



Bible Student's NotebookTM

The Herald of His Grace

Weekly

Presenting *every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. Colossians 1:28

Volume 22
Issue 547

The Fall of Satan

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

The “fall” of Satan is a fundamental factor in human and satanic theology. Like many another false notion, such as natural immortality, it is so vital to the spirit of error which pervades theology that no one seems to notice its absence from the pages of holy writ. It is blasphemy to deny it, though God has not spoken. Yet once we have our eyes opened to examine God’s revelation on this point, we see that the blasphemy is against “*the god of this world,*” who has blinded the minds of men lest the illumination of the glory of God should shine into their hearts.



Satan’s “fall” is only another and coarser form of Gnosticism, the “*science, falsely so-called*” (1 Timothy 6:20), against which the spirit of God has warned the saints. It is the old, old attempt to relieve God of the responsibility of the creation as we know it, and to shift its shadows to the shoulders of His creatures. The Gnostics divided this responsibility among many, and thus dissipated the blame. Today it is concentrated on Satan, the Slanderer, who deceived our parents in Eden. It did not seem to suggest itself to the Gnostic that his scheme was not only unscriptural but unscientific as well; that is, contrary to reason as well as revelation. It shelved the problem rather than solved it. It does not occur to the defenders of this satanic falsehood that it is not only absent from God’s Word, but no real relief in answering the question which it covers. If Satan fell, we must account for his fall. If the impulse was from within, or if it came from without, it is this which is responsible. Where did it come from?

In speaking of Satan, or the Slanderer, it will be of considerable advantage if we drop the common term “devil.” Satan is the Hebrew word for an *adversary*, and has not been corrupted by misuse. “Devil” is derived from the Greek *diabolos*, but it has been incurably corrupted by being applied to demons. *Diabolos* means *slanderer*. It is a common noun, and is applied to others besides the one

who has it for a title. It has a definite and instructive significance, but “devil” has acquired a very different, though indefinite, meaning.

“*That ancient serpent, the Slanderer and Satan*” (Revelation 20:2) is not known by name, but by descriptive terms and titles. He is not the only adversary or the only slanderer, but he is the chief adversary of God and Christ, and the supreme slanderer of God and man. He is the leader of the opposition in the divine government. It is his function to test and call in question, to thwart and to destroy every move made by God in His administration of the universe.

Let us suppose that Adam had been named “Sinner” instead of Adam. How would that have suited his circumstances before he fell? If we had no account of his transgression at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, would we not have the strongest kind of suspicion that his name was an index of his true character? Adam became entitled to the name sinner just as soon as he became what the name describes.

So with Satan, the Slanderer, the ancient serpent and the dragon of the end time. He has many appellations, but is there one which redeems his character? Is there one that intimates that he ever was anything but an adversary and a slanderer? The statement that the Slanderer is sinning from the beginning is self-evident because he would not be a slanderer if he was not a sinner. He must have been called by some other title if he was once righteous. Such is not revealed.

There is a strong tendency to ignore the plain revelations concerning Satan and to form a blurred, composite picture by confusing him with every other evil spirit, as our translators have done in the case of demons. The motive that prompts this is palpably the desire to prove that he is an excrescence on God’s creation, which has intruded contrary to God’s purpose and will and in spite of ►

every precaution. The first step in this propaganda is to prove that Satan was originally perfect, so that God is not at all responsible for his subsequent default.

The various attempts to explain the entrance of sin into the universe are all essentially the same. The modern systems, though indignantly repudiating any connection with Gnosticism because it is denounced in the Scriptures, are really only a fragment of it. The Gnostics introduced evil by gradations. They invented a series of angelic castes, the highest created nearly perfect, and each lower level less so, until sin reached man. In this way they attempted to exonerate God from the charge of committing a great sin, but fastened on Him the responsibility of the primeval peccadillo. Of course, *they* did not look at it in this way. *They* thought they were clearing Him of all implication with sin.

Modern systems are not so elaborate. Pointing to Genesis 1:2 they assure us that Adam's fall was not the first. If we look back of Adam we find another "fall." Modern minds being more easily muddled than the acute thinkers of the early centuries, it does not seem necessary to invent still another "fall" before that, and so on *ad infinitum*.

It reminds me of a label I once saw which puzzled my youthful, inquiring, but stubborn mind for some time. On the label was a picture of the label itself. Of course, on the picture of the label there must be a picture of the label, and on the picture of the picture there must be So I got a microscope and found that the artist had settled my difficulties very easily. He just made a little blot for the picture of the picture. That is the way theology tries to settle the origin of sin! It first seeks to reduce it so that our perceptions are unable to follow, and then if any one insists on using a microscope it makes a blot on God's character!

The principle is precisely the same as the "scientific" philosophy of evolution. First reduce everything to a mere

speck of protoplasm and then – nothing! Men of God say rightly that it is foolish to reduce everything to a form for which there is no reason or evidence, merely to bludgeon our minds into the acceptance of a theory which it rejects when things are kept within the range of human perception. It is far more foolish for those whose minds have been enlightened by God's spirit to use a similar course in connection with evil and sin. The problem is not changed though we invent ever so many "falls," for which the Scriptures give no warrant.

Another point we must insist on, if we are to be clear concerning these things: Not only do we read of no "fall" before Adam, *we never read of the "fall" of Adam*. Let no one mistake my meaning. That Adam sinned, transgressed, offended and became a dying creature with a variety of consequences is all too true; but God has never seen fit to use the term "fall" to denote the fact. Ordinarily we might overlook the use of a convenient term, but in this connection it is made the vehicle of obscure and unscriptural thoughts. Let anyone try to transfer the facts and consequences of Adam's "fall" to Satan, and he will soon be convinced that it is merely a blanket to cover ignorance. A return to scriptural language will shed light.

The real usefulness of the term "fall" lies in the unproven assumption that sin has always come from without, as in Adam's case, to a creature originally sinless. This would recoil on itself if it were carried to its logical conclusion. How many creatures in the chain suffered a "fall" and passed on the burden of sin makes no difference.

There was a first one, and we are driven to the horrible conclusion that God Himself must have played the role of serpent in the first instance! Should not this make us beware of embarking on this unscriptural and unreasonable philosophy?



64 pp, BK

The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Intermediate State

by — E.W. Bullinger

It is the author's contention that, when dealing with the subject of what happens at death, it is important that Christians confine themselves to what the Bible has to say and not turn to tradition. Some current views have more in common with the traditions taught by the Pharisees than with the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

See order form.

If Satan fell, where is the evidence? The word “fall” is not used. The desperate need for some evidence is all that is proven by the appeal to passages which no sober student would have pressed into service otherwise.

The favorite passage for proving the original perfection and subsequent fall of Satan is found in the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. The “*king of Tyrus*,” we are told, is another name for the devil. His presence in Eden is perhaps the only fact which points that way; but this does not establish the identity of the serpent with the king of Tyre. We are never told that Satan was the only spirit who had access to the garden. Moreover, the creature in Ezekiel was perfect at that time, for surely it was not one of the glories of the king of Tyre to have been in that scene as the serpent, the adversary of God! This would put his “fall” subsequent to the great cataclysm of the second verse of Genesis, which, we are told, was a result of it.

The prince of Tyre is emphatically described as a *man*, a human being (Ezekiel 28:2, 9). The king of Tyre was known among the people and his destruction was a matter of public astonishment. How can this apply to Satan? Those who have seen the ruins of Tyre and have some idea of its ancient magnificence will find nothing in this passage too wonderful to be accounted for. There is not the slightest hint that it concerns anyone but the ruler of Tyre. If it involves the spiritual king of Tyre, corresponding with the “*prince of Persia*,” the “*prince of Grecia*,” or Michael, the prince of Israel (Daniel 10:20-21), it is most unlikely that Satan should be assigned to a small kingdom like Tyre, or, indeed, any single kingdom, for he claims all kingdoms as his. Why should we give him such a subordinate place, simply to get a passage to prove that he once was perfect?

Moreover, it is always well to inquire what is intended by “perfect” in the Scriptures. The Greek has three words for “perfect,” and the Hebrew uses it for about six. It is questionable whether it ever denotes sinlessness. Any other meaning would be of little value in this discussion. The word used in Ezekiel 28:15 is *tahmeem*, meaning *flawless*. The A.V. renders it *without blemish, complete, full, perfect, sincerely, sincerity, sound, without spot, undefiled, upright, uprightly, whole*. It is most often found of the animals used in sacrifice. Noah was “perfect” (Genesis 6:9) in his generations. This certainly does not mean that he was sinless. David said, “*I was also upright perfect before Him.*” Does this prove that David escaped the lot of all of Adam’s descendants up to this time? It is evident that the meaning is limited to apparent flaws, not to innate tendencies. It is not a question of sinlessness.

The same word “perfect” is used in the passages which are

usually adduced to prove that Satan was created sinless, such as “*His work is perfect*” (Deuteronomy 32:4), “*As for God, His way is perfect*” (II Samuel 22:31; Psalm 18:30). It does not deny the great truth that all is of God. There is no flaw in the creation of a creature perfectly adapted to carry out a part of His purpose. Satan is as “perfect” in this sense as any of His creatures.

Still further, in the case of the Tyrian king, this perfection was in his *ways*, until iniquity was *found in* him. The iniquity did not come from without. It was in him while his ways were perfect, but undiscovered. This can easily be understood of a man, but cannot be applied to a sinless creature. Iniquity could not be *found in* such a one, for it is sure evidence that sin was already there.

Our ignorance of the spiritual forces of wickedness leads us to call them all “devils.” Thus our version calls the demons “*devils*,” and it is common to include Apollyon, the king of the monstrous locusts and messenger of the abyss, and every evil power of the unseen world, as a “devil.” There is only one Slanderer, and most of the minions of evil among the celestials are his messengers, as is seen under the figure of a dragon which drags a third of the heavenly host down with it.

Each kingdom or government of earth doubtless has a spiritual “prince” or overlord, under Satan’s suzerainty. We have been delivered from the authority of darkness. But Satan himself is never limited to one land. His peculiar province seems to be the aerial jurisdiction. He is sovereign over all, as he was the first of all to oppose the government of God. He did not offer our Lord the kingdoms of Tyre and Babylon as a reward for worship, but all the kingdoms of the earth, for he was over all.

Were we considering the *end* of Satan instead of his beginning, the very same expositors would absolutely refuse to accept their own identification, for, in the *Authorized Version* rendering his practical annihilation is tersely stated thus: “*and never shalt thou be any more.*” Compare this with “*The devil that deceived them ... shall be tormented day, and night for ever and ever.*” Changing “for ever” to “the eons” does not help the identification. There is no point in Satan’s career when he “shall not be.” The nearest approach is the thousand-year period, when he is bound; but the fact that he will be loosed and lead the largest host of his career in his final defection after that makes it impossible to apply this passage to the Slanderer. The true reading, “for the eon” (LXX) would teach that Satan is not alive today! The king of Tyre was judged in the sight of those who knew his glory.

The fact that such a passage should be pressed altogether out of its proper place assures us that the underlying motive is false. If Satan was sinless from the beginning, a plain passage could be found and a false one need not be distorted. Compare the words in Ezekiel with those of John. In one we read of the king of Tyre:

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee (Ezekiel 28:15).

The apostle was inspired to write, *“the Slanderer is sinning from the beginning.”* Suppose we falsely say “Adam was sinning from the beginning.” “No! No!” we hear our readers exclaim. “He did not sin until Eve was tempted by Satan.” What shall we believe: a fanciful inference, or God’s absolute declaration?

A favorite refuge from the plain and apparent sense that Satan was a sinner and murderer from the beginning is the suggestion that this dates from the beginning of man rather than Satan himself. The fact that such a statement could not have such a sense if applied in any other connection shows how desperate and hopeless this argument is. Moreover, the same expositors insist that all of the evidences of sin, such as the cataclysm of Genesis 1:2, are due to Satan! They occurred long before man came on the scene. Satan was a sinner, according to their own teaching, ages before Adam’s advent.

When was *“the beginning?”* As in the opening of John’s evangel, the article *“the”* is absent. The concept of an absolute beginning is outside of the range of human comprehension. We cannot look back to any definite point of time and say, “Nothing – not even God – existed before this.” So, in Scripture, the word *“beginning”* has the definite article – *“the beginning”* – when the context definitely decides what is in view. When the article is absent, as here, we would probably use the indefinite article, *“as a beginning,”* or, when used of a person, the possessive pronoun, *“his beginning.”* The *“beginning”* is always limited by the immediate context. Here this is finally fixed by the title used. So long as the Slanderer *was* a slanderer he was a sinner. This, we are told, was *“from the beginning.”* No other deduction is possible but that sin began when he began.

Isaiah’s description of the King of Babylon in the yet future day of Israel’s restoration is also taken as referring to Satan’s fall in the past (Isaiah 14:3-20):

*How art thou fallen from heaven,
O, Lucifer, son of the morning!*

As this is still future, it can hardly refer to Satan’s primeval “fall.” At that time Satan will have been literally cast out from heaven (Revelation 12:9, *cf.* Luke 10:18); but these facts give us no license to identify the two. There will be a king of Babylon who will arrogate divine honors to himself and who will lord it over the kings of the

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nations, and who will shake kingdoms. Yet he is a *man* (Isaiah 14:16), and Satan is not a man.

Moreover, an examination of the Hebrew text will convince anyone that the evidence for the title “Lucifer” is exceedingly slight. It is precisely the same word as the translators rendered “howl” in Zechariah 11:2. In the feminine it occurs again in this very chapter, at the beginning of :31. In slightly different forms it is found in Isaiah ten times, and it is always rendered *howl* (13:6; 15:2-3; 16:7 (twice); 23:1, 6, 14; 52:5; 65:14). There is no valid reason why Isaiah 14:12 should not be rendered, “Howl!” instead of “Lucifer.” This name is a human invention, and should have no place in the Scriptures.

Are not these futile efforts to find a foundation for the primeval perfection of the devil a tacit admission that no actual evidence exists? More than that, are they not desperate devices to disprove the clear, unequivocal statements that the Slanderer is sinning *from the beginning* (I John 3:8), was a man-killer *from the beginning* (John 8:44), and is not only a liar, but the *father* of it?

Having disposed of passages which cannot be connected with Satan, it may be well to inquire whether we have not

overlooked some which really have a bearing on his origin. We are perfectly safe so long as we keep to the titles given him in the Scripture: Serpent, Slanderer, and Satan. Is there any suggestion as to who brought the serpent into existence?

In Job 26:13, we read,

His hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

If this were the utterance of one of Job’s friends, we might well beware, lest it be merely human philosophy, for the Lord said,


Ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath (Job 42:7).

Besides, we must be careful to check the translation of the vital expressions. The Revisers change “formed” to “pierced,” yet the same word in 39:1 is left “*the hinds do calve.*” There is more consistency between “form” and “calve” than “pierce” and “calve,” yet the Revisers have made a change in the right direction. The Hebrew word *chul* refers to the *travail* which accompanies birth (Isaiah 13:8; 23:4; 26:17; 54:1; 66:78). When Eliphaz used this word, the translators themselves rendered it, “*the wicked man travaileth with pain*” (Job 15:20) and the Revisers concur. This, it will be seen, is allied to both *forming* and *piercing*. How incongruous “pierce” is will be seen if we should render Deuteronomy 32:18, “*thou hast forgotten God that pierced thee.*” They had forgotten the God Who had suffered in the travail of their birth.

Coming back, now, to the serpent, Job declares that “*by His spirit He garnished the heavens; His hand has travailed with the fugitive serpent*” (26:13).

Note the contrast between the garnishing of the heavens by His *spirit* and the painful production of the serpent by His *hand*. The spirit is used of intimate and vital association, the hand holds its work at a distance and suggests power and skill, rather than communion.

The immediate application of these lines is, of course, to the material heavens; but no one who has studied the stars and their relation to holy writ will fail to see a far deeper meaning. The stars are often used as figures of celestial powers, and in the ancient constellations both Draconis and Serpens have always represented the Satan of Scripture. The Dragon’s tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven (Revelation 12:4). This does not prove that we have here the divine description of Satan’s origin, but it is ever so much nearer a demonstration than the passages which are usually produced. ▶



The Problem of Evil and The Judgments Of God
by — A.E. Knoch

346 pp, PB
(See order form.)

This book traces the divine function of evil from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty. Here is what one of our readers has written about *The Problem of Evil*:

“The litmus test for motive in any writer is whether or not the power of the ‘Cross’ is being diminished or supplanted in any way; Knoch unfolds each point with the loving simplicity of someone who has faced and answered the critics with the overarching victory of Calvary. One comes away from each chapter of this work once again realizing that the offense of the ‘Cross’ has driven so many wonderful and freeing truths out of what is traditionally taught and practiced.”

The Septuagint reads, “Yet locks of heaven dread Him, and by an edict He puts to death the dragon apostate.” We have not been able to reconcile this and the Hebrew text, which seems, in this case, to be superior, for the context seems to call for God’s revelation of Himself in nature, past and present, not the future, which was not in evidence.

Yet there is one more link which will put the matter beyond question. Not only is the term *serpent* (Hebrew, *nchsh* the same as the name of Eve’s tempter in Eden’s garden (Genesis 3:1-2, 4, 13-14), but Isaiah describes it in precisely the same terms, the *fugitive serpent* (Isaiah 27:1):

In that day Jehovah with His sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the fugitive serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

The context clearly shows that this will be when the Lord comes to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity (Isaiah 26:21). Its connection with the twelfth chapter of the Unveiling is too close to deny. If Satan is that “ancient serpent” (Revelation 20:2), how can we help identify him with Isaiah and Job and Genesis? All will acknowledge Genesis and Isaiah. As precisely the same name and descriptive term is used in Job as in Isaiah, the evidence is as conclusive as it can well be. The “fugitive serpent” of Job is the same as the “fugitive serpent” of Isaiah. The “fugitive” serpent of Job (A.V., “crooked”) and Isaiah seems to refer to the constellation Serpens, for it flees from the grasp of Ophiuchus. The “crooked” serpent of Isaiah may be Draco (or Draconis), which winds its way among the northern stars.

The Unveiling and Isaiah give us his end, Genesis and Job give us his beginning. He is not introduced to us in the garden as an angel of light, though such he simulates today. He was seen as a *serpent*. Job gives us his origin. The One Who has garnished the heavens – *His* hand was pained with the travail of bringing forth the serpent.

It is well to seek for truth in its proper place. The judgment of Tyre and Babylon is no place to look for the origin of Satan. Job, however, is speaking of the creation of the universe and the manner of its making. God hangs the earth on nothing. The clouds and the sea are all displays of His power. Each couplet includes both good and evil. So, in the heavens, He it is Who made all. It is an elaboration of the great truth that all is of God (Romans 11:36).

We are now able to appreciate the peculiar term which has puzzled the translators, so that some render it *formed*, others, *pierced*. The woman was not the first to travail in pain because of sin. Jehovah travailed when Satan, was formed. Sin and pain appear together.

Satan is now *transformed* into an angel of light, and many of the Lord’s own receive him as such. His ministers are ministers of righteousness, posing as the ministers of Christ. This deception is no greater than his successful entrance into theology and enlistment of many great and grand servants of Christ, in proof that he actually was an angel of light at the first. ■

— *The Problem of Evil and The Judgments of God*
Part 1, Chapter 4

(edited)



72 pp., PB

See order form.

The King James Version – 400 Years of Bondage

1611-2011

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

1611 was not a high spiritual mark in the history of the church, the Body of Christ. Instead of being a grand year of the pinnacle of preservation or perfection of God’s Word, it was rather the sad depths of the subtle corrupting of God’s Word by the historic union of governmental and ecclesiastical politics.

An excellent book! – NC

Quite an eye opener to say the least! Very good! – NM

Bible Student's Notebook™ Weekly

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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ABBREVIATION KEY

<u>Scripture Version</u>	Concordance (Knoch)
(Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations are taken from the <i>Bible Student's Version</i>).	CL: A Critical Lexicon and Concordance (Bullinger)
CV: Concordant Literal Version	CWS: Complete Word Study Dictionary (Zodhiates)
DAR: Darby Translation	FoS: Figures of Speech (Bullinger)
DT: Dabhar Translation	SEC: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
FF: Ferrar Fenton Bible	TGL: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon
KJV: King James Version	UR: Unsearchable Riches
RE: Rotterdam's Emphasized Bible	VED: Vine's Expository Dictionary
WT: Weymouth Translation	YAC: Young's Analytical Concordance
YLT: Young's Literal Translation	
<u>Reference Sources</u>	<u>Reference Notations</u>
AA: Analytical Analysis (Welch)	cf. – compare
BDB: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon	e.g. – for example
CB: Companion Bible Notes & Appendixes (Bullinger)	et al. – and others
CC: Concordant Commentary (Knoch)	etc. – et cetera (and so on)
CKC: Concordant Keyword	ff. – and the following
	i.e., – that is

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