

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

SERMON TITLE: From the Palace to the Pit

SERMON REFERENCE: Ezekiel 28:8

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2458

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Take God's Word and find in the Old Testament the prophet Ezekiel. And when you've found that Old Testament passage, turn to chapter 28. And when you've found that, look up here. And I want to talk to you on this subject, "From the Palace to the Pit."

I, like you, enjoy headlines sometimes. I especially enjoyed this one. Now, you might not be able to see it out there, but that's a picture of Saddam Hussein, and in big red captions it says, "Captured!" Down underneath that it says, "Iraqi ex-dictator found hiding in a hole." Now, when I read that, my mind immediately went to this passage of Scripture over here in Ezekiel chapter 28 and verse 8, "*They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.*"

Now, this Scripture that I just read to you was talking about the king of Tyre, who lived high, wide, and handsome; who had a lavish, marble, cedar palace. And yet, he went from the palace to the pit. And God takes the king of Tyre and uses him as an illustration of Satan himself.

Now, Saddam Hussein may have been a terrorist, but he's only a picture of the greater terrorist, who is Satan himself. And all the terrorists of this world, including the king of ancient Tyre and Hitler and all of these today, are but tools of Satan, who is the power behind the throne. And Satan himself has gone from the palace and is headed toward the pit.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, we are at war, and it is a bigger war than we realize. Our war is not primarily or only against terrorism. Our war is not a political war. Our war is not a philosophical war. Our war is not a cultural war, as such. Therefore, our great enemy is not terrorism. It is not pornography. It is not liquor. It is not drugs, not violence, not sexual perversion, not abortion. Now, all of these things are terrible, but unless you see the power behind them all, behind all modern-day terrorism, behind all of these cultural and philosophical problems, you're not going to win the war. Your enemy, lady, is not your husband. Sir, your enemy is not your boss or your in-laws, not the IRS. There is a kingdom, listen carefully, there is a kingdom of evil. It is headed up by Satan, and he is the power behind the throne.

Now, Satan is not some medieval superstition. You cannot, as a child of God, afford ignorance. You need to be informed. There is a kingdom of evil. And we need to understand that we are citizens of another kingdom and that we have victory day-by-day if we will appropriate it. But we are living in this day and age in what the Bible calls hell's headquarters.

Listen to Revelation chapter 2, verse 13. God said to the church at Pergamou, "*I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat,*" literally, where Satan's throne, "*is.*" Now, we live in a world that is dominated by a kingdom of evil that has a king. Jesus called him in the Bible in John 14, verse 30,

“The prince of this world.” That’s what Jesus called Satan, *“The prince of this world.”* There is a kingdom of evil.

Now the king of ancient Tyre, that we see described here in Ezekiel 28, is used in the Bible as an illustration of Satan himself. And as you read Ezekiel 28, you find God speaking to the king of ancient Tyre, a wicked, malevolent, terrorist king, but God goes right on through the king of Tyre and God addresses Satan himself, who is the power behind the throne. Now, in the Bible you’ll often find God speaking through something or someone to the devil. For example, in the Garden of Eden, God spoke to the serpent, but He was really speaking to Satan. When Simon Peter said to Jesus, “You’re not going to the cross,” Jesus was speaking to Simon, but really to Satan when He said in Matthew 16:23, *“Get thee behind Me, Satan, for thou savorest not the things that are of God.”* Sometimes, God takes an individual or a thing and sees the power behind that thing and speaks to Satan himself. Now, that’s what God has done here in this 28th chapter of Ezekiel. So what we’re going to do is we’re going to look at Satan himself, the power behind Saddam Hussein, the power behind terrorism, and we’re going to see what we are really up against, because we’ll never win the war until we see where the true enemy is.

Now there is a system of iniquity. The Bible calls it the, *“Mystery of iniquity,”* in Second Thessalonians 2:7. There are four things out of this passage here in Ezekiel chapter 28 that I want to lay upon your heart. Many more things, but four things I want you to see about the devil himself.

Now, remember, this involves you. You may think that it doesn’t involve you, but you are a target of a sinister enemy. He is your personal enemy. And don’t think that you can afford neutrality, and ignorance is dangerous.

Four things I lay on your heart. First of all, **Satan was created in perfection**, Satan was created in perfection. People ask this question, “Why did God ever make the devil to begin with?” Friend, God did not create a devil. Satan, who became the devil, was created in perfection.

Look in this same chapter, if you will, now beginning in verse 11, *“Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, ‘Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.’”* Today we would say he was a perfect 10. He, *“seals up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God.”* Now, right away we know he was not talking about the literal king of Tyre, because the king of Tyre was not full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. The king of Tyre had never been in Eden, the garden of God. Now look, beginning in verse 13, *“Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, and the beryl, and the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of thy tabrets and thy pipes was prepared in thee from the day thou wast created.”* Now, this tells us that Satan was a created being. *“Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so;*

thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.” Now, the king of Tyre never did all of that himself, so God is speaking through the king of Tyre to someone else.

But now notice verse 15, “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.” Now, verse 15 tells us that Satan was the noblest, the most beautiful of angelic creation. Satan was surpassing in beauty. He was superlative in wisdom. Originally his name was Lucifer, which means light bearer.

Verse 13, look at verse 13. Verse 13 teaches that when Satan spoke, it was like music. His voice was like a great pipe organ. Look in the last part of that verse, ““And thy pipes were prepared in thee from the day thou wast created.”” When he would speak, he would fill the universe with music.

Look, if you will, again in verse 13. He lived in a jeweled city. Now, one day I’m going to live in a jeweled city, and so are you. We’re going to live in a city whose streets are gold, whose walls are jasper, a city that is adorned with precious gems. What he’s talking about here is Heaven. There was a time when this created being dwelt in a place called Heaven.

Verse 14, look at verse 14. It tells us he was on the holy mountain. A mountain in the Bible speaks of God’s government. The mountain of God speaks of the administrative authority that this one had. He was the chief of the chief. He was the prime minister of Heaven. Verse 14 tells us that he was a cherub. The cherubim were the highest of the created angels. He was the highest class of angels. And verse 14 tells us that he was the chief among them. He was the anointed cherub that covers. He was the one who was the leader of the leaders. He was the highest of the high.

Verse 18, look in verse 18. It speaks of his sanctuaries. “Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities.” A sanctuary is a place of praise. This anointed cherub, this one, the highest of the high; this one, full of wisdom and beauty, was a person who would receive and offer praise to the Almighty. He was like the high priest of Heaven. And it was his responsibility to orchestrate the worship and the praise to God the Father.

But remember that he was a created being. Never get the idea that Satan somehow was co-equal and co-eternal with God. Satan had a beginning. He was created by Almighty God. God did not create a devil. God created a perfect being, absolutely, totally perfect. So the first thing I want you to learn about this sinister minister of evil is that he was created in perfection. Got it?

Now here’s the second thing. Not only was he created in perfection, but number two, **he was corrupted through pride**. He was corrupted through pride. Now look again in verse 15 through 17, “Thou wast perfect in thy ways,” see, God did not create imperfection, “Thou wast perfect in they ways from the day that thou wast

created, till,” underscore the word till, “till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore, I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God, I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; and thou hast corrupted thy wisdom because of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”

Now here was this Lucifer, this Son of the Morning, who is absolutely beautiful, wise, having all of the attributes and accouterments that God could give to him, but then he was infected with pride. He came to believe, “I’m too good. I’m too wise. I’m too holy. I’m too great to be anything less than God.” The counterpart of this passage is found in Isaiah chapter 14 verse 14, where the Bible says that he was lifted up with pride and said, “*I will be like the Most High.*”

Now look at the word merchandise in verse 16 of Ezekiel 28, “*By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence.*” What is merchandise? Merchandise is that which passes through our hands. A merchant is something that takes something from somebody and sells it to somebody else. This merchandise comes through his hands. Now, Satan made merchandise of his office. All of this praise that was coming, it was coming only to him that it might go through him and up to God Himself. But what he began to do was to put his hands on that merchandise and to try to let that merchandise stick to his own fingers, and he made merchandise of his office. And, because of that, he fell from his exalted position.

Look, if you will, in verse 17, “*Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.*” Now, he fell because of his exalted position. Now, get it down plain, because some people stumble over this fact, God did not create a devil. He created a holy angel. And He gave that angel the power of choice between good and evil, and this angel chose to do evil. Now, had he not had the ability to choose to do evil, he could not have chosen to do good. God gives everybody a power of choice. If we had no choice, we could neither be praised for doing good or blamed for doing evil. This angel had a choice. And because of pride he chose wrong. And Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, became Satan, the Father of the Night. And verse 17 tells us that his wisdom and his beauty are corrupted, but now, listen carefully. Corrupted or not, traces of them still remain.

So when you think of the devil, don’t think of some repulsive monster, some scaly beast. The Bible tells us that he is a master of camouflage, and he has been transformed as an angel of light. Put this verse in your margin, Second Corinthians 11 verses 14 and 15. Here’s what the apostle said. He’s warning them about false prophets, and here’s what he said, “*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.*”

Now, Satan is like an angel, an angel of light. If Satan were to appear in this building as an angel of light, you would be tempted to fall down and worship him. And Satan has his emissaries, his ministers. Now, I want to say to all of those of you who are listening on television and those in this worship center, when you look for the devil, never fail to look in the pulpit. Never fail to look in the pulpit. Paul is talking about false prophets and he says, "*He has transformed himself as an angel of light.*" And so it's no strange thing if his ministers also be that way, be transformed as the, "*Ministers of righteousness.*" You see, the devil's not against religion. The devil is up to his ears in religion. He is the master of camouflage. And Satan works through music. Satan works through art, through literature. He is brilliant, but he's brilliantly stupid. He is beautiful, but he is hideously beautiful. And he has blemished beauty. He has warped wisdom.

Let me tell you some of the attributes of the devil with this blemished beauty and this warped wisdom. The Bible describes him in Genesis 3:1 as, "*More subtle than any beast of the field.*" The apostle Paul called him, "*An angel of light.*" The apostle Paul spoke of his wiles and his snares and his devices. Friend, sometimes a person may be very religious and very iniquitous at the same time.

Do you know what the first temptation was in the Garden of Eden? The devil, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve to sin, but what was the crux of the temptation? What was underneath the temptation? "Eve, do this and you'll be like God." He didn't say you'll be like the devil. "You'll be like God." Now, that sounds pretty good, doesn't it? It wasn't a temptation to fall down; it was a temptation to rise up. "To be like God, just do it my way. Forsake what God the Father has said and listen to me. You have your own homemade religion."

See, the devil is into this thing of worship. The devil even wanted the Lord Jesus to worship him. That's the unmitigated gall and audacity that the devil has. He said to Jesus, when he showed Him the kingdoms of this world, he said, "All of this I'll give You if You will bow down and worship me." Jesus knew the Scripture. Jesus said, ha, "Of course not. The Scripture says, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord God and Him only.'"

This world is full of religious deception. You say, "Pastor, then that proves the Bible not to be true." No, it proves the Bible to be true. First Timothy chapter 4 verse 1, "*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to,*" what? "*seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, doctrines of demons.*" The devil transforms himself as an angel of light.

Satan was created in perfection. Satan was corrupted through pride. And, by the way, nothing will put you further out of the devil's reach than genuine humility. And the Bible tells us in First Timothy Chapter 3 and verse 6, when we ordain a new minister, be careful that he's not a novice, "*Lest he be lifted up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil.*" Nothing will put a preacher more out of the reach of Satan than genuine humility. Sometimes we pray, "Lord, make me humble."

Well, friend, if you're wise, you'll humble yourself before Almighty God. God has ways of making you humble, and you probably will not like it.

Now, here's the third I want you to notice. Satan's created in perfection. God did not create a devil. Satan was corrupted with pride. Now, here's the third thing I want to lay upon your heart. **Satan continues with power.** Now, God says that, "I am going to cast you out of this holy place."

Look, if you will, in verse 17 of our chapter, "*Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom because of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground.*" Satan is cast out of Heaven. No sooner had he unsheathed his sword of rebellion than the power of Almighty God cast him from his holy place, from the holy mountain. Jesus said in Luke 10 verse 18, "*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.*" Jesus was there when it happened. This was before, eons before Bethlehem when Satan fell. But even though he's been cast out of Heaven by the express permission of God, Satan continues with power.

Look, if you will, in verses 16 through 18, "*By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore, I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God, and will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.*" That is, "You're no longer going to walk up and down here in this holy place." "*Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; and thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, and by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee; and it shall devour thee, and I will bring them to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.*" Now, here God is speaking of a process that begins with Satan's being cast out of Heaven and finally brought down to hell. But, in the meanwhile, Satan still has power.

You see, God gave to Adam and Eve dominion of the earth. Satan, having been cast out of Heaven, came as a con artist and conned Adam and Eve out of that dominion. They turned it over to him. They became slaves of Satan. And all the progeny of Adam and Eve have become slaves to Satan. The Bible says in First John 5 verse 19, "*The whole world lieth in the lap, the bosom, of the wicked one.*" We are by nature now the children of wrath. And Adam and Eve turned over the power and the authority on earth to this one called Satan. You say, "Well, I didn't know that Satan had power and authority on earth." Yes, he does. Put these Scriptures down now, John 14 verse 30. Jesus said, "*Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh.*" The prince of this world. Jesus called him that. "*The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.*" What does that mean? I don't have any itch the devil can scratch. That's what that means.

In Second Corinthians 4:4, the apostle Paul called him "*The god of this world.*" The word god with a little g. He is the god of this world.

Ephesians chapter 6 verse 12 speaks of, *“The rulers of darkness.”* That means that Satan is the commander in chief of a vast number of spirit beings, angels who rebelled with him and are in full sympathy with him and do his bidding. And now, Satan has this reign of terror over the earth. You want to know what’s wrong with the world today. There is a reign of terror and Satan is the master and chief. He has principalities and powers.

When Satan said to Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 4 and verse 9, *“Fall down and worship me, because all these kingdoms have been given to me,”* Jesus did not argue with him. Jesus did not say, *“It’s not yours to give.”* Jesus knew that Adam had delivered it over to Satan. Satan had usurped it as a con artist, but, nonetheless, Satan had it. But Jesus refused to worship him, but He did not deny the power that Satan had.

Martin Luther with that great hymn, which is one of my favorite hymns, *“A Mighty Fortress is our God,”* said of Satan, *“His power and craft are great and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.”* And he is known now for a multitude of iniquities. Notice in verse 18, *“The multitude of iniquities.”*

What’s wrong with the world today? Jot these Scriptures down, Acts chapter 10 verse 38 speaks of those, *“Oppressed of the devil.”* Luke 13:16 spoke of, *“One whom Satan has bound.”* Second Corinthians 12:7, *“The messenger of Satan.”* Satan has today a reign of terror. He’s the chief terrorist: subversion, perversion, diversion. He wants to divide. He wants to depress. He wants to destroy. Depression, oppression; these things come from the devil.

Have you ever wondered why there’s such a war on little babies? Friend, just open the Bible. Read the ancient god Molek. Molek, who had a fire in his belly with open arms, and in order to please this pagan deity, mothers would take their new, little new-born babes and, and roll them screaming into the fire to please Molek.

Then they had the worship of Baal, the fertility god, the god of sex. How did they worship the god of sex, Baal? By the sacrifice of their little babies. Satan has always hated children. Think of Pharaoh. What did Pharaoh do? He killed the babies. What did Herod do? He killed the babies. What does Planned Parenthood do? It kills the babies. Who is behind that? Abortion is a blood sacrifice to Satan. Satan has a war against the unborn, against the innocent. You see, they’re just old gods with new names.

Well, you say, *“Pastor, is it hopeless and helpless?”* Of course not. That’s why Jesus came. Put Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14 down, *“Forasmuch, then, as children are partakers of flesh and blood, ah, as the children,”* talking about us, the children of God, *“are partakers of flesh and blood, He,”* Jesus, *“also Himself took part of the same.”* Jesus became flesh and blood. Why? *“That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, the devil.”* Jesus came to this earth to die in my place, in your place, and through His death destroy him who had the power of death, the devil. Now, the word destroy ‘katargeo’ does not mean to obliterate. It

means to make of non-effect. Jesus does not obliterate the devil, but Jesus has taken away the authority of the devil. What Adam gave to Satan legally, what was legally lost, Jesus has legally taken back by His death, burial, and resurrection. When Jesus Christ was on the cross, hell had a holiday. They said, "He is finished!" But He wasn't finished. Satan was finished. The power of Satan was finished.

Now, notice, put down Colossians chapter 2 and verse 15. It speaks of Jesus and His death and it says, "*And, having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*" In what? In His death. Jesus spoiled principalities and powers. In Ephesians 6 verse 12 the Bible says, "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.*" But those principalities and powers, headed up by the devil, have been decimated by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been stripped. That is, all of his accoutrements are taken from him.

Think of Saddam Hussein in that rat hole. Think of that man who had walked around in his military regalia and that man who swaggered, and he's stripped. Not only was he stripped, but the Bible teaches that he is shamed, that he has spoiled principalities and powers. His authority has been taken from him. He is subdued like a whipped puppy, saying, "I want to negotiate." That is the way Satan is to you, child of God, if you'll understand it. He, Jesus has spoiled principalities and powers. The Christian, therefore, in your life and in my life, Satan has been defeated. He has been vanquished even if he has not vanished. He is present, but he is powerless. If I could only get you to understand this. Listen to me. Come up close. Satan has no power over you; none! None! None! He doesn't want you to understand that. You're not a victim. His back was broken at Calvary. He sails a sinking ship. He rules a doomed domain. And Jesus said in Luke 10 verse 19, "*I give you authority over all the power of the enemy.*" Amen. You need to understand that. Our Lord said, "*In nothing be terrified by your adversaries.*" Philippians 1:28. You say, "Does that mean I can't be put to death for Christ?" If you do, if you get put to death, it'll be Satan's biggest mistake. Revelation 12:11, "*They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death.*" Friend, in Jesus we have conquered. And again second Corinthians 2 verse 14 says, "*Thanks be unto God who causes us always to triumph in Christ Jesus.*" You're not a helpless victim, and quit saying, "The devil made me do it." He hasn't. He can't. Now, you can fail to use the authority that God has given you, and if you do, then you've got a big problem. But, friend, our Lord says, "*Behold, I give you authority over all the power of the enemy.*" You're not bigger, stronger, wiser, greater than Satan, but Jesus is, and the Bible says, "*Greater is he that's you than he that's in the world.*" First John 4:4.

Fourth and final thing I want to lay on your heart today: **Satan is consigned to the pit.** Satan is consigned to the pit. Look in our verse, Ezekiel 28 verse 8, "*They shall bring thee down to the pit.*" Now look in verses 18 and 19, "*Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring thee, therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee; and it shall*

devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. And all they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror;” that is, you’re just awful to look at, *“and never shalt thou be any more.”* That doesn’t mean that he won’t exist any more; it means never will you terrorize people any more. It’s over for you, Satan. Just as this man, Saddam Hussein, who lived so high, wide, and handsome, put to death so many people, where’d they find him? In a hole, cowering in the dirt, and people said, “You mean that’s, that’s the one we’ve been after?” Friend, there’s coming a time, there’s coming a time when we see Satan and we’ll say, “That worm? That’s the one that made the nations to tremble?”

What’s it all about? You choose sides carefully, because if you follow Satan, you’re going to end up with him. The Bible says in Matthew 25 verse 41 that, *“Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels.”* It wasn’t prepared for you. If you go to hell, you’ll be an intruder. But all who follow Satan will end up with him.

Number two: Don’t you be terrified by Satan. I don’t mean to swagger, I don’t mean to be careless. The Bible says in First Peter chapter 5 and verse 8, *“Be sober, be vigilant; your adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”* But remember that in Jesus you have authority if you will use it.

Number three: Understand where the real war is. Our battle is not with flesh and blood. Our battle is with principalities and powers. And many times we lose the war because we don’t show up for the battle.

Are you saved? Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, if not, Satan has you like a plaything, like a puppet on a string now, and one of these days you’ll join him in hell. “Pastor, when’s the devil going to rule in hell?” Never. The devil doesn’t rule in hell. The devil is going to hell to suffer. Don’t get the idea that somehow Satan rules hell. He doesn’t rule hell. For a while he’s a usurper here on earth, but his back has been broken and he has no power over you if you’ll trust Jesus.

Bow your heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Now, Jesus came to destroy the power of Satan. Jesus came to deliver you. Jesus came to set you free. He came to give you peace and power, forgiveness of sin, and a home in Heaven, but He will not force it upon you. The same God that gave to Lucifer the power of choice gives to you the power of choice. Choose you this day whom you will serve. If you’d like to be saved, would you pray a prayer like this, “Dear God, I’m a sinner. I need to be saved. I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me. You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Jesus. I believe You’re the Son of God. I believe You paid my sin debt with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And I receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior, and I give my life to You to live it out for You till You take me to Heaven. I give You my life, and I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Save me, Jesus.” Pray it and mean it. “Save me, Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray. Amen.”