

Why Is There A Devil?

Shockingly, many churches don't believe there is a devil, or evil spirits of any kind. The only thing that can be said to them is "do you not read the Bible... or just not believe it?" Because if you believe the Bible, you believe there is a devil. It's that simple. Claiming to believe the Bible and not believing there is a real devil is like reading about WWII and then believing the Nazis are just a metaphor for the evil in all of us.

But why did God create the devil – or did God create the devil? And either way, why has God permitted him free access to wreak havoc and deceive people for 6,000 years now – or has it been free access? Where did he come from, and where is he going?

We have all been taught to believe in a pitchfork-toting, horned-and-tailed, fiery-red devil. A malevolent spirit hell-bent (pardon the pun) on murder and mayhem. One who is at war with God over men's souls, and by all appearances is winning that battle – after all, far more souls are in the devil's churches than in God's church!

But is that what he is really like? What exactly is he, and how did he come to exist? **Is God unable to stop his rampages? Or does He just not want to stop him?** Every church has their own special opinion about these questions... and not one of them is even close to what the Bible plainly says. See for yourself, in...

LESSON 24: WHY IS THERE A DEVIL?

To properly understand the devil, we have to properly understand angels. First, there is not a single female angel in the entire Bible – and no reason to believe they exist at all. Every single time an angel or angels are mentioned, it is in a masculine sense.

What do angels appear like? **Mark 16:3-6**. Who was this "young man"? **Matthew 28:2-6**. [Especially compare **verse 5** with **Mark 16:6**]. What are angels made of? **Hebrews 1:7**. What is their purpose? **Verse 14**. What is our relationship to the angels? **Revelation 22:8-9**. Did God ever offer angels a place in His family, like He has offered us? **Hebrews 1:5, 13**. Will our future position be above angels? **1 Corinthians 6:3**.

The word "angel" comes from the Greek and Hebrew words meaning "a messenger". They are spirit beings who were created by God to assist in our salvation. They were never intended to be the offspring of God – that was reserved for us. They were made to be "ministering spirits", to the "heirs of salvation", and as you saw in **Revelation 22:9**, the righteous angels acknowledge that.

You might say that Earth is like a colonial mansion, and angels are the butlers for the Lord of the manor; and their primary function is to help raise, protect, and assist the "heirs of salvation". Compare that idea to **Galatians 4:1-3**.

Today, we are made "a little lower than the angels" (**Hebrews 2:6-8**). And even though we are heirs of God's throne, we are today less powerful than they, kept under "tutors and governors" until we are qualified to receive our inheritance. So even though all things are to be put "under our feet", or under our control, today "we do not yet see all things put under" our feet.

WHAT ARE ANGELS?

Angels are made of spirit, just like God is. However, you will remember from Lesson 14 that spirit is simply a different type of material than flesh; a better material, but still a real, tangible material. How did Jesus describe spirit? **John 3:8**. Can angels be invisible? **2 Kings 6:15-17**. [The horses and chariots of fire can only have been invisible angelic armies.] Why can't men see angels? **Numbers 22:22, 31**.

Think of it like x-rays. Regular light is completely blocked even by most clothes, much less flesh or walls. But x-rays can see through clothes and flesh because the wave is smaller than regular light, so it can sneak "between the cracks" of most matter. Only denser substances like bone and metals slow and stop them, because those materials are more closely packed together and the spaces between the molecules are much smaller, so fewer x-rays can slip through.

Similarly, spirit is made of a much finer particle than regular matter; perhaps it is what we call photons, muons or quarks, but more than likely spirit is smaller than all of those and is still unknown to science. It's probable (speculation alert!) that spirit is the ultimate building block of all matter, what scientists jokingly call "the God particle"; after all, **Acts 17:28** does say, "*in Him we live and move and have our being*".

Regardless, it is certain that spirit is a finer particle than matter, because God calls it "light". Thus spirit is able to pass through walls, move here and there like the wind without being seen, because it is moving through a substance much "coarser" than itself. And so to see spirits, God must "open your eyes" to see them; something He very seldom does.

GOD'S ANGEL GOVERNMENT

We are not told a lot in the Bible about how angels interact or what exactly they do; but what we are told allows us to understand a great deal, and most of that is found in Daniel and Revelation. For example, in **Daniel 8:15-19** we see Gabriel performing the office of a messenger. At the command of some unnamed "man's voice", Gabriel made Daniel understand the vision. The man's voice was obviously someone who outranked Gabriel, most likely Jesus.

Again in **Daniel 9:21-23** he is doing the same thing. Later, in **Daniel 10**, an angel comes to reveal understanding to him; this time no name is given, but it is almost certainly the same angel, Gabriel, who revealed all the other things to him. But now look at his physical description in **Daniel 10:5-6**. This appears to be an angel in form as a glorified human. In **verses 10-12**, you see he does the same job as Gabriel did in **chapters 8 and 9**.

But now look at the interaction between angels in **verses 13-14 and 20-21**. There is a lot in those verses, but they need to be read in several translations, particularly YLT, BBE, and the KJV margin notes on these verses.

1. First, we see another name for angels is "prince" since Michael is called "one of the chief princes".
2. The same verse also shows us these chief angels, like Michael, each have their own territory they manage or govern.
3. Next, notice that Gabriel and Michael are fighting against the prince of Persia. This means the prince (angel) of Persia was on the other side of the rebellion from Gabriel and Michael – which must be Satan's side. Other translations call this being "the ruler of the kingdom of Persia".
4. Fourth, Gabriel was unable to defeat the prince of Persia, but Michael seemed able to at least hold his ground. Thus the prince of Persia must be a very strong angel, stronger than Gabriel and apparently roughly equal with Michael. It is very probable, though not certain, this was Satan himself.

This much is obvious from reading it. Now some interesting things...

5. Gabriel says in **verse 13** the prince of the kingdom of Persia fought him; and then, after Michael came, he stayed there “with the *kings* of Persia”. So there was an angelic head of Persia, AND lesser “kings of Persia” who *also* fought against Gabriel. These can only be angels of lesser power, lieutenants to the angel of Persia who ruled under him.
6. In the King James margin note on **verse 13**, it says “or, the first of the chief princes”. YLT, the most reliable literal translation, renders this verse “lo, Michael, *first* of the chief heads”. This gives us two facts: there is a group of angels that are “chief princes”, or a top echelon of angels; and Michael is the chief of that group. More on that later.
7. We are given an idea of how these governments are managed by angels in **Daniel 11:1**, where Gabriel says of king Darius of Media, (BBE) “*I was on his side to make his position safe and make him strong*”. So angels are directly involved in guiding heads of state and seeing to it that certain things happen according to God’s plan.
8. **Daniel 12:1** tells us that Michael’s particular people whom he governs is “the children of your people” – Daniel’s people – the Israelites. Not just the Jews, but all the children of Israel, including the lost ten tribes.
9. In this chapter, four angelic territories are mentioned; Persia, Media, Greece, and Israel. At that time in history (500 BC or so), the only other significant civilizations in the world were China, India and Egypt. (Rome wouldn’t be a significant world power for several centuries.) It’s worth noticing this totals seven kingdoms.

So those are some initial insights into how angels rule nations behind the scenes. Much more to come.

SEVEN ANGELS

Read **Revelation 4:5**. Here the Bible explains one of its most basic symbols, “seven lamps of fire” represent “the seven spirits of God”. Now we know the Father has only ONE holy spirit; not seven. Jesus likewise has ONE holy spirit, not seven (**Ephesians 4:4-6**). So what are these seven spirits of God? Back up and read **Revelation 1:12-20**.

Notice how the Bible explains the symbol of the seven stars for itself in **verse 20** – the seven stars are seven angels. In the next few chapters, God addresses His comments to the angel of each church – which would only be appropriate if the angel was responsible for the state of affairs in that church.

Just as we saw before, angels are in authority over groups of people in various churches and towns. Only here the number of these angels is given: seven. Now angels are spirits, so it’s logical to conclude the seven spirits of God are seven angels who work closely with God. But we can be certain because **Hebrews 1:7** plainly tells us His angels are spirits; and that they are “*a flame of fire*”! And a “flame of fire” is exactly what you find on top of a candle – a flame or lamp of fire!

Remember, they didn’t have light bulbs then. The word “lamp” had only one meaning: a FLAME on a candlestick! And a flame in Bible symbolism is an ANGEL. And in front of the throne of God are SEVEN such angels! Earlier you heard several of these angels called “the chief princes”; here the Bible gives us enough information to conclude that there are SEVEN such “chief princes”! And they are mentioned in the Bible all the time, once you know how to look for them!

Start in **Zechariah 3:9**. What is this “one stone with seven eyes”? What does a stone represent in the Bible? **1 Peter 2:4-8, Ephesians 2:20, Daniel 2:34**. So if that stone is Jesus, what are the eyes? Revelation explains this symbol in **Revelation 5:6**. There you see the Lamb – Jesus – has seven horns, and seven eyes. And those seven eyes are the seven spirits of God! Those same seven angels!

And what do God's eyes symbolically look like? **Revelation 1:14**. Notice how that ties it all back together! **Angels are spirits, the seven spirits are called the eyes of God, God's eyes are a flaming fire, and flaming fire represents angels!** That's how you can be certain you have the truth, because IT ALL FITS!

You should remember from Lesson 10 that a "horn" represents a kingdom. So these seven "chief princes", or "top angels" each govern one of seven kingdoms or regions, as you learned in Daniel. These angels also make an appearance in **Ezekiel 1:13**, where their appearance is described in more detail. From that, you can see why God chose lamps to represent angels; because when Ezekiel saw them, they LOOKED like lamps – the flaming part on top of a candlestick.

So angels are pictured as "the eyes of God". What do these "eyes" do? **Psalms 34:15**. Is there any place they can't go? **Proverbs 15:3**. Between them, do they cover the entire world? **Zechariah 4:10**. And what are these eyes looking for? **2 Chronicles 16:9**. Even though God is in heaven, does He work on Earth through these eyes? **Psalms 11:4**.

Comparing those verses, as well as the already quoted **Revelation 5:6**, you see the "eyes of the Lord" which "are upon the righteous" and "are in every place, beholding the evil and the good", are without doubt the seven eyes of God spoken of elsewhere, the seven spirits or seven chief angels of God.

But they have other names too; read **Daniel 4:13-17**. Notice in **verse 13** the term is singular; "A watcher and AN holy one". This one "watcher" came down and made a pronouncement of judgment on Nebuchadnezzar. Then in **verse 17** he indicated he wasn't acting alone, for he said "this matter is by the decree of the WATCHERS... by the word of the holy ONES..." to show that "...the Most High rules in the kingdom of men".

Now for an angel already symbolized as an "eye", it is no stretch to call him a "watcher"... for what does an eye do if not... watch? Plus, this part of the Bible was written in Aramaic, not Hebrew, so using a different expression is natural enough since it was a different language. So one watcher – one angel, probably the one in charge of Babylon – came down with a pronouncement, and said this was by the decree of ALL SEVEN angels, to show that God ruled the kingdoms of men – *through His chief angels!*

HOW EXACTLY DOES THAT WORK?

Saying "God governs through angels" doesn't really answer the question of HOW that works. Fortunately, we have several case examples where God describes how and why He does this; first, read **Exodus 23:20-23**. So God gave this unnamed angel charge over the Israelites. We see examples of a few of this angel's actual tasks in **verses 27-30**.

Notice "AN angel" – only one – is given this task. Although no name is given here, we can identify this angel from the words of **Daniel 12:1**, where we see Michael is charged with leading the Israelite people.

But why does God govern through angels? God explains in **Exodus 33:2-3**. God could command an angel not to utterly destroy the stubborn Israelites, and the angel would obey; but God dared not go with them personally, for if He personally witnessed their sins He would "consume them in the way".

When you work personally for God, and receive personal instruction from God, and then disobey that direct command of God, it is a very serious sin. But when God commands an angel, and the angel commands you, and you disobey the *indirect* command of God, it is still a great sin – but nowhere near as unforgivable as before. Remember from Lesson 20, the more clearly you know God's commands when you disobey, the more stern your punishment must be.

Thus, rather than dealing with Israel directly, He dealt with them through an angel. Another great example is the story of Sodom and Gomorrah; read **Genesis 18:20-21**. Notice that God had only *heard* about Sodom; He had not *personally* inspected it! But now He was going to see FOR HIMSELF if it was like He had been told – "and if not, I will know", He said.

Who had carried this “cry” to God of the terrible sins of Sodom? Remember what the angels – the seven eyes of God – do? **Proverbs 15:3**. These angels witnessed the sins of Sodom, and told God about them. Why didn’t God just send out an order from heaven to kill Sodom?

How does God judge people? **Isaiah 11:3**. **God doesn’t pass judgment on people based on hearsay!** Not even hearsay from an angel! Before He kills someone for their sins, **He must see for Himself** “*whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it*”. Normally, God doesn’t judge people in this life, for “*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*” (**Hebrews 9:27**). But Sodom was a special case – why? **Jude 1:7**.

Sodom and Gomorrah are an example of what happens when God takes over from the angel that He sends with nations to guide them, and personally witnesses their sins and deals with them appropriately. Will that happen to all nations at the return of Christ? **Micah 1:1-4**. In **verse 2**, you see that in that day, God will “*be witness against you*” – a witness against the nations – *because today He is not a personal witness*. Why? **Habakkuk 1:13**.

Using angels to govern the Earth allows God an excuse not to utterly destroy mankind for their sins. If God were managing it personally, He would have to execute judgment as He did on Sodom – with the same result. Carnal man cannot withstand the judgment of God, so God dare not be around them, for He cannot be present without judging righteous judgment.

There is one exception I must point out; we are exempt from this “hands-off” policy God has towards most of man-kind. We are being judged today (**1 Peter 4:17**). God is personally watching our actions today. He doesn’t deal with us only through angels, He deals with us 1-on-1 because we have voluntarily chosen to accept His spirit and obey His judgments now.

Most of the world rejects God like the Israelites did, so like He said in **Exodus 33:3**, He manages men through echelon of angels... *lest He consume them in the way*.

MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

So God has seven top angels; but are they all equal in strength, power, and authority? As you already read, a literal translation of **Daniel 10:13** (YLT) calls Michael “*FIRST of the chief heads*”. But there is another reason to believe that Michael is God’s #1 angel; first, whenever the Devil needs to be disputed with, it seems Michael is sent.

Jude 1:9 *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*

Here Michael is called an Archangel; from this verse, most of the world assumes there are many archangels, and that Gabriel is also an archangel. But there are two problems with that belief;

1. No one but Michael is ever called an Archangel.
2. “Archangel” is only used twice in the Bible; (**1 Thessalonians 4:16**). Both times it is singular. Not “one of the archangels”, but “THE archangel”.

So what is an archangel? The English word “Archangel” is a fairly close copy of the original Greek word *archaggelos*; the literal translation is “the top messenger”. The Greek prefix “arch” means simply “to be first (in political rank or power)” (Strong’s Greek Lexicon). This is why YLT translates this verse “*Michael, THE CHIEF messenger*”.

This makes even more sense when you read the context, **Jude 1:8-9**; notice the whole purpose of this statement was to condemn people who “*reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries*”; the whole point of **verse 9** was to

show that **even Michael, the #1 angel, DARED NOT** rant and curse at the Devil; but only said “*the Lord rebuke you*”.

That example would only make sense if Michael was indeed the chief of the seven angels. As one final proof, read **Revelation 12:7**. All the angels on Satan’s side of the rebellion – all the angels of whom he is chief – are lumped together and merely called “*the dragon and his angels*”. **And in the same way, all the righteous angels are lumped together by saying “Michael and HIS angels”**. All the angels involved in this “war in heaven” fall into one of those two categories!

Gabriel frankly acknowledges that Michael is superior in rank in **Daniel 12:1**. You don’t call your equal “**THE great prince**”! Now as one final note on this subject, read **Daniel 10:20-21** in a modern translation such as the RSV or NIV. It’s difficult to understand in the KJV.

Notice after speaking of the prince/angel of Persia (Satan?) and the prince/angel of Greece, Gabriel says “*No one will support me when I fight these commanders except your commander, Michael.*” (GWV), or as the NLT puts it, “*No one helps me against these spirit princes except Michael, your spirit prince.*”

Perhaps the other five angels were unavailable to help Gabriel and Michael battle these princes of Greece and Persia. Or perhaps the other five have joined the rebellion and that’s why there are only Michael and Gabriel left – that would explain why only two righteous chief angels are named in the Bible.

Regardless, that leads us into talking about the rebellion itself, and the Devil’s part of it.

FALLEN ANGELS

Can angels sin? **2 Peter 2:4**. Are there evil angels? **Psalms 78:49**. Are all evil angels (evil spirits) the same degree of evil? **Luke 11:26**. How many angels are there? **Revelation 5:11**. How many of the angels sinned? **Revelation 12:3-4**. Who is the red dragon? **Verse 9**. And what are the stars? **Revelation 1:20**.

There is a ton of information in those verses, and we’ll be revisiting them again. But first, note the absolute minimum number of angels in the throne room now is 101 million. And since 1/3 of the original number sinned, and 101 million are left, then the original number must have been at *least* 150 million. **That in turn means there are probably at the very least 50 million – that’s 50,000,000 – fallen angels.**

So when one third of the total angels sinned and followed Satan, they became “his angels” (**Revelation 12:7**). And once they sinned, God “cast them down to hell”. So where is that? Where are these evil angels today?

The word “hell” is not from the word *hades* or *gehenna* like every other instance of “hell” in the New Testament. This is a word only used once, the Greek *tartaroo*, more familiar to us as its root word *tartarus*. Let me be absolutely clear; **this “hell” the angels were “cast down to” is NOT the same “hell” used elsewhere in the Bible.** It is a completely different word.

So where is *Tartarus*? Each commentary gives you a different opinion. But we don’t need to know the Greek definition of *Tartarus* according to Homer, **we need the Biblical definition of Tartarus. The BIBLE INTERPRETS THE BIBLE, remember!** But how can we know what *Tartarus* is, if this is the only time the word is used? Easy! Because this ISN’T the only time this *event* is recorded!

When the angels were “cast down” to *Tartarus*, *where were they cast?* **Revelation 12:9**. Where did Satan’s rebellion lead the angels who sinned? **Verse 4**. What did Jesus witness? **Luke 10:18**. And where are they today? **Ephesians 6:12**. And what are they doing? **1 Peter 5:8**. Who are the false gods that man has worshiped since creation? **Leviticus 17:7**.

So you see, without referring to the classical, pagan, Greek authors we can prove **from the Bible alone where Tartarus is – it’s right here on the Earth!**

THE OPPOSITE VIEWPOINT

So what are they doing here – are they idle? **Revelation 12:9**. Are they pretending to be the good, righteous angels the world calls “holy”? Or do they appear as the hobgoblins and ghosts you see at Halloween? **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**.

These evil angels, far from appearing as Halloween caricatures, pass themselves off as “angels of light” – the good guys! This is very important!

You already know that most of the world’s “Christianity” is in fact false Christianity, run by a counterfeit Jesus, in reality Satan the Devil. Does the Devil teach the truth? **John 8:44**. What do people who follow the Devil or the false Christianity do with the truth? **Acts 13:10**. Does the Devil pretend to be the opposite of what he is? **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** again.

So everything he teaches is in fact the opposite of the truth. When the Devil says “this man is righteous”, **the man is actually evil**. Make sense? When the Devil says “this man was a hero”, he means “**this man was a hero to MY rebellious cause**”. On the other hand, when the Devil says “this man was incorrigibly wicked”... was the man *really* incorrigibly wicked... or was he actually exceedingly righteous? **Isaiah 5:20**.

Underline this in your mind! Satan calls good “evil”, and he calls evil “good”. Darkness to him is “light” and light is “darkness”. What God calls freedom is slavery to him! And what God considers slavery he calls “freedom” (**John 8:32-34**).

When you see a righteous angel in a Catholic fresco, *it actually represents a fallen angel*. When you see a horrible, evil gargoyle, *it actually represents a servant of God*. That’s how Satan views things, remember! Nothing is more offensive to him than obedience to God! **The frightening witches and demons the false Christianity fears and mocks on Halloween are in fact the true Christians and righteous angels, as perceived by the fallen angels and false Christians!**

When the false Christianity speaks of “good”, it speaks of what God calls evil! When it talks of a wonderful glorious Jesus, *it really means Satan himself!* On the other hand, when it speaks of the most horrible monster, an evil, ugly, pitchfork-lading devil **it is really speaking of God himself!**

That’s how the Devil perceives God!

THE KING OF TYRUS

Remember: the only information we have about the Devil is in the Bible! Try to forget what Dante and Milton said. Their respective books were based on the doctrines of the false Christianity and the images they portray are almost exactly opposite of what the truth really is – the previous section of this lesson explained why.

The Devil is mentioned here and there throughout the Bible, but there are two main sections of scripture addressed to him – **Isaiah 14** and **Ezekiel 28**. So let’s go through them verse-by-verse and see what God says about the past, present, and future of the Devil.

Start in **Ezekiel 28**. It is addressed to two different people, a “prince of Tyrus” and a “king of Tyrus”. The identity of the prince of Tyrus is most likely the “man of sin/Pope/mouth of the beast/false prophet” you studied about in Lesson 10. But the king of Tyrus is undeniably the Devil. No possible human, or any other angel, could fit the description as perfectly as the Devil does.

Verses 1-10 are addressed to the prince, and they would fit the Pope very well – read it and compare it for yourself with the characteristics of the Pope you studied in Lesson 10. If you still have your notes from that lesson, compare them to **Ezekiel 28:1-10** now.

Then in **verses 11-19** God changes topics from talking about the Pope to talking about his master – the real power behind the Catholic throne. In **verse 12**, God – who is never lavish with His praise – basically calls this king of Tyrus “the best that ever was”. He says (NKJV) “*You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*”

God says this being was “the seal of perfection”. **God knows what perfection means!** And He uses the term twice in this verse! **Verse 13** proves this is no ordinary king for he was in Eden – 3,500 years earlier! Finally, this verse makes it clear that *God created him!*

In **verse 14**, we see that Lucifer had a very high position in the government of God; he was almost certainly the Archangel before Michael had the job. He was “*THE anointed cherub that covereth*”. To see where he worked, read **Exodus 25:17-22**. Here God gives instructions for making the lid for the Ark of the Covenant, which is the mercy seat where God sits; and covering this seat are two cherubs. One of them was Lucifer. It is likely the other was Michael.

In **Ezekiel 28:15** we see he was PERFECT in his ways. That means there was a time when this being had NEVER SINNED – when he was perfect according to GOD’S OWN STATEMENT! **The Devil was not CREATED EVIL – he was created PERFECT!** As Moffatt translates this verse: “*From the day you were created, you lived a perfect life, till you were discovered doing wrong*”.

After his sin, God said He will “*cast him as profane out of the mountain of God*”. Remember, the “mountain of God” is a Bible symbol for the government or Kingdom of God. And what is his final end? “*And I will destroy thee, O covering cherub*”.

And as most people probably know, **Ezekiel 28:17** speaks of his pride and beauty; but the second half of that verse most people ignore, “*I will lay you before kings, that they may behold you*”. Now compare that to **Isaiah 14:10, 16-17**. We’ll discuss the rest of **Isaiah 14** in a moment, but for now notice the clear parallels between these two passages.

Satan will not be destroyed as soon as Jesus returns **because God still has a use for him**. It is important that the sinners throughout history have an opportunity to see the proud angel they worshiped as a god be utterly humiliated and exposed for what he is. It is important for mankind to see exactly whom it is they trusted, and how powerless he was to save them from sin. So until mankind has had a chance to do that, he will not be destroyed.

Once that happens, God will deal with the Devil once and for all; read **Ezekiel 28:18-19**. God will bring a fire – no doubt a special fire, one “*prepared for the devil and his angels*” (**Matthew 25:41**). And that fire will “*devour thee*”. He won’t burn forever in hell, writhing in pain! God says he will be DESTROYED, and brought to ASHES in the sight of all that are watching.

Then what happens? Does he continue existing in this ash state? Does he somehow stay alive in the fires of this special furnace for all eternity? **Verse 19** in the ASV says, “*and thou shalt nevermore have any being.*”

At that point, he will cease to exist. But since there are a lot of objections to this clear statement from God to the Devil, we will address them now before we move on to **Isaiah 14**.

THE DESTINY OF THE DEVIL

Most of the world believes Satan is immortal, that he will be tortured unceasingly in hell for eternity – but then they also believe the same thing about humans, and they’re clearly wrong about that!

So first, I’m going to pose a logical question; can God create something He can’t destroy? Can He make a rock so big He can’t lift it? A bowl of soup so hot He can’t drink it? A universe so big He can’t see the other side?

I'm quite feeble, but even I have never built something I cannot destroy given enough time. Has God? Do you really think God is unable to do ANYTHING, including destroy spirit if He wants to do so? Is God almighty... or isn't He? That alone should answer the question. But we haven't even started yet!

Second, what are the wages of sin? (You should know the chapter and verse by now!) Has Satan sinned? **1 John 3:8**. *Since Satan is the INVENTOR of sin, will he be spared the penalty of sin – death?*

Think about it! The wages of sin is death! **Is it fair to exempt the being who sinned first – and most – from the only penalty the Bible commands for sin??** You may object saying, “but hell is a fate worse than death” – and that's true. And there are two reasons why that alone proves it isn't the fate of the Devil!

1. If Satan were sent to hell, even though it might be a fate worse than death, *it would still mean Satan would escape the penalty of death the law demands!* He would still never die, and if he never dies, the law will never be satisfied!
2. The wages of sin is death. **It would be a sin (an act in violation of God's own Law)** for God to give a greater penalty than the law prescribes!

One major reason people believe the Devil cannot be killed is **Luke 20:35-36**. That at first looks clear – but is it? Does the fact that angels cannot *die* mean angels cannot be *killed by God*? The redwood tree does not appear to die of old age – ever. It lives indefinitely. *But it can be cut down by man!*

Is spirit “corruptible” (subject to decay)? **1 Corinthians 15:44-54**. So spirit bodies never decay or die on their own! Does killing a man's body kill his soul (spirit)? **Matthew 10:28**. We cannot destroy a soul! In that sense, our souls are immortal – un-killable! **But is God able to destroy our soul?** (Same verse). Just because something never dies of natural causes, or cannot be killed by other men (or other angels) *does not mean it cannot be killed by God!*

Read **Matthew 25:41**. This fire is *especially prepared for the Devil and his angels*. Satan walked “*up and down in the midst of the stones of fire*” (**Ezekiel 28:14**), so God knows ordinary fire would not harm him at all; so this is a SPECIAL fire God has prepared *specifically* to destroy spirit!

That fire God prepares CAN destroy spirit – for to the spirit being in **Ezekiel 28:18**, God says, “*I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee*”.

FOREVER AND EVER

And now we come to the primary objection, based almost entirely on **Revelation 20:10**. Like the word *Tartarus*, you can spend weeks reading papers written about this verse and still have no clue what it means. *Commentators don't know because they don't trust the Bible to explain it!* As you will see, it is absurdly simple if you do.

Everyone agrees the Devil is cast into this “lake of fire”, but *how long* does he stay there? The verse says “*for ever and ever*”, but does that mean “for all eternity” as we understand the term today – or does it mean something else?

The word “ever” is from the Greek word *aion*, the source of our English word *eon*. So to begin with, what does the English word “eon” mean? Forever? Or merely an AGE, such as the age of dinosaurs or the industrial age? Furthermore, we use the word in a plural; “dinosaurs ruled the Earth *for eons*”.

If eon meant “forever”, it would have no end – therefore there could never be more than one eon! But of course eon doesn't mean forever, it simply means an unspecified period of time. It was the same in Greek. This is why Weymouth translates this verse “*and day and night they will suffer torture UNTIL the Ages of the Ages.*” But what does that mean?

Again notice that “ages” is used as a plural *which alone proves it cannot last for all eternity!* But as always, *don't take the word of anyone on this.* See how the Bible uses the word and then decide what it means based on how GOD uses it. Then you can decide whether God meant an eternity of punishment, or merely an AGE of punishment, or a punishment AT THE END of an age!

This word is used many times in the New Testament, and in many of them it *could* mean eternity; God will be worshiped for *aion*, and so on. But there are also other verses that clearly cannot mean eternity. Read **Mark 4:19** (my quotes here are from the KJV); there the words “of this world” are translated from the Greek word *aion*.

Is it possible to make sense of that verse if you read it “the cares of this *eternity*..”? Not really. But what if you read it as “the cares of this *age*..”? That makes a lot of sense! Now do the same thing to these other verses. **Luke 16:8**, “of this world” came from *aion*; **John 9:32**, “the world began” all came from that one word.

Finally, see **Matthew 13:40**. “World” is translated from *aion*. And notice clearly that AION HAS AN END! None of these verses permit *aion* to be translated as “eternity”, but all of them – and all the others – work perfectly if you translate *aion* as “age”! Thus it is established that *aion* means merely an AGE. A single phase of the plan of God.

In **Matthew 13:40**, Jesus says the present *aion* – age – will end at His return. But when that age ends, another will begin! The millennial age – and when that ends, another age, the second resurrection age will begin! As you're learning, **God's plan consists of many successive ages**, both past and future, **all of them a part of a single, grand plan** to create for Himself a family!

That means there is one BIG age, consisting of many SMALLER ages – one large AION which is made up of many shorter AION! But there will come a day when the complete plan of God is finished, and the AGE of AGES is over!

What happens then? **1 Corinthians 15:24-28**. And what is the signal that this complete plan of God is finished? **Revelation 21:1-2**. And what happens on that day? **Verses 3-4**. If there is no more death, then has death itself been destroyed before this point? **Revelation 20:14**.

What will the Devil be doing in the meanwhile? **Isaiah 14:15-17**. The Devil lives on, witnessing God repairing all the damage he caused, until the very end of this plan of God. But there comes a time when there is no more place found for him in the universe; so when Jesus goes through and “*puts down all authority and rule and power*”, when the plan is finally ALMOST done, Satan is destroyed.

He is cast in the lake of fire and “*the smoke of his torment*” ascends up *until the end of the age of the ages!* Until the plan of God is COMPLETELY FINISHED, and all the individual ages within it are concluded, THEN the Devil is finally destroyed and “*never shall be any more*”.

God is merciful. Even to his greatest enemy. And no loving God could stand to have a vicious, evil monster tortured and writhing in pain one second longer than absolutely necessary for the good of others. When Satan has served his purpose and spit in God's face for the last time, God will do the only act that love for all beings, including Satan, will permit; God will kill him. So that he can no longer bring unhappiness to himself and others.

KING OF BABYLON

Now that we have addressed that, it's time to study the other main devil-chapter in the Bible; **Isaiah 14**. Start in **verse 4**. The subject here is the king of Babylon. Who lives in Babylon? **Revelation 18:1-2**.

As you'll remember from Lesson 10, the beast is the military power, and the whore is the religious power, the false church. The whore rides – directs, rules, or inspires – the beast (**Revelation 17:3**). What was this whore called? **Revelation 17:4-5**. So this whore was called Babylon; and where did she and the beast get their power? **Revelation 13:4**.

So the dragon – Satan – can only be the angelic ruler – “prince” of Babylon. Interestingly, it is roughly in the same geographic area as Persia, where the dark Prince fought Michael and Gabriel over Daniel 200-300 years later. Thus it stands to reason it was the same fallen angel – Satan.

Back in **Isaiah 14:5-8**, you see this “king of Babylon” is described as “*He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger*”. This passage is a prophecy of the time when his power is broken.

Verses 9-10 speak of the reactions when his former servants, also punished by God, are saying to him “*have you also become as weak as we?*” **Verse 11** you see that his pomp is brought down *to the grave*. This is the first indication of his ultimate fate. A grave is where you put *dead people*.

Up until now, these verses could have applied to any evil person; most commentators focus on that, and tell you these verses have nothing to do with the Devil. But in **verses 12-14**, God briefly digresses to talk about his former glory, and shows this cannot possibly refer to any human.

For example, in **verse 12**; how many men have been in heaven? **John 3:13**. So who goes back and forth to heaven? **Genesis 28:12**. Then in **Isaiah 14:13-14**, which man could have said “*I will ascend into heaven*”? What do stars represent in the Bible again? **Revelation 1:20**. What mere man could have hoped to put his throne above the angels of God?

So Lucifer wanted to be far above all the other stars, equal with the Most High. He wanted to sit “*on the mount of the congregation*”, which must refer to the promise God gave to us: **Revelation 3:21**.

But notice clearly that Lucifer said nothing about REPLACING God on His throne in **Isaiah 14**! It does NOT say that Lucifer desired to be ABOVE the Most High! He desired to be ABOVE all other angels, and to be LIKE the Most High. He wanted God to treat him as an EQUAL! ***Satan desired to form a trinity with God and Jesus, so in all of his religions this trinity is his most cherished doctrine!***

He believes himself to be the “Holy Spirit” and worthy of a place in the Godhead. This gives us a large clue as to why he fell, which we’ll get to a little later. Meanwhile, in **Isaiah 14:15**, God says he will be “*brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*”. What pit will Satan be cast into? **Revelation 20:1-3**. And what will happen to him while he is in there? **Isaiah 14:16-17**.

Just as Ezekiel said, it is necessary that all mankind has an opportunity to see this creature before his destruction. God does nothing behind closed doors. He fears no scrutiny on His judgments. You will have a chance to see the Devil, hear his side of the story, see if you could have handled him differently, and finally come to see why God has to deal with him as He will, before God destroys him for the good of all.

Still, some use **verses 18-20**, to say that because God said, “*Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial*”, that Satan won’t be killed; but that isn’t what it says at all. The “them” of **verse 20** refers to **verse 18** where it says “*the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie IN GLORY*”; Satan will not lie **in glory**, like they did when *they died*, but will be “*cast out, away from your sepulchre ... like a DEAD BODY trodden under foot*” (**RSV**). But in all of those statements, the point is clear: DEATH must come for this greatest of sinners.

BEFORE THE BEGINNING

Turn to **Genesis 1:1**. What do you see there? That in the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth. Now as you read the rest of **chapter 1**, you see how God creates the light, dry land, the sun/moon/stars, animals, plants and so on. *But the creation of the Earth happened before day 1!*

On day one, God created light (**verses 3-5**). *But this was not the first step in creation!* Because BEFORE that, in **verse 1**, *the “heavens and the Earth” already existed!* **Genesis 1 does not discuss the creation of the Earth at**

all! So what was the Earth like between the time when God “*created the heavens and the Earth*”, and the moment when He created light on day one? **Verse 2**.

There we see the Earth was “*without form and void*”; translated from the Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu*. *Tohu* means “to lie waste; a desolation... a worthless thing; ... in vain, confusion”; *bohu* means “emptiness, void, waste”.

So did God create the Earth in a state of desolation? Did He create a worthless thing? Did He create a thing in confusion? **1 Corinthians 14:33**. Did God create it “in vain”? God answers in **Isaiah 45:18**. The words “in vain” are from the Hebrew *tohu*, so literally, that says “He created it not in *tohu*”!

So in **Genesis 1:2** it says “the Earth was in *tohu*”, but in **Isaiah 45:18** God said “I created it NOT in *tohu*!”; so in **Genesis 1:1**, when God created the Earth it was *not* in a state of *tohu*, but by **verse 2** it WAS in *tohu*! How did that happen? Rotherham translates **verse 2**, “*Now, the earth, had become waste and wild*”.

So *something major* must have happened between **verses 1 and 2**! What sort of thing could that have been? Read **Jeremiah 4:5-8**. Notice how the fierce anger of the Lord is going to cause destruction *because of the sin of a people*. Now skip down to **verses 20-25**. And what did all this? **Verse 26**.

Did you notice in **verse 23**, the phrase “*without form and void*”? Those were our friends *tohu* and *bohu*! So **as a result of sin, the world was turned into a state of “chaos and disorder”!** Now this prophecy was strictly confined to the area of Palestine (see **verses 27-29**), but it sets a clear precedent that sin can take a “*land flowing with milk and honey*” and turn it into *tohu* and *bohu*!

So when God made the heavens and the Earth, they were no doubt PERFECT like all of God’s creations, including Lucifer himself! But then someone’s sin ruined that and as a result the Earth became “*without form and void*”! And all this happened between **Genesis 1:1 and 1:2**.

I said before that the creation of the Earth is not mentioned at all in **Genesis** after **verse 1**. But there is a place in the Bible where it is discussed in detail – the book of Job. God was belittling Job by comparing accomplishments with him; and in **Job 38**, God speaks of the original creation of the Earth. **Read verses 4-6**.

See how these verses talk about the FOUNDATIONS of the Earth – not the mere establishing of seas or continents, but the real CORNERSTONE of the Earth itself – something never mentioned in Genesis! Because this was all summed up in **Genesis 1:1**, “*in the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth*”! But God wasn’t alone when this happened! Read **Job 38:7**.

In this *original creation*, long before Adam, when God created the Earth ALL the sons of God shouted for joy! All the “morning stars” sang together! You already know the Bible symbolism for “stars” – angels. And since God created angels, they are occasionally called His sons. At this moment, commemorated by the Feast of Shouting, the angels were overjoyed at the beauty of the creation of Earth. And Lucifer was among them, **not yet having sinned**, for it says, “*ALL the sons of God shouted for joy*”!

The rest of the chapter is about the things actually recorded in **Genesis 1**; for example, compare **Job 38:12** to **Genesis 1:3-5**, and **Job 38:8-11** to **Genesis 1:9**. But our purpose here is to establish that in **Genesis 1:1**, Lucifer and all the angels shouted for joy at the creation of the heavens and the Earth; and in **verse 2**, the Earth was in chaos and disorder because of sin.

And since Man hadn’t been created yet and Satan was the father of sin (**1 John 3:8**), this means the devil fell between **Genesis 1:1 and 1:2**! And that event brought all the sadness and misery that has come into the world since, and we remember that day with sadness every year on the holy day of Atonement.

(For more information on creation week and what exactly happened in it and before it, request the free article “Genesis Is Not The Original Creation”.)

ANGELIC JAIL

Read **Jude 1:6**. This verse tells us several facts; that the angels were given an “estate”; that they left it, and then were placed by God “in everlasting chains under darkness”. This phrase is often misunderstood; does the phrase “everlasting” mean “for all eternity”, or is there an END? See the last half of the verse “UNTO [until] the judgment of the great day...”

So these angels are kept in this state only UNTIL the judgment of the great day; who will be doing that judgment? **1 Corinthians 6:2-3**. When will we do this? **Daniel 7:22**. Where will we do this? **Revelation 20:4**. So angels will be judged – those found evil will be cast “into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”. The rest of the angels will be rewarded with appropriate honor.

Do the same rules apply to everyone equally? **Numbers 15:16**. Do the same rules that apply to us apply to angels? **Numbers 15:29**. Like us, all angels sinned in ignorance – with the exception of Satan, and even that is debatable. But Satan deceived the other angels when “*his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth*” (**Revelation 12:4**).

And like us, not all angels were deceived equally; some knew better than others, so their sin was worse. Some know even less than we do (**1 Peter 1:12**), they DESIRE to look into the things we understand!

Thus, some fallen angels are more wicked than others (**Luke 11:26**), and some angels are more righteous than others (**Daniel 10:21**). Read **Daniel 8:9-10**. As you remember from Lesson 10, this “little horn” is the papacy. And as you’ve thoroughly learned in this lesson, in the Bible “star” is synonymous with “angel”.

So what that verse says is some of the other angels are so impressed by Satan’s false religion, and the success he’s having, that he will “*cast them down to the ground*” (compare with **Revelation 12:4**). But that prophecy is future – does that mean angels can STILL join the rebellion? **Hebrews 12:26-27**. God is going to shake heaven – *yet in the future!* – and no one is there but angels and Jesus, and He trusts Jesus!

God is going to allow Satan to tempt angels so whoever CAN be shaken WILL be shaken! If one of the angels wants to join the rebellion, He wants to know NOW! Only that way will He know whom He can trust and whom He can’t! Just as He’s doing with mankind!

Meanwhile, at the original battle in **Revelation 12**, after they lost the evil angels were cast to Earth; at the time, there was nothing on the Earth, and it was shrouded in thick darkness as we see it in **Genesis 1:2**, so they were held by “*everlasting chains under darkness*” (**Jude 1:6**), and are awaiting judgment even now. And they know the day is coming – see **Matthew 8:29**. And they know it’s not far away now – **Revelation 12:12**.

DID GOD CREATE THE DEVIL?

In **Isaiah 14:12**, most Bibles render Satan’s name “Lucifer”, a Latin name meaning “light-bearer”. The Hebrew uses a different name – Hillel – with a more or less similar meaning. God created Lucifer to bring light – truth – to the world, as the chief angel, the “anointed ONE” who was to help build the family of God.

But the Devil was TOO perfect; TOO beautiful. God gave him perfect wisdom, knowledge, and beauty... but that wasn’t enough. He needed something God couldn’t give him or anyone else – perfect character. **God cannot spontaneously create perfect character**. The only way it can be created is the way He is creating it in you – by allowing you to sin, correcting you, and having you CHOOSE to do right. Otherwise, it isn’t character – it’s programming.

God made Lucifer and gave him free will, and eventually he sinned and became Satan – Hebrew for “the Adversary”. **Ezekiel 28:13, 15** state clearly that God created him... **but God did not create Satan. God created Lucifer, who exercised his free will to become Satan** – when he rejected the rule of God, he became the adversary of God, Satan.

It's like the statement "guns don't kill people; people kill people". What I mean is, it is no sin to make a knife. The knife can have many essential uses in society. To cut meat, to kill snakes, to chop vegetables; *the fact it can also be used for murder doesn't make it a sin to be a knife!* The knife has POTENTIAL for evil, but it is not evil! Nor did the manufacturer sin by making it! It is only evil if it CHOOSES to do evil, which of course a knife can't do – and equally of course, we and angels can.

Lucifer was "full of wisdom", and very powerful; thus, he had a great potential for evil. He also had great potential for good. It was up to him to choose how to use his gifts. He chose evil. This does not mean God created a *devil*, but God did create Lucifer.

WHY DID SATAN FALL?

God had a plan from the beginning. Being God's right-hand angel, Lucifer no doubt was privy to many of the details of this plan. At first, it sounded great. God was going to reproduce after His kind – was going to create beings in His image, and after His likeness!

Did God ever intend to make angels into the God kind? **Hebrews 1:13**. Did He offer them a place ruling in the world to come, as He did us? **Hebrews 2:5**. What was their position always intended to be? **Hebrews 1:14**. What is their job? **Revelation 22:9**.

On the other hand, what has God offered us? **1 John 3:2**. When we are like Him, what ability will we have? **John 7:38-39**. What do these rivers represent? **John 4:14**. Who is the source of all life? **1 Timothy 6:16**. Has God given it to anyone else? **John 5:26**.

God has immortality, *and the ability to create life!* And He has given this ability to the Son; and the Son is going to give that ability to US! That's the family business after all – God is a creator, and when we are made in the image of God, *we will be creators too!*

At first, this seemed fine, even wonderful, to Lucifer. But then one day Lucifer walked in front of a mirror and realized he was beautiful and wise, that he really did "seal up the sum"! Why couldn't HE reproduce in his image? Why couldn't HE give life? Why was it only these clay-shelled humans who were going to receive this ability?

So his pride corrupted him; his beauty blinded him; so he decided to force God to let him into the Godhead; and in his selfishness, he wanted to close it off to everyone else, so that there would be only THREE Gods in the universe:

God the Father (a mean, old-testamentarian ogre who shuns men completely); God the Son (a wimpy, bleeding heart wuss), and God the Holy Spirit – A.K.A. Satan the Devil – the POWER arm of the Godhead. The one who really is active in getting things done! And thus we have the Catholic trinity, Satan's ultimate dream when he said "*I will be like the Most High*".

A GREAT CONTROVERSY?

So far, you've learned a lot, but you still have some key facts to learn. Actually, what you have to do now is unlearn, which is much harder. We've been taught that Satan and God are bitter enemies, utterly unable to be in the same room without being at each other's throats; and there is no question that the Devil is our enemy *but not quite in the same way you've been told*.

We have a record of 4 meetings between Jesus and the Devil, not counting devil-possessed people in the New Testament. **In every one of these, both parties are, if not cordial, at least civil to each other.** Two of the meetings take place in Job, so read **chapters 1-2**. Here we are privileged to witness an actual meeting between Jesus and Satan. Remember, that "Lord" in the Old Testament almost always means Jesus (Lesson 13).

1. Satan and apparently all the other angels appear before God regularly on certain days; most likely on the holy days. This is presumably a mandatory assembly. (**Job 1:6, 2:1**)
2. Jesus makes conversation with Satan (**1:7**).
3. Jesus tries to prove a point to Satan that Man can be righteous by using Job as an example (**1:8, 2:3**).
4. Satan doesn't believe Man can be righteous (**1:9-11, 2:3-4**).
5. Jesus, to prove a point (and to teach Job a lesson) temporarily gives Satan power over Christians.
6. Satan – if explicitly given permission to do so – can cause various physical afflictions (**2:7**). But if not, there is a hedge about Christians (**1:10**) that Satan cannot get past.

Nothing in those conversations shows a ranting, raving Devil at war with God; it shows a sullen, truculent, self-justifying fallen angel to be sure; but one that *knows there are certain limits he cannot break*. He dare not defy God's "hedge" around Job without God's express permission. Rather like a private who despises his sergeant but fears to openly defy him – most of the time.

Another meeting is **Matthew 4:1-11**. Here we learn a few more facts; for one, the Devil can quote scripture (**verses 5-6**), but *not quite right* (**verse 7**). He quotes it close – but slightly twists it to make his own point.

Another example of this in **Genesis 3:1-5**. Most people assume the Devil's lie was "*ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*". But that wasn't the part that was a lie! **That part was true, God himself confirmed it!** Read **verse 22**; God said that after eating the fruit, Man was "*as one of us* [as one of the gods, just as Satan had said!] *to know good and evil*"! That part of what the Devil said was TRUE!

The lie was "*thou shalt not surely die*" ("you have an immortal soul!"). The lie was that disobeying God would not bring death! After all, Satan had done it and it seemed to work for him – he wasn't dead yet!

You see, God fully intended to give Man that fruit one day; after they "*had their senses exercised by use to discern good and evil*"; then God would "*make the spirits of just men perfect*". When we were ready, we would have received the fruit of that tree in God's good time. But Adam and Eve did not have the character to decide good and evil for themselves – as subsequent events have amply proved.

The Devil's lie was that they could take a shortcut and have the ability to decide right from wrong *before they had the character to handle it!* **They took to themselves the power to make decisions about right and wrong before they had any knowledge of right and wrong!**

So just like the Catholic Church and her daughters do, Satan used the word of God to make his point and *most of what he quoted was right!* But how that 10% that was a lie, changed the meaning of everything else!

GOD OF THIS WORLD

The second major thing we learn from the temptation scriptures is that Satan rules this world. Read **Luke 4:5-7**. Notice that Jesus did not disagree! Did Jesus later confirm the statement? **John 14:30** [any version but the KJV makes it clear he is "ruler of this world"].

Did God put him in charge of this world? **Jude 1:6**. The phrase "*kept not their first estate*" says they were given a place to "keep", manage, or rule. It is almost certain this was the Earth. But when they sinned, God took that position away from them. To whom did God give it? **Genesis 1:26** (see how often we get to use that verse!). So now Adam was the official ruler of the Earth.

But how do you acknowledge a ruler? **Romans 6:16**. So if you obey someone, they rule you – simple enough. Whom did Adam obey? **Genesis 3:17**. So now Eve was ruler! Whom did she obey? **Verse 13**. This is what the Devil meant when he said in **Luke 4:6** of the kingdoms of the Earth, “*that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it*”. God gave it to Adam, Adam gave it to Eve, and together they gave it to Satan!

God was the proper ruler, but Satan was the people’s choice; he was the unanimously chosen, *democratically elected ruler of this Earth*; and each time you sinned, you cast your vote in his favor! He is the ultimate incumbent politician, telling the voters exactly what they want to hear while destroying the society around them!

SO WHY DOES GOD ALLOW THIS?

Obviously, Satan being in charge of the world is a bad thing for the world. But God uses him for a purpose. What does the “god of this world” do? **2 Corinthians 4:4**. Notice that he “blinds the minds of them *which believe not*”. He doesn’t blind believers! He blinds those who DON’T believe!

The only other meeting between Jesus and angels we witness in the Bible is in **1 Kings 22:19-23**. This sounds very much like a board meeting to plan out a business strategy. Jesus as chairman, angels suggesting ideas, Jesus approving them. This is a far cry from the rigid “God inflexibly commands, everyone else timidly obeys” picture presented by Christianity – but these four meetings are the only ones in the Bible. These are what we reason from, not Dante’s “Divine Comedy” or Milton’s “Paradise Lost”.

This meeting in heaven has several interesting features; Jesus is soliciting ideas on how to get Ahab killed. Surely Jesus could simply use a lightning bolt or a plague! But here he opens the floor to suggestions. One of the spirits – angels – present suggests being a “lying spirit” in the mouth of the prophets of Ahab. Now lying is a sin. Thus, the only angels that would be “a lying spirit” are *evil angels*. And Jesus approved the plan, and sent him out to do it.

Why would God do that? That leads us to **2 Thessalonians 2:8-12**. In verse 9, this man of sin is “*after the working of Satan*” – so his methods are just like Satan’s – and he deceives many with unrighteousness (**verse 10**). Remember, he isn’t deceiving them by BEING unrighteous, but by telling them THEY can be unrighteous and they “*will not surely die*”!

And whom does he deceive? **Verse 10**. He deceives those who “*received not a love of the truth*”. If you don’t love the truth, you will lose it to Satan’s deception! Now in **verse 11**, we see that GOD SENDS SATAN TO DECEIVE THEM! God sends them a “strong delusion” to believe the lies Satan tells, *because God doesn’t have to kill a deceived person for sinning!*

In **1 Corinthians 5:4-5**, Paul writes of a man who was sinning and being put out of the church. And he was being “*delivered unto Satan*” – or “*given a strong delusion that he should believe a lie*” – and why? “*So the SPIRIT may be saved IN THE DAY of the Lord!*” God allows, or even sends, Satan to deceive people *for their own good!* Whom does God “give” to deception? **Romans 1:28**. And why does He deceive people – why put them in a state of “unbelief” again? **Romans 11:32**.

There is no sacrifice for a willful sin; if you know something is wrong and sin anyway, you die. So if God sees you rebelling, He has two choices; He either kills you – or He withdraws from you and allows or even causes you *to be deceived!* If you’re deceived, God doesn’t have to kill you for your sins and that allows you another chance to get it right in the second resurrection!

Since you didn’t love the truth enough to make the hard choices in this life, God lets you use this life as a sandbox instead – a place to make horrible mistakes and see the results of sin. After seeing enough of these fruits of sin, it should become more and more difficult for Satan to deceive you, because *you know firsthand what following his way brings*.

But if you won't take God's word for it, you *SHOULD* follow Satan, so you can see for yourself why God's way is better! If you don't love the truth, God will make sure you learn why you should!

Does Satan seek to find flaws in Man's righteousness, as he did with Job? **Revelation 12:10**. Does Satan seek a foothold in Christians to deceive them? **Luke 22:31**. Does God protect you? **Verse 32**. But will He protect you if you are not sincerely trying – if you do not really LOVE the truth? **2 Thessalonians 2:8-12**. Does God either permit or directly send evil angels to bother or deceive people? **Psalms 78:49**.

Satan IS your enemy; but he cannot harm a hair on your head *unless he first deceives you*. Satan had no power over Adam until Adam swallowed his lie and sinned! Then Adam was his servant, and he legally had a right to do whatever he wanted to Adam!

A WAR FOR MEN'S SOULS?

Satan is not more powerful than God. God could kill him at any instant. He is alive because God has a point to prove, and a purpose for Satan to serve while He proves it. You witnessed the argument in **Job 1**; God pointed to a righteous man, and Satan "accused Job before the throne of God"; so God permitted Satan to test his theory that Job would sin in a given circumstance, and afterward God again pointed out Job's righteousness (**Job 2**); Satan again had an objection, and God again permitted a test, and in the end Job again proved God right (**Job 42**).

You've seen God's side of the argument – Man CAN obey God. Satan's side of the argument is that NO ONE can obey God. Satan himself tells his side of the argument in **Job 4:12-21**. Remember, God had told Satan "Behold, he is in thine hand". So Satan was pulling the strings in Job's life now.

This is a vision one of Job's friends had; and it set the tone for Job's friend's arguments in the entire book. A spirit – angel – brought this to him. Since God had put it in Satan's hand, it can only have been a fallen angel. And in **verses 14-16**, you see this angel gave him goosebumps and fear and chills. No righteous angel ever appeared this way – only in seances and other demonic meetings do these things happen! Now look what this angel said:

Job 4:17-19 (BBE) *May a man be upright before God? or a man be clean before his Maker? Truly, he puts no faith in his servants, and he sees error in his angels; How much more those living in houses of earth, whose bases are in the dust! They are crushed more quickly than an insect;*

This angel complained because God even "*sees error*" in HIM! That God had no faith even in His ANGELS, and shall a MERE MAN be "*upright before God*"? Can a puny HUMAN satisfy God's fussy rules and be "*clean before his Maker*"?

Satan failed to obey God *and his entire defense is that he failed because God asked the impossible!* Satan claims that no being, not even a perfect angel like himself, MUCH LESS a mere human, can ever please God!

The battle between Satan and God is largely philosophical. God demanded Satan obey His laws, and Satan didn't; Satan said, "Those laws are impossible! No one can please You!" so God made Man, and now points to men like Job and says "See, Satan? Job is pleasing Me – if he can, why can't you?"

Rather than repent and admit God was right, Satan finds loopholes like any dishonest debater and says, "Oh yeah? Well, he obeys you because You've blessed him – but not if You do THIS to him". So God allows Satan to see for himself what happens – and in the process tests us or punishes us. Every righteous man is a stench in Satan's nostrils, **because nothing is more offensive to a selfish being than someone who succeeded at something he said was impossible!**

The war is not over men's souls. God sees to it that Satan only "gets" the souls that didn't love the truth, and even that is for their own good, so He can save them in the world to come when Satan won't be there to tempt them.

No, the war is over whether or not men CAN obey God. Satan refuses to believe it's possible. God knows it is. Jesus lived as a man to prove that it is – and Satan won't accept that, and denies it really happened, which is the doctrine of antichrist from Lesson 13. But the existence of a perfect life – Jesus – condemns Satan's side of the argument once and for all, which is why Jesus said, "*the prince of this world is judged*" shortly before He died (**John 16:11**).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

There is a lot in this lesson to absorb. But let's see if we can summarize it. God has seven top angels; through them He rules the Earth. But some of the angels sinned – one third, so far – so God cast them down to Earth, away from the presence of the Father. They appear regularly before Jesus, and occasionally are sent on errands for Him, but mostly they wander the Earth seeking to tear down anyone who is righteous – anyone who makes them look bad by obeying God.

Satan controls the world's religions, and most of their doctrines are perversions of old stories, twisted to tell Satan's point of view or portray his dreams. For example, you've been taught Satan cannot be destroyed because that is what SATAN WANTS TO BELIEVE!

He doesn't want to believe God can destroy him – as far as we know, no angel has ever yet been destroyed – and in his arrogance and pride, Satan doesn't think God can do it! The fact that God *hasn't* is proof to him that God *can't*!

On the other hand, why do the devil's churches teach that the "evil one" will be kept alive in hellfire forever? *Because if given the chance, that's what Satan intends to do to his worst Enemy!* Satan knows he can't kill God or Jesus; in fact, if he could somehow kill God the universe itself might well unravel, himself along with it!

So Satan is content to be LIKE the Most High; but if the opportunity presents itself, he will torture his enemies in hellfire for all eternity; including you, if you follow God. All who sin against Satan – all who obey God, that is – are, in Satan's reversed doctrines, going to hell to burn forever. Satan won't mercifully kill you, he needs your suffering to feel good about himself.

And if you do reject God and obey Satan, he will graciously grant you the enormous privilege of staring beatifically into his beautiful face for all eternity. This, to him, is the ultimate reward – a chance to spend time staring at him. Does that sound like a humble God... or a prideful false god?

On the other hand, the worst possible fate Satan can imagine is to spend eternity exiled from his wonderful magnificentness. He enjoys his company, surely everyone else must! Does that sound like a meek God – or a pompous Devil lifted up by pride in his own beauty?

Fortunately, God has no intention of letting that happen. That is why the Devil will be bound at the return of Christ, and held in captivity so all those whom he has deceived can come and stare at him in astonishment and say "HE caused all this suffering??" – and "I trusted HIM??"

And he will be kept that way "*until the end of the age of the ages*". God is working out a plan. In the beginning, God created angels – then, in due time, the universe – then mankind, and this current society – and, yet in the future, the resurrection of the saints of God.

After that, there will be an age to give all of the people who have lived, suffered, and died on this earth their CHANCE AT SALVATION. And finally, when all of these AGES are completed, at the end of the AGE OF THE

AGES talked about in revelation, Satan will be destroyed for good! To wrap up this lesson, read **1 Corinthians 15:24-28**.

This scripture is talking about a glorious day in the future when ALL enemies are destroyed – this MUST include Satan, the FIRST enemy! Even DEATH ITSELF IS GONE! And Christ will reign UNTIL THAT TIME – then, and ONLY THEN, He will deliver the kingdom to His Father – when the plan, the job Christ set out to do in this age is FINALLY COMPLETED – and all the suffering, heartache, death, pain and tears are FINALLY BANISHED FROM THE UNIVERSE!

This work is completely non-denominational and is meant to fulfill Christ's great commission to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" (**Mark 16:15**). **This publication is not to be sold**; "*freely ye have received, freely give*" (**Matthew 10:8**).

The Bible tells us to PROVE ALL THINGS, and The Simple Answers encourages people to do just that. If you cannot PROVE what you believe, you have no right to believe it! Many of the things we print are shocking because they are different from what you've heard, but if something we say offends or upsets you, we hope you will take the time to set aside your preconceived ideas and PROVE your point from the Bible to see if you truly have been right all these years.

We are dedicated to providing the SIMPLE answers to difficult questions. Please submit questions and/or comments to us using the contact information below.

We do not beg for donations and will print our publications in faith trusting God to provide the means. We are supported entirely by tithes and donations. If you would like to see this understanding sent to more people, we welcome your support.

Nathaniel Burson
10758 Hwy 155 South
Big Sandy, TX 75755

Questions@TheSimpleAnswers.com

For more articles, visit
www.TheSimpleAnswers.com