

Essential Truths I: Living With God

3

Origins

The Bible declares that the beginning point for mankind is God himself.

Read Genesis 1:26-27

Think about the implications of this for a moment. Mankind was not some accident of chance mutation, but was created according to a plan in the mind of God. This means that everything about mankind was designed with God as its focus. This focal point for human life is described in **Romans 11:36**:

“For *from* him and *through* him and *to* him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

As we have already seen in **Module 102**, this God-centered life was expressed on three levels:

- **“From him”** – our *life source* is designed to be God himself. He is the source of our life, our love, our joy, our peace, our strength.
- **“Through him”** – our *life enabling* is designed to be God himself. He is the power through which we live a life pleasing to him.
- **“To him”** – our *life goal* is designed to be God himself. He is the goal of our lives and the motivation which spurs us forward.

Read Acts 17:24-28

Read 1 Corinthians 8:6

This was how God intended mankind to live – in a state where life is centered in him. But for this to happen, God created mankind with a very special quality – a quality that the Bible calls “the image of God.”

The Word
God

▶ **Origins** ◀

Jesus

The Cross

The Blood

Resurrection

Repentance

Grace

Faith

Water Baptism

Holy Spirit

Temptation

Fellowship

Generosity

Kingdom of God

Worship

Prayer

Eternity

Second Coming

The Call

In the Image of God

What was the plan God had in mind when he created Adam and Eve? We find the clue in **Genesis 1:26-27**, which is rendered by the *New Living Translation* in this way:

“Then God said, ‘Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves. They will be masters over all life—the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the livestock, wild animals, and small animals.’ So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them.”

God “patterned [people] after himself” so that they would be like him. His purpose for creating us “in his own image” was so that he could walk with us, talk with us and have a close relationship with us (**2 Corinthians 6:16-18**).

God placed the first man and woman in a garden called Eden. But there was also something else in the garden – something dark and sinister that would alter the course of human history.

Read Genesis 3:1

The identity of this snake is disclosed in **Revelation 12:9** as “that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray.” Satan took on the guise of a garden creature in order to lure man away from God. So before we look at what happened in Eden, let’s look first at the origin of Satan himself.

The Origin of Satan

Before God made man, he created a class of spirit-beings called angels. Their purpose was to serve and fulfil God’s will (**Hebrews 1:7,14**) and to bring worship before God’s throne in heaven (**Revelation 5:11-12**). One of these angels was of a high order. His name, in Hebrew, was *Heyl*, which means “morning star.” In Latin, the name is rendered *Lucifer*, or “lightbearer.”

Read Ezekiel 28:12-19

This prophetic passage is, in fact, directed toward a human being, the king of Tyre. The human king had taken on characteristics of the real power behind the throne, Satan. And so the prophet’s message two-pronged. His words are directed firstly to the human king and secondly to Satan himself. Let’s take a look at what these verses reveal about the spiritual power behind the throne of Tyre. He was:

- The model of perfection (**verse 12**)
- Full of wisdom (**verse 12**)
- Perfect in beauty (**verse 12**)
- Created blameless (**verse 15**)
- Adorned with precious stones (**verse 13**)
- Present in Eden (**verse 13**)

Satan was not created evil. Everything about him was designed to reflect God's own glory. **Ezekiel 28:13-14** provides some hints as to his original function and responsibility in heaven. He was:

- Anointed as guardian cherub (**verse 14**)
- Created with inlaid tabrets and pipes (**verse 13**)
- Walked among the fiery stones (**verse 14**)

From these and other verses, certain characteristics of Lucifer become apparent:

His original position

Lucifer is described as a “covering cherub.” Cherubim are special angelic beings that guard or “cover” the throne of God. In **Exodus 25:18-22**, God instructed the Moses to make two gold cherubim to be mounted on the Ark of the Covenant, positioned to cover the ark's mercy seat wingtip-to-wingtip, as an earthly picture of the order found in heaven. This meant that Lucifer had the closest position of any angelic being to the throne of God, the very center of God's majesty and authority. His face beheld the full glory of God.

The description of Lucifer “walking among the fiery stones” also supports this. The fiery stones represent the brightness of God's glory. **Daniel 7:9-10** describes the throne as:

“...flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before [God]...”

Lucifer was a creature who lived in the fire of God's glory.

His original function

A clue to Lucifer's specific responsibility before the throne may be found in the last portion of **Ezekiel 28:13**. The Hebrew words used in this passage, translated “tabrets and pipes” by the *King James Version*, mean:

- **Tabret** – drum, tabret, timbrel; an instrument of joy that may have taken its name from the sound of its Hebrew name, *toph*.
- **Pipe** – a pipe bored through (the meaning of the Hebrew word is somewhat uncertain, but is likely to refer to a musical instrument of some kind).

It would appear that music was specially created within Lucifer, and his close position to God's throne indicates that he may have led the angelic hosts in worship before their Creator.

If this is the case, it is no wonder that music is such a powerful weapon in Satan's hands. Music has been built into man as well, as part of his capacity to worship God, and Satan seeks to draw that worship to himself.

Another indication of Lucifer's ministry of worship is found in Ezekiel's description of this resplendent cherub being adorned with precious stones. Nine stones are mentioned, but in the Septuagint (the ancient Greek version of the Old Tes-

tament) twelve stones are listed,* and these stones correspond exactly to the twelve stones that adorned the High Priest's garment, possibly indicating a priestly function in worship and praise.

His original glory

That Lucifer was glorious, there is no question. Several times, the Bible makes special mention of his beauty, splendor and perfection of form. He was equipped with all the intelligence, wisdom and appreciation of beauty needed to help him fulfil his responsibility as "covering cherub." He observed and reflected the very glory of God. He stood close to the heartbeat of God.

Then sin was found in him. When Lucifer fell from his position, he took with him all the inner attributes God had created within him, but in a distorted form. His beauty remains, but is now warped by pride; his wisdom remains, but is now corrupted by violence.

Ironically, it is Lucifer's original position, function and glory that now make it impossible for him ever to repent and be reconciled to God. How can an angelic being so close to God, rebel then later change his mind? Unlike Adam's original disobedience, Lucifer's rebellion was made in full knowledge of God's nature and glory, and of the consequences of his act. In demarcating the limits of God's grace, **Hebrews 6:4-6** also describes Lucifer's irreversible rebellion:

"It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance. . ."

In fact, the "lake of fire" (what is generally known as "hell") was originally not intended for man, but was "prepared for the devil and his angels" (**Matthew 25:41**).

The name "devil" is from a Greek word meaning "accuser" or "slanderer." But the Bible uses many other names to describe this fallen angel. A quick look at some of these names provide us with a glimpse into his character.

- The accuser (**Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1-2**)
- The tempter (**1 Thessalonians 3:5**)
- The dragon (**Revelation 12:9**)
- The ancient serpent (**Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 11:3**)
- Deceiver of the whole world (**Revelation 12:9**)
- Beelzebub – the "lord of the flies" (**Matthew 12:24**)
- The god of this world (**2 Corinthians 4:4**)
- The prince of this world (**John 12:31; 14:30**)
- Belial – the personification of wickedness (**2 Corinthians 6:15**)
- Abaddon/Apollyon – the destroyer (**Revelation 9:11**)
- The evil one (**John 17:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:3**)

* It is likely that, due to a copyist's error, three of the stones were dropped from the Masoretic Hebrew text.

But the most commonly used personal name for the Devil in the Bible is Satan. Satan is a Hebrew word which means “adversary.” His hatred for God is only matched by his hatred for man, who was created in the image of God.

Satan is real. He is not, however, the red-devil-with-a-pitchfork caricature so often depicted in the popular media. He is a fallen archangel who, though twisted grotesquely by sin, still retains much of his former splendor.

2 Corinthians 11:14 says that “Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light,” and he has done this many times in history. He is a master of disguise. Evil as he is, he rarely presents himself in an evil light; his words are sweet, though they drip with poison. He is, after all, the “father of lies” (**John 8:44; Acts 13:9-10**). And this is exactly how he presented himself to Adam and Eve.

The Fall of Man

Satan’s intention was to lure mankind into his rebellion against God. The basis of his temptation – the proposal he presented to man – was identical to the basis of Satan’s own rebellion. Satan’s rebellion was based on:

- Pride and conceit (**Ezekiel 28:17; 1 Timothy 3:6**)
- A desire to deify himself (**Isaiah 14:12-14; Matthew 4:8-9**)

At the core of man’s act of high treason against God can be found these two elements – pride and self-deification.

Read Genesis 3:1-24

Do you see the two elements of Satan’s own rebellion at work in the temptation of man? Look closely again at **verses 5-6**:

- **Pride** – “...[She] saw that fruit of the tree was...desirable for gaining wisdom...” (**verse 6**)
- **Self-deification** – “...you will be like God...” (**verse 5**)

When man rebelled against God, he inadvertantly identified himself with Satan’s cause (**John 8:44; 1 John 3:8-10**) and came under Satan’s tyranny (**1 John 5:19**). Man didn’t just turn his back on God; he turned his face toward Satan (**Ephesians 2:1-3**).

Read Romans 5:12

All the generations following that first temptation inherited the fallen nature of their ancestor, Adam – a twisted nature of pride which has been the hallmark of human existence ever since the first temptation. The basis for human life was no longer “from God, through God and to God.” It was now “from me, through me and to me.” The image of God had become marred beyond recognition by self-centeredness and self-deification.

Read Romans 3:23

The Bible calls mankind's condition of separation from God "sin" and defines it as "fall[ing] short of the glory of God." In **Romans 1:18**, Paul defines man's fallen state as "godlessness" which leads to "wickedness," and in the following verses we see a steady progression in the outworking of mankind's godlessness:

- **Ingratitude** – leading to a darkening of the heart and mind (**Romans 1:21; 2 Corinthians 4:4**)
- **Idolatry** – the swapping of God's glory for a false glory (**Romans 1:22**)
- **Immorality** – the giving over to shameful lusts (**Romans 1:23-27**)
- **Inventive Depravity** – being "filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity...they invent ways of doing evil" (**Romans 1:28-32**)

But the wonderful news of the Gospel is that God did not leave man in this sorry state. He intervened in human history when he sent Christ into the world.

Read 1 John 3:8

A New Beginning

Read 1 Corinthians 15:22

Read Romans 5:19

God did not give up on man because of his godlessness and wickedness. Instead, he put into action a plan of salvation and restoration. When you give your life to Christ, your life immediately has a new point of origin. You no longer look back to a point of origin in Adam's sin; you now look back to a point of origin in Christ himself!

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

Because of Christ, you have been brought back onto the original track of God's purpose and will for your life. Because of Christ, your life is now "from God, through God and to God." Because of Christ, you have been recreated in the image of God.

Read Colossians 3:9-11

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18

Just as Adam was the origin of sin and its miserable consequences, so Christ has become for you the origin of the blessing and glory of God. His death on the Cross reversed the effects of the Satan's original temptation and opened the door for you into the abundant, overflowing life of God!

Read John 10:10

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