

# Satan

## Satan's Fall.

It would appear that the original creation (Gen. 1:1) was committed to the hands of angels, over which Satan was the chief. It was an earthly paradise, called "*Eden, the garden of God*". Satan was not a serpent then, but "*the anointed covering cherub*", clothed with the reflected glories of God (Ezek. 28:14). But when unrighteousness was found in Satan, his heart lifted up because of his beauty, he was ejected from the angelic company (Ezek. 28:17), taking with him his demons; "*the host of the high ones*" (Isa. 24:21). It would appear that, under Satan's influence, "*the earth became without form and void*" and remained so until God intervened. As soon as the reconstruction was complete, and Adam given the headship of creation, Satan immediately began his efforts to get the earth back under his influence.

Note that "*Lucifer, son of the morning*" in Isa. 14, is not a description of Satan, but rather of [the Beast](#), the head of the revived Roman empire.

**Satan is Permitted to Act.** God made the lake of fire "*for the devil and his angels*" (Mat 25:41), but God did not immediately dispose of Satan. He left the Devil with a measure of freedom for the purpose of accomplishing the will of God! Ultimately, Satan is a tool that God uses, for a limited purpose, but in the end he will be cast into the lake of fire. We see this, for example, in the book of Job. God desired a heightened relationship between Job and Himself. Satan was employed to bring great trouble into Job's life, but in the end he only accomplished the will of God.

**Satan Seizes Christ's Inheritance.** Through the subtilty of the Serpent, man disobeyed God. When man sinned, Satan laid claim to this world, because man - set up by God - was fallen. Satan steadily worked to gain control over this world, which is Christ's rightful inheritance, as Creator and Heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). Before long, almost every institution on earth became corrupt. Daniel 10 reveals the involvement of Satan's emissaries to influence the nations (Persia, Greece, etc.) to do his bidding. We read there also that God's elect angels are working to counter the activity of Satan (Michael, "your prince", etc.). In the New Testament we further find that Satan is active in this world to prevent men from receiving the gospel, by "*blinding the eyes of them that believe not*" (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan is "*the god of this world*" (2 Cor. 4:4) in a religious sense, and he is "*the prince of this world*" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) in a political sense. The higher a person gets in this world,

the closer they get to the Devil. Satan even used the stolen inheritance to tempt the Son as a man on earth, after He had gone hungry for forty days and nights. He tempted the Lord Jesus, offering Him all the kingdoms of the world, if Jesus would but fall down and worship Satan. He does have the power to do this, as we see in Revelation when the Devil gives His power to the beast (Rev. 13:2). But Jesus refused to take the kingdom in bypassing the cross. Jesus was the first man Satan ever encountered over whom he had no power; *“the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me”* (John 14:30).

**The Tide Begins to Turn.** From the moment of His birth, our Lord was opposed by the Devil. Revelation 12 reveals that it was Satan, the great red dragon, who was animating Herod to seek the life of the young child. At the beginning of the Lord’s public ministry, Satan tempted Him in the wilderness. Jesus answered every temptation with the Word of God. This event was critical in that it occurred right before the Lord went out into His public ministry. His three and a half years of ministry were characterized by “undoing” the works of the Devil (1 John 3:8), not only by taking away sin at the cross, but by casting out demons, and relieving His people from the consequences of their sins. In Matthew 12, Jesus likened this to one who wants to enter the house of a strong man to plunder his goods. One must first *“bind the strong man”* before he can *“plunder his house”* (Matt. 12:29). A mere man could not spoil Satan’s house. It required one who could meet the enemy’s temptations, and overcome him. Jesus had met the strong man, Satan, in the wilderness (Matthew 3) and had overcome him! After that, Christ went about through the land of Israel spoiling Satan’s goods, in the power of the Spirit of God (Luke 4:14). Thereafter, the Devil left Jesus, although we do find Satan active in the garden of Gethsemane (John 14:30; Luke 22:44; Luke 22:53; Heb. 2:14), and even at the cross (Psa. 22:21; Psa. 18:4), to press the power of death down on the Lord.

**The Cross.** At the cross of Christ, the power of Satan was broken. Although Satan is still active today, he is a defeated foe! In Hebrews 2 we read that *“as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy [or, annul] him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”* (Heb. 2:14). It was really by going into death that Jesus rendered Satan powerless. For every other man, Satan had power over them through death. But Jesus defeated Satan in a way he never expected. Jesus did not refuse to die, but neither did He take the sentence of death as from Satan. Instead He took the cup of judgment from the Father’s hand in perfect submission. Hence, we hear those words, *“not my will, but thine be done”* (Luke 22:42), and *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit”* (Luke 23:46). But there is something more. There was that in the cross of Christ which laid the moral basis for the eventual defeat of Satan. Jesus said in John 12:31, *“now shall the prince of this world be cast out”*, referring to the cross.

When man fell, Satan laid claim to this world, usurping the Son's inheritance. The world fell under Satan's power through man's disobedience. Christ suffered on the cross to bear man's sin, and satisfy every claim that a righteous God had on man. Satan was "cast out" in a moral sense, because the grounds of his claim were totally annihilated! The cross outwardly appeared to be the casting out of the Son, but really it was the casting out of the prince of this world.<sup>1</sup> Satan awaits a coming day when he will be literally *cast* out of the heavenly places, then *cast* into the abyss, and finally *cast* into the lake of fire. But while he awaits that day, he falsely continues in a role to which he has no claim.

**Satan and the Believer.** The believer must still contend with Satan today. Satan finds something "in us", unlike the Lord, on which he can act. The flesh is within us, and therefore we are not immune to his attacks. Peter tells us to "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Pet. 5:8). But though we need to be sober and watchful, we do not need to be afraid. James tells us to "*Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*" (James 4:7). Satan meets Christ in the believer, and he flees from Christ, because Christ has already defeated him! Satan's demons are also active, to resist the Christian when he tries to possess his portion in Christ (Eph. 6:10-18). For this reason, we are given the whole armor of God, to be able to stand against the strategies of the Devil. Satan is also active in the heavenly places, coming before God (as he did in Job 1 - 2) to accuse us when we fall, for he is "*the accuser of our brethren*" (Rev. 12:10). To counteract the accusations of the Devil, "*if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*" (1 John 2:1). No matter how great Satan's power, we have a greater power within us, for "*greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*" (1 John 4:4). All of God's power is at our disposal, all we need to do is ask!

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;  
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright;  
And Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees.<sup>2</sup>

**Final Victory.** The mystery of iniquity "*already works*" (2 Thess. 2:7), but the presence of the Spirit of God on earth, the presence of God-ordained government on the earth, and even the moral character of Christians (the "salt of the earth") are keeping evil at bay. When the Spirit and Bride are removed at the rapture, Satan will be free to push his agenda at a rapid

pace. In the seven years of judgment that will fall on this world, Satan will be a primary actor. Half-way through the seven years, there will be a war in heaven, in which Michael and his angels will defeat Satan and his angels (Rev. 12:7-9). The dragon will be cast out of the heavenly places, and will thenceforward be restricted to the earth, which will cause great rejoicing in heaven (Rev. 12:10). But for those on the earth, it will get worse, because the Devil will have *"great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"* (Rev. 12:12). Satan will employ a number of individuals as his instruments, forming a false triad of evil: the Great Red Dragon (Satan), the Beast from the Sea (leader of the revived Roman empire), and the Beast from the Earth (Antichrist, or the false prophet). *"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet... which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty"* (Rev. 16:13-14). These ones will work together to increase evil and brazen revolt against God. Those who dwell on the earth will *"worship the dragon, because he gave the authority to the beast"*, etc. (Rev. 13:4). Ultimately, the interests of Satan are selfish. When Christ appears, He will bind Satan and cast him and his angels into the bottomless pit ([the abyss](#)), where he will remain a thousand years; i.e. during the Millennial reign of Christ. Afterwards, Satan will be let loose from the abyss for one final task; to *"go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth"* (Rev. 20:8). This will be providentially used by God to rid the earth of every remaining person without faith. Then, when his useful time is over, Satan will be *"cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"* (Rev. 20:10). So ends the Devil. This is the story of the most beautiful angel in the creation of God, who was lifted up because of his beauty, and iniquity was found in him.

**Satan's Downward Progression.** It is striking that we always see Satan moving down, down, down...

1. Iniquity was found in him; *"I will cast thee to the ground"* (Ezek. 28:14-16)
2. Cursed in the garden; *"upon thy belly shalt thou go"* (Genesis 3:14-15)

----- 4000 Years -----

1. Bound in the wilderness; *"first bind the strong man, and then spoil his house"* (Matt. 12:29; Luke 4:13)
2. Defeated at the cross; *"through death he might annul him who has the power of death... the devil"* (Heb. 2:14)

----- 2000 Years -----

1. Cast down to the earth; *"he was cast out into the earth"* (Rev. 12:9)

2. Cast into the abyss; "*and cast him into the abyss, and shut it*" (Rev. 20:3)

----- 1000 Years -----

1. Cast into the lake of fire; "*was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone*" (Rev. 20:10)

**Four names of Satan.** In Rev. 12:9 we are given four names of Satan; "*And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent, he who is called Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole habitable world*" (Rev. 12:9).

1. Dragon is the name that infers *cruel power*. In Rev. 12:3 the dragon is marked by persecuting the remnant of Israel, and in Rev. 12:4 the dragon's tail draws stars, or influences the leaders of the West.
2. Serpent is the name that infers *deception*. In Gen. 3:1, we read of the serpent deceiving or beguiling the woman.
3. Devil is the name that infers *slandering* or *tempting*. We read in Luke 4 of the Devil tempting Christ with three temptations.
4. Satan is the name that infers *hostility* or *opposition*. See Zech. 3:1, 1 Chron. 21:1; Rev. 9:11. "*Abaddon*" is Hebrew for 'destruction', and "*Apollyon*" is Greek for 'destroyer'.

## Footnotes

1. *By death He morally and judicially destroyed him who had the power of death. It was the total and entire annihilation of all the rights of the enemy, over whomsoever and whatsoever it might be, when the Son of God and Son of man bore the judgment of God as man in obedience unto death. All the rights that Satan possessed through man's disobedience and the judgment of God upon it, were only rights in virtue of the claims of God upon man, and come back to Christ alone.* - Darby, J.N. *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*. John 12.
2. Cowper, William. *Exhortation To Prayer*. Cowper's Poems, Sheldon & Company, New York