

Words of Truth



That Old Serpent

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When studying the Bible there are many passages that discuss serpents (Numbers 21:6-9, Isaiah 27:1, Isaiah 30:6, Jeremiah 8:17, Amos 5:19, Matthew 10:16, Matthew 23:33, Mark 16:18, John 3:14, James 3:7, etc.). Some of the passages just mentioned are figurative; others talked about snakes, lizards, and even sea creatures. When you study the Scriptures and see verses that discuss serpents the context always has to be considered to define what kind of serpent you are reading about. There are at least forty-nine verses that talk about some type of serpent. Yet, there are only two Scriptures that discuss “that old serpent”.

John records the only two Scriptures in the Bible that discuss “that old serpent”. Those two Scriptures are these: *“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him... And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years”* (Revelation 12:9 and Revelation 20:2). From these two Scriptures we learn some things about that old serpent. We learn the identity of that old serpent is Satan. We learn that he is credited with deceiving the whole world (more on this later). We learn he was cast into the earth (Job 1:6-7, Job 2:1-2, and Luke 10:17-18). We learn that Satan is restrained. In other words, he does not have free reign to continue his deceiving on the earth.

It is interesting to study that old serpent. One of the reasons it is interesting is that we read of a serpent in the lives of Adam and Eve. Notice: *“Now the serpent [comment: not “a serpent”] was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil... And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel... But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”* (Genesis 3:1-5; 14-15 and II Corinthians 11:3). When you read these Scriptures, does a question comes to mind? How about questioning if the serpent in Genesis chapter three is the same as the serpent discussed in chapters twelve and twenty in the Book of Revelation.

Is That Old Serpent The Same Serpent Of Genesis 3?

When you study Genesis chapter three you find no direct mention of the name Satan. In fact, when

you search the Scriptures the first mention of the name Satan you find is in I Chronicles 21:1. If you search the Scriptures for the term “devil” you first read that term in Matthew 4:1. You do read about “devils” as early as Leviticus 17:7, but certainly nothing is mentioned of any of these terms in the book of Genesis. There was nothing specific in Revelation 12:9 and Revelation 20:2 that tells us for sure that Satan was in the garden to tempt Eve. Therefore, our digging has to go a little deeper into the Scriptures.

There are two Scriptures I’d like to submit as this point of our study for consideration. Those two Scriptures are these: *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it... He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil”* (John 8:44 and I John 3:8). I have highlighted the statement “from the beginning” in both of the Scriptures above. The reason I highlighted that phrase is that these words show us that it was in fact Satan in the garden talking with Eve.

When talking about “the beginning”, we can biblically know we are talking about the time of creation. Notice: *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth... Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth... And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female... But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female... In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands”* (Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 40:21, Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6, John 1:1, Hebrews 1:10, etc.). When talking about the beginning of something other than creation, the context clearly bears that out (i.e. John 16:4, Philippians 4:15, and I John 1:1-3). Therefore, Satan being a liar, murderer, and sinner from the beginning shows he is that serpent in the garden.

Digging a little deeper brings us to a figurative text. In the text I am about to submit for your studies Ezekiel is saying that the king of Tyrus is Satan. Remember, when someone sins they can certainly be called Satan (cf. Matthew 16:21-23). Ezekiel is talking about this king (Ezekiel 28:11-12), but in the figures he uses we learn about a cherub that sinned in the garden. Notice: *“Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God (Note: this is Satan; Luke 10:17-18 and Revelation 12:9): and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire”* (Ezekiel 28:13-16).

Conclusion

We’ve found Satan was there in the beginning. We know he is “that old serpent”. The only conclusion that is logical and possible is that Satan tempted Eve in the garden. This is certainly what all of the Scriptures point to.