was given dominion over the earth and all that it contained (Ge 1:28-30) with a single prohibition to not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Ge2:17), Satan began to execute his strategy expressed by his five "I wills" recorded in Isaiah 14:12-15.¹ Satan's strategy included the establishment of his own kingdom over which he could rule. In eternity past, a third of the angelic creatures chose to become subject to Satan's rule (Re 12:4). There are several Biblical references to Satan and his angels (e.g. Matt 25:41; Re 12:7) and Satan as a prince of his angelic followers (Matt 12:24-26 cf. Eph 2:2). Satan did not lose his genius when he fell and his forces have structure and organization (Eph 6:11).²

The creation of man, an inferior creature with the capacity to choose, represented, among other things, an opportunity for Satan to expand his domain. God gave man the ability and opportunity to choose as represented by the prohibition against eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden. The reason that God entrusted man with that responsibility goes beyond the scope of our study of prophecy and it encompasses the subjects of anthropology and angelology. Nevertheless, Satan usurped man's God-given dominion over the earth and became ruler of this earthly domain so that Jesus called Satan the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Otherwise, Satan would not have had the authority to offer all of the kingdoms of this world to Christ (Lk 4:5-6). Other statements confirming Satan's dominion and rulership over this world include:

- ❑ Some of Satan's angels are called "the world-rulers of this darkness" (Eph 6:12)
- ❑ The whole world lies in the evil one (1 Jn 5:19)
- ❑ Satan is called the "god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4)

As a result of man's fall in the garden, man became subject to Satan's rulership over man's former domain. Immediately after the fall of man in the garden, man was spiritually separated from God (spiritually dead) and man became subject to physical death as well – a reality captured in God's prophetic announcement in Genesis 2:17 which states in part – "you

¹ See previous series and notes for a more thorough analysis of this subject – the Angelic Conflict as the basis for the creation of man. A selected list of theologians who have embraced elements of this doctrine to a greater or lesser extent include such men as Renald E. Showers, Donald Grey Barnhouse, Lewis S. Chafer, and Stanley Ellisen to name a few. In addition, credit must be given to Robert B. Thieme for perhaps more clearly articulating a synthesis of God's Essence and the angelic conflict and I am sure that the seeds for his views are perhaps found in the work of such men as Chafer and Barnhouse. See Renald E. Showers, ***What On Earth Is God Doing? Satan's Conflict With God*** (Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1973); Donald Grey Barnhouse, ***The Invisible War*** (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965); Lewis S. Chafer, ***Satan, His Motives and Methods*** (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1990); Stanley A. Ellisen, ***Biography of a Great Planet*** (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1975). In addition, see Lewis S. Chafer, ***Systematic Theology*** (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), Volume II, 78-81, 85, 100-101, 103-104, 108, 110, 120-121. See also Robert B. Thieme, Jr., ***Christian Suffering*** (Houston, Texas: R. B. Thieme, Jr. Bible Ministries, 1987), 140ff and Robert B. Thieme, Jr., ***The Integrity of God*** (Houston, Texas: R. B. Thieme, Jr. Bible Ministries, 1988), 232ff.

² Those angels who chose to remain faithful to God are called "holy" and "elect" angels (Mk 8:38; 1 Tim 5:21). God remained their Lord (Isa 54:5; Jer 31:35).

shall surely die.” This phrase contains two forms of the verb meaning “to die” and could be translated “dying, you shall die,” thus referring to both a physical and spiritual death. Man would not drop dead at that moment, but would eventually die (Heb 9:27). Man became a slave to a new sinful disposition or nature that he had not previously possessed and to death itself (Ro 5:12; 6:6, 16-23) and to the continual fear of death (Heb 2:15).

Satan was not concerned about man’s plight. Had mankind been left to Satan’s devices, man lost much of his former dignity (Ro 1:18-32) not to mention the fact that man would have been without hope for being in God’s presence again. Man would have had no hope of eternal life with God. Through the self-destructive pattern inherent to the sin nature and through the lack of any eternal hope, man would have ceased to exist and Satan would have perpetual dominion over this earth. However, Satan isn’t omniscient. Therefore, he could not have anticipated that God had a plan in place to deal with such a contingency.

God’s plan to deal with such a contingency is expressed in the first prophecy in Scripture of the Messiah – a redeemer who would serve to deliver man from this plight. This initial prophecy from man’s point of view was not very detailed; however, Satan, who had knowledge of pre-historic events not possessed by man, was fully aware of who this man would be. This would be the Son of God Himself to come in the form of human flesh. Not only would this God-man/Redeemer deliver man from spiritual death, but He would also restore earth to its rightful dominion – to the dominion of man. Ultimately, this God-man/Redeemer would rule over an earth that would be restored to its perfect state. Thus, the focus of Satan’s strategy shifted to preventing the advent of this Messiah/God-man/Redeemer.

Genesis 3:15 – The First Prophecy of a Redeemer for Man

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel. (Ge 3:15)

The phrase “your seed” in reference to Satan is prophetic of the fact that Satan would in fact attract knowing and unknowing followers throughout the remainder of human history (see Jn 8:37-47). The phrase “her Seed” is a reference to the Messiah and the term “seed” is used throughout the Bible as a Messianic term (e.g. Isa 6:13 cf. 11:1). This man would be the key to the restoration of man and the earth and would be the subject of many prophecies to follow which would expand upon this initial prophecy and key component of God’s strategy.

The phrase “He shall bruise your head” is a reference to the crushing strategic defeat that Satan experienced at the Cross and which sealed his eternal doom to the Lake of Fire in which he will be thrown at the end of human history (Re 20:11-15). Also, through the redemptive work of this Messiah/Deliverer, God would save people out of Satan’s kingdom and make them members of His own kingdom (Gal 1:4; Col 1:13). These redeemed persons would live in Satan’s world system, but they would not belong to it (Jn 17:14-18 cf. Heb 11:13; 1 Pe 1:17; Eph 2:19; Phil 3:20).

God’s efforts through the Messiah to restore the earth to a theocratic form of governance with man as the administrator would not be without opposition. Genesis 3:15 also indicates that Satan would win tactical victories via the phrase – “you shall bruise His heel.” In one of the greatest paradoxes in human history, Satan inspired man to put Christ to death and thereby make possible man’s spiritual redemption – two counterproductive efforts in Satan’s strategy. When Christ went to the Cross, He suffered a terrible, but temporary injury (Jn 12:31; Col 2:15).

Satan had to keep this God-man/Redeemer from coming, otherwise his chances of avoiding the Lake of Fire and successfully executing his strategy of establishing his own kingdom in place of God’s kingdom would be negated. Scripture reveals that Satan’s battle for a kingdom rages among angelic creatures as well as redeemed humans who represent God’s spiritual

kingdom in the world (Dan 10:13, 20-21; Eph 6:11-12, 16; Job 1:9-15, 17; Lk 22:3; 2 Thess 2:9; Matt 16:21-23; Acts 5:1-3).

In our next lesson, we will see how this initial prophecy is expanded in other prophecies in the Old Testament.