

# **Was The Devil Ever In Heaven?**

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FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE  
GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA

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In Isaiah 14:12 it speaks of Lucifer falling from heaven, etc., and makes mention of his being "cut down to the ground" who DIDST weaken the nations.

To begin in the middle of a thought always does violence to the thought and causes one to miss the proper meaning. The thought here of which this 12th verse is only a part begins with the 4th verse of this chapter and continues through the 23rd verse. This puts the 12th verse down in the middle of the thought.

The 4th verse says, "That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say . . ." This makes it clear that the remarks made here refer to the king of Babylon and to no other. The thoughts concerning the proverb against the king of Babylon are continuous from this 4th verse through the 23rd verse. I request anyone who does not agree with this interpretation of this Scripture to show where the line of thought changes and the remarks are directed to another person other than the king of Babylon. The 4th verse introduces the proverb against the king of Babylon and continues through the succeeding verses to tell of his violent acts in the earth against other nations and peoples for which the judgments of God are pronounced upon him and in the 22nd verse he mentions judgments against Babylon which show clearly that that subject is still under consideration.

Now, let us take a direct look at this 12th verse which mentions Lucifer who is said to have fallen from heaven as being cut down to the ground who DIDST weaken the nations. This, then, was some judgment upon him for something he had done before this came to pass. Could it then refer to the devil

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Could he have weakened the nations while he was still in heaven and then later been cast out of heaven for having weakened the nations? Could he have done any evil work in the earth while he was still a pure angel in heaven? Of course not!

But, on the other hand, the king of Babylon did do these things and became so exalted in his heart that he said he had done all these things with his own hand. The Babylonish Kingdom was the first universal kingdom that history records, and her king subdued and weakened and brought under subjection all other nations. Hence the reference to him who DIDST weaken the nations.

The 4th chapter of Daniel, verses 12 and 13, will throw much light on this 14th chapter of Isaiah. In verses 10 to 16 is given a vision that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had. Let us read it: "Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth; The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; the beast of the field had shade under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, 'Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's

heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him.' "

In the 19th verse Daniel begins to interpret his vision to him and refers to the tree, etc., and in the 22nd verse he says, "It is thou, O king, that art grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth."

This corresponds exactly with the 13th verse of the 14th chapter of Isaiah, which reads: "For thou has said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God," etc. Nebuchadnezzar was proud in heart and said the same thing in different words in the 30th verse of the 4th chapter of Daniel after he had subjected all the kingdoms of the world to himself. Listen to him: "The king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of MY power, and for the honour of MY majesty."

In Daniel 4:25 Daniel proclaims unto the king what is the decree of the most high concerning him. "That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

In Daniel 4:31-33 we find that this judgment actually came on Nebuchadnezzar and just how serious it was because that in his heart he was lifted up with pride and exalted himself in his heart even unto heaven to the exclusion of the God of heaven and did not acknowledge Him but said he had done all this with HIS OWN HAND, etc. Thus he fell from heaven (the exalted position he held and attributed this unto himself in his heart) and was cut down to the earth and humiliated beyond any other man that we have any record of.

Luke 10:17-20

"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give 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 to you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Please bear in mind that all of this was done and said in connection with the disciples of Christ and their work. Therefore this could not refer to the devil being cast out of the eternal heaven where God dwells because he did not just at this time show up in the earth. He showed up in the Garden of Eden in the form of the serpent. He came along in Job's time and was operating all along from Adam and Eve's time on down.

These disciples of the Lord had been out on a mission for Him and they had been able through His Name to cast devils out of people's hearts who were possessed with them. It is in this connection that Jesus made this statement. Satan had taken a very exalted place and had dared to intrude into the hearts of men which had been made for God only. Through the power of Christ and His gospel he was defeated and dethroned and cast out of his exalted place in human hearts and cast down from the high esteem in which he had been held by those whom he had deceived and possessed.

Heaven is a term which may be and often is used to denote an exalted position or high place as well as to denote the habitation of God and the eternal dwelling place of the saints. Take, for instance, the statement of Jesus in Luke 10:15, "And

thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven," etc. We know that that city of Capernaum never actually got up to heaven, but Jesus referred to their pride and being lifted up in heart and mind and pronounced judgment upon them for it.

The Bible refers to the third heaven. This was an experience related by the apostle Paul in the 12th chapter of 2 Corinthians, verses 1-4. In verse 2 he refers to one being caught up to the third heaven. Then in verse 4 he says, "How that he was caught up to paradise." This identifies the third heaven with paradise, and that is not yet the place of God's abode, because in Luke 23:43 Jesus said to the penitent thief who was crucified with Him, "Today shall thou be with me in paradise." Jesus, then, went into paradise on the day of His death. But after His resurrection the third day following, He said to Mary in John 20:17, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." He had been to paradise, but He had not been to His Father at that time.

Now the Bible speaks explicitly of three heavens and from the foregoing conclusion it seems there must be yet at least a fourth heaven which is the abode of God.

1. There is the aerial heaven that surrounds this earth in which are the clouds as well as the sun, moon, and stars, etc. This is what is referred to in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

2. Then there is the ecclesiastical or spiritual heaven referred to in Eph. 2:6. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" There are several other references in the Scriptures to these spiritual or church heavens.

3. The third heaven or paradise is referred to in 2 Cor. 12:1-4. To understand this properly furnishes

us the key to the proper interpretation to many Scriptures which would be very confusing in connection with other Scriptures if we do not understand this point and think that every time the term "heaven" is used in the Bible it refers only to the abode of God.

#### **Revelation 12th Chapter**

This chapter deals with two wonders which appeared in heaven—one a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars and ready to be delivered of a child; the other a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and a tail which drew the third part of the stars of heaven—and also with the war in heaven.

Now, there are some things mentioned here which make it very clear that the "heaven" referred to here is not the heaven which is the eternal abode of God, and that it has no reference to the devil being cast out of this heaven.

In the first place, this dragon was in the same place where the woman was; for it is said that he stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born—verse 4. This woman was in pain—verse 2. Do we suppose we shall be enduring hardships, trials, persecutions, and suffering pain in heaven? I do not.

Then it says in verse 5 that she brought forth a child and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. Could she be in heaven where God is, and still her child be caught UP to God and His throne? Is God still on up above heaven somewhere so that the child would be caught UP above heaven to Him? I say, No!

Verse 6 says the woman fled into the wilderness. Is there any wilderness in heaven where God is? The Bible does not describe it that way, but rather as a

place of exquisite beauty, richness, grandeur, glory, light, etc.

Verse 11 says, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death."

This makes it perfectly clear what kind of a war it was (spiritual) and where it was by the weapons which were used. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. But the blood of the Lamb (Christ) was not shed in heaven. It was shed on the earth. Again it was the blood of the Lamb through which they overcame, therefore this could not possibly refer to the devil being cast out of God's heaven because the blood of the Lamb was not shed for thousands of years after the devil is known to have been working in this earth. Therefore, if we were to concede that the devil were ever in heaven and cast out, we would have to exclude this Scripture as any proof of it because they could not have used the blood of the Lamb as a weapon against him way back there when it had not been shed.

It is also said that they overcame him by the word of their testimony. But it is here in this world that God's people testify to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then it is said that they loved not their lives unto death. Heaven is a spirit world. God is a spirit. John 4:24. "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits." Heb. 1:7. We see then that God is a spirit and His angels who dwell with Him in heaven are spirits and we know that spirits cannot die. But this is talking about people who could die, and, in fact, many of them did die.

Verse 13 says, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast out unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." Now, there is nothing at all mentioned in the entire chap-

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ter about the woman being cast out of heaven to the earth. Then how could the dragon persecute her after he was cast out into the earth if she were still in heaven? Remember, the dragon was in the same heaven where the woman was. Then if he could be cast out of heaven to the earth and still have access to the woman to persecute her and her still in heaven, we would be making heaven a very uncomfortable place to be. Let us hope that God is able to provide a better defense and security for His children than that.

The fact is, all of this took place right here in the earth and the term "heaven" refers to the ecclesiastical, spiritual, or religious heaven, which is among the people right here on earth.

Further, to substantiate any such argument that this chapter refers to the devil being cast out of heaven, one would have to prove that the devil had such a physical form as a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and a tail long enough to draw stars out of heaven. This cannot be done, because we have no knowledge of the devil having any kind of physical form any more than we do of God having a physical form, but we do have knowledge that both of them are spirits.

Again in Rev. 13:2 we see that the dragon gave his power and seat and authority over to another, a beast which arose up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, etc. Now, if this dragon is the devil himself, I would like to know when and where the devil ever gave his power and seat over to another, 3 and to whom. The fact is that this dragon was not the devil himself, but both the dragon of Rev. 12 and the beast of Rev. 13 were agents, instruments, or systems (religious systems) through which the devil operated and carried on his work.

But some may object that the Scripture says it was the devil (Rev. 12:9). This verse says, "And

the great DRAGON was cast out, that old serpent CALLED the devil, and Satan . . ." It says here the dragon was CALLED the devil and Satan.

It could properly be called the devil because it was the principal system through which the devil was operating at that time. It was a devil-dominated system of religion. Paul says in 1 Cor. 10:20, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils . . ." We see then that the devil actually had a system of religion and at least some worshippers who sacrificed to him. Therefore he is spoken of here, or rather his religious system through which he was operating, is spoken of as being in heaven (ecclesiastical or religious heaven) because that in the hearts of the Gentile idol worshippers whom he had deceived he was exalted to the place of God and worshipped and sacrificed to instead of the true God.

Now we have brought forth several clear points here showing what this is not. But we would not be fair to the inquirer after truth to just tell him what it was not and leave him hanging out in mid-air, not knowing just what is meant by these things. So we shall now bring forth the truth that is taught in the 12th chapter of Revelation in connection with other Scriptures.

Now, if we just forget the first wonder that appeared in heaven in the first verse of this chapter (the woman clothed with the sun, etc.) and only consider the second wonder which is spoken of in verse 3 (the great red dragon) we shall, no doubt, be thrown off the proper course of thought and stray from the truth. But we find that this woman is mentioned throughout the entire chapter as the object of the dragon's wrath and persecution. Therefore we cannot leave her out of the picture at all, and to carry her along in connection with the activities of the dragon

will help us to understand just what is being taught here and where and when it all took place.

The language here is highly symbolical as it is throughout the entire book of Revelation.

With these thoughts in mind, we will first establish the identity of the woman referred to in the first verse.

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

This woman was in a very exalted place, and the brightest luminaries of heaven were assembled around her. This is a picture of the New Testament church which was built by Christ Himself (Matt. 16:18) in all of her pristine glory and splendor.

But perhaps you may require other Scriptures in connection with this to justify this interpretation of this Scripture. We shall give them.

Rev. 19:7, 8, says, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Here we see the Lamb (Christ) has a wife and that her splendid apparel is the righteousness of SAINTS, which compose the church on earth.

Rev. 21:9, 10 makes it even clearer. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." The following verses then proceed to give a detailed description of this city in highly symbolical language. This Scripture does not

only tell us that the Lamb has a wife, but also tells us who she is—"That great city, the holy Jerusalem."

Turning to Hebrews 12:22, 23 we find a further identification of this city. "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and CHURCH of the Firstborn, . . ." This definitely identifies the city of God (heavenly Jerusalem) as the CHURCH of the Firstborn. There it is definitely established from these Scriptures that the wife of the Lamb (Christ) is His church and therefore she is symbolized by a woman in this exalted position.

This is further taught in the Scriptures by plain comparison in Eph. 5:25-32. And again in 2 Cor. 11:2 Paul is speaking to the CHURCH at Corinth and says, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." This refers to the bond and spiritual relationship between saved people and Christ, the heavenly bridegroom of their souls.

Rom. 7:4 is another Scripture along this line. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

But so much for that. We could go on multiplying texts at considerable length along this line, but it is not necessary. Surely it must be clear to everyone that the New Testament church which Jesus built is His bride and is properly represented by a pure woman such as is pictured in Revelation 12.

The sun is the brightest luminary of heaven. Then it would properly symbolize the brightest luminary of the spiritual heaven, which is the SUN of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. This woman is said to be clothed with the sun, and

surely the divine virtues and graces of the Son of God is the apparel and adornment of the Church of God in the earth.

She puts on the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 13:14. She puts on the **new man** which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. Col. 3:10. She is arrayed in fine linen, the righteousness of saints. Rev. 19:8. She is changed into the same image or likeness of Christ by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3:18.

Oh, what is the glorious and high situation of those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, which compose His church in the earth!

### **Revelations, Chapter 12**

A crown of twelve stars was upon this woman's head. She was exalted and crowned a queen. Her husband was the King of kings and Lord of lords (Christ) and she is exalted to the position of queen, reigning by His side through His power over all the powers of evil and Satan right here in the earth.

In the Scriptures "star" is used to symbolize ministers or spiritual rulers or luminaries. Let us look at Rev. 1:20, "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." Then in the 2nd chapter of Revelation, the messages to the seven churches begin and we note in verses 1, 8, 12, and 18, and in chapter 3, verses 1, 7, and 14 that the message to each individual church is addressed to the angel of that church. That would mean the minister or overseer there in that congregation. Perhaps the twelve stars in the woman's crown refer to the twelve apostles of Christ who were her first ministers and were co-workers with Christ Himself in establishing her in truth in the earth.

The moon was under her feet. The moon has no light of its own, but reflects the light of the sun. This is a proper symbolizing of the law and prophet age above which the church had just risen to receive the grace and truth which was brought by Christ Himself. The law with its various rituals and sacrifices and mode of worship typified Christ and the prophets prophesied of Him. In reality, all the light that the law and prophet age had was that which was reflected upon it by the Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, who was to come.

This woman (the church) was travailing in birth and pained to be delivered of a child. This properly symbolized the earnestness and zeal with which the early church labored and sacrificed all to win souls for Christ. And she brought forth a man child. This man child properly represents the multitude of souls who were brought to Christ, born again, in the early church. There were about three thousand in one day on the day of Pentecost, and soon afterward we read of five thousand, etc.

Some may question how a man child could represent such a multitude, but this is no mystery when we understand what the saving grace of God does for people and that those who are saved are of "One heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32), and that the whole church is the "Body of Christ" (Eph. 1:22, 23, Col. 1:18), and there is "ONE BODY" (Eph. 4:6, 1 Cor. 12:13, Rom. 12:5). Further in Eph. 2:13-15 we find that the entire multitude of saved people composed of both Jews and Gentiles who have been brought together in Christ are referred to as "ONE NEW MAN."

Now at this point when the woman was bringing forth this man child (multitudes of believers) the dragon appears and goes into action. He stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born. So now we will turn our attention to the dragon, the

second wonder mentioned in Rev. 12, and identify him in the Scriptures.

First, he is described as having seven heads and ten horns. Would we expect to see such a literal, physical monster as that? Certainly not! Then we know that he symbolizes something and the Scripture will help us in finding out what.

In the Bible horn stands as a symbol of power and authority. They stand for the same here in connection with the dragon. The head would more properly symbolize the ruler or system through which this power or authority was executed. The Scriptures make this perfectly plain concerning this dragon of Rev. 12 and the beast of Rev. 13 which had the same identical marks as the dragon—seven heads and ten horns.

Now, let us turn to Rev. 17:3, and we find here a scarlet-colored beast having seven heads and ten horns—the same identical marks as the dragon of Rev. 12 and the beast of Rev. 13. This time there is a woman riding on the beast, but she is a very different woman from the woman of Rev. 12 who was clothed with the sun, etc., and a pure woman. But this woman of Rev. 17 is declared to be a vile harlot. If the pure woman of Rev. 12 represented the true pure Church of God in the earth, which the Scripture clearly proves that she did, then a woman who was an impure, vile harlot, would properly represent a false church or religion. But this woman was riding on the beast, therefore we are certain that in some way this beast which is identical with the beast of Rev. 13 together with the dragon which gave the beast its power and seat and authority and which is distinguished by the same marks—seven heads and ten horns—must be, or is closely connected with a false, impure system of religion.

Rev. 17:7 says, "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns." Then, in verse 9, it says, "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." The city of Rome, which was at that time the governmental and political head of all the then-known world, is said to be situated on seven mountains. This is a geographical note of history concerning the city. This verse, then, helps to establish the location or place of the seat of authority of the dragon and beast.

But the seven heads also had a further meaning besides just the seven mountains on which the woman sat. Verse 10 says, "And there are seven kings." During the reign of the Roman Empire as a universal power there were seven different systems or forms of government through which her universal power was executed. They were: (1) The regal power, or kings. (2) Consuls or dictators. (3) Decemvirate, a government by ten men. (4) Military Tribunes or Consuls. (5) Triumvirate, a government by three men. (6) Imperial or emperors (under the Caesars). (7) The Exarchate or Patriciate (Exarch was the title of the ruler of this western kingdom under Charlemagne).

Then in verse 12 attention is turned to the horns instead of the heads, and it says, "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet." This refers to the ten minor kingdoms which grew out of the Roman Empire during its decline and fall. History records such to have been the case and names these kingdoms as follows: Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Sueves, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Heruli, Saxons, Huns, and Lombards.

At the time the Revelation was given to the Apostle John about 96 A. D., the Roman Empire was in its unified form as a world power, and the ten

horns had not yet come into existence. The Scripture says they are ten kings which have not yet received a kingdom. But at a later date the Roman Empire disintegrated and fell apart and was broken up into ten minor parts or kingdoms.

These are all merely identifying marks of the dragon and beast so that we might know where to locate them and not be deceived into thinking that this Scripture is teaching something which it is not, such as the devil being in heaven and there being war in heaven, etc.

Rome has been in her time the seat of two grossly false systems of religion. Hence, it was necessary to symbolize her in two forms—a dragon in one instance, and a beast in another—but the seven heads and ten horns of each definitely identifies both of them with Rome. The two false systems of religion of which Rome has been the seat are Paganism (heathenism, idolatry) and Papalism. The dragon symbolizes Pagan Rome and the beast symbolizes Papal Rome.

Rome in its Pagan form with its heathenish and idolatrous worship was prevailing over all the world when Christ came to earth to bring salvation. This false system of religion with its worship and sacrifices to its idol gods stood in direct opposition to the worship of the true God as taught and practiced by Christ, His apostles, and the early church in general. He stood before the woman (true church) ready to devour her child as soon as it was born. History proves this to have been a literal reality. The opposition became so violent between them that it was finally declared to be a capital crime punishable by death to profess Christianity. When anyone would profess a faith in Christ he was subject to death as soon as he was apprehended. History gives an account of more than sixty millions who were put to death for the name of Christ and their testimony of faith in Him as their Savior during the combined

reign of both of these false systems of religion of which Rome was the seat—Paganism and Papalism.

This is what is meant by the war in heaven—the ecclesiastical or religious heaven. It is said that Michael (Christ) and His angels (ministers) fought and the dragon (the false religious system of Paganism which was dominated, permeated, and engineered by the spirit of the devil himself) and his angels (the priests or ministers or prophets of this false system of religion) fought.

A clear example that this was in the ecclesiastical heaven (the violent opposition between true and false idolatrous religion) is found in Acts 19:23 through the remainder of the chapter. On this occasion Paul and some companions had gone into Asia preaching the gospel of Christ. They came to Ephesus, which was much given to the idolatrous worship of the goddess, Diana. As they taught them that there were no gods which were made with hands, etc., a violent opposition developed against them and they were mistreated and man-handled, etc., and there was much confusion throughout the entire city, and the people of that city cried with one voice for about the space of two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Other examples can be found in the New Testament and many, many such cases can be found in church history.

This is what is meant by the woman's child being caught up to God and to His throne. When the converts were born or brought forth, then they were put to death and their souls ascended to God. It also explains the statement in verse 11 that they loved not their lives unto death. They were willing to die for Jesus' sake. Paul, who was a martyr for the cause of Christ, said, "Neither count I my life dear unto me, that I might finish my course with joy." Acts 20:24.

The fact that this dragon is called Satan in the 9th verse merely shows the nature of his activity. Satan was more or less a general term applying to any individual or power that stood as an opposer. Jesus called Peter "Satan" on one occasion when he stood before Him and attempted to dissuade Him from going up to Jerusalem because he knew He would suffer there. (Matt. 16:23). Therefore this false system of religion was called "Satan" because it stood in opposition to the true religion. This does not at all disannul the fact that the term Satan is applied to the devil in many instances in the Scriptures, but sufficient evidence has already been produced to show this is not talking about the devil himself in this chapter, but the agent or system through which he operated.

Verse 9 says the dragon and his angels were cast out. As the truth of God with it's enlightening and regenerating power continued to spread through the earth through the efforts and work of Christ, His apostles and then the great company of the early church, the deceptions of the devil in this false system of idolatrous worship were more and more uncovered and exposed until the people were able to see the truth and the condition they were in, and as they did, they threw down the false worship and that idolatrous worship, through which the devil had been successful so long in deceiving their darkened souls and causing them to hold it in high esteem in their hearts, was exposed by the light of truth, and was then cast out of the high esteem and allegiance of the people and cast down to a low plane of ill-repute and was looked on with disdain and contempt by the people as they discovered its errors and turned unto the truth. Therefore it is said to have been cast out of heaven (the high and exalted place it had in the hearts of the people).

Bear in mind that it is talking about the dragon all the time, and we have already seen clearly by the Scriptures what the dragon symbolized.

**Ezekiel 28:13-18**

This Scripture speaks of the "anointed Cherub" that had been in the "Eden of God" and was "perfect in thy ways" from the time he was created until "iniquity was found in thee," etc., and the proponents of the doctrine that the devil was one time a bright angel in heaven apply this to the devil himself. But a little closer look at these verses will prove clearly that such could not be a proper interpretation.

The subject under discussion in these verses is introduced in verse 12. "Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, etc."

Here is a reference to the king of Tyrus. The king of Tyrus was, without question, a man and not a spirit such as the devil is. He was a very considerable and accomplished man above other men or kings. The courts of Tyre, with its kings, had for a long time been famous. There is nothing here to even indicate this might or even could mean Satan.

It is said in verse 13, "Thou hast been in the Eden of God." Eden stands as a symbol of the paradise of God where man had everything that was good and was master of it all and had dominion over all. But that position was given to man by God. So was the position, good situation and dominion of the king of Tyrus given him by God because God's Word says that He gives the kingdoms of men to whomsoever He will. Daniel 4:17.

Verse 14 says, "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth," etc. After God had deposed man from his dominion in the garden of Eden, He placed a cherubim at the gate to guard it lest man should return and eat of the tree of life and live forever, etc. Gen. 3:22-24. This cherub stands as a symbol

of guardianship or protector of sacred and precious things. God put him there for that purpose. This should be the real duty of anointed kings and when they observe this rule strictly God blesses and owns them. The advancement and position of kings and rulers is from God. He said, "I have set thee so." Verse 14.

Verse 15 says, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." The day of his creation would be the day he was created or made or set up or anointed as king and ascended the throne. Note it is not just the man as such but the man as "king of Tyrus" that is under consideration here. Hence, his creation as referred to would not be when he was created as a man but when he was created or anointed or set up as "king of Tyrus."

At the time God set him over this kingdom he prospered in all his ways and all went well with him until iniquity was found in him. That is, he became lifted up in his heart with pride and this sin that was the downfall of our fore-parents in Eden (pride) proved to be his overthrow.

This is made plain in verse 17 which says, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness, . . ." His heart was lifted up against God because of pride on account of his very great position, so God decreed his overthrow just as He did in the case of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and others. His wisdom was corrupted by reason of his brightness. That is, he was such a bright luminary among men and in the political or governmental world that he became really a fool in glorying and thus his wisdom that brought him to this position was corrupted.

As for the devil or Satan having ever been a good or upright person, I say he surely was not. In 1 John 3:8 the apostle declares without reservation

that "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." And in John 8:44 Jesus said, "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."

Both of these Scriptures refer to what the devil was in the beginning. One said he sinned from the beginning and the other said he was a murderer from the beginning. If one wants to go on back of the beginning where the sacred record begins and speculate on what might have been there before the beginning I do not consider it safe nor profitable to do so.

The divinely inspired sacred record going all the way back to the beginning says he was a sinner and a murderer then and abode not in the truth. Some may object at this point that he was in the truth at one time but did not abide in the truth. But the other statements of this verse in connection with this statement rather carries out the thought that he never did abide in the truth—was never in the truth at all.

**Revelation 20:1-3**

Now let us look at Rev. 20:1-3. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Here we have the binding of the dragon for a thousand years, etc. Note: it says he laid hold on the dragon. It is the dragon under consideration here. This dragon is identical with the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns of Rev. 12. The fact

that it said "the dragon" proves it is referring to something with which we have already been made acquainted. Otherwise, it would have said "a dragon" and have given a description of him to identify him. Therefore we conclude there is only one dragon considered throughout the book of Revelation and "the dragon" of Rev. 20 is the same as the dragon of Rev. 12 which has already been discussed and identified at considerable length.

Rev. 20:1-3 is identical with the 12th chapter of Revelation and reviews the same period and conditions under different symbols. The binding of the dragon and casting him down into the pit is identical with his being cast out of heaven or his high, exalted position in the hearts and minds of the people of the religious world. Jesus spoke of this same thing when He said in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

The angel which came down from heaven properly represents the whole ministry of the early church who worked in such close contact with Christ through the Spirit and in such unison with each other that they properly stand together as one unified body that could be represented by one angel. The chain in his hand is the unbreakable chain of truth which exposes every false thing.

The works of the devil and all his false doctrines and religions can only live in darkness because he is the ruler of the darkness of this world. Truth is light. Light dispels darkness. When darkness is dispelled and the evil works of darkness and the devil are exposed they have no power to operate any more, hence, it is said this false system of religion (the dragon) was bound.

The dragon (paganism, heathenism, idolatrous worship) was overthrown and bound through the earnest, faithful work of the early church in getting

the soul-enlightening truth to the world. Truth in the hands of Michael and His angels (Christ and His ministers) prevailed. The glorious triumphs of the early church continued until about A. D. 270 when the overthrow of the dragon power in a general sense seemed to be complete. However, about this time there began a decline in spirituality among the children of God which opened the way for a great apostasy and the falling away which finally led to the establishment of the Papal system about A.D. 530.

When the devil saw his first agent of deception (the dragon) was defeated and cast down, he just quickly changed his clothes, so to speak, and took on a Christian garb which he wore in the Papal system and continued right on with his work of deception and spiritual destruction but by means of a different agent. Note, it was the dragon (the system) and not the devil himself which was bound, cast out, etc., for the devil continued his work right on in the beast of Rev. 13 and he is the dominating spirit of Papalism as well as Paganism. We should understand that, since Christ has seen fit in the Scriptures to personally identify Himself with His system of religion and the workings of His church in the earth (the church in the Scriptures is called the Body of Christ which would signify a body or group of people which was actuated and motivated and empowered to function by the Spirit of Christ within them), then it would only be natural and proper for the devil to be personally identified with his system and work in the earth also. Hence, the dragon was CALLED the devil and Satan.

The Papacy was given power to continue 42 months.—Rev. 13:5. Counting 30 days to the month this would be 1260 days. Prophetic time was reckoned on the basis of a day for a year which would give us 1260 years that the Papacy was to continue.

Reckoning from the time set by most of the church fathers and historians for the beginning of the spiritual decline (A.D. 270) and continuing on ahead to the time of the Martin Luther Reformation when the power of the papacy was broken (A.D. 1530) we have exactly 1260 years. We could not say that the papal system was destroyed or eliminated at the time of the Martin Luther Reformation because it has continued even until now on a big scale but its power as a supreme religious power, as it had been before, was broken and the prophetic narrative moves into another step or phase of false religion—Protestantism—which was to continue 350 years until the time of the Evening Light Reformation when the true Church of God as the visible functioning body of Christ was again restored to the earth.

The thousand year time period used in this part of the prophecy which measured the duration of the time the dragon was to be bound as well as the time the disembodied spirits of the martyrs were reigning with Christ in Paradise could not be literally applied as an exact period of a thousand years' duration. I did apply it this way in the original article printed in the February, 1970, issue of "Faith and Victory," but I see now that to apply it literally and all other parts of the text as symbols, which they clearly are, would violate the fixed laws of interpreting symbols and miss the proper meaning. Neither can we apply the rule before used as a day for a year, for then we would have 360,000 years which would throw the events described here clear out of harmony with all other related events described in the prophetic narrative. So, in order to preserve the consistency of the use and interpretation of symbols, we conclude that this thousand years is symbolic of a long, indefinite period of time. This thousand year period, from the events described at its beginning and its ending,

seems to span all the intervening time breaks connected with the different events in the progress of the prophetic history of the Revelation from the close of the early morning church age (about 270 A.D.) until the Evening Light Reformation age (about 1880 A.D.) when the true Church of God was restored as the visible, functioning body of Christ in her pristine glory; and the subsequent loosing of the dragon in the atheistic spirit and power of communism which is so rapidly covering the earth today and deceiving one nation after another in rapid succession shortly following this reformation. The dragon had been the mortal enemy of the true Church of God as she shined forth in all of her glory in the beginning of the Christian era. Now he comes forth to engage her in mortal combat again when she comes forth in this evening time to shine again in all of her glory and beauty as in the morning time after being hid from view for more than 1600 years by the two major systems of apostasy—Papalism and Protestantism.

If we understand that there have been three major systems of false religion in the earth, Paganism, Papalism, and Protestantism, in that order, and operating one at a time and the spirit of the devil predominant in all of them changing from one to another as the power of each was broken by the power of God and His truth and that now in the last days they are all three operating in the world at the same time, all of these different things will not be hard to understand clearly.

Now for a brief reference to verse 4 of Rev. 20—"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Note, it was not people upon this earth at all that is referred to here but the souls of them that had been beheaded (the martyrs of Jesus) in paradise. This was the com-

pany that "loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12:11. This is the same thing referred to in Rev. 12:5 which says, "And her child was caught up to God and to His throne."

This was that glorious company of converts who were not accounted worthy to live on the earth because of their faith in Christ; but were persecuted unto death. But as they were put to death down here their souls ascended up to God. The victorious reign of the church, God's true people, down here was cut off because they were not permitted to live here during that time so the scene shifts from earth to paradise where they did live on and reigned with Christ during the long reign of Papal darkness (known as the Dark Ages) when the Papacy reigned supreme and the 350 years of the Protestantism era (known as the dark and cloudy day) during which time the dragon was bound.

The thousand years (long, indefinite period of time) does not measure the duration of their reign at all. It did not end at that time. They are still living and reigning with Christ in Paradise and will continue to live and reign with Him eternally in heaven. But with the restoration of the true Church of God in her full power and glory and the preaching of the Word of God in all of its fullness by Holy Spirit-filled ministers which, when believed and obeyed, brings a full, free and uttermost salvation from sin, salvation work on a general scale began again in the earth and the people of God, His church, was again restored to that victorious, triumphant life upon the earth; so the scene shifts back down here where the work of salvation is being carried on and just leaves this grand company to continue their reign with Christ in Paradise.

**2 Peter 2:4**

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment;"

This particular text may be a little obscure and its true interpretation a little difficult to establish clearly in the light of all the other passages considered on this subject, even to myself. However, this one thing I know: any given text of Scripture must be interpreted according to the general tenor of the over-all teachings of the Scriptures on that subject. If any interpretation of a Scripture crosses or contradicts other plain texts on that subject, one can rest assured that something is wrong with his interpretation on that Scripture. To conclude that this one Scripture teaches that celestial angels sinned and were cast down to hell, etc. would be to contradict the general tenor of Scripture as evidenced by the discussion of this number of other passages on this subject. Therefore, whether we may clearly understand this particular passage or not and may not be able to fully and clearly explain just what it does mean for sure, we know that it does not mean that.

But I will insert here an excerpt from the writings of C. E. Orr which seems to me to be a reasonable and true interpretation of 2 Peter 2:4, 5, and Jude 6, 7, both of which texts deal with this same thought.

Quote: "2 Peter 2:4, 5, and Jude 6, 7. This has reference to Adam and Eve. They were cast out of Eden, their first estate. . . . Notice that in the last two texts the writers are speaking of great wickedness or sin. Why should Peter start with sin in the eternal heaven and then go next to the wickedness in the days of Noah? Why should he overlook the sin in Eden which plunged the world into sin? We understand that Peter and Jude are talking about

wickedness on the earth, and therefore start with the sin in the garden and not sin among holy angels in heaven. The Bible is not a record of what is done in heaven, but what is done in earth. It is said in John 8:44 that the devil was a murderer from the beginning. In John 1:1 we are told that God was in the beginning. The word "beginning" is used here of both God and the devil, and is so used because of our finite minds being unable to grasp the fullness of eternity, but this beginning reaches back into eternity beyond beginning.

"Sin is a principle. Righteousness is a principle. We hold that no holy being could create or generate a sin principle any more than an unholy being could create a righteous principle. For holy angels to sin, a sin principle must have existed and they received it in their nature by faith or in some manner. The devil and angels did not create sin, for God created all that has been created. God did not create sin. He did not create goodness. Goodness is an uncreated and eternal principle. We hold that sin is an uncreated and eternal principle. If it be a created principle, then God created it, for He alone is Creator. A holy being could not create sin and retain his holiness; therefore God did not create sin. Devils could not create it; therefore sin is uncreated. God saw that His creation was good, but we do not understand that sin was His creation.

"Jesus taught His disciples to say when praying, 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Now, if angels in heaven sinned, then God's will was not done in heaven and Christ's words would not mean much to us. If holy angels in heaven sinned one time, how can we know that they have not sinned many times? Why could they not sin some future time, and if they can sin, why could

not we after we got to heaven? To our mind the only logical conclusion is that sin never entered heaven and never will. No holy being in heaven ever sinned or ever will. Why would God redeem sinning man at such a great cost, and not redeem sinning angels?"

- O. B. Wilson

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