

THE LION FROM HIS THICKET

Jeremiah 4:7-18

Introduction: The lion's name comes from the Latin *leo*. The lion is the largest living of the family of cats other than the tiger such as the Bengal Tiger. The lion is what is called an "apex predator." What that means is that the lion is at the top of the food chain and they have no predators that feed off of them. The lion is active about 4 or more hours per day. The times they are active is in the night time. They are what is called a "carnivore" which means they survive only on flesh. Their prey is made up of mostly medium-sized mammals. Larger mammals are usually excluded. The lion hunts in open spaces and often prey on animals who have drifted away from the safety of the herd. The lion has been designated as the "king of beasts" as well as "king of the jungle." The lion has been a favorite symbol of royalty and a symbol of bravery. The lion became a favorite *nickname* for historical personages such as "Richard the Lionheart" who was the king of England. Another was "William the Lion" who was king of Scotland.

We have even see the proliferation of the use of the lion in several media presentations. For instance the mascot of the studios of Metro-Goldwin-Mayer (MGM) one of the major movie makers since the 1920's is always presented with a roar at the beginning of their movies. We are probably aware of the Disney animated production titled *The Lion King*.

The lion became the prominent symbol for ancient Mesopotamia which included the Babylonian Empire which is significant in the prophecy of Jeremiah. As we examine the content of **Jeremiah 3-4** is the invasion of Judah by the kingdom from the north which historically was the kingdom of Babylon. We should remember that there are three interpretations of a passage and in this one all three of these mesh into an interesting application. The **historical application** is that the invasion will eventually be and was the nation of Babylon and the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. There is the possibility that the fact that the Babylonians used the lion as a means of execution was to emphasize the domination the Babylonians had on nations. In fact Babylon was the ruler of the world at one time. The **doctrinal application** is that this is a prophecy of the coming Tribulation time when the Antichrist will manifest himself and take over ruler of the world system. The **spiritual application** is the one we are going to emphasize and will address that shortly.

You say, "What does this have to do with **Jeremiah**? Well look at a couple of passages:

- **Jeremiah 4:7 (KJV)** *The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.*
- **Jeremiah 5:6 (KJV)** *Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces:*

because their transgressions are many, *and* their backslidings are increased.

We find a couple of things here. One, note in **Jeremiah 4:7** the lion is “from his thicket.” The second verse indicates the “lion out of the forest.” There is something about this designation that I think is significant. According to **Isaiah 9:18 (KJV)** For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in **the thickets of the forest**, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke. What we find here is that the “thicket” and the “forest” are synonymous according to this passage. You might ask, “What is so significant about that?” If we know anything about forests is that they are made up of *trees*. The tree is one of the significant symbols of man. We saw this last Wednesday where we find that the blessed man described in **Psalms 1:3 (KJV)** And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Man is like a tree. Even Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about a tree and Daniel informed him that the tree was a picture of the king, Nebuchadnezzar.

My point is that the “lion in his thicket” **historically** is the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. The “lion in his thicket” **doctrinally** is the Antichrist that is to come. Remember who the Antichrist is, the Devil incarnate. This will happen when the Antichrist comes forth as a man and will rule the world. The **application** I want to emphasize here is the **spiritual** or **inspirational application**. This is where I want us to go today. So stay with me and see if we cannot learn some things about the “Lion From His Thicket.”

Keep something in mind about a lion. One is that the Lion is the symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember **Genesis 49:9 (KJV)** Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? Jesus is called the **Revelation 5:5 (KJV)** And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. Also, the enemy of God, Satan, has chosen to imitate Jesus Christ and he is called a “roaring lion” in **1 Peter 5:8**. Thus we need to know the things we face with the “roaring lion.”

1. THE ORIGIN OF THE ENEMY, SATAN, Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19. We find here that there is a designation of Satan that shows his status in God's economy among the angels. Paul refers to Satan as an angel in **2 Corinthians 11:14 (KJV)** And no marvel; for **Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light**. As one writer said, “Satan is for real.”¹ What we find in **Isaiah 14** and **Ezekiel 28** is God's revelation about Satan that is not shown in Genesis 1. We ask, “Why did God not tell us about Satan in His creation account?” Because God has concealed the truth from those who will not accept it (**Matthew 13:11-13**). What we have in these two accounts is a documentation about the enemy we face every day. This gives us the

¹ Robert Lightner, *Angels, Satan and Demons*, (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998), page 66.

account of the “original sin” of Satan and how he became known as the Devil. Originally Satan was in the “Garden of God” according to **Ezekiel 28:13**. Please note also that he was the “anointed cherub” in **Ezekiel 28:14**. Also notice that he was “perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created until iniquity was found in thee” in **Ezekiel 28:15**. Look at **Isaiah 14:12-17**. Satan’s goal is to “be like the most High” and take the place of God in the world and in your life.

2. **THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE ENEMY, SATAN, Ephesians 4:27.** The goal of Satan as seen in **Isaiah 14:13-14** is to take the place of God and “be like the most High” (**verse 14**). This is confirmed in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (KJV)** ³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ 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. He desires to be worshipped. Here is an interesting revelation in the scripture. There is an interesting verse that reveals something that took place in Israel. Look at **Leviticus 17:7 (KJV)** And **they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils**, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations. Then again in **Deuteronomy 32:17 (KJV)** **They sacrificed unto devils, not to God**; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Now before we get indignant about what the people of Israel did not the warning Paul gave to the church at Corinth in **1 Corinthians 10:20-21 (KJV)** ²⁰ But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. ²¹ Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils. Can we be guilty of this very activity? Note with me one other verse in **1 Timothy 4:1 (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. Note with me that in the “latter times” there will be those who embrace “seducing spirits” and “doctrines of devils.” Satan’s objective is and always has been the supplanting of God and being worshipped himself in the place of God. You may ask, “What takes place when someone ‘sacrifices to devils?’” Look at the context of **1 Corinthians 10:20-21**. Look at **1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (KJV)** ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we *being* many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. It has to do with eating and drinking something that has to do with flesh and blood.
3. **THE OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY, SATAN, Psalm 106:37. Psalm 106:37 (KJV)** Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. The question is very clear. Can we do the same thing today? It is my conviction

that this takes place constantly. Note with me some of the activities of the Devil/Satan.

- a. **Avoid the “doctrines of devils” 1 Timothy 4:1.** Note in this verse that Satan is a seducer. The word “seduce” means “to lead astray or to corrupt.” The goal of Satan is to draw you away from the truth and principles of the word of God. He wants to take you away from your allegiance to God.
- b. **Acknowledge that Satan has “devices” according to 2 Corinthians 2:11.** Devices is an interesting word. Look with me at these places where the same word is translated differently. **2 Corinthians 3:14 (KJV)** *But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.* “Minds” here is the same word as in **2 Corinthians 2:11.** Look at **2 Corinthians 4:4 (KJV)** *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* Again same word. Go to **2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV)** *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* Do you know where the battlefield is in your life? What you think. What you believe.
- c. **Awareness of the opposition Satan has for believers.** He has some plans for you if you will yield to his temptations.
 - 1) **1 Corinthians 7:5 (KJV)** *Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.* You can defraud each other by our relationship in marriage.
 - 2) **1 Thessalonians 2:18 (KJV)** *Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.* Satan will hinder you in many ways. He will put blocks in your way to keep you away from church. He will put busyness in your life to keep you from the word of God and prayer. He will put roadblocks in your way to keep you from being an encouragement to a discouraged believer.
 - 3) **2 Corinthians 4:4 (KJV)** *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* He wants to keep the lost from coming to Christ.
 - 4) **Psalms 106:37 (KJV)** *Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.* He wants to keep your children from the truth and he will get you to sacrifice your children to the things of the world. We do this by engaging them in the things of the world and avoid the things of God. For instance a parent will see that a child has every opportunity to excel in some sport or activity but never

encourage them to become aware of the things of God. I see parents line their automobiles up to drop their children off at the place where they can learn to dance and go gymnastics but will never take them to church. Parents will spend hours with their children teaching them to play baseball or softball and never teach them anything about the truth of God.

d. Allow the truth to sink into your life. Note some of the names of the enemy, Satan/Devil.

- 1) Satan = adversary.
- 2) The Devil = to throw. He wants to slander you.
- 3) The Serpent = subtle or beguile is his nature.
- 4) Beelzebub = "lord of filth."
- 5) God of this world = he wants to be worshipped.
- 6) Wicked one = seen in **1John 5:18**. He has no good plans for you.

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