

Greater Works Than These Shall He Do . . . and Satan Did Too

Part 1

Copyright 1994 - 2016 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : September 1, 2016

Last Updated : September 1, 2016

Philip And Nathanael, King Solomon Sins, Rehoboam's Haughty Attitude, King David's Kingdom Divided, Constant War Between Jerusalem And Samaria, God's Prophets Warn The Israelites To Repent, Assyrian King Shalmaneser V Invades And Conquers The Northern Kingdom, The Israelites Are Deported To Other Lands, Israelite Gene Pool Is Polluted, Babylon King Nebuchadnezzar Invades Israel And Destroys Jerusalem And The Temple, Jesus Proved His Authenticity Through His Miracles And Mighty Works, Jesus Bestows Same Gifts On His Disciples, Apostles' Miracles

Many of you will be familiar with the story of Nathanael that is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. After Jesus had called Philip to be one of His Apostles, Philip then went to Nathanael in order to inform him that they had found the Messiah. However, when Nathanael learned from Philip that Jesus was from Nazareth, he was not the least bit impressed. Following is the complete story:

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

John 1:43-51, KJV

For reasons which are not made clear in any of the Gospels, Jesus' boyhood town of Nazareth apparently had a very bad reputation amongst some of the Israelites, and Nathanael seems to have been of this same opinion. In fact, as I have mentioned before, the Jews of Judah had a very low opinion of their northern brethren who were descendants of the Ten Tribes.

I am aware of two main reasons why this negative attitude existed. As I explain in articles such as "One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews", "The Fruits of Disobedience" and "The Psalm 83 War False Doctrine Exposed!", in his old age, King Solomon turned out to be not as wise as he had been in his younger days. Thus, the Old Testament informs us that the king "loved many strange women". Worse yet, Solomon's heart strayed from the Lord, and he began to worship all of the false gods of his lovers, and build sacrificial altars to them. As a result of Solomon's great sin, the Lord chose to take the kingdom away from him in the days of his son and heir, Rehoboam; that is, except for Judah and Benjamin in the south. Following are the verses where all these events are explained:

"But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after

other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

1 Kings 11:1-13, KJV

If you continue reading into the next chapter of that same Book, you will discover exactly how God fulfilled the above prophecy. Following King Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam rose to the throne of Israel. However, Rehoboam was a young, foolish know-it-all. He thought that he knew better than the wise elders of Israel, and this is exactly what happened:

"And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days,

then come again to me. And the people departed. And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him: And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day."

1 Kings 12:1-19, KJV

Please notice in the previous verses that we are told that "the cause was from the LORD". In other words, God actually put it in Rehoboam's heart to make such a foolish mistake, because He had already decreed that the kingdom was to be rent from Rehoboam, due to his father Solomon's blatant sin of disobedience and backslidden condition. Thus, exactly as He said He would do, the Lord divided King David's kingdom into north and south; that is, Judah and Samaria, the latter of which was also known as Ephraim.

If you read the Books of the Old Testament, you will discover that for several centuries after that, the kings of Samaria and Jerusalem were often at war with each other. Sometimes the king of Samaria would even side with the Assyrians. Of course, this only deepened the hatred that existed between Judah in the south and the other Ten Tribes; that is, Israel. Furthermore, the hatred continued to exist during the First Century as well.

But that is not all. As I more thoroughly explain in some of the aforementioned articles, God sent Prophets such as Isaiah to warn the Israelites that judgement was coming soon if they did not quickly repent of their sins and get their hearts right with the Lord. For example, in describing the depth of their rebellion and apostasy, the Prophet Isaiah wrote the following:

"Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint."
Isaiah 1:5, KJV

As is usually the case with the stubborn Jews, they did not take heed to God's Prophets by any means. The end result is that God finally sent the Assyrians to invade and conquer the tribes of the Northern Kingdom. The area around Samaria was the most heavily affected by the Assyrian invasions. Of course, it did not help that the Israelites foolishly kept goading the Assyrians by trying to grab territory from the southwestern corner of their empire. That was more than Assyrian king Shalmaneser V was willing to endure.

As you will see by the verses below, not only did Shalmaneser V regain the cities which the Israelites had stolen from him, but he went even further and totally conquered and subdued the Northern Kingdom of Israel. To ensure that the Israelites did not recoup and try to attack him again, he likewise did what a number of invading foreign powers did in those days. Just as the Babylonians and the Romans would likewise do in later centuries, he deported the Ten Tribes to some of his own controlled territories. But that is not all. Shalmaneser imported foreigners into the Northern Kingdom. This resulted in the gene pool of the Israelites becoming totally polluted. Consider the following verses where all of these events are described:

"In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him. Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the

LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof."

2 Kings 17:1-24, KJV

While we have taken a detour from our main discussion, at least now you understand two of the primary reasons regarding why the Jews of Judah self-righteously looked down upon their northern brethren. It is also why we find this verse in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John:

"Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."
John 4:9, KJV

Oddly enough, while those self-righteous hypocrites viewed themselves as being more pure than their northern brethren, the fact of the matter is that not even two hundred years after the aforementioned events, the Jews of Judah also became the object of God's Wrath for some of the very same reasons. Thus, Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar descended upon them, and Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple were destroyed in 587 BC. Furthermore, the Jews were likewise carried off by the many thousands, and were enslaved in Babylon for seventy years. So, in effect, their gene pool became just as corrupt as that of their northern brethren.

Considering how far north Nazareth is in Israel, I suspect that the aforementioned reasons may be why Nathanael felt the way that he did regarding Nazareth. At any rate, one of the things that Jesus said to Nathanael was "thou shalt see greater things than these." Aside from the miraculous events which occurred during Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist at the Jordan River, we all are aware of the wonderful miracles which Jesus performed during His public ministry, which are recorded in the four Gospels. He healed people. He fed the multitudes on various occasions. He raised people from the dead. Through the Power which was bestowed upon Him by His Father, Jesus proved that He was who He claimed to be by the very miracles and mighty works which He performed. Despite their many objections and legalistic arguments, this was one thing which the Scribes and the Pharisees could not ignore or disprove. Consider the following group of verses:

"Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ,

he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see . . . Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

Matthew 11:2-4, 20-24, KJV

"And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

Matthew 13:54-58, KJV

"At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him."

Matthew 14:1-2, KJV

"And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? . . . And king Herod heard of him;

(for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him."

Mark 6:2, 14, KJV

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell."

Luke 10:13-15, KJV

"And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

Luke 19:37-38, KJV

"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel . . . But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

John 5:19-20, 36, KJV

"Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him."

John 7:2-5, KJV

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

John 9:1-4, KJV

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me . . . Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? . . . If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."

John 10:24-25, 32, 37-38, KJV

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

John 14:10-12, KJV

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."

John 15:24, KJV

But that is not all. Prior to His departure from this Earth, and His return to Heaven, Jesus likewise bestowed these very same Gifts and Power on His followers, so that the world at large would know and believe that they were His true anointed emissaries. In other words, their own mighty works would be God's stamp of approval. Consider the following verses:

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Matthew 10:7-8, KJV

"Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

Luke 9:1-2, KJV

"And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you . . . Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Luke 10:8-9, 19-20, KJV

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

John 14:12-14, KJV

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Mark 16:17-18, KJV

In reading the Book of Acts, it becomes quite evident that the Apostles did in fact perform all manner of miracles and mighty works by the Power of God, including multiple miracles of healing, as well as raising people from the dead. Consider this set of verses:

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God . . . Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

Acts 3:1-9, 4:8-10, KJV

"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one."

Acts 5:14-16, KJV

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Acts 19:11-12, KJV

"And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."

Acts 20:9-12, KJV

"And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god."

Acts 28:3-6, KJV

"And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles."

Acts 2:43, KJV

"And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.)"

Acts 5:12, KJV

"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

Acts 6:8, KJV

"Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands."

Acts 14:3, KJV

"Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."

Acts 15:12, KJV

As I said, all of these miracles served to authenticate the Apostles as Jesus' true ambassadors, just as Jesus had also been authenticated by His own miracles. If you take the time to read the verses around the ones which I have shared above, you will quickly determine that there is another reason why these miracles were performed. They served as lead-ins to witnessing sermons which sometimes won thousands of converts to the faith in a single day.

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<http://www.billkochman.com>

Greater Works Than These Shall He Do . . . and Satan Did Too

Part 2

Copyright 1994 - 2016 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : September 1, 2016

Last Updated : September 1, 2016

Conflict And War During First Century, Great War In Heaven, Unseen Spiritual Warfare, Devil Is Liar Deceiver And Author Of Confusion, Devil Opposes And Withstands God's Word And Will, Blinded By Satan's Lies And Deception, Accuser Of The Saints, Jesus Warned His Followers About False Christs False Prophets And Coming Great Deception, Jesus' Message Directed To First Century Christians, Great Signs And Wonders, Satan's First Century Deceivers, Apostles' Warnings Regarding False

Apostles Deceivers And Antichrists, Apostle Paul's Warning Regarding Coming Antichrist, Signs And Lying Wonders, Satan Gets His Day, Closing Remarks, Suggested Reading Resources

There is another very important reason regarding why these miracles were so necessary. As I explain in the series "When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?", as well as in "Who Hindered the Antichrist?", if we take the time to read the Scriptures closely, we begin to realize that the First Century was a time of war and great turmoil; not just in the Heavenly Realm where Satan and his fellow renegade Angels were challenging and fighting against God's Supremacy and Divine Order, but also on the Earth itself -- and in Israel in particular -- where the Israelites were under oppressive Roman domination; where the Jewish religious leaders were growing increasingly concerned about losing their power and the fragile but cozy relationship with Rome; where the Zealots, Sicarii and other rebels were growing restless and bolder with each passing year; and where the Romans were running out of patience with those stubborn, conniving Jews. The situation was reaching a boiling point in both spheres.

Really stop and think about all of the conflicts -- both the physical ones, as well as the spiritual ones -- which were occurring at that point in history. It was God versus Satan. It was Michael and his Angelic Host versus Satan and his Fallen Angels. It was Jesus versus Satan. It was the scribes and the Pharisees versus Jesus. It was the Zealots and the Sicarii versus the Romans. Indeed, it was a very messy time.

As Jesus stated in the Gospel of Matthew, this great war in Heaven started sometime after He was born, and perhaps not long after He had entered His adulthood. After all, the Lord said it had begun in the days of John the Baptist, and John was only six months older than Jesus. In my view, it is clear to see that this great war was all about Him, and what He was about to achieve for the sake of humankind. While this great war was in large part about the Redemption and the Salvation of humanity, another big objective was obviously to rid the Kingdom of Heaven of Satan and his cohorts once and for all.

That wars do indeed occur in the Spirit Realm is made quite evident by verses such as the following:

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Matthew 11:12, KJV

"Then said he [the Angelic Messenger] unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."

Daniel 10:12-13, KJV

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:12, KJV

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

1 Corinthians 15:24-28, KJV

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and

from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, KJV

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Revelation 19:11-14, KJV

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

1 Peter 5:8, KJV

As I explain in the aforementioned articles, Satan was out to win this great war, no matter the cost. As such, he was more than willing to resort to whatever tricks or ploys he could in order to achieve his objective. He was also very jealous of Jesus and His followers. Because of his pride, that serpent was determined to outdo and outmatch Jesus and His followers at every step. Now, if there is one thing we know about the Devil, it is that he is a liar, a deceiver, and the author of confusion. If God says one thing, Satan will say the exact opposite. After all, in both Hebrew and Greek, the word "satan" -- or "satanas" -- means adversary, or one who opposes or withstands another. So that vile demon wants to cloud our minds, and confuse us, so that we cannot discern the truth. I am reminded of the following verses:

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"
Ephesians 2:2, KJV

"In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them [the Jews] which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."
2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

So as we can see, lies and deception are two of the tools in the Devil's arsenal of weapons. He will use them to blind us to the truth of God's Word. Not only that, but Satan will use his human emissaries to do the very same thing. He will use them to contradict and distort God's Word. Isn't that precisely what the Scribes and the Pharisees did with Jesus? Those legalistic snakes constantly contradicted Jesus, and tried to find fault with what the Lord said, taught and did. With good reason the Devil is also called the Accuser in the Book of Revelation, as we see by these two verses:

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the ACCUSER OF OUR BRETHREN is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."
Revelation 12:9-10, KJV

Now, here's the thing. Jesus was fully aware of the great deception which was coming to Jerusalem in the years ahead. While it is indeed true that the unbelieving Jews were very deceived already, what was to come later on would be a lot worse. He knew that Satan's deception would be so powerful,

and so convincing, that if it were possible, it would even deceive His very own followers; that is, the elect. That is why He issued the following warning to them in His Olivet Discourse:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24, KJV

"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

Mark 13:22, KJV

Please understand that Jesus was giving this warning to His First Century followers. This was not a message to Believers today, as so many modern Christians tend to think, and which I likewise believed for many years. While we obviously know that there are many deceivers in the world today, again, this is not the time period that the Lord was referring to. Just keep in mind who His audience was. Do you honestly believe that the Lord would tell His listeners these things if they were actually meant for us living two thousand years later today? I don't. At any rate, Jesus was telling them that some extremely convincing liars and deceivers were on their way, and one person in particular was on his way.

Notice what the Lord says there; "great signs and wonders". To me, that does not sound like everyday parlor tricks. The Lord is talking about some very powerful deception. Please keep this phrase in mind, because we will be coming back to it in a minute. So as I explained a minute ago, the Devil wanted to outdo and outmatch the Lord's Disciples. If Jesus was going to give them power to perform miracles, then Satan would do the very same thing with his followers. He would match fire with fire. We find evidence that this was indeed the case in the following verses. Please notice how many

times we are told that these deceivers were Jews:

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done . . . And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."

Acts 8:9-13, 18-24, KJV

"And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a

season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."

Acts 13:6-11, KJV

"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

Acts 19:13-16, KJV

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."

Acts 20:29, KJV

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Ephesians 5:6, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their

folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was . . .
But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,
deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:8-9, 13, KJV

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as
there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall
bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought
them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

2 Peter 2:1, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?
He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits
whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone
out into the world . . . And every spirit that confesseth not
that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and
this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that
it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

1 John 4:1, 3, KJV

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess
not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a
deceiver and an antichrist."

2 John 1:7, KJV

It is plain to see then that powerful deception was indeed
rampant during the First Century, and the Apostles warned
their followers about it quite a few times. It seems that
after Jesus returned to His Father, the darkness moved in,
in full force. So that is why the Apostles had to have those
same Gifts of miracles and mighty works. They had to certify
before the unbelieving public who they were, so that some of
them would believe and come to Jesus Christ. They had to be
able to counter what Satan was doing through his evil people.

However, as I said, the worse deception was still to come.

As I explain much more fully in "When Was Satan Cast Out of
Heaven?", as well as in "Who Hindered the Antichrist?", the
Apostle Paul offered the clearest warning yet regarding the

soon arrival of the Son of Perdition, who would in fact sit in the Temple in First Century Jerusalem, and declare that he was "God". Consider the following verses. I have added some words in brackets for clarification:

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [Christ's Return] shall not come, except there come a falling away first [the apostasy], and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition [the Antichrist]; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God . . . And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-12, KJV

Just as Jesus had warned His followers of coming "great signs and wonders", please notice how the Apostle Paul describes it as "all power and signs and lying wonders". In other words, the Antichrist would be fully empowered by Satan himself in order to perform his convincing signs and lying wonders. In my view, this means that he would literally be the Devil in the flesh, just as Jesus was the Son of God in the flesh.

This would in fact be Satan's crowning achievement on Earth, and his greatest deception as well: finally getting what he had wanted all along; that is, to be worshipped as "God". As you will learn when you read the aforementioned series, the hard-hearted, unbelieving Jews would fall for this deception too, exactly as the Apostle Paul states above, because they had long ago rejected God's one true Messiah, Jesus Christ. However, in the end, they would pay dearly for their foolish rebellion. Please refer to those series for more details.

With this last thought, I will bring this article to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

Abomination of Desolation: Explained!
Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?
Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?
Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
Satan: His Origin, Purpose And Future
Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires
The Fruits of Disobedience
The Psalm 83 War False Doctrine Exposed!
Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?
When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?
Who Hindered the Antichrist?

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<http://www.billkochman.com>