

Satan

Satan's Beginning

Ezekiel gave us a prophecy concerning the *prince* of Tyre that transitioned to a prophecy concerning the *king* of Tyre. Satan is allegorically referred to as the king of Tyre here since he was the influencing power behind the prince of Tyre at that time. This prophecy reveals much about Satan and his origin.

Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD:

"You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever." (28:11–19)

In the Essentials teaching, [*Higher Orders of Celestial Beings*](#), I explained that Satan is a cherub, a celestial creature, and he may (or may have) look like an ox. He may have a human likeness and have human hands, but he most likely has wings since all three types of cherub in the Bible do. *He is not an angel*. He only disguises himself as angel for deception because angels are perceived as a force for good (2 Corinthians 11:14). Satan was a complete work of perfection ("the signet of perfection") when God created him. He was the wisest and most beautiful creature of all His creation. Apart from the wisdom of God, man is no match for him.

God prepared a type of priestly garment for Satan to wear. Consider how similar the description of his covering is to that of the making of the breastplate of the Hebrew high priest:

He made the breast piece, in skilled work, in the style of the ephod, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. It was square. They made the breast piece doubled, a span its length and a span its breadth when doubled. And they set in it four rows of stones. *A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle was the first row; and the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper.* They were enclosed in settings of gold filigree. There were twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel. They were like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. (Exodus 39:8–14)

The description of Satan's garment includes nine of the twelve stones that were on the breastplate of Israel's high priest. Nine is symbolic for judgement whereas twelve is symbolic for divine government. It seems God was sending a message.

Satan was an anointed guardian cherub on the "holy mountain of God." We are told that he walked in the midsts of the "stones of fire." Throughout the Bible, the phrase "my holy mountain" refers to Zion, the city of David on the southwestern side of Jerusalem. Psalm 48 declares most beautifully:

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress. (Psalm 48:1b–3)

The letter to the Hebrews reveals that believers receiving a kingdom "have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (12:22a). There is an earthly Mount Zion after the pattern of a heavenly Mount Zion.

The "stones of fire" are the coals of fire before the throne of God (Revelation 8:5) that were also revealed in the heavenly pattern of the tabernacle (Leviticus 6:13, 16:12).

The phrase "holy mountain of God" is most likely symbolic for the throne of God in heaven which resides within the temple of God in heaven (Psalm 11:4, Isaiah 6:1, Revelation 7:15; 16:17–18).

All this reveals that Satan was originally anointed with a priestly type of role before the throne of God in heaven and possibly also on earth since we are told that he was in Eden. This correlates with the fact that he is a cherub and they are only seen covering the *Shechinah* Glory or carrying the throne of God in the Bible.

Satan was originally without sin or “blameless” in all his ways for a period of time. What caused sin to be found in him? We are told that he was filled with violence and profaned his sanctuaries through the unrighteousness of his abundant trade (or traffic). His magnificence caused him to become prideful and corrupt his superior wisdom in pursuit of his own glory. Revelation 12:4 tells us that one-third of the angels went with Satan when God banished him from His mountain so it was rebellion that he was trafficking in his sanctuaries. He desecrated the sanctuaries meant for the worship of God by using them as a marketplace to sell his plan of sedition to the angels. His prideful insurrection filled him with violence. This is where sin began (1 John 3:8). God cast him out of His heavenly sanctuary. I like the way Jesus described it: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18).

A prophetic insight from Isaiah concerning Satan’s fall revealed his motivation:

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘*I will* ascend to heaven; above the stars of God; *I will* set my throne on high; *I will* sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; *I will* ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I will* make myself like the Most High.’ (14:12–14; emphasis mine)

“O Day Star, son of Dawn” is another name for Satan. The Hebrew word is *heylel* which means “shining one” or “morning star.” This name could reflect the brightness that came from his covering of precious stones.

Satan’s five “I wills” reveal that he was consumed with selfish pride. It is safe to say that *pride* was the first sin. Throughout the Bible, God reveals His hatred of pride and love of humility. Consider the dichotomy of the following two Proverbs:

The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate. (Proverbs 8:13)

The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life. (Proverbs 22:4)

Satan wants to be God and the first thing he did to deceive humanity was to proclaim the following lie:

But the serpent [Satan] said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, *and you will be like God*, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:4; emphasis mine)

Satan tempted Eve with the very same deception that he fell to: “you will be like God”. He is now engulfed in an all-out effort to thwart the dominion of Jesus Christ so that he can be God—a truly impossible task.

Satan’s Character and Motivation

Satan is a Hebrew word which means “adversary.” In the New Testament, Satan is also referred to as “the devil” which is the English translation of the Greek word *diablos* which means “calumniator, false accuser, or slanderer.” The following verse confirms these two primary names:

And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, *who is called the devil and Satan*, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Revelation 12:9; emphasis mine)

Satan’s two main names reveal his motivation. He is the adversary of God’s people who accuses them before Him day and night (Revelation 12:10).

Jesus and the apostles Paul and John also referred to Satan as “the evil one” (e.g., John 17:15, 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 1 John 3:12) which is the English translation of the Greek *poneros* which means to be of a bad, evil, or wicked nature (in an ethical sense). Whereas the names Satan and the devil describe his evil intentions and actions, “the evil one” confirms that *he is the very source of what God defines as bad, evil, or wicked*. This distinction is deeper than it seems, because it gets down to the root of *sin* infecting this world. Consider what John wrote:

We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God [Jesus Christ] protects him, and *the evil one* does not touch him.

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:18–19; emphasis mine)

Satan is the source of sin which corrupted the core, spiritual nature of man at the fall. Man does evil things because of his corrupted nature. All those who are not born of God (born-again believers in Jesus Christ) are under the power of Satan—the source and driving force behind their spiritual nature. Concerning them, Paul explained:

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

The “god of this world” is referring to Satan. As the source of evil, he is the god of this world because of the sway he holds over man through the power of sin.

When Jesus Christ came on the scene in the flesh, He was explicit about the character of Satan in the following two statements:

He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44b)

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. (John 10:10a)

Jesus labeled Satan “the father of lies” and noted that being a liar is his core character trait. Deception is his core competency.

Satan is filled with hatred, for a murderer is engulfed in hatred (1 John 3:15). There is no truth in him. He may disguise himself with “good” works, but it is only a deception masking his intention to destroy the souls of men. The apostle Peter warned: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

The Power of Satan

The Bible reveals that Satan has certain powers, notably the following:

- Fire — He can send fire down from heaven. (Job 1:16, Revelation 13:13)
- Wind — He can send great winds, perhaps what we now call tornados. (Job 1:18–19)

- Bodily affliction — He struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (2:7)
- Other signs and wonders (miracles) not specifically mentioned. (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:13)

However, it is important to note that *all* of these Scriptures refer to periods of time when God places little or no restraint on Satan—during a short period of Job’s life and the Tribulation. The only supernatural influence that the Bible ascribes to Satan outside of these periods is His empowering people to work counterfeit miracles. They are real miracles, but counterfeit in the sense that they do not come from God. We read of this in the “secret arts” of Pharaoh’s magicians (Exodus 7:11–12, 22) and Jesus’s reference to people with *another* Jesus doing “mighty works” but actually being “workers of lawlessness” (Matthew 7:15–23).

The Hedge Principle

If he could, Satan would quickly destroy God’s people with supernatural force, however, righteous believers are “hedged” by God. This “hedge principle” is brought out in the book of Job.

The book of Job starts out by confirming that Job was a righteous man:

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. (1:1)

We are also told that Job was “the greatest of all the people of the east” (3b). The impact of Job’s righteousness was notable. His abundant life was glorifying God.

Then, we are given a glimpse of Satan interacting with the LORD:

Now there was a day when the sons of God [holy angels] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? *Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side?* You have blessed the work of his

hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (1:6–12; emphasis mine)

Satan was initially *not* pursuing an attack on Job or anything that he had. His intelligence network is superb and he knew Job was righteous and feared God. He was not even trying because he knew there was nothing he could do. His statement to God confirmed this: “Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side?”

The book of Job teaches us that God does allow the righteous to suffer, but only for a greater good. God will not remove the hedge around a righteous believer unless there is ultimately a greater reason for Him doing so. However, such “reasons” are often not readily apparent. Thinking deeper, one can begin to glimpse the reality that Satan is ultimately a pawn in God’s greater plan of revelation. In the context of our eternal reality, this makes far more sense.

The Restraint Principle

Through the Holy Spirit, God also has a broader restraint on Satan in the present age. Consider what Paul explained in his second letter to the Thessalonian church:

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, ... For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? *And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will so until he is out of the way.* And then the lawlessness one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2:1a, 3b - 12; emphasis mine)

Before the second coming of Jesus Christ, the antichrist, the “man of lawlessness,” is going to proclaim that he is God. His appearing is presently being held back or restrained by Jesus Christ abiding in His church. Paul explained that “he who now restrains it will so until he is out of the way.” Who alone has the power to restrain Satan and Who alone is going to be taken away? Jesus Christ. All of us *in Him* still living on the earth will be taken away (raptured) with Him.

In this present church age, Jesus Christ is restraining the full power of Satan so that people have an opportunity to repent and come to Him. Peter explained:

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise [to return], as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

The early chapters of the book of Job showed us what Satan is capable of when given the opportunity by God. Because of the restraint principle, Satan has to implement his deception with strategic patience. I find him to be a *systems* engineer, slowly spreading his networks of deceit that appeal to the carnal, sinful nature of fallen man. I will examine these systems in a separate Essentials teaching.

Satan's Timeline

Finally, I will end this teaching with the following timeline which is helpful for understanding the past, present, and future course of Satan:

- Satan is created with the other celestial beings.
- Satan rebels taking one-third of the angels with him.
- Satan quickly moves to deceive Eve, triggering the fall of man to sin. God then announced His gospel, declaring to the serpent (Satan): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he [Jesus Christ] shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).
- Satan still has access to heaven which he uses to make accusations against the saints (Revelation 12:10).

- Satan deceives the nations and assaults humanity through the power of sin for 6,000+ years. He focuses his efforts on hindering gentile believers, Israel, and then the church—God’s vessels for revealing Himself to man.
- Satan and his angels will be defeated by Michael and his angels during the middle of the Tribulation and they will be thrown down to earth. At this point, Satan will no longer have access to heaven.
- Satan (the dragon) will empower the antichrist (the beast) and the false prophet to cause the world to worship the dragon, the beast, and the image of the beast. (Revelation 13)
- At the end of the tribulation, Satan (the dragon) will gather the armies of the world at Armageddon to battle the returning Jesus Christ and his army of saints. Jesus will make quick work of the antichrist (the beast) and his army. (Revelation 16:12–16; 19:19–21; 2 Thessalonians 2:8)
- After the tribulation, Satan will be bound in *the abyss*—the area of Hades (or Sheol) where demons are imprisoned—for 1,000 years during the reign of Jesus Christ.
- After the millennial reign of Christ, Satan will be released from the abyss. He “will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth” and gather them for an attack against Jerusalem. God will destroy their army with fire from heaven and throw Satan in the lake of fire and sulfur where he “will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:7–10)

Many more things could be written about Satan, but these are the essentials. More will be covered in related Essentials and other True Vine Life teachings.