

(Isaiah) All About Satan

by David Guzik

God's judgment on the nations is a reminder of His mercy on Jacob and Israel, and the ultimate fate of Satan is a defeated and degraded creature in hell.

Duration: 55:21

Scripture: Isaiah 14:3-4, Isaiah 14:6-7, Isaiah 14:12-13, Isaiah 14:32, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Satan's Fall", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the fall of the king of Babylon and the reasons behind it. The fall was prompted by something the king said in his heart, even though he may not have spoken it aloud. This fall is described as the king being cut down to the ground, symbolizing his loss of glory and power. The sermon also mentions the falls of Satan, with the first fall being from a state of glory to a state of sin, and the second fall yet to come when Satan will be restricted to the earth. The sermon concludes with a vivid description of a funeral song sung to the defeated king of Babylon, emphasizing the loss of his pomp and power.

Transcript

The broader section is God pronouncing His judgment against the nations. Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Edom, Moab. We saw back in chapter 13 that God was focusing His word of judgment against Babylon.

We saw last week that this word of judgment came against Babylon before it was even raised up to the place of a superpower in the world. But that's okay. God knew it was going to become a superpower.

God knew they were going to become arrogant. God knew He was going to judge them. God knew all of this from the beginning.

And so He announces it ahead of time. Chapter 14 continues the idea of judgment upon Babylon. But as God so often loves to do, in the midst of His pronouncements of judgments, He gets out the salt shaker, should I say the sugar shaker, and He sprinkles some love in there.

Sprinkles some grace and some mercy. So look at the first two verses, Isaiah chapter 14, where the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will still choose Israel and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them and they will cling to the house of Jacob.

Then people will take them and bring them to their place and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids. In the land of the Lord, they will take them captive, whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors. Now, again, Isaiah 13 ended with the desolation and gloom that would come upon Babylon.

And since Babylon was Judah's or would be Judah's great enemy, any judgment on Babylon was an expression of mercy on Israel. You know, when God's judging your enemy, that's mercy to you, isn't it? So Isaiah follows this pronouncement of judgment on Babylon with the idea that the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will still choose Israel. I love that phrase in verse one.

The Lord will still choose Israel. Don't you feel that sometimes, you know, Lord, yeah, you chose me. But if you had to choose all over again, you wouldn't still choose me.

You'd change your mind. Yeah, Lord, you know, I can see why you chose me back then. But, Lord, haven't you seen me in the years since? I don't think you'd choose me all over again, Lord.

Would you still choose me, God? Look at verse one. And will still choose Israel. Do you feel like God's stuck with you tonight? That he'd choose differently if he could? Here, the Lord reminds his children that he still chooses us.

And he'd choose you all over again, right now. You've let the Lord down. You haven't served him the way you should.

You haven't produced fruit the way that you should. You're aware of this. You're smarting from it.

The devil's got his whooping stick out on you. You know what? The Lord would still choose you tonight. And he still does choose you.

His choice isn't just a one-time thing. Then he looks back and says, Oh, bad choice, but I'm stuck with it. No, he still chooses you.

He chooses you every day. And he gives a beautiful promise of restoration to Israel. He says that he'll settle them in their own land.

The Babylonians had forcibly exiled most of the population of Judah. And so the promise of return was precious. There's also a precious invitation to the Gentiles there.

Did you see it there? It says in verse one, the strangers will be joined with them. Yes, God would bless Israel and Judah again, but he'd also bring strangers to be a part of that blessing. Any Gentiles here tonight? You're a stranger.

You're a stranger to the covenants of God, but the covenants of God have been open to you. The regathered and the restored Israel would invite Gentiles to receive the goodness of God with them. And then they would take them captive, whose captives they were, and they'd rule over their oppressors.

You see, in inviting the strangers to come and to be joined with them, Israel eliminates their enemies. Do you know the ultimate way to conquer your enemy? Make him your friend. You've just conquered your enemy.

That's what Israel does. These enemies of theirs, the captors, the Babylonians, the ones who oppress them, now they're their friends because they were the strangers who've come and become part of this covenant. Well, that's the word of encouragement.

Now there's a different kind of word of encouragement beginning at verse three. I'm going to read verses three through eight, and then we'll go back and pick this apart piece by piece. But I want you to get a sense of the power and the flow of what's going on here.

Look at verse three. It shall come to pass in the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon and say, How the oppressor has ceased, the golden city ceased. The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers.

He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke. He who ruled the nations in anger is persecuted and no one hinders. The whole earth is at rest and quiet.

They break forth into singing. Indeed, the cypress trees rejoice over you and the cedars of Lebanon saying, Since you were cut down, no woodsman has come up against us. Now, it starts out here in verse three, speaking of the day that the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve.

Friends, I want you to just think of that phrase there in verse three. The Lord God announces a day when he will give rest, rest from what? Rest from sorrow, rest from fear and rest from hard bondage. My friends, I'm here to tell you that because of your relationship with Jesus Christ, that is the birthright for every born again believer in Jesus Christ.

It's your birthright before God to have rest from sorrow. Why are you sorry all the time? Why are you looking your wounds and acting like you know you? What, has God left his throne? Did God die in heaven? Did God die somewhere and nobody told us? We believe in God. We believe that Jesus Christ is for us and God is for us.

Who can be against us? That's rest from your sorrow. You can cast all your cares upon him. He cares for you.

Rest from it. He says there, rest from your sorrow and then from your fear. Fear.

Friends, for the believer in Jesus Christ, an unnatural and obsessive and ungodly fear. It's just plain sin. You may as well go to God right now, look him in the eye and say, I don't trust you.

I don't trust you to protect me, to love me, to have your sheltering hands around me. I've got to be afraid for myself, Lord. I don't think you'll look out for me.

What a terrible thing. God wants to give you rest from your fear tonight. Rest from your sorrow.

Rest from your fear. And you saw the third thing in verse three, didn't you? Rest from your hard bondage. Oh, you know, there's a lot of hard bondage, isn't there out there? There's hard bondage to sin.

No harder bondage you'll ever serve in your life than that which will serve to sin. Then there's hard bondage, which you'll serve to the fears of men. Being a man pleaser, being caught in a sinful cycle of wanting to please people, of being a people pleaser and all the rest of it.

There's the hard bondage of the fear of man. There's the hard bondage of legalism. There's all sorts of hard bondage out there.

Now, there's a sweet bondage out there, too, isn't it? That's when we're bond slaves of Jesus Christ. The Lord wants to give you rest from all those things. Wasn't it Jesus who said, come to me? All you who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest.

Rest from your sorrow, rest from your fear, rest from your hard bondage. Do you have it? Jesus Christ offers it to you tonight. And then he goes on here in verse four.

He says that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon and say, you see, in the day of restoration, the defeat and the weakness of the king of Babylon will be exposed and Israel will rejoice. Now, as this prophecy continues on from Isaiah 13, it's important that we remember that in the context, Isaiah had two aspects of prophetic fulfillment in mind. First, there is the immediate and partial fulfillment regarding the empire of Babylon and its king.

There was a world empire of Babylon. The first great king of Babylon was Nebuchadnezzar. The second great king was or the third actually was Belshazzar.

And these great kings ruled and had a mighty empire. And the prophecy in its first level of looking looks at that. But as so often is the nature in God's prophetic word, there is a near fulfillment that's a partial fulfillment.

It's close to the time of the prophecy and it fulfills it partially. But then there's a more distant fulfillment that is an ultimate fulfillment of what's going on. And that is exactly the character of these passages, prophetically speaking, of Babylon.

There was a literal city of Babylon and a literal king of Babylon. But friends, I'm here to tell you as well that the Bible makes it very clear that there's also a spiritual empire of Babylon. That's Bible code word, so to speak, for what we call the world system.

And friends, this world system, this spiritual empire of Babylon, which God gloriously announces its final fall in the book of Revelation, chapter 17 and 18. This spiritual Babylon, this world system, it has a spiritual king. And who is the spiritual king of spiritual Babylon? It's Satan himself.

So there is a immediate partial fulfillment with the literal city in Babylon, literal empire and a literal king. And there's a spiritual empire of Babylon and a spiritual king. Now, I need to say this right at the beginning because some people, you should know, some Bible commentators very strongly disagree with this.

And they think that what we're going to read in the rest of here in Isaiah, chapter 14, you know, I read it over myself. They say, well, this has no bearing whatsoever on Satan or any kind of spiritual king of Babylon. And I just have to say, I heartily disagree.

I heartily and thoroughly disagree. You see, my friends, this proverb against the king of Babylon was in a partial sense in the mouth of the returning exiles when Babylon was finally conquered and the people of Judah could return to the promised land. That's a partial sense.

But in an ultimate sense, this proverb against the king of Babylon will be in the mouth of God's people when the world system and when her king Satan are each conquered and destroyed. Now, I want you to

consider this. Why is God telling you about the downfall of Satan now before it happens? Why? Why is he telling you the destiny of spiritual Babylon and her king? So that we can think and live now knowing the ultimate fate of the world system and Satan.

How often have you said this? If I only knew then what I know now, I know I've said a lot of times. Well, we say that once we see how things turn out, right? We see how things turn out. We see how it all ends up and say, you know what? If I only would have seen then what I see now, do you realize what God's doing in this passage? Here, God is allowing us the opportunity to know now what we will see then.

And he's going to allow it to affect our thinking and our actions. You can know it now. Now, one other thing, and this is very interesting.

Obviously, we're not here this evening reading this in the original Hebrew. But if we could study this in the original Hebrew, and if we're all fully conversant with biblical Hebrew, when we read this passage in Isaiah 14, you would notice something in the tempo, in the phrasing, in the grammar. And what you would notice is that it sounds like a mourning song at a funeral.

Now, what's interesting about this is that this is a mocking mourning song. This is taunting and mocking the king of Babylon. But it's put in the context of a mourning song to make it even a bigger chap to his hide, if I could put it that way.

This is in-your-face trash-talking to the king of Babylon. And it's deliberately put in a taunting way. And you'll see more as we go on.

First of all, verse four, the middle of the verse. How the oppressor has ceased. The golden city has ceased.

The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers. Friends, God wants us to know now that the spiritual king of Babylon, that Satan, he wants you to know now his days are numbered. There's going to come a day when his oppression has ceased.

And when the Lord will break the staff of the wicked and the scepters of these rulers. You know, sometimes we get so weary and so discouraged from Satan's attack. We almost think like his day is going to last forever.

If we remember that one reason why the devil works so hard is because even he knows that his time is short. Well, then that's an encouragement to us. Friends, let me tell you, you can outlast the devil.

You can do it. You can outlast him. You can't out muscle him.

You can't overpower him. You got to trust in Jesus Christ for that. But as you trust in Jesus, you can outlast him.

His days are numbered. Look, it says right there how the oppressor has ceased. That lets you know there's going to be an end to the career of the devil.

You can outlast him. That should be an encouragement, a hope to you right now. Now, you can say now, no more of this.

Well, if I only would have known that then, no more when the devil's career is over that you look back. Well, if I only would have known it then, you know it now. He's telling you ahead of time.

And he goes on, he says in verse six, he's struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke. Who ruled the nations in anger is persecuted and no one hinders. Now, both the literal king of Babylon and the king of spiritual Babylon were mighty, oppressive rulers over the people and over the nations.

But now the one who once persecuted is himself persecuted and nobody stops. And as a result, the whole earth is at rest, is in quiet. And they break forth singing.

Look at verse seven. The whole earth is at rest and quiet. They break forth into singing.

And you want to know how great it is? Even the trees are happy. Look at it. Verse eight.

Indeed, the cypress trees rejoice over you and the cedars of Lebanon saying, since you were cut down, no woodsman has come up against us. Now, what's interesting about this is when you go into history, you find that the literal king of Babylon, they had a deforestation problem. They went and they now the forests of Lebanon were famous for their mighty trees, wonderful for building the cedars of Lebanon.

And what they would do in Lebanon and northern Israel, anywhere they could, these kings of Babylon, they would come and cut down as much wood as they possibly could. They didn't care about ecology or anything like that. And so they did as much damage as they could.

And now when the king of Babylon is gone, the literal king, the trees are rejoicing. Can I tell you something? The trees are going to rejoice when the king of spiritual Babylon is gone also. Do you realize that creation itself will also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God? They want it to happen.

The trees, the rocks, the mountains, the hills, the ocean, they're all saying, come quickly, Lord, come quickly, Lord, deliver us from this bondage, deliver us from it. They're waiting for. Now, if you think that was vivid, go to verse nine.

Again, this is a song sung to the defeated king of Babylon. Hell from beneath is excited about you to meet you at your coming. It stirs up the dead for you, all the chief ones of the earth.

It is raised up from their thrones, all the kings of the nation. They shall all speak and say to you, have you become as weak as we? Have you become like us? Your pomp is brought down to shield and the sound of your string and instruments. The maggot is spread under you and worms cover you.

Now, can you imagine this song in the tempo and the tone of a funeral song? This is in your face. You know what it is? This is saying plain and simple, the king of Babylon, you're going to hell. And boy, are they happy to get you.

They're happy to receive you. Hell from beneath is excited about you. Hell itself is excited to meet the king of Babylon because it can't wait to be the place where the one who tortured so many is tortured himself.

Now, this was true for the king of literal Babylon, and it's true for the king of spiritual Babylon. My friends, God wants us to know now that Satan is destined for hell. He isn't a winner.

He is a loser. My friends, let me lay it down right here and clear. Despite what you see in the cartoons and all the depictions here and there, Satan is not the boss or the lord of hell.

What, you think he runs the place? Let me tell you something. You know who runs hell? God runs hell. Hell is God's place.

It's not the devil's place. That's the place where he's incarcerated. It's the place of his imprisonment.

God runs hell as a place of his righteous judgment. Satan will go to hell as a victim, as the ultimate prisoner in the dungeon of darkness. And hell will be happy to receive him that way.

Look at what they say, all the chief ones of the earth, the kings of the nation. Verse 10 says they come and they say to the devil is what they're going to say to him when he comes down to hell. Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? You see, when he went to hell, the literal king of Babylon, of literal Babylon, was exposed as a mere man, even though he thought of himself as greater than that.

As well, when the king of spiritual Babylon goes to hell, everyone will be amazed to see that he was only a creature. You know what? Sometimes we often, and I think we do this to Satan's great delight. We often inflate Satan's status and importance.

We think of him sometimes. You've thought this way sometimes. We think of Satan sometimes as the opposite of God.

You can do this with people very easily. Say, what's the opposite of light? You say dark. What's the opposite of good? Bad.

What's the opposite of hot? Cold. What's the opposite of God? And they'll say, Satan, not on your life. God has no opposite.

God is the uncreated master of everything in the created order. My friends, Satan wishes he was the opposite of God. But God wants us to know that now, we can know it now.

What every creature will know someday, that is that Satan is but a mere creature. And in no way the opposite of God. Friends, if Satan somewhere has an opposite, his opposite is a high-ranking angel in allegiance to God.

Someone like Michael, the archangel. That's an opposite for Satan. But on that day, Satan's going to be brought down to hell.

And everybody will look and say, this is you? You're the one? What, you're the one that we thought we were so afraid of, that ruled over the nations? You're the one? Look at you. You're just a creature. And if that's not enough, it says, look at verse 11.

Wow. Your pomp is brought down. The maggot is spread under you and worms cover you.

My friends, in the end, it won't just be defeat for the king of Babylon. Both for the literal and spiritual kings of Babylon. Their defeat in hell will be disgusting and degrading.

Do you know this? Do you know how disgusting and how degrading the end of Satan will be? There it goes down to hell. Here's your bed. It's a bed of maggots.

And here's your blanket. It's a blanket of worms. There you go.

Think about that when you go to bed tonight. You're sleeping in a nice bed. Devil's going to sleep on a bed of maggots and covered with a blanket of worms.

My friends, when you think about how disgusting and degrading the end of Satan will be, why would any of us want to serve him or work for his cause even for a minute? Who wants to end up with the maggots and the worms? No part of it. There's one other line there in verse 11 that caught my eye. Maybe it caught yours as well.

Did you notice where it says, and the sound of your stringed instruments. Before his fall, Satan was associated with music in heaven. Ezekiel chapter 28, verse 13 says of Satan before his fall, the workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.

Apparently, the musical career of Satan did not end with his fall. Because the sound of his stringed instruments is only brought down when he's imprisoned in hell. So music oftentimes is still a tool in the hand of the devil.

It's still a mighty hand in the tool of the Lord, but it's also oftentimes used as a tool in the hand of the devil. Now, verse 12 continues on. Now again, remember, Isaiah is delivering this prophecy, and he has in mind the king of Babylon.

In the near view, he has in mind the king of literal Babylon. In the far, ultimate view, he has in mind the king of spiritual Babylon. Now, what's interesting about this is as you go through the prophecy, at some times he focuses more on the near fulfillment and sometimes he focuses more on the distant fulfillment.

Coming into verse 12, now he's focusing more on the distant fulfillment. Check it out here, verse 12. How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, how you are cut down to the ground, you have weakened the nations.

You've said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit on the mountain of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north.

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most high. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol to the lowest deaths.

Now, here in verse 12, the prophet identifies the king of Babylon as Lucifer, son of the morning. Now, there's some debate as to if Lucifer is a name or a title. The name Lucifer means morning star or day star.

It refers to a brightly shining object in the heavens. Whether it's a title or a name really makes little difference. The idea is clear.

This once brightly shining king of Babylon is now fallen from heaven. Fallen from heaven, indeed. Did you know that in fact, there are four falls of Satan? And this prophecy refers to his fourth and final fall.

The first fall of Satan was when he fell from glorified to profane. This is described in Ezekiel chapter 28 and in Luke chapter 10. In Luke chapter 10, Jesus says that he saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Now, this is the only fall of Satan that has already happened. The other three falls of Satan have yet to occur, but he has fallen from a being of great glory to being a being that is full of sin and is profane before God. The second fall of Satan yet to come is when Satan will fall from having access to heaven to being restricted to the earth.

Did you know that right now Satan has access to heaven? He does. He goes before the Lord right now and you know what he does? He rags on you and me. That's what the Bible says he does.

You have a beautiful picture of this in the book of Job. One day, Satan was cruising up before the Lord in heaven. The Lord bragging on his servant Job to Satan.

Isn't that glorious? Isn't that frightening? The Lord's saying, Hey, Satan, see my servant Job? Pretty righteous man. Satan says, Ah, he doesn't serve you for nothing. You just bless him all the time.

No wonder he serves you. The Lord says, That's not why. He does it because he loves me.

Ah, let me take some of that stuff away. And the Lord allows him to bring greater glory to himself. And might I say greater honor and credit to Job in the end.

Bible says that Satan is the accuser of the brethren and that he stands before the Lord accusing us day and night. Friends, that's where Satan is right now. He has that access to heaven.

But the Bible says in Revelation, chapter 12, verse nine, that there's going to come a day when Satan is cast out from that access in heaven and he's going to be restricted to the earth. That's going to happen during the period of time that the Bible calls the great tribulation. And when Satan gets restricted to the earth, look out because he's not happy about it.

That's the second fall. The third fall of Satan is when he falls from his place on the earth. And you know where he's going to fall to? A great big bottomless pit with a great big chain around.

He's going to fall to the bottom of a bottomless pit. If there is such a thing, a bottom of a bottomless pit. He's going to be way down in there.

Shut up in there. That's the third fall. Then after he's there for a thousand years, finally, Satan will fall from the bottomless pit to the lake of fire, which is commonly known as hell.

And friends, that's what's referred to in Isaiah, chapter 14, verse 12, where it says how you are fallen from heaven. Oh, Lucifer, son of the morning. Satan's going to hell.

That's his destiny. And then it says, oh, Lucifer, son of the morning. Friends, do you realize that this is a title of glory and beauty and honor? And this fit Lucifer well before his fall.

The morning is glorious. And in Hebrew thinking, the son of whatever is characterized by whatever. If I call you a son of glory, it means that you're characterized by glory.

If I call you a son of Belial or a son of foolishness, it means you're characterized by foolishness or by the foolish God. So when the Lord says that at one time Lucifer was the son of the morning, you realize what glory he had in heaven. Matter of fact, he had a glory that was similar to please.

I'm not trying to say that was the same, but it was after the same analogy of the glory of Jesus himself, who is called the bright and morning star. Satan, though he was a created being, had some of these glorious qualities in himself. No wonder the Bible says in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 that it says that Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light, deceiving many today with his apparent glory, beauty and goodness.

My friends, if Satan himself were to appear before us right now, if he were to appear on this platform and show himself, not only would we not be terrified at his presence, if you're thinking of some hideous, grotesque being like you've seen in some horror movie, wipe that conception out of your mind. He would appear as an angel of light and we would be strongly tempted not to run. We would be tempted to worship him.

My friends, now, how is he? Look at verse 12. You are cut down to the ground. What a contrast! This being once so high, once so shining, once so bright, now cut down to the ground.

Why? Why the fall from so glorious, so shining, so bright, now cut down to the ground? Look at it there in verse 13. For you have said in your heart, God tells us the reason behind the fall of the King of Babylon and it's true both for the King of literal Babylon and spiritual Babylon. The fall was prompted by something he said, even though he may have never said it with his lips, it was enough that he said it in his heart.

And what did he say? Look at it there, verse 13. I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.

I also will sit on the mountain of the congregation on the farther sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.

The pride, the grasping, selfish ambition, the self-will of the King of Babylon is powerfully expressed in the five I will statements. Friends, this is the essence of the self-focused and the self-obsessed life. I will.

I will. I will. I will.

I will. I will ascend into heaven. Heaven will be my home and my place of honor.

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. Now, stars of God in the Old Testament is a common reference to the angels. New Testament as well, I should add.

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. It's as if he's saying I will be enthroned and I will be exalted above all other angelic beings. I will also sit on the mount of the congregation.

I will sit in the place of glory and honor and attention. I will ascend above the heights. I will continue to rise, even in heaven, until all see me in my bright, shining glory.

Finally, he says, I will be like the Most High. I will be glorious and be set equal to God far above other created beings. Friends, I want you to look at this and consider this carefully because I've seen this and understood this in a slightly different way than I've ever understood it before.

I used to think that this passage described Satan's desire to exalt himself above God or to replace God as if Satan were to march up to the throne and kick God off the throne and say, that's my seat now. Thank you very much. I don't think so.

Look at this here. We see in these statements, not so much a desire to exalt one's self above God, but the desire to exalt one's self above one's peers. Satan doesn't say he wants to be above God here.

He wants to be like God. But who does he want to be above? His peers, the other angelic beings. He says, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

Previously, he said, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. He wanted to be equal with God above the other angelic beings. From this passage, it seems that Satan's desire was not so much to be above God, but to be honored and regarded as the highest angel above the other stars of God, receiving the glory and attention one would receive being next to God, equal with God, like the most high.

You don't have to want to be exalted higher than God to be like Satan. It's enough to want to be exalted above other people. Now, what's curious about this is in a backdoor way, he wants to be exalted above God, doesn't he? Because he is challenging God's plan.

He's challenging God's order. He's challenging God's way. And when you do that, you think you know better than God.

And so you are challenging God. But he's doing it in the backdoor way. The front door is just saying, I want to be higher than my peers.

There are some people today who in a upfront way say, let's kick God off the throne and I'll be there. But far more common, the way that Satan trips people up is for the devil to say, you just be exalted above other people. Above your peers, you put yourself in the place of applause and attention and glory and honor, and then you drink it in and become drunk on it.

See, my friend, Lucifer was certainly a glorious angel. The Bible calls him the day star, the morning star. It calls him the son of the morning.

In Ezekiel 28, it calls him the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. It calls him in Ezekiel 28, the anointed cherub who covers. Yet there came a time when despite all his beauty and glory, he departed from the heart of God by wanting to exalt himself above his peers.

You see, he departed from the heart of God. As the heart of Jesus says, the status of equality with God is not something I'll hang on to. I'll let it go.

The heart of Jesus says, and you get this from Philippians chapter two, the heart of Jesus says, I'll let go of it. I'll give up my reputation. I'll be a servant.

I'll live humbly among men and I'll even die an excruciating and humiliating death. And when Lucifer departed from this heart, he fell from his glory. One commentator makes an excellent statement and he says, It's a strange paradox that nothing makes a man less like God than the urge to be God's equal.

For he who was God stepped down from the throne of his glory to display to the wondering eyes of men the humility of God. You're never less like God than when you want to be him. So what prompted Satan's desire to exalt himself above all other creatures? What prompted these five I will statements? Why did Lucifer rebel? Well, we're getting off into an area of speculation here.

And so I don't expect you to regard this as what I'm saying is the absolute truth. You can take it or leave it. But there are some Hebrew traditions which I think connect very well with passages of scripture.

That perhaps suggests that Lucifer rejected God's plan to create an order of beings who would be made in the image of God, yet would be beneath the angels in dignity, but would be served by angels in the present time and would one day be lifted above the angels in glory and honor. Ladies and gentlemen, that's human beings. Do you realize that you have an incredible difference between you, your essential makeup, who you are as a being? There's an essential difference between a human being and angelic being.

A human being is made in the image of God. An angelic being isn't. Angelic beings are glorious.

Angelic beings are powerful. Angelic beings are impressive, but they're not made in the image of God. This means that there is a level, a dimension of fellowship that we can have with God that the angels cannot.

Now, Lucifer gets wind of this plan to create these beings. And maybe he sees the plan on the drawing board and he goes, but you're going to make these things out of dirt? Look at us. I'm the sun of the morning.

I'm glorious and resplendent. And you're going to pour your image into this? Now, God says, yeah. And you know what? You angelic beings, your job is to serve them.

Not only that, these creatures, these dirt creatures made in my image, they're going to teach you. You're going to serve them. They're going to teach you.

And one day they will be glorified and their glory will outstrip yours. Not a chance. I will be exalted.

I will sit in the congregations of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most high.

Friends, do you see Satan's plan? Do you see Satan's strategy? This is the case. It really explains his strategy because you know what Satan wants to do? He wants to obscure the image of God in you. Satan wants to get you to serve him.

And finally, Satan wants to prevent the ultimate glorification of as many people as he can, because that's one less person, one less stinking dirt human being glorified above him. So, friends, that's why Satan went out, I believe, and said, I will. I will.

I will. I will. I will.

Yet, listen what the Lord answers to all these I wills. Verse 15. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol to the lowest depths of the pit.

Oh, yeah. You say you're going to do this. I will.

I will. I will. Oh, yeah.

God says, let me tell you how this is going to work. You're going down. The Lord says to Satan, you shall be brought down despite Satan's desire to exalt himself.

He's not going to be exalted at all. Now, certainly there's a sense in which Satan is exalted right now, isn't he? There's a sense that he's the king of the world. He's the king of the world system.

He's the king of spiritual Babylon. My friends, if there could be a worldwide referendum right now on planet Earth, vote for who you want to rule over this world. Can I tell you that God would lose? In the heart of man, the vast majority of men, they're given over to Satan's rulership.

They've elected him president, a ruler, a king of this world. There's a sense in which he's exalted now. But this is but an eye blink in the scope of eternity.

Satan, like all those who desire to exalt themselves, shall be brought down. Friends, you can follow in his footsteps if you want to. Desire to exalt yourself and you'll be brought down.

The Bible says, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. Jesus said, if anyone desires to be first, should be last of all and servant of all. The way up is down.

Satan never learned that. So what happens when he goes down? Look at verse 16. Those who see you will gaze at you and consider you saying, is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the house of his prisoners? When the literal king of Babylon fell, his weakness was exposed, and others were amazed that once he had so much power and so many feared him.

Now, the same is going to happen when the king of spiritual Babylon falls. People will see him for what he really is and be amazed at how much power he actually had. Friends, if you realize that as powerful and as mighty as Satan is, you've got something he doesn't.

You're made in the image of God. You've got the Holy Spirit dwelling within you. You realize that you can put that person.

Well, wait a minute. I don't need to be so afraid. I don't need to take this.

I'm going to walk in the Lord. I'm going to trust in him. Greater is he who's in me than he who's in the world.

You can rest in that. Verse 18. All the kings of the nations, all of them sleep in glory, everyone in his own house, but you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, like the garment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit like a corpse trodden underfoot.

You will not be joined with them in burial because you've destroyed your land and slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. Prepare slaughter for his children because of the iniquity of their fathers, lest they rise up and possess the land and fill the face of the world with cities.

For I will rise up against them, says the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name and the remnant and offspring and posterity, says the Lord. And I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, then marshes of muddy water. I'll sweep it with the broom of destruction, says the Lord.

Now, in the mind of the ancient world, there really was a fate worse than death. And you know what that was? That was to have your dead body unburied and desecrated. It's hard for us to relate to that.

For us, we think, you're dead, you're dead, who cares? Do whatever you want with my body. But in the thinking of the ancient world, they didn't think like that. And so you know what God says? He goes, yeah.

And you know what they're going to do to you, King of Babylon? Not only are you going down, but your corpse, as it says there in verse 19, like a corpse trodden underfoot, you will not be joined with them in burial. You're not even going to be given a proper burial. Instead of a proper burial, the King of Babylon gets a bed of maggots and a blanket of worms.

That's what you get. Friends, the destruction of Babylon, both literal and spiritual, will be complete. The Lord will cut off from Babylon the name and the remnant.

There won't even be a remnant of Babylon left when the Lord will sweep it with the broom of destruction. Don't you love that? You get sick of this world system. Friends, not only is this King going down, it's going down.

God says, I'm going to sweep it away. It's rubbish, fit only for the broom of judgment. It's going to go.

That finishes the section of God's judgment against Babylon. Now, in the remainder of Isaiah chapter 14, we have two brief sections where the Lord speaks of judgment coming upon the kingdom of Assyria and the kingdom of the Philistines. So let's go through them quickly and finish up the chapter.

Isaiah 14, verse 24. The Lord of hosts is sworn, saying, Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass. And as I have purpose, so it shall stand, that I shall break the Assyrian in my land and on my mountain tread him underfoot.

Then his yoke shall be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth. And this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.

For the Lord of hosts has purposed and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out and who will turn it back? You know, God says to the Assyrians, Come to my land and I'm going to wipe you out. You know, that's exactly what happened. The Assyrians invaded the northern kingdom of Israel and carried them away in exile.

And then they invaded the southern kingdom of Judah and they came close to Jerusalem. They were going to conquer the whole city. You know what God did one night when the Assyrian army went down to bed? The angel of the Lord came down and slew, slain, slew, killed real bad.

A hundred and eighty five thousand of them in one night. Can you imagine that? That's what the Lord said would happen. He says, I will break the Assyrian in my land and on my mountains tread him underfoot.

It wasn't Israel that did that. It wasn't Judah that did it. The Lord did it.

I love it. What it says there. Did you see that in verse 27? For the Lord of hosts has purposed and who will annul it? God always accomplishes his purpose.

His plan has never frustrated it. Even when we have no trust at all in our own plan, you can fully trust God's purpose. That's the judgment on the Syrians.

Look at the judgment on the Philistines. Verse 28. This is the burden which came in the year that King Ahaz died.

Do not rejoice, all of you of Philistia, because the rod that struck you is broken. For out of the serpent's roots will come forth a viper and its offspring will be a fiery flying serpent. The firstborn of the poor will feed and the needy will lie down and say, if I will kill your roots with famine, I would slay your remnant.

Wail, O gate. Cry, O city. All of you of Philistia are dissolved.

For smoke will come forth from the north and no one will be alone in his appointed times. Now, Philistia was rejoicing because Israel, Judah was under siege. King Ahaz had died.

The Philistines were rejoicing. You know, the Philistines were the longstanding enemies of Israel standing in what's now the Gaza Strip, that coastland area of Israel, southern Israel there. And the Philistines occupied that line.

Now, by the way, you know, the Latin rendering of Philistine or Philistia is Palestine. The Palestinians take their name, the land of Palestine. That's what the Romans called that land because they didn't want to give any credit to the Jewish people.

So they called it the land of the Philistines. It's kind of funny in a roundabout way. When somebody calls a Palestinian, they're identifying themselves with the Philistine nation.

God says, don't be happy when calamity comes upon Israel. Don't you be happy because worse judgments coming upon you. By the way, that's that's something for us to consider, isn't it? Don't be happy when God's judging another person.

Maybe worse may come upon you. And the chapter wraps up in verse 32. Then one will answer the messengers of the nation or excuse me, what will one then answer the messengers of the nation that the Lord has founded Zion and the poor of his people shall take refuge in it? I love it.

What does God have to say to his people and to all the nations when nations are being judged? Here's a messenger. A messenger comes to God's people. They say, listen, God's people, all these other nations are being judged.

Syria is being judged. Syria is being judged. Babylon's being judged.

Philistines being judged. What do you say about that? You know what they say? This is what it says in verse 32. Number one, they say the Lord has founded Zion.

Whenever judgment comes, what is founded on the Lord is made evident. The storm comes and it beats against the house and it tests its foundation. And if it's made on sand, it's going down.

But if it's built on the rock and it'll endure when the Lord has founded something, it's evident to everyone in the midst of judgment. The fire sweeps through it. The chaff and the dross is burned away, but the building still stands.

You feel like you've been through the fire. The chastening hand of God has gone upon you. But here you are.

You're still standing, aren't you? It says right there, the Lord has founded Zion. Can you say that of your own life before the Lord tonight? I've seen the judge, I've seen our other people, I've seen the chastening hand of God in my life, but the Lord has founded my life. And that's why I'm standing for him right now.

And the second thing he says there, what's the other answer you give him? Verse 32. The poor of his people shall take refuge. God's place of security is not for the rich, is not for the self-sufficient.

It's for the poor of his people. It's the poor in spirit who find refuge in God's city. Does this bring us around in a beautiful circle of contrast to the pride and self-will and arrogance of Lucifer? There he was, I will, I will, I will.

Not one of the poor of his people. Can you receive that gift tonight of being poor in spirit before God? Now, when you're poor in spirit before God, that's not a place of whining. It's not a place of moaning.

It's a place of saying, Lord, I need you. I'm like a destitute beggar. And if you don't meet my need, Lord, nothing, only you.

That's the kind of dependence the Lord wants upon us. And that's the answer we can give in a time of judgment. So, friends, let's pray to God together tonight for humble hearts before him.

For hearts that aren't going to go around saying, I will, I will. Gimme, gimme, gimme. Instead, Lord, whatever you will, make me, Lord, poor in spirit.

Make me one of the poor of your people, because then I'm rich in you. Father, that is our prayer tonight. You said, Jesus, blessed are the poor in spirit.

We want that blessing. We want the blessing that comes to your poor in spirit. So, Father, I pray for everybody here tonight who just feels wiped out.

They just feel destitute. Lord, let them know that you can meet them right there and strengthen them. I pray that everybody in this room tonight has their foundation in you, in Zion.

Lord, not in ourselves, not in the I wills that declare our desire to be equal to you or to exalt ourselves over our peers. Just make us poor in spirit, God. That's where we want to be and that's where we want to stay.

In Jesus' name.

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