

Ezekiel 28:11-19 (Walter Biggar Scott) 132307

Two Trees of Paradise: God's Grace And Man's Responsibility, Satan and Man. (28:11-19)

God is the fountain of all good: Satan the source and author of all moral evil. Who and what was Satan before his expulsion from "the holy mountain of God?" Known in his first estate as "the anointed cherub," he reflected the creation-glories of God, while also the most beautiful, the most wise, the most exalted of created beings (Ezek. 28:11-19). But not content with a creature's place, which is ever one of subjection and obedience, he aspired yet higher. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." May the Lord imprint the lesson upon all who handle the vessels of the sanctuary! (1 Tim. 3:6.) What is Satan's character now? A murderer and a liar (John 8:44), and he will yet become the most abject, degraded, and miserable of all in the lake of fire; no kingly place will there be given him, as poets fondly dream.

What a solemn illustration is thus afforded of the inability of the creature to stand before God unless girded with Divine strength, and encircled by the arms of omnipotent power. The highest of all angelic intelligences have been tested 'midst creation glories and dignities. Man in innocence and himself the center of a vast system displaying the goodness and wisdom of the Creator, has been tried in Eden. Highly favored Israel has been tested in the land of Immanuel—aye, and in the presence of infinite love; but, alas! every tree has withered, and God has engravers the result over the boundless circle of all creation, and written in burning characters the one melancholy history—all, all is failure.

Satan, then, as the serpent—subtle and cunning—entered the garden in his twofold character as liar and murderer. See how he effected the ruin of the responsible man and thus dragged down the creation to suffering and bondage (Rom. 8:20, 21). Insidiously he approached the weaker of the two—the one whom Adam was set to guard, to love and protect—bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. "And he said unto the woman, Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" This first of all questions was truly a satanic one. It was a doubt thrown upon the word of God, a fiery dart which should have been instantly quenched by "Jehovah hath spoken;" but the question was entertained, the doubt allowed, and thus the victory was nigh won. Pushing his advantage, the serpent not craftily now, but boldly gave the lie direct to the living God. "Ye shall not surely die." Satan proved himself a traducer of God, a liar, and the murderer of the innocent man in the garden, and after the lapse of 4,000 years, he again lied in the very presence of infinite love, and sought to destroy the Holy One of God; for the man, and the woman's seed, are ever the objects of satanic hate (John 8.) The last and successful attack upon the woman in the garden was to traduce the character of God as sovereign in goodness. He would give what God had withheld. God had but given them a subordinate place; he would make "as gods." He would give them opened eyes and increased intelligence—knowing good and evil; this God had arbitrarily withheld, because not perfectly good. The bait was eagerly swallowed: "She took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Satan worked upon her weakness, and she wrought upon her husband's affections. She should have leant upon her husband, and he upon God.