



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology

“The Trail of the Serpent in the Old Testament”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we ask Thy blessing upon us as we turn again to the study of the Scriptures. We realize, Lord, that we are dealing with a very difficult subject. And we pray that we have the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit as we consider the ministry of Satan, as it affects us, who are men. And we pray that through our studies we may learn a new necessity of constantly leaning upon Thee for help and strength and for protection against the wiles of the evil one. We know, Lord, that according to the Scriptures, Satan is just as real a person as Thou art. And so we pray that we may remember this and therefore, be better prepared to serve as an instrument designed for the proclamation of the truth. We commit each one in this room to Thee, and we pray Thy blessing upon them. May this time be a time for fruitfulness and edification in the truth.

For Christ's sake. Amen.

[Message] Now, let's read three verses for our Scripture reading tonight. Genesis chapter 3 in verse 15, which contains the first promise of the redeemer. Because it is the text that contains the first promise of the redeemer, it is often called the Protevangelium. And you should know this word because you'll see it from time to time. I think that I put it on the board probably for you once before. Protevangelium. *Prote*, of course, is a

word that means first and *evangelium* is a word for gospel and so Protevangelium is a term that means the first preaching of the gospel.

Verse 15 of chapter 3 of Genesis reads,

"And I will put enmity between thee (Satan or the serpent) and the woman, in between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Now, we need not enter into an exposition of this text, except simply to notice this, that the Lord has prophesized that there shall be enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. And he has also prophesized that there shall be a successful conclusion for the woman's seed except that in the process of winning the struggle, the seed of the woman shall have his heel crushed.

That's the meaning of that Hebrew expression, "he shall crush thy head, thou shalt crush his heel." Satan shall wound the seed of the woman, but it is not a fatal wound because it is the crushing of the heel. But the woman's seed shall make an end of the serpent, for he shall crush the serpent's head. And to crush the head is a fatal wound. For here then, is the first preaching of the gospel because it is the first announcement of the coming of the seed of the woman and of his ultimate victory.

And you will also notice -- I may add this, I didn't intend to but it has occurred to me. You may also notice that one of the preminent works of our Lord in coming was not only to die for our sins but in that death, to destroy the works of the devil. In other words, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was not only directed toward men but also directed toward Satan. And we read of this in a number of texts in the New Testament such as Colossians 2:15. I'll put that up here at the conclusion, and if we have time I'll say something about it. Our next study, however, will deal with it in more detail. 1 John chapter 3 in verse 8, Hebrews chapter 2, verse 14 and verse 15, and other texts, stress the fact that Jesus, when he came and died, dealt with Satan finally.

Now let’s turn over to the last book of the Bible, having read a text from the first, and read verses 4 and 5 of Revelation chapter 12. Revelation chapter 12.

Now, I think while you are finding Revelation, I will just read the first three verses, and then we will notice particularly the 4th and 5th.

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

And she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth and pain to be delivered.”

Now the picture is that of Israel, who is likening to the woman. The twelve stars, of course, are a symbol that goes back to the twelve tribes of Israel. And we read that she is with child and is about to be delivered. In verse 3,

“And there appeared another wonder in heaven: (or another sign in heaven) behold, a great red dragon,” (Now in the 9th verse of this chapter, we are told that the dragon is Satan.) “Having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.”

And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.” (A reference to the fall of angels with the fall of Satan.) “And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

Now, I want you to notice that this picture is a very vivid picture of a pregnant woman who is about to bring forth a child. And the dragon, this terrible dragon, is standing, waiting to devour the child that is to be brought forth. And that picture is really a picture of the whole of the history of the Old Testament. Or the history of the Old Testament is the history of the events that lead up to the pregnant woman’s begetting of

the child, Our Lord Jesus. And so the picture of Satan standing to devour the child is the picture of his attitude towards the seed of the woman through the Old Testament.

And then we read,

“And she brought forth a male child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and to His throne.”

Nothing is said about the cross but simply the ascension. The child escapes the grasp of the dragon and ascends to the right hand of the Father. And the next thing that is to happen is that he is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And so we are living in the age, in which God is waiting, not willing any of us who are redeemed, not willing that any of us who are elect to perish but that all of us, who are elect, should come to repentance or have room for repentance. For nineteen hundred years, God has been waiting for the elect to be gathered into his fold. “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, Jesus said, them also I must bring.” And that is the history of the nineteen hundred years, since Our Lord was here.

Now, the subject for tonight is the Trail of the Serpent in the Old Testament. Remember the things that we have learned as we combined angelology and anthropology. The nature of sin is this: it is objective transgression of God’s law. Sin is not simply self-centeredness.

I read in a Christian magazine, just this past week, a young man who was a college boy, was trying to tell some other college students how they should reach their college friends. And he had some good suggestions and he also had some suggestions that were not theologically correct. He said that we should not speak of sin to young people, but we should speak of self-centeredness.

Now, that’s fine, of course we would like to get away from objectionable biblical terms if they are really objectionable, although frankly, I think God has pretty good sense

and the use of terms in the Scriptures myself and I still like to use them. But self-centeredness is not all that sin is. Sin is more than self-centeredness. Sin is rebellion against God. And so to suggest that sin is only self-centeredness is to give a false definition of sin. Sin is positive rebellion. As a matter of fact, we’ve been saying sin is unbelief, which issues in rebellion and then usually, if provided with the proper opportunity, results in immorality.

So we’ve learned then that sin is the transgression of the law of God. It is unbelief and an out breaking rebellion. It involves both guilt and pollution and it issues in a sinful state, that sinful deeds. Then we learn that the consequence of sin, is this, the serpent is cursed and ultimately to be crushed. Genesis 3:15. The woman is to be subjective to the man. So every time that your husband says, “Dear, would you please do this?” Don’t say no, say yes and blame the serpent. The reason that we are to be in subjection, ladies, to our wonderful husbands, is because of sin. And so subjection is a reminder to you of the fact that sin took place.

Now of course, I think that God intended for us to be subject, we women, all along. But after the fall, that subordination has become subjection and it is part of women’s judgment, as we read last time.

Now, for the man, he has to work in the sweat of his brow and discover that everything seems to be against him in this world. And so he struggles to support that wife who is to be in subjection to him. Of course, he’s got by far the worst of it, no question about that. In spite of the fact that he was led into sin by the woman. No seriously, man has his judgment because of his sin. Woman has hers. And the serpent has his. And we said that the penalty for both man and women is spiritual death.

Now, spiritual death of necessity means ultimately, physical death. Physical death is not a separate penalty. Physical death is a natural result of spiritual death. And of course, if that spiritual death persists through this human experience, and if we die, spiritually dead, that spiritual death is prolonged throughout eternity and becomes eternal

death. That’s not a different death, that’s the same old death but just preserved and lengthened throughout all eternity.

Then we discuss the transmission of sin; that is, how sin is transmitted from one man to another to another and to another and so on. And why, after thousands of years, we live in Dallas, Texas, thousands of miles away from the place that Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, many, many, many thousands of generations from Adam, why we are still subjected to sin? And we suggested that Adam’s sin was imputed to man immediately. That is, the moment we were born, we come under the judgment for Adam’s sin.

In Roman’s chapter 5 in verse 12, states that.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, because all sinned.”

Now, they sinned in Adam. He’s not talking about our acts of sin there but our acts of sin in our representative for Adam was our representative. So when he sinned, he plunged the race into sin.

Now wonderful to relay, of course, Jesus Christ came as the Last Adam, died upon the cross and by his one righteous act that made it possible for those who believe, to possess the life that Jesus Christ provides. So that one man plunged us into sin, one man’s righteous act lifts us up to the right hand of the throne of God.

Now, you read Romans 5:12 through 21 and you will notice that sin is traced to one man and salvation is traced to one man. Who represented these men? St Augustine said, “The entire spiritual history of man is bound up in the history of one man, Adam, and of the one man, Jesus Christ.” That’s why he’s called the Last Adam. By the way he’s not called the Second Adam, as some of our hymn writers have called him. But he’s called the Last Adam because if he had failed there would have been no other Adam, no other representative man. So he’s the Last Adam, but he’s called the second man, not the

last man because there are many other men who shall come into a relationship with God, I for one, you for one, and many others.

Now, sin is transmitted immediately, that is the moment we're born we come under the judgment for Adam's sin. Now, as a result of that, we also propagate the sin nature so that man propagates his own nature. We come under the judgment of God immediately. Sin is transmitted immediately. Not medially, immediately. Directly. In Romans chapter 5 in verse 12, states that. Galatians chapter 3 in verse 22 also states that.

Now we want to trace briefly, the conflict that flowed out of the enmity between thee and the woman. I put a little diagram on the board, and I do not claim that all of my diagrams are Scriptural because it is impossible to diagram perfectly spiritual truth, at least it seems to me. But you will notice that this triangle, a kind of ideological triangle, I designed to represent some of the enmities that exist between man and Satan and God. Man is at enmity with God because of his sin and so he is at enmity upward before he responds to the message concerning Jesus Christ. Satan, too, is at enmity with God. God is only at enmity with the sin that exists in man and Satan. But man is at enmity with Satan and Satan is at enmity with man. The reason for this is very simply that each one of them has our own will, and Satan has his will, and we want to do what we will, and he wants to do what he will. And that we can never, the two of us, man outside of Christ and Satan outside of Christ or outside of God, they can never get together against God because they each have a will of their own.

So we have then, man at enmity with Satan, Satan with man and both against God. That's the character of sin, of course. That's why, by the way, Russia and Chinese Communism, perhaps they shall get together for a while. That's why they can never be together finally until in the last days the last moments, The Great Tribulation period, when man sees that his only hope is to unite for a brief time, they shall unite in their common opposition to God. But this is why, in Russian Communism, right from the beginning there has never been any unity. Workers of the world unite. And that was the one thing

that has never been true of Communism and never will be. Don’t be surprised, if you read in your newspapers, of some new conflict that breaks out in Communism or new conflicts that break out in the western world because man can never unite because he is united in one thing that prevents him from ever being united in anything else and that’s his sin. Which means that he is an unbeliever and a rebel and consequently, he cannot agree. That’s a sad state, isn’t it?

Now, since God is already announced the defeat of Satan, in his struggle, against God and man, why a man, in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15, it is only to be expected, of course, that the dragon should be very much interested in doing everything within his power, to prevent this man from coming. And that’s what we are going to see here.

In Roman I of our outline, the attempt to thwart God’s purpose in Adam’s time, Genesis chapter 4, verses 1 through 7. Now we are going to read a good bit of the bible tonight. Let’s turn back to Genesis chapter 4, let’s read verses 1 through 7.

“And Adam knew Eve his wife;” (You know of course, the word knew, in the Bible, is a word that means to enter into intimate relationships with. Of course it is the word here for sexual intercourse. I mention this because in the Bible when you read the word, foreknowledge, or foreknew, that word does not mean to know beforehand, simply it means to enter into intimate relationship with. It’s a Hebraic concept. For know us is not to know what we would do but to enter into intimate relations, which is by choice. It’s bound up in this idea that existed in the Hebrew mind concerning the word, know. “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I gotten a man from the LORD.’”

And she again bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering;”

(Perhaps, he did by fire, we do not know. But remember Elijah said, "The God that entereth by fire, he is the true God." Perhaps Abel's offering was consumed in fire and therefore, they knew his offering had been honored by God.)

"But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, "Why art thou angry? And why hast thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Now you see, Cain has been guilty of unbelief. He did not accept the word of God concerning the proper sacrifice. By faith, Able offered a more excellent sacrifice. Faith cometh by hearing, hearing the word of God. Cain heard, he just didn't believe. He brought something else. He's like a man that enters a contest today. The contest says, send your entry in on a plain sheet of white paper, unmarked. So what do you do? You send it in perhaps written out of top of a giant cake in order to impress the judges. You know what they do? They eat the cake and throw your entry away. It's illegal. They don't have to judge it. They get paid for it, but they don't have to use it. You've been disobedient. You didn't obey the instructions.

And so here, Cain didn't obey the instructions. And because he didn't obey the instructions he was guilty of unbelief, he was a rebel against God. Deep down in his heart, he was not right with God. He brought a beautiful offering, no doubt. And the world might have admired it very much, in fact you might have found some, if they hadn't been ones there looking at it saying, "I think it's real bad to kill an animal. How much better to accept the offering of the immaterial sacrifice?" There are many good reasons why Cain's offering should have been accepted, by human reason, but it wasn't.

Now what does Cain do? Well, he proves what is in his heart.

“And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ And he said, ‘I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?’”

So he’s guilty of unbelief, rebellion, murder, and now the impudence to say, “I don’t know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” This is the product of unbelief. But now in the New Testament, there is something said about Cain that marks out this incident as an attempt on the part of Satan to foil the plans of God. For we read in the New Testament, in John 1 chapter 3 in verse 12 that Cain was of that wicked one. So while Cain slew Abel because he was angry that his offering had not been accepted, in the New Testament we are told that it is done satanically. And that may well be the first attempt, on the part of Satan to thwart the coming of the redeemer. Or perhaps he thought that Abel was the one through whom the promise should come. Later, as we know Seth was born and the line was continued in Seth.

Well, let’s take a look on now at Noah’s day, the attempt to thwart God’s purpose. I should put overthrow instead of thwart. It’s harder to pronounce. It’s also harder to spell, too. The attempt to thwart God’s purpose in Noah’s time, Genesis 6, verse 1 through verse 9. Now let’s read a few more verses,

“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives for all whom they chose.”

Now when you see this term “sons of God” it is often said the term “sons of God” is a reference of the Godly line. There is no support for this whatsoever. This is just a guess. The term sons of God in the Old Testament, is a Hebraic expression -- is a

Hebrew expression, which only occurs in reference to angels. Now, there are similar terms, that occur to reference of men, but this precise expression, never occurs except with reference to angels. So the sons of God and saw the daughters of men, speaking theologically, are probably angels. But let’s continue,

“And the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.’ There were giants on the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men,”

Now it is also said, that if the sons of God are the Godly line, then the daughters of men are the ungodly line, and that’s a second guess. Because there is nothing in the usage of the word daughters of men, to suggest that they are not of the Godly line. That’s just pure guesswork. That not interpretation of the Bible, that’s meddling with the Bible, as a friend of mine likes to say. The term “sons of God” refers to angels. The term “daughters of men” includes every one of us. That is what we are. Whether we are the Godly line or the ungodly line, we are daughters of men. That is, those of you who are female.

“And they bore children to them, the same became mighty men who were of old, men of renown. (mighty men) And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagining of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him in His heart.

And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing and the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them.’”

Now, the wickedness that is described here, is insufficient to account for the flood, if all it is just ordinary wickedness among men. But you see six, in verses 1-4, when the description is made of this unnatural union, that is the last straw. What we have here is demonic intervention in the affairs of men. That is sufficient to bring the worldwide flood. Because if this is persisted in, then the incarnation may be in danger. So we read in verse 8,

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.”

Only one family was uncontaminated, and it was necessary for God now to intervene in the flood.

Will you turn with me to the New Testament, to the Book of Jude? One of these nights we’re going to talk about this subject in more detail. But until we do, I just ask for you to -- just ask that you read Peter 1 chapter 3, Peter 2 chapter 2, Jude verses 5 and 6, that we are going to read here, verse 5, 6 and 7, that we are going to read now, Genesis 6, and then pray about it and then you’ll believe like I do. Now verse 5,

“I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

And the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the Great Day --

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh,” (You know that term means different flesh. It’s the word in Greek *heteros*, in which we get heterodoxy, heteropractice

and so forth.) “Strange flesh are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

Now, that verse is an allusion to the experience of Genesis chapter 19, when the two angels who had come with the Lord to Abraham, went on to the city of Sodom and Gomorrah. And the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were so wicked that when these angels entered the city of Sodom, they sought out Lot’s house and the inhabitants of that land saw those two men. You’ll remember that they went up to the door of Lot, and they sought to have those men. They, as a matter of fact, stormed the door. In order that they may have those men that they might know them, the Bible states, that they might enter into a sexual relationship with them. Angelic beings. You’ll remember that God had to supernaturally put blindness upon them so that they lost the way.

Now, that’s what he’s talking about here, when he speaks about going after strange flesh. That’s what was happening in Noah’s day. It’s very difficult for us, in the 20th century, to understand this and sometimes men seek to point to Matthew, where the Lord Jesus, speaking about the angel says that, “The angels neither married nor given in marriage, but the wicked neither marry or given in marriage but are like the angels in Heaven.” This is the text Matthew 22 in verse 30. “For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in Heaven.”

And it’s sometimes said how could the angels unite in any way with men when the text of Scripture says that the angels neither marry or are given in marriage? But they overlooked the fact that this days like the angels of God in Heaven. That’s true of the angels of God in heaven. That’s true of the elect angels, but it’s not true of the nonelect.

Well, then how could it happen? I always like to say it doesn’t make any difference. If I cannot explain to you how it happened. Nevertheless, the Bible teaches that it happened. I may go out tonight and turn on the switch in my car, and it may not start. And I may go into the back and take off the gasoline tank and put a stick down in

there and pull it out, and there is no gasoline on that stick and I might come in and say, "I'm out of gas. My car won't start." Then Cardinal Michael may go out with me, and he may know how to do this a little better and he'd take a longer stick or something, and he'd put it down in there and he's say, "No, there gasoline in there." But still my car won't start. I was wrong as far as the reason is concerned, but it won't start.

Now, the facts of the Bible are that the sons of God, the angels, took to themselves the daughters of men. There was an illicit, unnatural union of some kind. And I can only suggest this, I do know that the demons inhabited men in our Lord's day. There was such a thing as demonic possession, and so I presume it was something like that, that the angels possessed the bodies of men, in such a way, that this danger persisted and so God brought the flood in order to preserve pure, the line to our Lord Jesus Christ. It's a strange thing, but it's the teaching of the Scripture. And Genesis chapter 6, Genesis chapter 19, 1 Peter chapter 3, 2 Peter chapter 2, Jude, verses 6 and 7, specifically this forth.

I had a Professor of New Testament, Dr. Everett Harrison, who was an outstanding scholar, still is one of our outstanding New Testament scholars. He was a very quiet type of man, and he never like to take an unusual type of interpretation, never like to have an oddball interpretation. I'm glad I sat under him because it delivered me from a lot of oddball interpretations that people place on the word of God. But when he came to this subject, he used to like to say to us, he say -- he'd say, "Men, I don't like to believe this. I just naturally think it's strange, and I don't want to accept it. But when I read the verse that I've just read to you in Jude," he read the passage, "when I read that verse in Jude and when I read the passage 2 Peter chapter 2 and 1 Peter chapter 3 and Genesis chapter 6," (he was also a Professor of Hebrew at one time.) He said, "I can't come to any other conclusion in there and so I believe that this is the teaching of God's word." I think that the way we ought to come to God's word, too.

Roman 3, the attempt to thwart God's purpose in Pharaoh's time.

Now, let's turn over to Exodus chapter 1. One of these days I want to take a little time out and just spend about an hour on this subject that we just brought up and dropped in ten minutes. The attempt in Pharaoh's time, Exodus chapter 1. Now let's read a few verses here in Exodus chapter 1. Let's begin with verse 8 -- verse 7,

"And the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and became exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, 'Behold, the children, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we.' Come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply and it come to pass, that when war occurs, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land."

In other words, Pharaoh wants to prevent the increase of Israel. But Satan is behind Pharaoh. Pharaoh is his too.

"Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew; and they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigor. And the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah.

And he said, 'When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women and see them upon the stools, if it be a son then ye shall kill him; but if it be a daughter then she shall live.'

Now, this is the attempt of Satan, through Pharaoh, to destroy the male line altogether. But in the Bible it is said that God takes the wives in their own craftiness, and so Moses is born. And what happens? Well, you know the story of Moses. Take a look at verse 1 of chapter 2,

“And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took for a wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw him, that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off to see what would be done to him.

And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river, and her maidens walked along by the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child; and behold, the babe wept.”

In other words, Satan was defeated by a baby’s tear. Just little things like that. God takes the wives in their own craftiness. He makes the wrath of men to praise him. And so Moses was preserved and through Moses, of course, the children of Israel and the seed.

Now IV, the attempt in Jehoram’s time. And let’s turn over to 2 Chronicles chapter 21. 2 Chronicles chapter 21. Things have proceeded for many years, but now we are going to see that the royal line is reduced to one. 2 Chronicles chapter 21 in verse 1.

“Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead. And he had brethren, the sons

of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.

And their father gave them great gifts of silver and of gold and of precious things, with fortified cities in Judah; but the kingdom he gave to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn. Now when Jehoram had risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and slew all his brethren with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel.”

The line is reduced to one. One breath between the fulfillment of the promises of God and their nonfulfillment.

Now, we also read that he ultimately had children. And we read in verse 17 and verse 16.

“Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians who were near the Ethiopians. And they came up into Judah and broke into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house and his sons also and his wives, so that there was not a son left him, except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.”

In other words, notice the emphasis the Holy Spirit places upon that. Nothing, no one left but this one. So, again, Satan attempting to thwart the purpose of God by preventing the incarnation of the son of God.

Now Roman 5, the attempt in Athaliah’s time, chapter 22 in verse 11. Let’s read chapter 22 in verse 11. Verse 10,

“But when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal seed of the house of Judah.” (Notice again, all the seed royal of the house of Judah.) “But Jehoshabeath,” (I wonder if that is the way to pronounce it.

My text has the accent on shab. I wouldn’t have pronounced it that way, but that’s the way they say to pronounce it. I think they’re wrong, but I’m probably wrong.)

“Jehoshabeath the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons who were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber.

So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not. And he was with them hidden in the house of God six years; and Athaliah reigned over the land.”

So for six years, the whole of the line rested upon this one son, Joash, and the wicked Athaliah was unable to thwart the purpose of God. All of the promises that God had made to Abraham, think of it, all of them depended upon that one little child, Joash.

Now, the attempt in Haman’s time we are familiar with, those of you that have been in Bill McCray’s Bible class. You’ll remember that in the book of Esther, as a result of wicked Haman’s designs when he was right on the point of making it possible for the seed of Judah to be slain, he was thwarted. And he was thwarted by reason of the fact that the king had insomnia. That’s Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, isn’t it? Chapter 6 in verse 1,

“On that night could not the king sleep;” (Why? Well, because the hand of God was upon the king.) “And he commanded to be brought the book of records of the chronicles, and they were read before the king.”

So royal insomnia. Have you ever hear royal insomnia? You’ve had big insomnia, no doubt. But all this time you see Satan is standing before the woman, seeking to devour her son as soon as he is brought forth, doing everything that he possibly can to prevent the fulfillment of the purposes of God. And the last attempt with this we are

going to stop. Matthew chapter 2, verse 4 and verse 7. Next week we are going to look at Satan in the life of our Lord. Let's notice Matthew chapter 2, verses 4 and verse 7.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.'

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." (Why was he troubled? Well, he was troubled because he was troubled by Satan.) "And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where the messiah should be born."

And notice the scribes, who are unbelievers, they know the Old Testament. They know that he is going to be born in Bethlehem and so that's what they say.

And they said unto him,

"In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the thousands of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My people Israel.'"

Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said,

"Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."

And they left. And then of course, the rest of the chapter states that Herod made every attempt to destroy the child, and as a result, God of course, lead Joseph and Mary

to take our Lord and to take him into Egypt to preserve our Lord of any harm from Herod.

Now, all of this reaches its climax, of course, in Colossians chapter 2 in verse 15. And I think tonight we’ll just close by reading that text because we are going to look at it next week as we look at the life of our Lord and Satan. Colossians chapter 2, verse 15, records the victory of our Lord over Satan. For we read,

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

The cross. And as the result of this, we are free judicially from the power of Satan in our lives.

Let’s close, our time is up, with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank thee for the revelation of the conflict that has existed between Satan and the purpose and plan of God. And we know, Lord, that though he was defeated at the cross, that sentence has not yet been pronounced upon him so that he is allowed a measure of freedom today. And we know that his purposes are still, if possible, to thwart thy plans for us and for our Lord.

Enable us to be wise and to realize that we are engaged in a heavenly warfare with the powers of darkness. And help us to lean upon thee for the victory.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

“The Trail of the Serpent in the Old Testament” by S. Lewis Johnson
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