

Let Freedom Ring!

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:17-20

3. The Ghosts of Gettysburg-- and the War Behind All Wars



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Introduction: The Ghosts of Gettysburg

On November 19, 1863 President Lincoln stood at Gettysburg where the ghosts of the Union and Confederate dead still lingered over the fields of America's greatest slaughter. He spoke words that branded themselves into the still-quivering soul of a torn nation:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth. (5)

The Civil War cost the lives of 680,000 soldiers—not including civilian casualties. This is more than all other wars our nation has ever fought combined. The memories of what was dared, done and suffered will ever remain. Yet Lincoln’s resolve proved true. We remain the United States of America. Our nation did find the new birth of freedom, under God, and has not perished from the earth. Let freedom ring! Let freedom ring!

I. The War Behind All Wars

There is a great *War Behind All Wars* that provides the universal backdrop for all human conflicts. We were born on Battlefield Earth, the universe’s equivalent of Gettysburg. We were born on a battlefield—and under the wrong banner! Is such a thing possible?

Simply put: What the Civil War was for America, the *War Behind All Wars* still is to the universe at large. Currently, the universe is divided

into two great camps. On the one side stands God—the Creator of heaven and earth and those loyal to their Maker. On the other side stands Satan--a mighty spirit being who raised rebellion against his Maker and ours. The story of the *War Behind All Wars* helps to make sense out of many otherwise baffling and perplexing questions we grapple with daily.

Tonight in our *Theater of the Universe* the great stage curtains will be pulled back to reveal the *War Behind All Wars*--and Satan, its instigator. This evening we will examine three passages from the Bible that portray the universal conflict between good and evil on the universal, national and personal levels.

- Job, chapters 1 and 2 deal with the *Cosmic Conflict*—the universal setting for the struggle between God and Satan for ultimate dominion.
- Isaiah 14 reveals Satan’s control of *Earth’s Nations* as the Puppet Master spiritual ruler behind the human rulers and nations hostile toward God and His loyal followers.
- Luke 4 unmask Satan’s attacks through *Personal Temptation* too powerful for us to resist unaided—and shows us how Satan’s puppet strings may be cut away from our lives.

Act I of the drama has begun. We look up to find ourselves standing center stage in the *Theater of the Universe*. We are no longer mere spectators sitting in theater seats. We’ve been drafted into the action. But we are clueless. No script has been provided. This is real-life, real-time, improvisational theater—with actual consequences for the choices we must make. We are no longer looking at the universe. The Universe is looking at us!

II. The Cosmic Conflict—Job 1, 2

The universal nature of the *War Behind All Wars* is brought to view in the first two chapters of the book of the book of Job. Are you ready to take the plunge into intergalactic politics?

We look up to find ourselves standing in the Universal Council on top the Cosmic Mount of Assemblies where representatives from all intelligent created worlds have gathered to consider issues affecting all the inhabited worlds of the Creator's vast domains of loyal subjects. Here another round in the already-in-progress conflict between God and Satan plays itself out before the eyes of the universe at large.

Those gathered on this occasion are "the sons of God"—sometimes confused with mere masses of anonymous angels. They are better understood to be the equivalent representatives of their respective created orders that Adam was to the human race. Adam is our own "son of God" forefather, and is identified by this title in Luke's genealogy of the Messiah. In Luke's third chapter we find seventy-seven generations stretching from Jesus "the Son of God" back to Adam--who is also declared to be "the son of God".

Both Adam and Jesus stood before God as primary and official representatives for the whole of humanity at different times in our history. The heavenly council that surrounds us is made up of such "Adams"—the progenitors of their own constituent orders. Angels are present. But so are beings representing other worlds, solar systems and regions of space.

Job, chapter one:

"In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East.

"His sons used to take turns holding feasts in their homes, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a

burnt offering for each of them, thinking, ‘Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ This was Job's regular custom.”

The scene that begins with a good man on earth now shifts to an evil being in heaven’s Universal Council...

“One day the angels... (“Angels” merely means “messengers” in the Bible--with the underlying Hebrew in this passage being literally “sons of God”. This would include beings we would think of as angels, but extend beyond them to other orders of created intelligences as well.)

“One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to Satan, ‘Where have you come from?’

“Satan answered the Lord, ‘From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it.’

“Then the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.’

"Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

What is going on? Why is Satan up in heaven at the Universal Council? Why was he down on Earth? Where is our human “son of God” Adam, who should be representing our planet instead?

Some of these questions will be answered as we go along. For now we should know that Satan is on Earth because he was cast from heaven after raising a rebellion against God. Our first human parents sold themselves and us into the power of the arch Enemy of the Creator.

We let the Devil in. He brought his demons. They've taken over. And everything the Creator intended to live forever began to die. Adam couldn't represent us at the council. He was already dead. So in the days of Job Satan going up to offer himself as Earth's representative at the Universal Council.

We hear a great voice speaking. Roll is being called. God questions Satan's right to be present in the council of the "sons of God". After all, he has lost his right to represent the angelic order when he was cast from heaven.

"Where do you come from?" God asks Satan.

Satan sneers, "Oh, I've been roaming around on earth. Adam can't be here. He ate your forbidden fruit, and died. He's host at a grand feast of hungry worms. He's pushing up daisies. He's looking at grass from the side that isn't green. So I'll just stand in for him today. After all, Adam ate the apple. He gave Earth into my power. So today I'll stand in for Adam—and planet Earth."

God doesn't simply throw Satan out. But He doesn't acknowledge his boastful claims either. How can Satan pretend to be Earth's appropriate spokesman at the Universal Council? Satan is an angelic being—an order of intelligences created long before the creation of Earth. He isn't even human. He wasn't made from the dust of the planet he claims dominion over. What kind of nightmarish Evil Empire has Earth become when Satan represents us before the Universal Council? No wonder we've got so many problems down here!

God says to Satan, "While you were down there roaming around on Earth, did you happen to bump into my man, Job? He's a very good HUMAN BEING, Satan—a far better representative for Earth than you—a fallen angel--who usurped the dominion I bestowed on Adam."

Consider this: So long as a single son of Adam or daughter of Eve on planet Earth still retains undivided loyal to our Creator, Satan's undisputed claim to our world is in jeopardy. Job was the most loyal to his Maker person in the world in his day. That's why God pointed to him in front of the watching eyes of the Universal Council and the universe at large.

Today the person God might point to could be you. It could be me. The issues so far as intergalactic politics go remain the same. We stand center stage in the *Theater of the Universe* with the Universal Council of Watchers, the loyal angels of God and inhabited worlds looking on. All are intensely interested. We are “Exhibit A” in the *War Behind All Wars* that has deeply affected them all--and remains unresolved.

Can a faceless nobody riding the subway home from work, a nameless mother kneeling beside her child’s bed, a forgotten old man thumbing his worn Bible in a nursing home, a Christian student standing at his locker in a high school hallway, a Christian business man in his cubbyhole office on 46th floor be important enough to attract the attention of the inhabitants of the universe? Is it possible that the great Creator God might point to any one of us, and say, “Look! Look all of you watching worlds! He is mine! She is my own!”? Are we really standing center stage in the *Theater of the Universe* even as we are gathered here for *Let Freedom Ring!* this evening?

The Bible says, “Yes!”

The Creator of all entrusts those loyal to Him on planet earth with His reputation in the court of Universal opinion. If we prove loyal to our Maker, we make Him proud. If we deny Him, we second Satan’s sneer—virtually declaring the Devil’s will should be done in heaven as it is being done on earth. Like Adam and Eve, we give our world and ourselves into the hands of the great Enemy of Good by distrusting our Creator and siding with His sworn enemy.

Satan promptly questioned Job’s loyalty before the Council. He slandered Job’s true motives and cast a slur on the Creator Himself.

“You protect Job and all he possesses!” Satan hissed. “You put a wall of fire around him that he can’t see, yet burns me! Your angels stand shoulder to shoulder around Job so I can’t get at him. You give him all kinds of toys. Even a dog loves the burglar who tosses him a pork chop every day. That’s not true loyalty, or any mark of genuine goodness. Its merely behavioral-conditioning. You scratch Job’s every itch. You answer his every prayer. You give him everything he could possibly wish for—great wealth, a supportive wife, ten fine children, the esteem

and respect of all alike, favors from heaven. No wonder Job worships you. You're not playing fair, God. You never were."

"The Lord said to Satan, 'Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.' Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord."

For sake of time we must pass over the rest of Job's story quickly. Satan soon attacked everything Job held dear. He sent the Sabeans and Chaldeans raiders to steal all Job's livestock and kill his servants. Satan sent lightning to strike Job's sheep and shepherds—killing all but the one. He sent a sudden mighty wind sweeping in from the desert to blow the house down on Job's seven sons and three daughters. It collapsed. They all died. Plainly Satan controls the thoughts and actions of violent men and even the forces of nature. He is responsible for hurricanes and terrorist attacks. But he can only go so far as God allows. Satan is a mean dog, but he's on a strong leash!

It wasn't God picking on Job. It was the Devil who was responsible. What did Job do when he heard all he had and all his children were gone? The Bible says:

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb,
and naked I will depart.

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;
may the name of the Lord be praised."

"In all this, Job did not sin
by charging God with wrongdoing."

Job did not know what we know. He didn't know that the eyes of countless worlds were upon him. The spotlights of affliction and agony blinded Job. He couldn't see through his tears into the darkness that surrounded his soul. He didn't know he was standing center stage singing solo in the *Theater of the Universe's* Carnegie Hall with a tears on his cheeks and a sob in his throat.

Job had done it. He had bested Satan himself. He had preserved his own freedom from the Great Rebel's undisputed dominion over Earth. By

his loyalty to God in the face of such loss and sorrow, he had renewed Adam's original claim under God's rule. Job made God Himself look good. Making your Maker look good is no small accomplishment!

You might have thought Satan would give up. But, no. He is a proud and persistent spirit. Next time the Universal Council met, Satan and God faced off again. God said to the Devil:

"Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason."

"Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

"The Lord said to Satan, 'Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.'

"So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.

"His wife said to him, 'Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!' He replied, 'You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?'"

"In all this, Job did not sin in what he said."

Job was in ongoing, unrelenting, horrific pain from head to toe. His wife--grieving the loss of her children--tore angrily at his stubborn loyalty to the God who would allow such a tragedy.

"Are you still holding on to your loyalty to God?" she raged. "Curse God, and die!"

"Don't speak like a foolish woman, Honey," soothed Job scraping an ugly boil with a shard of a broken clay pot.

Job's friends came to offer their comfort--then spent thirty-six long chapters hammering Job spiritually and philosophically. In the end, Job was well beyond suicidal. He begged God to kill him, and cursed—not God—but the day of his own birth. Job longed for God to come down and explain what was going on. He felt to the center of his soul the unfairness of doing what was right and being severely punished for it. If sin only hurt the sinner, there would be a balance in the universe and it might claim a right to continued existence. But sin is unfair. It hurts the innocent and the guilty alike. In the end, it will be eliminated forever.

God had the last word in the story of Job. He came to the faithful sufferer in a mighty whirlwind. He revealed Himself through the wonders of His creation. Job looked on the might, mystery, unfathomable grandeur and wisdom of his Maker. He was granted a face to face with Creator God—one of those rare “God sightings” on recorded in the Bible. Job looked on God and said, “I heard about You with my ears before. Now I have seen You with my eyes. I repent every words of complaint about anything that has befallen me. To see my great Creator, is enough. You are my Maker, and all you do is right and good!”

Strangely enough, God never told Job what we know. He never told Job that by his loyalty in the face of tragedy, loss, marital disintegration, the misunderstanding of well-meaning people and his own aching unanswered questions he had proved himself the very human hero God knew him to be. Job yanked the strings of his life out of the Dark Puppet Master's hands. He refused to dance the Devil's dance as directed simply because Satan piped his painful and puzzling tune.

Job renewed the claim of Creator-loyal humanity to planet Earth. He had caught the touchdown pass in this round of the *War Behind All Wars*. He had knocked the winning hit right out of the ballpark! He'd sunk the winning basket as the final buzzer sounded. He'd nailed the final triple spin center rink. He'd hit the high note perfectly before a far vaster audience than any human performer. Job had made his Maker look good. And for all the throbbing boils, monster pimples and ugly scabs he'd been scraping off his quivering hide for the past several weeks—Job didn't look too bad himself! He was God's hero.

Even among men, personal suffering accepted for the greater good of others is commendable. During the Civil War, a certain mother received news that she had lost five sons in defense of the preservation of the Union. Not long after, she received this letter:

**Executive Mansion,
Washington, Nov. 21, 1864.**

Dear Madam,--

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.

I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours, very sincerely and respectfully,

President Abraham Lincoln (6)

In the end, Job received his own message from One greater than even the greatest of American presidents. God gave his battle-scarred hero a personal interview. Then our Creator did what He loves doing best: He restored Job's former blessings double-fold. Everything Job had lost he got back again twice over.

II. Satan as Puppet Master Behind Ruler of Ancient Tyre

We've seen the *War Behind All Wars* in its universal frame as portrayed in the first two chapters of Job. Now let's look at how this same battle manifests itself among the nations on Earth. Tyre was an ancient nation that fell under the thrall of Satan and became identified with him in his opposition against God and His people.

This was the nation over which wicked Queen Jezebel's father was the priest-king. Satan stood behind the scenes as Puppet Master of this ancient people opposed to God's truth and His people. Two distinctly separate beings are addressed in Ezekiel's 28th chapter. The first was the human ruler of Tyre—the kings who sat on her throne, which included Jezebel's daddy. The Bible addresses this human proxy puppet first. The prophet Ezekiel speaks to the ruler of Tyre. He says:

“The word of the Lord came to me:

**‘Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre,
“This is what the Sovereign Lord says:**

**'In the pride of your heart
you say, "I am a god;
I sit on the throne of a god
in the heart of the seas."
But you are a man and not a god,
though you think you are as wise as a god...”’**

God goes on to address a proud, wealthy, intelligent man of power and world politics who did not feel the need of any god greater than himself, or any wisdom greater than his own. In fact, the ruler of Tyre was nothing more than a puppet on the strings of the Dark Puppet Master himself—that fallen angel Lucifer and Satan—the being who invented doing it your own way rather than God's way.

Once God has addressed the human “ruler of Tyre”, he lifts his gaze and speaks directly to the true King of Tyre--the spirit being we call Satan, the Puppet Master of Tyre's human ruler. Let's listen in as God speaks to Satan—the King of Tyre.

“The word of the Lord came to me:

**‘Son of man, take up a lament
concerning the King of Tyre
and say to him:**

“This is what the Sovereign Lord says:

‘You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mounting were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.’”

Mark this clearly: Satan is a created being, not an eternal equal to God. Our Creator also made Lucifer a perfect angel of dazzling beauty. This mighty angel was anointed as a guardian cherub. He was on the holy mountain of God where the Universal Council met as representative of his own order of beings. He walked among the fiery stones at the heart of the universe, perhaps where the Big Bang first boomed.

God says to Satan:

“You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade..

(The original Hebrew term translated “trade” in this passage can also mean “slander”--the giving and taking of false and lying words to one’s own advantage against an opponent...)

“...through your widespread *slander* you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.”

What was Satan’s sin that led him to defy his Creator? What was the evil that made him into the slanderer of his own Maker and ours? Let’s listen in and see. God is still talking to the Devil as we continue:

**“Your heart became proud on account of your beauty,
and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor.”**

Are you beautiful? Are you highly intelligent? Don't be proud of these gifts your Creator has bestowed upon you as though they were yours by right. Every good gift can be turned to a bad end if we forget the Giver.

God continues to speak to Satan:

“Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.

“By your many sins and dishonest trade...

(Remember that “trade” here in the Hebrew may also be properly translated “slander”...)

“by your dishonest *slander* you have desecrated your sanctuaries.”

Satan was in charge of worship. He loves religion. He used to be the keeper of the sanctuaries in the heavenly realms before he defiled them and was cast into our earth. Here he achieved what he was unable to achieve in heaven: the defiling of religion so that it brought glory to the creature rather than to the Creator. The creature Satan most wanted admired, worshipped, obeyed and feared was himself.

Did you ever wonder why religion seems to be responsible for so much misery and bloodshed among mankind through history? That question is clearly answered. It is not true Bible religion that is such a plague to humanity in stirring up hatred among men, but rather the false forms of religion inspired by heaven's ex-sanctuary keeper—Satan himself! He was a liar and a murderer from the beginning. He simply seeks that other creatures may adopt his own self-willed, self-centered principles—thus joining his rebellion against the God.

What would be Satan's end? Would he continue forever waging the *War Behind All Wars* against the Creator and his followers in heaven and on earth? Would he be placed in charge of some fiery kingdom of eternal

agony and horror? No. Listen carefully as God Himself speaks of Satan's final end. God says:

“So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more.”

Satan is not in charge of the fires of hell; rather he is consumed those flames. Hell fire is designed for that very purpose. The only way either angels or man are destroyed in those flames is if they persistently join the great rebel's cause against his Maker, and ours. Notice that Satan's end is through what we would call “spontaneous combustion”. Fire comes out of him and consumes him to ashes in the sight of the gathered nations of mankind. They are appalled at the spectacle as Satan comes to his fitting, final, fiery end, and is no more. So ends the sad tale of the King of Tyre.

III. Satan as Tempter of Humanity and of Christ— Genesis 3 and Luke 4.

We have seen the Cosmic Conflict in its universal aspects in Job 1 and 2. We have seen Satan can work through the nations of this world and their rulers in Ezekiel 28's depiction of Satan pulling the strings for the human ruler of the ancient city of Tyre. Now lets consider the story of mankind's fall in Genesis' 3rd chapter. It is here that our race first fell into the power of the enemy.

The Bible says:

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, “You must not eat from any tree in the garden”?’”

“The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, “You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.”’”

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Notice Satan's original lie as he first hissed it to Eve through the serpent's forked tongue.

"Sin won't really kill you. You won't really die if you disobey God. Sin will make you like God himself, knowing good and evil."

Notice four things Satan did toward his Maker in the process of tempting Eve:

***First:* Satan mocked God. "Did God REALLY say...?" Hear the subtle scorn in his voice?**

***Second:* Satan misquoted God. "You must not eat of any tree in the garden..." Is God starving you here in Eden, Eve? Did He tell you not to eat from any tree? Eve just had to correct this misinformed serpent, and so fell for Satan's plot to draw her in.**

***Third:* Satan misbelieved God. "You will not surely die." This is a crucial lie, the oldest ever spoken to the human race. A great mass of false worship is erected on this falsehood that has made its way even into the Christian church in varied forms. There is no such thing as an immortal sinner. Not us. Not even Satan himself.**

***Forth:* Satan not only mocked, misquoted and misbelieved God, he also maligned God. "For God knows that when you eat of it you will be like God, knowing good and evil." God is keeping something good from you, Eve. He knows this fruit will make you like Him. He has his own best interests at heart, not yours. He's not your friend, but your enemy.**

Some have suggested that without eating the fruit, Adam and Eve would never have "lost their innocence" by beginning marital relationships. This view would make Satan the benefactor of the race. This cannot be true, however. God had already told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply sometime before the temptation at the tree. They had received the gift of procreation from the hand of their Creator, not from the hand of his archenemy.

Satan said, “Listen to me, I’ll give you the sweetest fruit, the best things of life. Believe me, not the Creator.” The old slanderous dragon was hissing his lies against his Maker again. Sadly, Eve listened.

Notice the effects of sin. *Sin estranges us in seven ways that affect our primary relationships.*

First, sin estranges man from himself.

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

When Adam and Eve ate from the tree, then looked on their own bodies, they were ashamed. They were strangers to their own and each other’s flesh. They found themselves some adequate, though itchy fig leaves, and fashioned themselves garments to hide their nakedness. Have you ever looked on your own body with disgust? There is a reason for that estrangement. It is sin.

The second thing sin estranges us from is God.

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’

“He answered, ‘I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.’

“And he said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?’”

When God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve didn’t come running to meet Him with joy as they had before. Instead, they fled and hid themselves in the bushes. Not even the fig leaf clothing was enough to hide the nakedness they felt before their Maker’s eyes.

Have you ever been ashamed to pray, disinclined to go to church, or unwilling to read the Bible? There is a reason for that repulsion toward things of God. It is sin.

The third thing sin estranges us from is other human beings.

“The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.’”

When God asked Adam what he had done, Adam blamed Eve. Before he had sinned, she seemed too precious for him to lose. He knowingly accepted the fruit from her hand and cast his lot with hers for better or for worse. Yet now Adam is ready to point the finger of blame and guilt away from himself at her who was closer to him than any other on earth.

Is there anyone on earth you are at odds with? Are you struggling with your family relationships? Is there a neighbor or a friend you aren't getting along with? Is your marriage in serious distress? Don't blame God. Don't even blame yourself entirely. There is a reason for your relationship problems. You were born a sinner. The native selfishness of sin divides us one from another.

The fourth thing sin estranges us from is from the creatures we share this planet with.

“Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

“So the LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this--

**‘Cursed are you above all the livestock
and all the wild animals!**

**You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.**

**‘And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;**

**he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”**

Before sin, Adam and Eve were the kindly king and queen of the peaceful kingdom of the creatures. But after sin, God put enmity between the woman and the serpent that had been used by Satan to tempt her. That was only the beginning of the estrangement between humans and the creatures of earth, sky and water. Time would come when we would be at war with each other—man eating animal, animal eating man, animal eating animal, and even man eating man. Animals would be killed for mere sport, with no need for their deaths even for food. Human life would be cheap in the eyes of their fellow man.

What brought such tragedy to the peaceful kingdom as it came from the Creator’s hand—a kingdom where all alike were vegetarian, and no predator-prey relationship existed--except between rabbit and carrot? It is sin.

The way things are now are not as they were meant to be. The geological record does not show ancient Earth as God created it, nor does it reveal long epochs of slow evolution. Rather it shows the world as it had become generations after Eden, when the violence on Earth was so great and the creature world had become so deformed and corrupted that God washed it clean with the flood of Noah, and made a new start. Those fossils things buried layer after layer in the 85% of the earth’s surface laid down by the great waters of the past are evidence of sin’s effects on the created order. They are not evidence of the Creator’s original handiwork. That had already been badly twisted by evil generations before Noah.

A fifth thing that sin estranges us from is normal bodily function.

**“To the woman he said,
‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;
with pain you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you.’”**

God did not design woman’s body originally in such a way that childbirth would be the painful process it is today. Imagine if it were as pleasurable to bear the baby as it is to conceive it? What if the bond

between mother and child were a pleasure bond rather than one involving pain?

Further, as Eve came from Adam's rib and the two were one in Eden, there was no dominance of one half of humanity over another due to sexual differences between male and female. They were fully equals, male and female, both alike formed in the image of their Creator. The *Battle Between the Sexes* came in with human sin—along with all other distortions that mar human sexuality as God originally designed it. Sin estranges man from normal bodily functions—both personally and toward others.

A sixth thing sin estranges man from is his environment.

“To Adam (God) said, 'Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it--'

 "Cursed is the ground because of you;
 through painful toil you will eat of it
 all the days of your life.

 “It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
 and you will eat the plants of the field.
By the sweat of your brow
 you will eat your food...”

Man and nature were now opponents, with Adam having to battle thorns and thistles to grow his food. He fought weed with hoe, fang with spear, claw with knife--matching his cunning and strength against a hostile environment in both the plant and animal world. This hostility between man and his environment only came after sin entered.

Wonder why man makes such a mess of his environment? Wonder why macro-organisms and micro-organisms battle us for dominance over the planet? Wonder why we put lions, tigers and bears behind bars and look at them in the zoo rather than walking up and petting them like our cat or dog at home? Wonder why people eat animals, fish and birds? It wasn't always this way. That isn't God's original design. Man's estrangement from his environment came with sin.

A seventh thing sin estranges man from is life itself.

God told Adam he must battle earth for his bread by the sweat of his brow...

**“...until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”**

Man wasn't meant to die. God designed us to live forever, not to become obsolete. Scripture says, “He placed eternity in their hearts.” When death comes, it comes as an intruder doing violence and stealing that which causes us loss and grief. We were not equipped to deal with death. Yet it comes to all on this death-bound planet where everything dies in the end. It comes because of sin.

The Word of God says:

“The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the Lord God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.’

“So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”

There is no immortal sinner to live on in endless torment and increasing misery for endless ages on earth, or in any other realm. God ensured that. When mankind had eaten from the forbidden tree, he was immediately denied access to the Tree of Life—that true whose fruit contained the essentials necessary for the permanent maintenance of human life. So Adam and Eve began to die, and gave birth to a dying race after them of which we are a part.

We might easily ask, “What hope is there?” Plainly we have been twisted and marred beyond our ability to restore ourselves. So has the environment as it has responded to the forfeited dominion of man to

Satan. The hope is in the seed of the woman prophesied to crush the head of the tempter, Satan.

Summary Conclusion

Tonight we have traced the *War Behind All Wars* in three chapters. Job 1 and 2 portrayed the cosmic scope of this ancient battle. Ezekiel 28 showed Satan the Puppet Master pulling the strings of the human ruler of Tyre. In Genesis 3, we have seen the temptation of our first human parents on a most personal level.

But what about us? Will we remain as we are by birth—born under the wrong banner, on the wrong side, in a war that rages but will soon be over forever? Or will we find a new birth of freedom? We need not guess at this answer. Jesus said:

“He whom the Son sets free is free indeed!”

Let freedom ring! Let freedom ring!

Tonight as ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ presenting his Word in your hearing we encourage you to pledge for the first time, or renew your allegiance to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ—the mighty Commander of the Lord’s Hosts. We recruit for God’s side in the *War Behind All Wars*. If in the sight of those gathered here present, and before the eyes of the unseen beings who keenly watch us on earth and in heaven, you wish to pledge your allegiance to King Jesus in opposition to his opponent, Satan, you may.

Would you like to cast your vote for God’s side of the War Behind All Wars? Would you like to enlist under the banner of Jesus in the battle against evil? If so, please come forward as the music plays this evening. Tomorrow night our subject will be: “Faces Carved in Stone: and the Mirror of the Almighty”.

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Note: Teach those who come forward the hand motions for “The Five C’s of Christian Faith” and have prayer with them.

