

*"PRINCES,
GOOD & EVIL"*

By Rev. Dr. Steven Craig Brown

Exploring the Prince of Peace and the prince of darkness.

Pure Christianity Series: Volume #5

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

John 14:6

Acknowledgments

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This book is dedicated to all of my past and present students and to the Holy Spirit of God, of Whom we are all students, and from Whom this material was received.

An Introduction

Most of us are familiar with many of the names used to refer to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, with the title of "Prince of Peace" residing in close proximity to His chief title, as "the Son of God." Most of us are also familiar with many of the names for Satan, i.e.: the Devil, the evil one, Beelzebub, Belial, or as especially referred to in this study: "the prince of darkness" or "the prince of this world." There are many references to "princes" in the Holy Bible, some of them divine, some angelic, and some others satanic. Thus the title: "Princes, Good and Evil." I hope you enjoy this investigative, educational journey through the Holy Word of God. I pray that we will learn a great deal from the Holy Spirit of God, for He is the Teacher that Christ promised to us.

This study follows along the same theme as many of my other essays, and it is done in an effort to delve deeply into the many, marvelous mysteries that are woven within the verses of the Holy Bible. Please review this material with an open mind and open ears, as Scripture would direct us; and also with a soft heart so that the Lord might deal with each of us, individually, in our own Spiritual lives. Understand my philosophy, in that, my words are nothing. But the Word that they are inspired by...is everything.

May God bless you richly.

THE SECRET OF JEHOVAH

Go with me into the Word of God, to see what mysteries He has to reveal to us. They have been there since the Word has been available, but perhaps we have not noticed, or did not ask our Father to reveal them to us.

In the Gospel of James, we find a wisdom that is available to us if we only ask for it, and believe that we have received that wisdom. (James 1:5, 6). Jesus is God's secret. He is the mystery of God:

"What man is he who fears Jehovah?
He teaches him the way he should choose.
His soul shall abide in good,
and his seed shall inherit the earth.
The secret of Jehovah is with those who fear him;
and he will make them know His covenant."

Psalm 25:12-14 (ILB)

This passage speaks of "the secret of Jehovah," and of a description of one who fears God. It says that, "his seed (singular) shall inherit the earth." Also, "he will make them know His covenant." (Which Jesus obviously did more completely than Moses, David, or anyone else that this passage might be interpreted to originally be directed toward.) There are enough spiritual clues in this short passage to lead me to believe that it speaks of His One seed...Jesus Christ. But another word that is closely related to "secret" is "mystery." And one should never base a sound opinion on just one, obscure verse in the Bible. (As any good Hermeneutics professor or Pastor will teach you.) You need to learn how to "rightly divide the Word" if you haven't already, where you would basically find other verses in the Word which will support, or deny how the original passage was interpreted. So let's take a look at some references of "THE" mystery. In the following passage we hear the apostle Paul speaking:

"Now I rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf,
and I fill up in my flesh the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ,
on behalf of His body, which is the church; of which I became a minister,
according to the administration of God given to me for you to fulfill the
Word of God,
the mystery having been hidden from the ages,
and from the generations, but now was revealed to His saints;
to whom God desired to make known what are the riches
of the glory of this mystery among the nations,
which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; whom we announce,

warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom,
that we may present every man full-grown in Christ Jesus.
For which I also labor,
working according to the working of Him
who works in me in power."

Colossians 1:24-29 (ILB)

This passage is rather lengthy, as he wrote to the church at Colosse, but in his letter to his "true son", Timothy; he was brief, while explosive in his explanation of "the mystery of godliness":

"And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifested in flesh, was justified in Spirit,
was seen by angels, was proclaimed among nations,
was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory."

I Timothy 3:16 (ILB)

In case you were wondering about the translation I have been quoting (ILB), it is known as: THE INTERLINEAR BIBLE with the Greek and Hebrew original texts and a LITERAL TRANSLATION of the Bible, by Jay P. Green, Sr.; published by Hendrickson Publishers. This is a very powerful and enlightening translation, and if possible, I intend to use it exclusively in this research along with THE NEW STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE of the Bible.

Now this mystery of God, Jesus Christ, truly is a mystery...a marvelous mystery. And there is much more to this mystery than meets the eye of the casual student of the Word of God. This simple statement I have just made is a truth in itself: The Word of God. Most Christians believe this phrase to mean the Holy Bible. While this is true, it is also true that the Word of God has more than one meaning or application. The Word of God is also Jesus Christ.

Is this new information for you? It shouldn't be if you are at all familiar with the Gospels of the New Testament. Perhaps you are more comfortable with the Old Testament? Let's do an interesting comparison from the Old Testament to the New Testament that will perhaps set a firm foundation for our investigation into this mystery. To keep it simple and basic to start with, let's compare the first five verses of the first of the five Books of Moses (the Pentateuch), being Genesis; and compare it to the last Gospel of the New Testament, John; since they both start with the words: "In the beginning":

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;
and the earth being without form and empty,
and darkness on the face of the deep,
and the Spirit of God moving gently on the face of the waters,
then God said, let light be-and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good,
and God separated between the light and the darkness.
And God called the light, Day.
And He called the darkness, Night.
And there was evening, and there was morning the first day."

Genesis 1:1-5 (ILB)

The information contained in these first few verses must have been a great deal for the early students of the Word of God to comprehend. Here we see a Divine being as responsible for creating the planet we inhabit, the light that we see by, and having the power to separate that light from what would otherwise be without it...darkness. From the beginning, light is seen as something good; therefore the darkness on either side of the light must be, in contrast, not good; or evil.

The creation of man is not mentioned until verse 26, in Genesis, and then as it is quite specifically stated: "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;" One must come to the inevitable conclusion from this verse, that God was not alone, since He uses the plural tenses of "us" and "Our." With these observations in mind, let's go now to the Gospel of John (the Disciple whom Jesus loved), and compare just the first five verses with our observations of those verses. We will see how, with the progressive revelation of the Holy Bible, that the Apostle John was blessed with the knowledge of the involvement of Christ, "In the beginning":

"In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through Him, and without Him
not even one thing came into being that has come into being.
In Him was life,
and the life was the light of men,
and the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overtake it."

John 1:1-5 (ILB)

Now I can almost hear someone saying, that is all fine and well, but this passage doesn't speak of a man. It is a figurative use of "Word." Not so. Closer scrutiny of the passage shows a gender application. For example, v.2 "He" was "in the beginning" and "He" "was with God." But how does one know that this "Word" that we are studying, is Jesus Christ? Do we just believe, because someone has said it is so? And being the good Christian students that we are, we should have faith in the Pastor or teacher that told us this? No. You should believe it, or anything else that is supposed to be Scriptural

and Holy because the Bible, the written, inerrant, infallible, authoritative Word of God, says it is so.

So far, we have seen Jesus referred to as many things, but...where exactly does it say that Jesus Christ is the Word of God? Because we have made some solid observations of Genesis and John, it is imperative now that we also establish Jesus Christ as the Word of God. Thank God for His Holy Word, both in the person of Jesus Christ and in the written Word. Please turn in your Bible to John 1:14:

"And the Word became flesh,
and tabernacled among us.
And we beheld His glory,
glory as of an only-begotten from the Father,
full of grace and of truth."

John 1:14 (ILB)

Yet this passage is not the only proof of Jesus as the Word of God. Please turn to the Revelation of Jesus Christ, 19:11-13:

"And I saw Heaven being opened.
And behold! A white horse,
and He sitting on it having been called Faithful and True.
And He judges and wars in righteousness.
And His eyes were as a flame of fire,
and on His head were many diadems,
having a name that had been written,
which no one knows except Himself;
and having been clothed in a garment
which had been dipped in blood.
And His name is called
the Word of God."

Revelation 19:11-13 (ILB)

Going thus far in this passage, I simply cannot just pass over the proof of two of the other titles of nobility for Jesus, in the very next few verses:

"And the armies in Heaven followed Him on white horses,
being dressed in fine linen, white and pure.
And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword,
that with it He might smite the nations.
And He will shepherd them with an iron rod.
And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger
and of the wrath of God Almighty.

And He has on His garment and on His thigh
a name having been written:
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Revelation 19:14-16 (ILB)

Notice again, the first verse, wherein the armies of Heaven follow Him. Jesus was always very involved with angels while He taught on earth, and as you might find out also, He was very involved with them in His role as "THE ANGEL OF THE LORD" throughout the Old Testament. Now that we have established some of the most important names that Jesus has been known by, I propose perhaps a new name of honor for Him. As I have said before, this Jesus Christ truly is a mystery of God; and this name I propose may appear as a mystery in and of itself. This is a mystery of mysteries to some, but a fact to others.

The name I propose is, PRINCE OF PRINCES. This I propose through a study of relevant Scriptures to follow. But first, let's go back to John 1:1-5. Now we see Jesus as the Word of God, as other Scripture has verified. This being true, we can also now see the brevity of those first five verses. They are worthy of a closer look with this verified knowledge and we can insert His name wherever it is appropriate (my inserts):

"In the beginning was the Word (Jesus),
and the Word (Jesus) was with God,
and the Word (Jesus) was God.
He (Jesus) was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through Him (Jesus),
and without Him (Jesus) not even one thing
came into being that has come into being.
In Him (Jesus) was life,
and the life was the light of men, and the light shines
in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it."

Reference is made to Jesus 7 times in the first four verses. (Seven is also the biblical number signifying completion.) Did you notice also in vv. 4 & 5 the mention of the words, life and light, and darkness?

Speaking of light and life, please read John 8:12. Also, read John 14:6. As far as the darkness mentioned is concerned, please read John 3:16-21. These words are not only utilized in the Gospel of John, but also in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16; Ephesians 5:8-14; 1 Peter 2:9; and 1 John 1:5-7. Also, in comparison of Genesis with the Gospel of John, note that the Creation is mentioned in the first verse of Genesis:

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Genesis 1:1 (ILB)

As compared to the first verse of John:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

John 1:1 (ILB)

Now it is absolutely clear from the very first words of the Holy Bible, that God created. And, it is further explained in the Gospel of John, that the Word, Jesus Christ, was with God in the beginning; and that this very same Word, Jesus Christ, was (and is) God. Therefore, Jesus is God, in case you were wondering where the evidence of that statement might have come from. Also, all things were created through the Word (Jesus), and nothing (emphasizing nothing) was made without Him:

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

John 1:4 (ILB)

Since Satan is the prince of darkness, we can only assume that his adversary, Jesus Christ, is the Prince of Light. And if Jesus is the Prince of Life, then Satan must be the prince of death. These are, of course, figurative titles that are used to help equate the true personalities of each. Jesus is all that is good and righteous, while Satan is all that is evil and wicked. Let's see what the Holy Scripture has to say about light and darkness. In v. 5 of John, there is a strong contrast between light and dark:

"And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it."

John 1:5 (ILB)

Let's continue on in the Gospel of John, to see the kind of life that we have available through Christ Jesus:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that everyone believing into Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16 (ILB)

Everlasting life, that is the kind of life that we have available through Jesus Christ. Not just life here on earth, but one that continues on, forever, into eternity. We might ask ourselves, how are we to think of this light that we have read about? Is it like natural light, or perhaps a Spiritual light? Let's see what the Apostle John has to say in Chapter 8 of his Gospel:

"Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying,

I am the light of the world;
he following Me will in no way walk in the darkness,
but will have the light of life."

John 8:12 (ILB)

Jesus gave us many great and profound lessons, and He taught the people in a way in which no man had ever done before Him. He astonished His elders, who were very educated religious scholars; even from His blessed childhood years. But I feel that one of the greatest teachings He ever blessed us with, was from within these following few words:

"Jesus said to him, I am the Way, and the Truth,
and the Life. No one comes to the Father except
through Me."

John 14:6 (ILB)

Now, what Scriptural evidence do we have that equates this darkness to evil? Let's walk out of the Gospel of John, and into 2 Corinthians, and take heed of a warning to take no part with evildoers:

"Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.
For what partnership does righteousness have with lawlessness?
And what fellowship does light have with darkness?
And what agreement does Christ have with Belial?
Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?
And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols?
For you are the temple of the living God, even as God said,
'I will dwell in them, and walk among them; and I will be their God,
and they shall be My people.' "

2 Corinthians 6:14-16 (ILB)

In Ephesians we see the good (the followers of Christ) spoken of as the children of light. The evil ones are portrayed as the sons of disobedience:

"Let no one deceive you with empty words,
for through these the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience.
Then don't be partners with them; for you then were darkness,
but now light in the Lord-walk as children of light.
For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth,
proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord.
And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,
but rather even reprove them.
For it is shameful even to speak of the things being done by them in secret.

But all things being exposed by the light are clearly revealed,
for everything having been revealed is light.

Therefore, He says,

'Arise, sleeping one, and stand up out of the dead ones,
and Christ will shine on you.' "

Ephesians 5:6-14. (ILB)

In 1 Peter, we see how Jesus became a stumbling block to the unbelievers, by His being the cornerstone that the builders rejected:

"Then to you who believe belongs the honor.

But to the disobeying ones,

He is the Stone which those building rejected-

this One became the Head-of-the-corner, and a Stone-of-stumbling,

and a Rock-of-offense to those disobeying,

stumbling at the word, to which they were also appointed.

But you are an elect race, a royal priesthood,

a holy nation, a people for possession,

so that you may openly speak of the virtues

of the One who has called you

out of darkness into His marvelous light."

1 Peter 2:7-9 (ILB)

In 1 John, we have the testimony of those who knew Jesus, personally, and declared Him as "the Word of Life." Here we see both of these Divine attributes of Christ connected together in one title:

"We announce to you what was from the beginning,
what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes,
what we beheld, and what our hands touched, as regards the Word of Life.
And the Life was revealed, and we have seen, and we bear witness,
and we announce to you the everlasting Life which was with the Father,
and was revealed to us.
We announce to you what we have seen,
and what we have heard,
that you also may have fellowship with us.
And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.
And we write these things to you, that your joy may be full."

I John 1:1-4 (ILB)

This is a testimony that is filled with heartfelt emotions, from those who truly saw Jesus as Lord and Savior, and also as someone who shared a very special fellowship with them. It is obvious to me that this writer, John, and those others that he speaks for, truly must have felt blessed in Jesus' presence. In the following verses, we see a call for believers to remain steadfast in their fellowship with Jesus, and not to be hypocritical like some who say they have not sinned, when in fact, they are no more than liars:

"And this is the message which we have heard from Him,
and we announce to you: God is light, and no darkness is in Him-none.
If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and we walk in darkness,
we lie and are not practicing the truth.
But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of His Son Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and righteous that He may forgive us the sins,
and may cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar,
and His word is not in us."

I John 1:5-10 (ILB)

I think we have thoroughly established thus far, the distance between good and evil, light and darkness. Good is as far from evil as the east is from the west.

Jesus truly is THE Prince of the highest order, as the following prophecy predicted of His glorious birth:

"For a child is born;
to us a Son is given;
and the government is on His shoulder;
And His name is called Wonderful, Counselor,
the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6 (ILB)

This passage speaks of our blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, as the coming Messiah. This Prince, even as He faced His earthly death on the Cross; put the dark prince in his place:

"Now is the time for judgment on this world;
now the prince of this world will be driven out.
But I, when I am lifted up from the earth,
will draw all men to myself."

John 12:31-32 (NIV)

Here we have a word choice used by the NIV translation calling Satan the "prince of this world" whereas the ILB translation uses "the ruler of this world." (If one is very particular in their studies, they will notice similar word choice differences from the King James Version, the American Standard, the Amplified Version, and so on. The important point to remember is, be sure when you study any translation, that you get the context of the usage of the word in that particular passage. Sometimes it is necessary to go to several reputable translations and even a Bible dictionary and/or an exhaustive concordance.) And again, let's see what the Lord says as He is instructing them about the coming of the Holy Spirit:

"When he comes,
he will convict the world of guilt
in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:
in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;
in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father,
where you can see me no longer;
and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world
now stands condemned."

John 16:8-11 (NIV)

When Peter and the other apostles had to speak before the Sanhedrin, they testified as to why they were steadfast in following Jesus Christ, the Prince and Savior:

"The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead- whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

Acts 5:30-32 (NIV)

We have established Jesus as the Prince and Savior, and as the Prince of Peace; and Satan as the prince of this world and of darkness. So where did this wide contrast, or conflict, between these two begin? I can imagine that some would say it began when Satan tempted Jesus in the desert.

And, although Satan unsuccessfully tried for forty days and forty nights, this was not Jesus' first confrontation with the evil one. Nor was the sin committed in the Garden of Eden, God's first encounter with a sinful nature. Before Eve could be tempted by the serpent, or Satan, sin had to already be present before she could be tempted by it. And now you might wonder how and what was the origination of that sin that was already lurking about in the Garden?

The very first sin committed, was that of Satan's sin. He rebelled against God. People always have wondered, since God created all things, how could He have created such an evil being, as Satan is? Remember now, too, as we read in the Gospel of John, that all things were created by and through the Word; which is, Jesus...with that fact in mind, Jesus has known Satan since his beginning, even before he became so evil. Yes, Satan was not always the evil one that he is today. In fact, he was highly esteemed in his beginning. But, from there, everything went horribly downhill.

Some of this knowledge may be new to you, so try to follow along objectively and let the Holy Spirit lead us in this teaching. Before Jesus was incarnate on earth in the fleshly body of a man, He was with God. We know this from the Gospel of John, and numerous other Scriptures. We will go into further detail on this, later on in this study. So if Jesus was with God in the beginning, where was Satan before he became the serpent in the Garden of Eden? Let's see what the Scriptures can tell us.

When I first read of the king of Tyre in Ezekiel, I must admit that I was a bit confused. Because in the first part of chapter 28, I could see God rebuking this king for his evil ways; but as I continued reading from v. 11-19, I saw Him speaking of someone who could not have been a living mortal man. The reason I

say this is because there could not have been a living person in Ezekiel's time that had also been in the Garden of Eden. Even Adam had long been dead. My only impression was that He must have been comparing the king of Tyre's evil ways with those of the evil one, or Satan, himself. It was reassuring to me, to find out that I am not alone on this thought, since there are other students of the Word that have also come to the same reasoning.

Let's read these verses where this conversation is taking place, so that you might come to your own observations. It speaks initially of a beautiful angel with an important heavenly position as the guardian angel covering over the Garden of Eden. As this chapter progresses, one can see that this angel became rebellious and succumbed to greed and vanity eventually, and was then eternally punished by God, suffering His wrath forever. This angel had been covered in beautiful, precious stones and gold, and was originally created perfect in all ways. But, he chose a tragic path of rebellion toward His creator, wanting not what had been given him, but everything, including what belonged to others.

You might contemplate for a moment, about those you have personally known or heard of that started out with all good intentions, even holding important positions of responsibility; but then fell to the attraction of any number of sinful desires, such as greed, envy, vanity, lust, fame and fortune, etc. They have done nothing new. They are only pursuing the very same rebellious lifestyle that this once anointed cherub pursued. Please read, and see what has become of him:

"And the word of Jehovah was to me, saying,
Son of man, lift up a lament over the king of Tyre,
and say to him, So says the Lord Jehovah:
You seal the measure, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
You have been in Eden the garden of God;
every precious stone was your covering, the ruby, the topaz,
and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper,
the sapphire, the turquoise, and the emerald, and gold.
The workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes in you-
in the day you were created, they were prepared.
You were the anointed cherub that covers,
and I had put you in the holy height of God,
where you were.
You walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.
You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,
until iniquity was found in you.
By the multitude of your trade they filled your midst with violence,
and you sinned.
So I cast you profaned from the height of God, and I destroyed you,
O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire.
Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor.

I have cast you to the ground.
I will put you before kings, that they may see you.
By the host of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trade,
you have profaned your holy places;
thus I brought a fire from your midst; it shall devour you,
and I will give you for ashes on the earth, in the sight of all who see
you.
All who know you among the peoples shall be apalled at you;
you shall be terrors, and you will not be forever."

Ezekiel 28:11-19 (ILB)

Verses 18 & 19 speak of a similar destruction that Satan faces in Revelation, with the Lake of Fire and Satan's death. But let's not be satisfied with only these Scriptures. Let us review others, also. In the Book of Daniel is another vision. Many may see in this vision, what might appear to be an animal you could call a unicorn, which is the he-goat with a horn between his eyes. I propose that this vision speaks of Heavenly wars and of fallen angels, and the ultimate death of Satan, the evil one. Let's review these verses, and see what observations you can make. Note that this vision was so powerful, originally, that Daniel became physically ill for several days after he experienced it:

"In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar,
a vision appeared to me, Daniel,
after that which appeared to me at first. And I looked in a vision.
And it happened when I looked,
I was at Shushan the citadel which is in the province of Elam.
And in a vision I looked, and I was by the Canal of Ulai.
Then I lifted up my eyes and looked.
And behold, a ram was standing before the canal, having two horns.
And the two horns were high, but one was higher than the other,
and the higher one came up last.
I saw the ram pushing westward and northward and southward,
so that no beasts could stand before him,
nor any could deliver out of his hand.
But he did according to his will, and became great.
And I was considering, and, behold, a he-goat came from the west,
over the face of all the earth, and did not touch the ground.
And the goat had an outstanding horn between his eyes.
And he came to the ram with two horns,
which I had seen standing before the canal.
And he ran to it in the fury of his power.
And I saw him touched beside the ram.
And he was moved with anger against him,
and struck the ram and shattered his two horns.
And there was no power in the ram to stand before him.

And no one could deliver the ram from his hand.
Then the he-goat became very great.
And when he was mighty, the great horn was broken.
And in its place came up four outstanding ones
toward the four winds of the heavens.
And out of one of them came a little horn,
which became very great, toward the south, and toward the east,
and toward the bountiful land.
And it became great, even to the host of the heavens.
And it made fall some of the host, and of the stars,
to the ground, and trampled them."

Daniel 8:1-10 (ILB)

Notice here the reference of a ram. When I read this passage, my thoughts automatically went back to the ram mentioned in Genesis 22:13, that is caught in the thicket (bush). When the opportunity arises, you should re-read the entire passage of Abraham, Isaac, and the sacrifice at the altar unto God. We see the he-goat in Daniel coming to the ram from over all the face of the earth. Also re-read the account of Satan in the midst of angels in the presence of God, and his walking to and fro over the earth in Job 1:7. In v. 8, the goat's new horns went out in all four directions, and in vv. 9 & 10, we see the little horn emerging, that ultimately caused the fall of some of the host of the heavens (angels) and some of the stars. (Remember these things for our future study references.) In the remaining verses, we see the conclusion of the vision, and the interpretation of it by Gabriel an angel of high ranking in God's Heavenly host that is also mentioned of in the New Testament. If you watch closely, you can see a strong similarity emerging in vv. 11-13 with the previous passage we studied in Ezekiel, dealing with a rebellious nature of vanity and greed. We can also now see a jealous nature developed in this passage where the he-goat desired what the leader of the host (Prince of the host, NIV) received in the daily sacrifice. And he stole it, taking others with him. In v. 25, we will see the beast become confident and destroy many until he comes up against the Ruler of rulers (Prince of princes, NIV) and meets his defeat:

"Yea, he magnified himself even to the leader of the host.
And the daily sacrifice was taken away by him,
and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.
And a host was given with the daily sacrifice because of transgression.
And it threw the truth down to the ground;
and it worked and prospered.
Then I heard a certain holy one speaking,
and another holy one said to that one who spoke,
Until when is the vision, the regular sacrifice, and the desolating
transgression,
to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled?"

And he said to me,
For two thousand, three hundred evenings and mornings;
then the sanctuary will be vindicated.
And it happened when I, Daniel, had seen the vision,
then I sought meaning.
And, behold, the form of a man stood before me.
And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai,
and he called and said, Gabriel, make this one understand the vision.
And he came beside my place.
And when he came, I feared and fell on my face.
But he said to me, O son of man, understand;
for the vision is for the time of the end.
And while he was speaking with me, I was stunned,
on my face toward the ground.
But he touched me and made me stand.
And he said, Behold, I will make you know
what shall happen in the last end of indignation.
For it is for the time appointed for the end.
The ram which you saw with two horns
is the kings of Media and Persia."

Daniel 8:11-20 (ILB)

Here again, note in v. 11, how jealousy enters this vision: "he magnified himself even to the leader of the host, (NIV-Prince of the host) which I believe could be referring to Jesus Christ (as the Angel of the Lord), or possibly Michael, the Archangel. Also again, note in the following passage, where we see the Ruler of rulers (Prince of princes-NIV):

"And the shaggy goat is the king of Greece.
And the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.
And as for that which was broken, and four stood up in its place,
four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in its power.
And in the latter time of their kingdom,
when the transgressors have come to the full, a king strong of face,
and skilled at intrigues, shall stand up.
And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power.
And he shall destroy marvelously; and he shall prosper, and work,
and destroy the mighty, and the holy people.
And also through his skill he will make deceit succeed in his hand.
And he will lift himself up in his heart,
and be at ease; he shall destroy many.
He shall also stand up against the Ruler of rulers,
but he shall be broken without a hand.
And the morning and evening vision that was told is true.
But you shall shut up the vision; for it shall be for many days.

And I, Daniel, was faint. And I was sick for days.
Afterwards I got up and did the king's business.
And I was amazed at the vision.
But there was no understanding."

Daniel 8:21-27 (ILB)

Notice in vv. 19 & 20, we hear that this vision speaks of the end times. Revelation speaks of the end times and of princes & kings who were either satanic beings or possibly earthly beings, which are under Satan's control. Also, Revelation speaks of the deaths of the false prophet, the beast, and Satan. From v. 23 through v. 25, I can see a character evolving, then broken. This character immediately caused me to consider him as possibly the Antichrist. Some, who read this commentary, may say it is full of allegory and imaginations, but I have always seen a strong thread of correlation from Ezekiel through Daniel and into the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

These three passages are all accounts of visions that foretell of the end times and deal with not just human or animal confrontations, but also with heavenly wars by heavenly beings. In Revelation it is said that there was war in Heaven and it speaks of princes and the like; so we will continue on into that book at the Holy Spirit's leading. For most of my life, I would like to have thought that I had a fairly good understanding, a good grasp, of the concepts of Heaven and Hell. Of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. And I have been acquiring more and more enlightenment on the subject of the Holy Spirit of God. This third person of the Godhead, seems to be a bit more difficult to comprehend, simply because humans can fathom a being with somewhat human features more easily than a "Spirit" that is without form. And although God is spirit, and we are to worship Him in spirit, it might seem for some that the Holy Spirit is even more invisible than the Father or the Son. This, I believe, is the origination of the term, "Spirit World" dealing with all of the good and evil forces in the universe which cannot be seen by the naked eye.

I have been confronted, personally, from my early years and all throughout my life with the evil workings of Satan and his despicable agents. And I assumed that God was always involved in our earthly lives, and that things do happen in the Heavens that we cannot see, but I couldn't really get much more of a picture in my curious mind, than that.

Of late, I have realized that events perhaps happen simultaneously in the heavens, or in some connected fashion, with the events that happen here, on earth. And although God's days and years might be measured by a different time-calendar than ours, and also the things happening in Heaven are no doubt on a spiritual activity level versus our fleshly activities, I see a very active schedule of events in the Heavenly realms, as recorded in the Holy Word of God. As I read Revelation, chapter 12 for a study I did on angels, I noticed that this

particular chapter seemed to be like a "Heavenly summary" of the birth, death and resurrection of our beloved Savior, Jesus Christ. I also saw the original fall of Satan and his dark angels, and his anger at being exiled to earth; and his relentless quest to seek revenge on all those who followed Jesus Christ. I believe this chapter to be a heavenly overview, from the spiritual/ heavenly point of view, over these many centuries of time that it speaks of. Your impression may be different from mine, but that's fine. We are all seekers of knowledge in God's Word and in His will for our lives. Let's read from Revelation, chapter 12, and make some observations of the material:

"And a great sign was seen in Heaven,
a woman having been clothed with the sun,
and the moon was underneath her feet;
and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
and having a babe in her womb.
She cries, being in labor, and having been distressed to bear.
And another sign was seen in Heaven.
And, behold,
a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns!
And on his heads were seven diadems,
and his tail drew the third part of the stars of the heaven.
And he throws them to the earth.
And the dragon stood before the woman being about to bear,
so that when she bears he might devour her child.
And she bore a son, a male,
who is going to shepherd all the nations with an iron staff.
And her child was caught away to God, and His throne."

Revelation 12:1-5 (ILB)

We can see many things happening in these first five verses, just as we did in our comparisons of the first five verses of Genesis and John. There was a great sign seen in Heaven, which could be taken to mean the bright star, which the Magi followed to the birthplace of our Savior, Jesus Christ. There is obviously the picture of a pregnant woman, and with all of the reference to stars, it makes me think of the constellation Virgo-or, the virgin. The dragon, which is another name for Satan, takes a third of the stars and casts them down. Stars are sometimes also used to represent angelic beings in the Word, we realize, by our previous observations. This woman bore a male child who would shepherd all the nations, leaving me with only the thought of my sweet Savior, Jesus Christ. Her child was caught away to God, and to His throne. This speaks strongly to me of Jesus' death and resurrection to the right hand of God. With these thoughts in **mind**, let's move into more of chapter 12:

"And the woman fled into the wilderness,
where she had a place, it having been prepared from God,

that there they might nourish her a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
And war occurred in Heaven,
Michael and his angels making war against the dragon.
And the dragon and his angels made war, but they did not have strength,
nor was a place yet found for them in Heaven.
And the great dragon was cast out-the old serpent being called Devil,
and, Satan,
he deceiving the whole habitable world-was cast out onto the earth,
and his angels were cast with him."

Revelation 12:7-9 (ILB)

Here, we see an angelic war going on over the Serpent's desire to kill the woman's child. In v. 9, we see the actual casting down of Satan and his angels. These things seem to have happened in the heavenly realm, as the earth carried on it's own activities. Let's continue on from v. 10:

"And I heard a great voice saying in Heaven,
Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of His Christ,
because the accuser of our brothers is thrown down,
the one accusing them before our God day and night.
And they overcame him because of the word of their testimony.
And they did not love their soul even until death.
Because of this, be glad, the heavens and those tabernacling in them.
Woe to the ones dwelling on the earth, and in the sea,
because the the Devil came down to you having great anger,
knowing he has a little time!"

Revelation 12:10-12 (ILB)

From the beginning of this passage I am reminded of a question that many students and new believers have asked me: In the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13), what is meant by, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." (NIV) This is not a question to be answered easily, since many theologians have pondered this same question for years. Let's review the method of prayer suggested by Jesus:

"Therefore you should pray this way:
Our Father who is in Heaven, let be sanctified Your name.
Let Your kingdom come; let Your will be done,
as it is in Heaven, also on earth.
Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
but deliver us from evil;

for Yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory to forever. Amen."

Matthew 6:9-12 (ILB)

Where is the kingdom of God? Is it here on earth? For the Scripture says, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." preceded by: "Thy kingdom come;" (NIV) The answer to this question may be beautifully answered in the following passages. Realize, please, that the operative word for when the kingdom of God is to come is, NOW as the above Scripture tells us. And, that this coming happened after the accuser was thrown down (to earth) and they (the believers) overcame him (Satan) because of the word of their (the believers) testimony. God's kingdom is here, now. But, the passage above refers to the millennial kingdom, as opposed to a "kingdom" on earth. Obviously, our present-day world is not the kingdom of God that we joyfully await. But the Bible does speak of a definite kingdom for Christians on earth, and just before this kingdom on earth arrived, John the Baptist traveled about, preaching: "Repent! For the kingdom of Heaven has drawn near." (Matthew 3:2 ILB) Once again, this kingdom that John the Baptist referred to as being near is not the millennial kingdom which occurs after the rapture at Christ's second coming. Rather, this "kingdom" is "the kingdom of his dear Son." as we see in the following passages:

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,
and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Colossians 1:13 KJV

and:

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly
into the everlasting kingdom
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

II Peter 1:11 KJV

We are aliens on this planet. Satan is the "ruler of this world." We live in God's kingdom, here and now:

"But you are an elect race, a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, a people for possession,
so that you may openly speak of the virtues of the One who
has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
you who then were not a people, but now are the people of God;
the one not pitied then but now pitied.
Beloved, I exhort you as sojourners and aliens to abstain from fleshly lusts which
war against the soul; having your behavior good among the nations,

in that which they speak against you as evildoers,
by observing your good works,
they may glorify God in a day of visitation."

I Peter 2:9-12 (ILB)

Now, as we continue in Revelation, chapter 12, I would ask that you might consider the woman in this illustration as possibly, "the Bride" as in: "the Bride of the Lamb." This Bride is, of course, the church, which has been beautifully prepared for the Bridegroom who is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. With this thought in mind a whole panorama of beautiful illustrations appear as you read this chapter. Let's finish with the concluding verses of chapter 12, and see how the dragon is obsessed with a vengeance toward the woman and her seed which is the church and all Christians:

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast out onto the earth,
he pursued the woman who bore the male.
And two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman,
that she might fly into the wilderness,
to her place, where she is nourished there a time,
and times, and half a time, away from the serpent's face.
And the serpent threw water out of his mouth
like a river after the woman,
that he might cause her to be carried off by the river.
And the earth helped the woman,
and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river
which the dragon threw out of his mouth.
And the dragon was enraged over the woman,
and went away to make war with the rest of her seed,
those keeping the commandments of God,
and having the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 12:13-17 (ILB)

And this dragon continues, relentlessly, in his quest to make war with the rest of her seed; even unto this day. But his time is short. He will not live forever, as Holy Scripture promises us. And we are not left alone to fight against him in this battle:

"Then be subject to God.
Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.
Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you..."

James 4:7-8 (ILB)

Keep your eyes set on God, not on the things of this world. Not on the things the ruler, or prince, of this world is concerned with. We are soldiers in battle. But as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, we have God on our side. And we have been given power through what we have heard and been taught:

"Therefore, my child,
you be empowered by grace in Christ Jesus.
And what things you heard from me through many witnesses,
commit these things to faithful men,
such as will be competent also to teach others.
Therefore, you suffer hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
No one serving as a soldier tangles with the affairs of this life,
so that he might please the one enlisting him."

2 Timothy 2:1-4 (ILB)

Not only have we been empowered by grace in Jesus Christ, and also been taught to resist the Devil and he will flee; but we also have angels helping fight the battles, as God directs them. In the following instance, we see how Michael, the Archangel, was involved in earthly battles. Note that Michael is also known as a "prince," as well as a "ruler." And, likewise, there are "princes" or "rulers" also in Satan's army.

In the Book of Daniel, we studied a vision Daniel experienced, involving the evil influences in the Heavens and on earth. We will continue now with God's angelic involvements, as Daniel is visited by someone I can only imagine as "the Prince of princes." He spoke to Daniel of war with the king of Persia, and how Michael, "one of the first rulers" came to His assistance:

"And in the twenty-fourth day of the first month,
as I was by the hand of the great river,
which is Tigris, then I lifted up my eyes and looked:
And, behold, a certain man was clothed in linen,
whose loins were wrapped in fine gold from Uphaz.
His body was also like the beryl,
and his face looked like lightening.
And his eyes were like torches of fire;
and his arms and his feet in color like polished bronze;
and the sound of his words were as the noise of a multitude.
And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision.
For the men who were with me did not see the vision.
But a great trembling fell on them,
so that they fled to hide themselves.
Then I was left alone, and saw this great vision;
and there remained no strength in me.
For my color was turned within me to corruption,

and I kept no strength.
Yet I heard the sound of his words.
And when I heard the sound of his words,
then I was on my face, stunned;
and my face was toward the ground."

Daniel 10:4-9 (ILB)

This passage reflects the overwhelming presence of this angel. Although Daniel was the only one who actually saw him, the others with him sensed something so powerful that they began trembling and ran for cover. They ran for cover from something they couldn't even see! I believe that this angel is the same angel that appeared to Moses in the bush and the very same angel that spoke to Abraham with two other visitors (angelic) before they departed for Sodom. In other words, this particular angel is none other than The Angel of the Lord; Jesus Christ, pre-incarnate. (I have conducted an exhaustive study on this subject, and would recommend it to you.) Now let's continue on to see what happens to this awestruck man of God, Daniel, as the Angel continues His conversation with him:

"And, behold, a hand touched me
and set me shaking on my knees and the palms of my hands.
And he said to me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved,
understand the words that I speak to you, and stand up.
For I am now sent to you.
And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood, trembling.
And he said to me, Do not fear, Daniel.
For from the first day that you set your heart to understand,
and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard.
And I have come because of your words."

Daniel 10:10-12 (ILB)

Here we find proof that this Angel is indeed sent from God, and not from the evil one. The visible glory of God was present, seen only by Daniel, and this Angel spoke on behalf of God and His will for Daniel, and He encouraged and comforted Daniel. Please do not be fooled by Satan, who can appear as an angel of light. As good Christians, Satan will always try to interfere in our good works for the Lord; so what I am saying to you as a concerned brother in Christ, is to always have your "discernment alert switch" in the "on" position. Be ever-ready to utilize your spiritual gifts in opposition to the evil one and his agents of confusion. Never take anything you hear as truth, unless you can find it in the Holy Word of God...no matter who tells it to you, not even myself.

A modern trend in and out of the church today, is to elevate angels above their rightful place. Even to worship them, directly. This is totally inappropriate. Worship your God alone, for it is He that dispatches His angels, to do His work,

as He wills it to be done. Now that I have said this mini-lecture, let's continue our reading in Daniel, to see what part Michael played in this situation:

"But the king of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days.
But, lo, Michael, one of the first rulers, came to help me.
And I stayed there with the kings of Persia.
Now I have come to make you understand
what shall happen to your people in the latter days.
For the vision is yet for many days.
And when he had spoken such words to me,
I set my face to the ground, and I became speechless.
And, behold, one in the form as the sons of men touched my lips.
And I opened my mouth and spoke,
and said to him who stood before me, O Lord,
my pangs have come over me, because of the vision,
and I have no strength left.
For how can the servant of my Lord speak this with my Lord?
For as for me, there is no power left in me;
yea, there is no breath left in me.
And again one in the form as a man touched me, and made me strong.
And he said, O man greatly beloved, do not fear.
Peace to you.
Be strong.
Yea, be strong!
And when he had spoken to me, I was made strong.
And I said, Speak, my Lord, for you have made me strong.
And he said, Do you know why I have come to you?
And now I will return to fight with the ruler of Persia.
And when I have gone out, then, lo, the ruler of Greece shall come.
But I will tell you what is written in the Scripture of Truth.
And no one makes himself strong with Me in these things,
except Michael your ruler."

Daniel 10:13-21 (ILB)

I feel it is important to notice a few things in this passage. The Angel appeared in the form of a man (vv. 16 & 18). In v. 21, we see the application of deity in the use of the word, "Me" as a capitalized form of the word. Again, the Angel strengthened Daniel, allowing him to speak. I am also inclined to believe that the rulers and kings spoken of, are not necessarily mortal beings, but angelic, whether heavenly or Satanic. This is confirmed obviously by the classification of Michael as, "Michael your ruler" in v. 21.

Other indicators would be that why would they say the king of the kingdom of Persia, rather than just the king of Persia (v. 13)? There was also a reference made to staying with the kings (plural) of Persia. And we have an angel fighting

with a king or kings in this passage, and the only other possible time this may have occurred in the Word was the familiar wrestling match with an angelic "man." You may want to re-read the last verse of this passage to try to determine what the Angel meant when He said that "no one makes himself strong with Me in these things, except Michael your ruler." That sounds pretty exclusive to me.

In the beginning of this study, I spoke of Jesus being responsible for all things created as we have learned from the Gospel of John. We know that there are also beings of a Heavenly nature, such as kings and princes, and rulers and authorities, and powers and dominions. To illustrate this point, let's depart from Daniel, momentarily, and go to the Epistle to the Colossians so we can "rightly divide the Word." The following passage begins with a prayer that you might be filled with knowledge and spiritual understanding, which is my prayer also, for you:

"For this cause also, from the day in which we heard,
we do not cease praying for you and asking that you may be filled
with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,
for you to walk worthily of the Lord to all pleasing,
bearing fruit in every good work, and growing into the full knowledge of God;
being empowered with all power according to the might of His glory,
to all patience and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father,
who has made us fit for a share of the inheritance of the saints in light,
who delivered us out of the power of darkness,
and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love;
in whom we have redemption through His blood,
the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation-for all things were created in Him,
the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth;
the visible and the invisible; whether thrones, or lordships,
or rulers, or authorities, all things have been created through Him and for Him.
And He is before all things, and all things consist in Him.
And He is the Head of the body, the church;
who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead,
that He be pre-eminent in all things;
because all the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him,
and through Him making peace by the blood of His cross,
to reconcile all things to Himself through Him,
whether the things on the earth,
or the things in the heavens."

Colossians 1:9-20 (ILB)

It is important to note, that it is the desire of God that we grow into the full knowledge of God and be empowered with all power (spiritual) according to the might of His glory. We are now fit for a share of the inheritance, and we have

been translated (moved) into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Jesus). Notice how all of these things are in the present-tense, meaning they are available to believers, now! Note also the confirmation here, that Jesus is responsible for the creation of all things in Heaven and on earth, visible or invisible, whether thrones, lordships, rulers or authorities. In the concluding verses of this passage, Paul tells how we once were at war in our own minds, so to speak, as far as good and evil are concerned. We now have been cleansed of evil and can go before our Lord, without blame or charge:

"And you then were once alienated and enemies in your mind by evil works. But now reconciled in the body of His flesh, through death, to present you holy and without blame, and without charge before Him, if you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not being moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard proclaimed in all the creation under Heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister."

Colossians 1:21-23 (ILB)

There is one specific thing I wish to bring out from these few verses. Albeit wonderful for our blessing of becoming holy and blameless and without charge before Him, we know we have the guarantee of the seal of the Holy Spirit purchased with the price of Christ's blood on the cross, but the Apostle Paul emphasizes our purity hinges on "if you continue in the faith..." Please do not wander from the narrow path.

Let's go back to the events of Michael, the Archangel, again in the Book of Daniel. Note that the Literal Translation of the Bible interprets his title as "ruler," whereas the King James and the NIV call him, "prince." This is typical throughout the text. Go with me now to Daniel, chapter 12. Here we see that Daniel is visited by a total of three angelic beings. One of which is dressed in linen. This strikes an amazing similarity to the three visitors that Abraham met with in Genesis, chapter 18. One of those "men" was openly referred to as "the Lord." I have reason to believe that the man "clothed in linen" in Daniel, chapter 12, is one in the same "Lord." Please read this passage to see what your observations are:

"And at that time Michael shall stand up,
the great ruler who stands for the sons of your people.
And there shall be a time of distress,
such as has not been from the existence of a nation until that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
everyone that shall be found written in the Book.
And many of those sleeping in the earth's dust shall awake,
some to everlasting life,
and some to reproaches and to everlasting loathing.

And those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament;
and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.
But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, seal the book,
to the end-time. Many shall run to and fro,
and knowledge shall be increased."

Daniel 12:1-4 (ILB)

These verses speak of the end-times, and how everyone written in the Book will be delivered. "Those sleeping in the dust" are those that are buried; and they will receive their judgment, whether ever-lasting life or everlasting loathing. Notice that during the time of distress, Michael will stand up. It is reassuring to know that this great messenger will be there to stand for the sons of God. Who are "the sons of God"? In both the Old and New Testaments, the children of God are also sometimes referred to as "the sons of God." (Ref: Hos. 1:10 & Rom. 8:14.)

In the following verses, we see the arrival of "another two" (angels), and note that the man clothed in linen, "was on the waters of the river." This tells me that He was not standing in the water, but atop it. Just as when Jesus walked on the water in the New Testament passages. So let's continue reading from v. 5:

"Then I, Daniel, looked.

And, behold, another two stood there, the one on this side,
and one on that side of the river's edge.

And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was on the waters of the river,
How long until the end of these wonders?

And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was on the waters of the river,
when he held up his right and his left hand to Heaven,
and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time,
times, and a half.

And when they have made an end of scattering the power of the holy people,
all these things shall be finished.

And I heard, but I did not understand.

Then I said, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

And he said, Go, Daniel!

For the words are closed up and sealed until the end-time.

Many shall be purified and made white and tested.

But the wicked shall do wrong.

And not one of the wicked shall understand,
but the wise shall understand.

And from the time the regular sacrifice shall be taken away,
and the abomination that makes desolate set up, a thousand,
two hundred and ninety days shall occur.

Blessed is he who waits and comes to the thousand,
three hundred and thirty-five days.

But you go on to the end; for you shall rest and stand in your lot

at the end of the days."

Daniel 12:5-13 (ILB)

We are blessed with the knowledge that our Lord has seen fit to involve His heavenly messengers (angels) in our destiny. We truly are not alone in our struggle. It is reassuring also, to note how it is promised to Daniel that he shall rest; and I take this to be the rest that our Savior speaks of, and that he will stand in his lot at the end of the days. (He will be with his own, at the Resurrection.) Now, in the next passage from the General Epistle of Jude; we hear some very interesting things. There seems to almost always be a deeper message in scripture than just the obvious, literal context of the verse. Jude is an excellent example of this, with the mention of Michael's contention with the Devil over Moses' body and the angels that are kept in chains. This contention is not cross-referenced in the Bible by any another scripture but it is mentioned in the apochryphal books, as I have been taught.

Many people think that the "certain men" who crept in secretly (to the church) are false prophets and teachers in the present-day sense, creating chaos and confusion in our modern churches. But for an even deeper message, look closely at the wording, because these certain men are "of old" and "marked out to this condemnation" and they are also "ungodly ones." "Of old" speaks of creation language. Jesus' beginnings are "of old" and I propose that these men mentioned in Jude are actually more than just false prophets and teachers...they are actually direct agents of the evil one, Satan. Remember that I said earlier in this study, that Satan was the first to commit sin unto God. And he, of course, was also in the beginning along with all of the other angels in the heavens. To confirm this statement, let's go to 1 John:

"The one practicing sin is of the Devil, because the Devil sins from the beginning.
For this the Son of God was revealed,
that He undo the works of the Devil."

I John 3:8 (ILB)

Now these men who have sneaked-in to the church are not only connected to the likes of Satan, but as we will read, the angels who were sentenced to everlasting chains, are also brought into this illustration:

"For certain men crept in secretly,
those having been of old marked out to this condemnation,
ungodly ones perverting the grace of God for unbridled lust,
and denying the only Master, God, even our Lord Jesus Christ.
But I intend to remind you, you once knowing these things,
that the Lord having saved a people out of the land of Egypt,

in the second place destroyed the ones not believing.
And those angels not having kept their first place,
but having deserted their dwelling-place,
he has kept in everlasting chains under
darkness for the judgment of a great Day."

Jude: 4-6 (ILB)

Now we have heard of princes and rulers and authorities and dominions, but did you know that there is also a "Captain" of the Lord's Heavenly Host? (NIV) In the ILB He is called: "Commander." Let's turn to Joshua, Chapter 5, to see what happened to Joshua before the famed battle at Jericho, before the wall fell:

"And it happened, when Joshua was beside Jericho,
that he lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold!
A Man stood opposite him, and His drawn sword was in His hand.
And Joshua went to Him and said to Him,
Are You for us, or for our foes? And He said,
No, for I come as the Commander of the army of Jehovah.
And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and worshipped.
And he said to Him, What does my Lord say to His bondservant?
And the Commander of the army of Jehovah said to Joshua,
Take your shoe off your foot,
for the place on which you are standing is holy.
And Joshua did so."

Joshua 5:13-15 (ILB)

I hope that after reading this passage, that when you continue to read about the fall of Jericho, you might realize that another army was present at this battle besides Joshua's. God's army was there, also. He even sent His Commander. Another significant observation is that of who is this Commander of the army of Jehovah? Every reference to this (angelic) person is capitalized. i.e.: Commander, He, Him, Man, You, Lord. This capitalization is reserved in Scripture to indicate Deity in the Holy Trinity: The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit (Ghost).

This "Commander" ordered Joshua to remove his shoe because he was now standing on holy ground when he met the Commander. Now, needless to say, this army of heavenly angels must have had a great deal to do with the fall of the famed wall at Jericho and, the success of Joshua's army. (To think, if the wall had actually fallen by just the marching and sounds of the human army, they could have repeated this procedure for any city they went to.)

Mankind doesn't stand a chance in battle against the armies of the heavenly host. We can only pray that we truly are followers of our God and His Christ, so

that this army will indeed be an ally...not an adversary. Mankind also has no hope in battle with Satan's armies without the assistance of our God who shepherds over us. It is through Him that we truly are delivered. I believe that throughout many of the battles described in the Holy Word of God, that He sent His angels to do His bidding according to His eternal plan. I believe that this is also true for all time, considering the fact that God (Jesus) is the same yesterday, today and forever. This would include even our modern-day wars.

You might say that God has a vested interest in the outcomes of the battles between the nations on earth. He has purchased His children at a price; that being the precious blood of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, shed upon the cross. We are guaranteed eternal salvation through the seal of the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit that Jesus promised He would ask the Father to send to us so that we would not be left orphans when He arose to the right hand of the Father. Have you ever wondered what God might look like? Let's begin closing this study up with one final look at the Scriptures of the Book of Daniel:

"I was looking until the thrones were set up,
and the Ancient of Days sat, whose robe was white as snow,
and the hair of His head like pure wool.
His throne was like flames of fire; its wheels like burning fire.
A stream of fire went out and came out from before Him.
A thousand thousands served Him, and a myriad myriads stood before Him.
The court was set, and the books were opened.
Then I was looking because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke.
I was looking until the beast was killed, and his body was destroyed,
and given to the burning flame.
And the rest of the beasts, their dominion is taken away.
Yet length of life was given them for a season and a time.
I was looking in the night visions. And, behold,
one like the Son of man came with the clouds of the heavens.
And He came to the Ancient of Days.
And they brought Him near before Him.
And dominion was given to Him,
and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations,
and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away,
and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. "

Daniel 7:9-14 (ILB)

As I bring this study to a close, I certainly hope you have enjoyed it, and have learned a few things from God's Holy Word on these subjects. I know I have

learned, and I thank God for allowing me to write this study, for the Son showing me the Way, and for the Holy Spirit's teaching. Praise the Lord.

Amen.

"For the rest, my brothers,
be made powerful in the Lord, and in the might of His strength.
Put on all the armor of God,
for you to be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil;
because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the rulers of this world,
of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenlies.
Because of this, take up all of the armor of God,
that you may be able to resist in the evil day,
and having worked out all things, to stand.
Then stand firm,
having girded your loins about with truth,
and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
and having shod the feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
above all, taking up the shield of faith,
with which you will be able to quench all the darts of the evil one,
the things having been made fiery.
Also, take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,
and watching to this same thing with all perseverance and petition
concerning all the saints."

Ephesians 6:10-18 (ILB)

Now that we've come this far, is this all that there is on the subject we are studying? Let me be the first to tell you, absolutely not! But I do believe that we have made significant headway into the study of "PRINCES, GOOD & EVIL."

In following the leading of the Holy Spirit, He would not allow me to close this essay until at least one more area is discussed. That being, Isaiah chapter 14, and the five "I wills". When one looks at chapters 13 & 14 in a light that is not in the strict literal context, you might see a much broader illustration that involves more than just mortal beings.

Chapter 13 smacks of the end times language of Armageddon, and chapter 14 has many illustrative facets within it. Many would firmly say that chapter 14 speaks of an earthly king that was being tremendously humbled because he had tried to exalt himself beyond mortal expectations. Maybe so, in the strictest literal sense, but I believe that this chapter deals more specifically with Satan. Please take the time to read chapters 13 & 14 before continuing on, so that you might be able to formulate your own opinion.

For illustration purposes, bear in mind that Jesus Christ is the King of kings, therefore, Satan might be considered the king of all that is evil, even the king of Babylon...a particularly evil place. So let's do a verse-by-verse study of chapter 14 to see if this illustration is possible:

vv.1, 2: Israel's reformation: God will settle Israel in her own land again, and others outside of Israel will join her. Those who had opposed Israel and had held her captive will now be under Israel's control.

vv.3-8: The people rejoice: Now that Satan has been defeated (by Jesus on the cross) the people praise the Lord. They are no longer in bondage and find rest and peace.

vv.9-12: Satan is rejected: Even Satan's own followers in Hell are now ridiculing the once powerful satanic being. He has become just as powerless as they are.

v.12: Specifically Satan's fall: Satan's fall from heaven to earth. No more to be the morning star.

vv.13, 14: Satan's Sin: The five "I wills" detailed in these verses, illustrate how Satan had desired in his heart to be like, or even superior to God. This was the "original" original sin, prior to that of Adam & Eve.

v.15: Specifically Satan's demise: Satan is cast down to the depths of the pit, only to be humiliated, but he will be separated even from his followers for a special death (the lake of fire).

vv.16, 17: Satan's humiliation: The humiliation of Satan by his own kind is tremendous as the once powerful evil prince of darkness stands disgraced before all who can only stare at him in shock.

vv.18-20: Satan's separate burial: All of the nations' kings have their own tombs, but Satan is cast out of his and even covered by those he slew, "like a corpse trampled underfoot."

v.21: Specifically Satan's sons: A special place is prepared for Satan's sons so they cannot rise to re-populate the earth. This may refer to the special section of hell known as Tartarus. (There they would join the rebellious angels who married mortal women.)

vv.22-27: God's plan for the world: God will provide for the destruction of the evil one, and as in v.25, his (Satan's) yoke will be removed from God's people.

vv. 28, 29: Word of warning: Though Satan has fallen and been "broken" (defeated by Christ on the cross & placed in chains) his evil offspring (root) will spring up a viper (antichrist). Its fruit (followers) will be a darting, venomous

serpent. Note the full-circle route of "serpent" from Genesis to "serpent" in this passage, and also to the reference in Revelation.

v.30: Refuge: God promises refuge in Zion for His afflicted peoples.

I hope you have enjoyed this overall study, and put it to prayer so that you and I both will benefit from the teaching that the Holy Spirit has given to us on this subject.

Praise God in all things.

God Bless.

THE KEYS OF HEAVEN AND HELL

By S. C. Brown

The word, key, appears six times in the Holy Bible and the plural tense appears twice:

Key:

Judges 3:25 Strong's reference: 4668

Isaiah 22:22	“	“	“
Luke 11:52	“	“	2807
Rev. 3:7	“	“	“
Rev. 9:1	“	“	“
Rev. 20:1	“	“	“

Keys:

Matthew 16:19 Strong's reference: 2807

Rev. 1:18	“	“	“
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In Strong's Concordance, the Universal Subject Guide provides some direction on the intention of these words as applied in the Holy Word of God.

Key-a small instrument for unlocking doors. Used literally for doors in Judges 3:25.

Used figuratively of: Prophetic authority of Christ...Isaiah 22:22

Present authority of Christ...Rev. 1:18

Plenary authority of Christ's apostles...Matt. 16:19

Teachers...Luke 11:52

4668: Hebrew-maphtech, maf-tay'-akh; from 6605; an opener, i.e. a key:-key.

2807: Greek-kleis, klice; from 2808; a key (as shutting a lock), lit. or fig.:-key.

Discussion has been raised in regard to who has possession of the keys to heaven and hell (aka life and death) especially in regard to Satan's position in ownership. Although we may all have various opinions in translation and interpretation of the Bible, one truth remains, and that is the fact that Satan is a created being and has never had authority over his Creator, nor will he ever have authority. Satan's desire or greed to possess the daily sacrifice, and to elevate himself to a position like that of his Creator or even greater, was the reason that he was cast down from heaven, I believe. As was the case with Job specifically, we learn that Satan had to obtain permission from God prior to bringing Job under attack.

Presently, Satan is not welcome in heaven or hell and spends the limited time he has remaining pursuing those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

After Jesus' crucifixion, He rescued those who awaited Him and led them to their reward and distributed gifts to men. Jesus is the firstborn of God and firstborn from the dead. He truly is the way, the truth and the life, and shows us how we might enter into the peace we are promised. Our room has already been prepared by Jesus, himself, and Satan in no ways can grasp us from His hand since the Father gave us to Jesus and Jesus said that no one can take us from the Father. Jesus is responsible for our creation, and has always had possession of the "keys" to life and death, and has never relinquished possession so that someone else might return them to Him. Rest assured, those who believe in the Lord, belong to Him; and He has sealed our eternal salvation with the seal of His Holy Spirit.

In His Service,

Rev. Dr. Steven C. Brown, D.D.