

The book of Revelation exposes an organised attack by the forces of evil against the work of Jesus Christ and His followers. The book is full of this conflict. It reveals that the leader of this attack against Jesus Christ is Satan. Satan is specifically mentioned eight times in Revelation. Five of these references are in the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. In this seminar, before we move on to read and study other chapters of Revelation, we will consider who Satan is and what his ultimate destiny will be.



Q1 **What other names and titles are applied to Satan in Revelation?** Revelation 12:9

- A
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

The name Satan means adversary or enemy. In Revelation, Satan is referred to as the dragon (Revelation 12:3,4,7,9,13,16,17; 13:2,4,11; 16:13 and 20:2), the serpent (Revelation 12:9,14,15 and 20:2), and the devil (Revelation 2:10; 12:9,12; 20:2 and 10). The word devil means slanderer.

Q2 **From where did Satan come to earth?** Revelation 12:7-9

A

When on this earth Jesus Christ said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Luke 10:18. Satan and his angels fought in heaven. The war that broke out resulted in Satan and "his angels" being cast to this earth. Other Bible verses reveal that angels are living beings, (Luke 12:8,9) they are created beings, (Psalm 148:1-5) and some of them have rebelled and sinned against God. (Revelation 12:3,4; 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.)

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Who is Satan?

Satan is not some abstract force of evil. The Bible makes it clear that the devil is a real being or personality. In Matthew 4 we read of Jesus Christ holding a conversation with the devil. In John 8:44 Jesus Christ declared that the devil was a "liar" and "murderer." Satan is not a weird monster. "The devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41) were originally beautiful, sinless angels. They chose to rebel against God. By their own choice they became evil beings and sin entered the universe.

Who made Satan?

Speaking to the king of Tyre, God also addressed the devil who was controlling the king: "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden the garden of God, every precious stone adorned you . . . You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you . . . Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings." Ezekiel 28:12-17.

God created a perfect angel or cherub. This "guardian cherub" is obviously someone other than the king of Tyre for this being was in the Garden of Eden. The king of Tyre did not exist then. This cherub was a mighty angel, created perfect and very beautiful. However, he focused on his beauty and allowed thoughts of self importance to develop until he entertained the idea of challenging God.

Why did Satan choose to rebel?

While addressing ancient Babylon, God also revealed the attitudes of the devil, Satan: "How have you fallen from heaven, O morning star (or Lucifer), son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" Isaiah 14:12-14.

The Bible says that God is all loving (1 John 4:8), all wise (Romans 11:33) and all powerful (Matthew 6:17,18.) Faith and reason demand that such a God create a good world. He did. We read, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." Genesis 1:31. God did not create the devil. God created a perfect universe. He created Lucifer as a perfect, pure, holy, sinless angel with free choice. However, pride took control in Lucifer's life and he rebelled against the Creator God. He chose to follow a course of destruction and death.

Why did God not destroy Satan as soon as he rebelled?

Lucifer allowed pride to swell into rebellion. It was the first time such a thing had happened in the universe. His proud boast was, "I will make myself

like the Most High." Isaiah 14:14. He implied that his form of government, his will and his commands would be superior to God's. He openly challenged the position, power, honour and character of God. This led to rebellion and war in heaven.

When the rebellion was in its infancy it was like a seed that no-one but God could identify. If God had destroyed Lucifer immediately many may have wondered whether Lucifer's claims were correct. So God allowed the seeds of sin and rebellion to grow and develop that all might witness the methods used by Lucifer and see the fruit of his rebellion. History has revealed Lucifer to be Satan the adversary or enemy.

How did we get involved?

In Genesis 3 we read the tragic story of the entrance of sin and death into the human experience. Our first parents chose to rebel against God and obey the serpent, Satan. This involved such a fall that sin and death came upon the whole human family. Human beings became slaves to Satan. (Read Romans 5:12 and 6:16.)

SATAN'S METHODS EXPOSED



Q3 **How does Satan work to control people to possess and destroy them?**

A 1. Revelation 12:9

Although God "does not lie," (Titus 1:2) Satan is prepared to falsify, misrepresent and deceive. Note these facts:

Satan will misquote Scripture to *DECEIVE*.

In attacking Jesus Christ Satan was prepared to misquote Scripture in a blatant attempt to deceive. (Read Matthew 4:1,3,5.) Satan made a suggestion to the Lord Jesus and offered a single Bible verse to give it support. Jesus Christ protected Himself from the devil's deception and misinterpretation by carefully comparing other Scriptures with the one in question. Satan does not hesitate to use the Bible if he can twist or distort it to serve his purposes. As we continue to study Revelation we will see that the misuse of Scripture and the distortion of Biblical truth is often Satan's most formidable weapon.

Satan performs counterfeit miracles to *DECEIVE*. The "work of Satan" is "displayed

in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives." 2 Thessalonians 2:9,10. (Also read Revelation 16:13,14.)

Satan will use false religious teachers to DECEIVE. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve." 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. Satan seldom poses as an evil one. Nor does he usually work openly. He works through human agents whom he can willingly or unwillingly (or even unbeknown to them) use or manipulate. He works to replace the truth of God with subjective feelings. Jesus Christ warned of Satan's deceptions. He declared, "False Christs and false prophets will appear and perform

great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect - if that were possible." Matthew 24:24. (Also read Matthew 7:21-23; 24:4,5; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1-3.)

Now let us consider the other methods that Satan uses . . .

- A 2. Revelation 12:10 (Compare 2:9)
- A 3. Revelation 12:12,13 (Compare 2:10, 13)
- A 4. Satan also uses affliction and suffering. (Read Revelation 2:9,14 and Job 2:7.)

SATAN'S BATTLES WITH JESUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Using these four basic weapons Satan attacks Jesus and His people. The book of Revelation describes the main battles in which Satan has been and will be involved.

Battle 1: CONFLICT WITH JESUS

Satan is the one who originated all rebellion against God. He was the originator of sin. He was the cause of conflict in heaven. He was the cause of rebellion in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:14,15.) "He who does what is sinful is of the devil." And, "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." 1 John 3:8.



Q4 **Carefully read Revelation 12:1-12. Who was waiting to attack Jesus Christ upon His appearance on earth and why?** Revelation 12:3,4

A Who?
Why?

Q5 **When Jesus died for humanity what happened to Satan?** Revelation 12:10-12

A

When Jesus Christ died on the cross He defeated Satan. Satan's plans began to fall apart. Satan realised that it was only a matter of time before he would be totally destroyed. However, although he was defeated and thrown to the earth, Satan was determined not to give up the fight.

Battle 2: CONFLICT WITH THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS



Q6 **Satan did not give up after Jesus Christ's death, burial, resurrection and ascension to heaven. Whom did Satan attack after the ascension of Jesus? How long was this attack to last?** Revelation 12:5,6,13,14

A Who?

How long?

Revelation refers to two periods of great tribulation for the followers of Jesus. This is the first. It follows the ascension of Jesus to heaven.

Battle 3: CONFLICT WITH BELIEVERS BEFORE JESUS RETURNS



Q7 Who does Satan attack just before Jesus comes? Revelation 12:17

A

This is the second great *TRIBULATION* that the followers of Jesus Christ will experience. The term "the rest of her offspring" means the remnant or those who are left and remain faithful to Jesus. This is after the "1,260 days" of persecution and before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan will attack savagely as the gospel is carried to all the world. (Compare Matthew 24:9-14.)

Q8 Whose help does Satan enlist in this final attack upon believers? Revelation 13:1,11

A 1.
2.

Revelation 13 gives a detailed account of Satan's final attack upon God's people. The second of the two powers he enlists is called the "false

prophet." (Compare Revelation 13:11-17; 16:13,14 and 19:20.)

Battle 4: CONFLICT FOR THE LAST TIME

To understand the setting for the final battle that Satan embarks upon, read Revelation 19:11-20:10.



Q9 Who is the Conqueror that attacks the beast, the false prophet and their leader Satan? Revelation 19:11-16

A

Q10 What will initially happen to Satan? Revelation 20:1-3

A

Q11 What will be Satan's ultimate fate? Where will he be placed? Revelation 20:7-10

A

Jesus Christ came and shared humanity "so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil." Hebrews 2:14. (Compare Ezekiel 28:18,19.) Satan will be destroyed.

my

response...

There are only two sides. There is no neutral territory. We either worship Jesus Christ as our Saviour or we serve Satan. The side we are on determines our destiny. Satan will endeavour to get us on his side by his many deceptions. Satan may suggest to some that the promises of the Bible are not true. Others may face ridicule and persecution. However, Revelation has exposed Satan, his malicious attacks and his methods. Revelation portrays his fate.

If we do not understand who our enemy is, and the methods he uses, we are extremely vulnerable. Satan has deceived many into thinking that he doesn't exist. We are safe only when we follow God's counsel. We are safe when we: (1) trust God's Word the Bible, for it is our only source of true understanding and our guard against deception, (2) obey God's Word the Bible, for then we are standing on the side of the Holy Spirit and truth, and (3) remain faithful to Jesus Christ.



Will you choose to reject Satan's temptations that make you hesitate in giving a total commitment of your life to Jesus Christ? Will you choose to follow Jesus Christ and to trust and obey God's Word?