

Satan, Fallen Angels, Us and the Bible

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Introduction

When you think of Satan - the devil - what image comes to mind? When you think of fallen angels - demons - you “see”... what? I really want you to stop for a moment and answer those questions ... maybe even write down your responses. I have a survey with several options you can access from my webpage. If none of the options suit you, then choose “other” and leave a comment. But formulate your answers before you go there so you record your initial responses. You can see results of all participants after you enter yours.

Function

Instead of seeing Satan or the fallen angels by some sort of “image,” I am going to make the case that these creatures should be thought of more in terms of function. In fact, ... one of their functions is “*image building*.” They want to control how they are thought of by those who believe they exist. They also want to control how they are thought of by those who do not believe they exist. The goal is creation of false imaging so as to divert attention from their tactical functioning.

Angel/Messenger of Light

The Bible teaches that “*Satan disguises himself as an angel (angelos) of light*” (2 Cor 11:14). In this instance, it is unfortunate to translate, “*angelos*” by the word, “*angel*.” When I think of “*an angel*,” I think of a celestial being. But this word often means, “*messenger*” (Mt 11:10, John the Baptizer, 2Cor 12:7, Paul's thorn, Ja 2:5 spies at Jericho). The verb, “*angelo*” means, “*to tell, to announce*” - so to think of the noun as one who tells (a teller) or announces (an announcer) is not a stretch. In fact, this is the primary meaning. I think the intention of 2 Corinthians 11:14 is to describe Satan's function - not appearance.

As a messenger, or announcer, as though from God, he presents errant “*spiritually illuminating*” messages - with the intent of making his audience believe contact with God has occurred. He is happy to do this toward an audience of one ... or one million. The “*goal*” is a presentation as close to being from God as possible ... without it being from God. The “*hope*” is for individuals to adopt the tailor-made facade, miss God - and enter eternal Hell. The vileness of knowingly presenting a false image of the Creator for such an end is evil unmatched. This is unparalleled malice - and is extremely foolish when one also knows there is no escape from this same Creator. And he does know that (Rev 12:12). Additionally, as He imitates God (or the things of God), he can reinforce his presentation with subjective experiences designed to serve as proof of an encounter with the Creator (See Rev 13:3,12-15). I will not be surprised if it is revealed at The Judgment that Satan was occupied with this type of “*messaging*” 99.999% of his time.

“Tailor-made Facade”

That phrase in the last paragraph was very deliberate. By it, I am introducing an important element to this discussion. If it is true, that individually Satan is our “*adversary*” (1Pet 5:8 - even though “*your*” in this passage is plural), and he develops attacks “*tailor-made*” toward each of us - we need to reflect on the abilities of such a creature.

For starters, Satan, and his angels, are extremely powerful beings - compared to us. They pose no threat to God, but we are no match on any level. There is no question in my mind that if God did not restrain them, I would have long ago been ripped to shreds. There is no way they would allow this

discussion ... and the matters in the coming paragraphs. Satan is a killer. He has been “*a murderer from the beginning*” (Jn 8:44). The angels who fell with him ... are not our friends either.

While I do not think God wants us to cower in fear of these angels, and their attacks and potentials, I do think He wants us to “*respect*” them. Jude warns of recklessness in these matters. Indeed, a mark of false teachers, preachers or prophets can be found in their pronouncements toward these fallen angels. They “*revile angelic majesties. But even Michael, the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.' But these men revile the things which they do not understand*” (Jude 8-10).

When Peter spoke of these reckless proclaimers, he said they are “*daring and self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels, who are greater in might and power, do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. But these like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures (fallen angels?) also be destroyed*” (2Pet 2:10-12). We are not to admire, honor, or submit to Satan or the other fallen angels, but we are to acknowledge their superiority (at present), take a hands-off approach to them and defer them to their Maker. That is what I mean by “*respect*.” Concerning Satan, we are to “*be on the alert*” and “*resist him*” (1Pet 5:8,9 and Ja 4:7), and not be “*ignorant of his schemes*” (2Cor 2:11). As “*the tempter*” he lurks, looking for an opportune time (Mt 4:3 and Lk 4:13). But anything beyond this? If Michael, the archangel, did not dare rail him, and even now dares not take such a posture, it is hard for me to see how any man, even redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, has been elevated to a more powerful position than what Michael possesses. Remove yourself from those who rail against Satan, and his, claiming all kinds of power and authority over them.

Doctrines of Demons

Paul warned Timothy, “*the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from (apostasia) the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and **doctrines of demons***” (1Tim 4:1). Demons teach. They often do so through “*the hypocrisy of liars*” (1Ti 4:2). These deceitful spirits also employ “*deceitful workers ... servants ... (who) disguise themselves as servants of righteousness*” (2 Cor 11:13-15). Do you think those who are listening to these “*liars*” or disguised “*servants of righteousness*” believe they are sitting at the feet ... of teachings from demons? Actually, these two passages may be instructing us on two different ways fallen angels function. Let's look closer.

Working With Man's Will

Oftentimes, Satan, and his angels, simply work in concert with man's will. The bulk of our “*victims*” in the preceding paragraph are probably in that camp. When it is said, “*some will fall away from (apostasia) the faith*” the word, “*apostasia*” is key. Here again, we have what I consider an unfortunate translation. “*Apostasia*” is a compound word from the preposition “*apo*” (motion away from something having never been in it) plus “*stasis*” (“*a standing*”). Our “*victims*” are not falling away from, or out of, anything (which would be “*ek*” + “*pipto*”). They are standing and willfully moving away from the faith having never been in it. They are of the number who want “*to have their ears tickled*” heaping up “*teachers according to their own desires and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths*” (2Tim 4:3,4). Secularly, have you ever heard of evolution? That is a myth of the first degree. Then, theologically ... the tree is infested with birds (Ezek 31:6, Dan 4:12, with Mt 13:32). When we are told, “*some will stand and move away from (apostasia) the faith*” ... that is a mighty big “*some*.” My point? Demons, and/or Satan, do not need to violate the will of these

“victims.” They simply work in concert with those wills ... and all parties are glad. Demons functioning in this vein I think of as “influencing agents.” That is different from a second way they can function, which is ...

Demon Possession - Get a Load of This

It is absolutely true that fallen angels can inflict great suffering in those they possess (e.g., Mk 5:1-20 and Mt 17:14-17). But that is not always the case. The accounts involving Elymas (Ac 13:8-12), and the fortunetelling slave-girl (Ac 16:16-19), describe an entirely different possession experience. There is no indication these individuals were at all “bothered” by their infestation or that their wills were being violated. But, for me, the most startling account of possession by a fallen angel ... involves Judas.

There are two recorded instances of Satan possessing Judas (who knows ... maybe there were more incidents). Let's look at both of these in light of the presentation I have been making.

In the first account, we are told, “*Satan entered into Judas ... (and he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them*” (Lk 22:3,4). Judas was literally Satan-possessed. It is obvious the ensuing conversation was a very controlled, methodical, reasoned exchange among all present. And the reaction of those who conversed with ... Satan in the flesh? The chief priests and officers “*were delighted (chairō)*” - which could also be translated, “*rejoiced.*” So, we have a Satan-possessed man creating ... a rejoicing audience. To be sure, these revelers had no idea they were shaking hands with ... their father (Jn 8:44). They know now. There is no hint that anyone's will in this affair was being violated. In fact, just the opposite. Their wills were being served - whether possessed or influenced.

The second instance was during the last supper in the upper room. Jesus revealed His betrayer by giving him a dipped morsel of bread. “*And after the morsel, Satan then entered into him.*” The Satan-possessed Judas then exited the room at Jesus' command, “*What you do, do quickly.*” This is one command ... that Satan and Judas happily obeyed. We are then informed the disciples thought the Satan-possessed man (one of their own number they had known for years) was leaving to either buy some things for the feast or to “*give something to the poor.*” They thought he was departing ... for ministry (Jn 13:21-30). They were totally oblivious that Satan was inside this man, this very familiar man, right in their midst ... close enough to receive this morsel from the King.

So, are we more discerning than the spiritual dullards of both of these incidents? You can answer that for yourself. I have already answered it for myself. I am a dullard.

“The Devil Made Me Do It!”

That defense will not work for Judas. Satan simply supplied “*the boost*” to go ahead and do the desire that already resided in the transgressor's heart. In my mind, the ultimate evidence of this surfaced when Pilate was in private with Jesus. Pilate was frustrated that Jesus was not answering him, and part of Jesus' response included, “*(H)e who delivered Me up to you has the greater sin*” (Jn 19:11). “*He*” is a third person singular which I believe points directly at Judas. Satan may have used Judas in his designs, but God drops no hint that Judas was a victim of Satan. Indeed, as one of his children he was willingly carrying out the desires of his father. I have the feeling that Satan functions in this manner ... with more of his children than just Judas. What do you think? But, let's move on and discuss ...

Angels: Are Each of Them Unique?

We know every human being is one-of-a-kind. Physically, each one's DNA is unique. But, beyond our physical uniqueness, we are also unique in intelligence, abilities, temperament - and how

all these things are combined. We are, in every way, unique. So, ... what about angels? Is it possible they too are all one-of-a-kind ... different in intelligence, abilities, temperament - and how all these things are combined? Actually, it is impossible to be otherwise. Every morally accountable being fills his/her own space uniquely - whether man or angel.

And Now Add Sin Into the Mix

Concerning man, I am of the persuasion that sin has suppressed and compressed us into a degree of commonality that will be removed when we enter glory. In other words, if sin was absent in all of us even now, our uniqueness would be exponentially pronounced over what we currently see. Additionally, sin warps us in unique ways. Some of the warping is quite predictable, but sometimes it is surprising and unpredictable. When explaining why the Law was given, Paul said, *“death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's offense”* (Ro 5:14). Adam's descendents, infected with an inherited sin nature, came up with *“new ways”* to sin. Adam's *“gift”* ... was filled with surprises far beyond his imagination. But, not only do his descendants have different sin inclinations, but the affects vary dramatically... mentally, emotionally and physically. To think that fallen angels are not impacted by the power of sin in unique and even unexpected ways is to fail to recognize the power of sin. Here is a quote I wrote years ago. It is on a drawing for one of my songs called, *“With The Other Hand.”* Everything in parenthesis I have added here.

*“Sin, in its simplest form, is any single violation of any of God's commands (Ja 2:10).
Yet, at the same time, I believe sin is the most powerful 'force' in existence (God is not a force).
Sin deceives us, blinds us and sears our conscience (Heb 3:13, 2Cor4:4 and 1Tim 4:2).
Sin callouses our affections and hardens our heart (Eph 4:19, Mt 24:12 and Heb 3:8).
Sin enslaves us and results in our physical death (Jn 8:34 and Ro 5:12).
And, if we leave this life with our sins unforgiven,
our sins will make up our eternal death warrant (Rev 20:12 and Col 2:14)
assigning us, body and soul, to a just level in Hell (Jn 5:25-29 and Mt 25:31-46).
Even Satan himself is irreversibly locked in its grip (Rev 12:12).”*

No moral creature who sins is immune from sin's debilitating power - angels included. In fact, with untold years of practicing sin, only God knows the devastation that has been exacted upon these creatures. Sin is a degenerating force always moving the sinner further into its deep recesses. It is relentless in its death grip. Furthermore, just as people sin differently from one another, it is reasonable to suspect angels do not sin in the same ways. They, like people, may have varied sin inclinations and weaknesses. So, while Satan may function in and through Judas as shown above, it does not follow that other fallen angels operate in the same manner ... or can. Just as some people become incoherent and incapacitated by sin, I will not be surprised if we find that some of these angels have become near basket cases ... especially as they *“see,”* with varying clarity, their approaching doom. Contemplations on this matter quickly become unbearable - and they might not have access to *“a bottle”* in which to temporarily bury themselves. Even I want to run from thinking on these things. Satan may have *“great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time”* but it does not follow that other fallen angels are reacting in like manner with this same knowledge (Rev 12:12). Additionally, on the other side of the sin ledger, just as people cherish different kinds of sin behaviors - so, also angels might have particular sin preferences. Bottom line, just as sin warps people in different ways and in varying degrees, I suspect the ranks of the fallen angels are similarly riddled. We will see.

The First Error - The First Sin

There was a first one - a first error and a first sin. These are not the same thing. Error is possible without sin, but error probably almost always leads to some sin. Before taking a stab at the first sin in the ranks of the angels, let's look at the first one closer to home.

In the garden of Eden, Eve was in error about God's command before she sinned. When challenged about the prohibited fruit, she erroneously quoted God. *"God has said, 'You shall not eat from it, or touch it, lest you die.'"* (Gen 3:3). God said nothing about touching the fruit (Gen 2:17). It is noteworthy that even before sin became common, Eve was adding to God's words. What a legacy. Disaster accompanies such error ... and she has mothered an abundance of like activity in this regard. *"You surely shall not die!"* (Gen 3:4). Satan ... lied. To this we shall return. So, when she touched the fruit - and did not die - the bite soon followed. And with that bite, she did die. We are *"dead in our trespasses and sins"* (Col 2:13). She died spiritually in that instant, now separated from God (Isa 59:2). Physical death came later. If she was not redeemed before exiting this life, *"the second death, the lake of fire"* awaits (Rev 20:14) ... the third experience of death (Read, *"Death and Life and the Bible"* for a detailed treatment on this).

I do not know how Eve came to embrace this error or how long she walked around with it in her head - but it eventually assisted her into sin. God commanded Adam about the fruit before she was formed, so assuming Adam accurately related the matter, did she simply mishear? Or, did she hear correctly, only to later embellish Adam's account by adding *"or touch it"* as she eyed the prohibited fruit? Of course, it is entirely possible the first error resided with Adam - and he was the one who added to God's instructions. After all, once Eve ate the fruit, *"she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate"* (Gen 3:6). I have been told the Hebrew indicates Adam was present with Eve throughout this exchange with Satan, and he not only failed to correct her error about touching the fruit but he also made no attempt to stop ... the guinea pig. A great husband ... and legacy he fathered. It appears several errors - maybe even sins - occurred before that fruit was consumed. My point is that error, or errors, occurred somewhere in the time-line before the first sin (by God's reckoning) came crashing down. Up until that moment, Adam or Eve (or both), though error infected, were still walking in a state of innocence. So, what was the first error in the angelic ranks, who carried it, and how long was it entertained before actual sin occurred ... and sin's floodgate opened?

Imagination ... Informed By Scripture

I am going to take some liberties with some of the forthcoming material. Continue reading with discernment and simply consider what I present. Even I hold much of this very loosely. For starters, I am going to assume that select quotes from addresses to the king of Tyre and king of Babylon give us information about Satan. I am not alone in this speculation as many commentators believe these passages reach beyond these men - but how much and what parts (if any) you determine for yourself.

Here is part of God's address to the King of Tyre. *"Thus says the Lord God, 'You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets was in you. On the day that you were created, they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers (guards) and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence and you sinned. Therefore, I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because*

of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings that they may see you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore, I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you. You have become terrified and you will be no more” (Ezek 28:12-19).

God spoke this to the king of Babylon. *“How you have fallen from heaven, O star (shining one, day star), son of the dawn! You have been cut down to earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven. I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High.’ Nevertheless, you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you saying, ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’”* (Isa 14:12-17).

To what king would God say, *“You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty”*? While many men have been filled with such illusions of grandeur (delusions of grandeur) and might say this about themselves ... this is God speaking. Would He say to the king of Tyre, *“You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created”*? Or what man would God describe as *“the anointed cherub”* or a *“covering cherub”* who was *“on the holy mountain of God ... (walking) in the midst of the stones of fire”*? In Revelation 12, we are told there was war in heaven and *“Satan, who deceives the whole world ... was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him”* (Rev 12: 7-9). It seems to me that much of this material in Ezekiel and Isaiah reach past these two kings - and point to Satan. If this is correct, here are some things I glean from these accounts about him.

He was created.

He was created perfect/innocent and full of wisdom.

His beauty was stunning.

He held a position of great importance. But then ...

He sinned.

He was removed from his place of trust.

He became a destructive, deceiving source toward everything/everyone he could reach.

A time will come when his activities will be halted.

At that time, the veil will be drawn back, and those who see him will be appalled at his smallness ... but not yet.

Appalled at His Smallness ... But Not Yet

For us, right now, in this age and time, this subtitle is a critical statement. If you have come with me this far, please stay with me. It is important we examine this ... but not yet. First, I want us to go back to that first error - that first sin.

My guess is that Satan made the first error, and that error was an overvaluation of himself. Somehow, he concluded the last word of my last sentence, and the second word of this sentence, should have started with a capital “H”. He may not have carried this error in himself (small “h” is deliberate) for very long before it was reckoned, by his Creator (small “h”, capital “C” intentional) ... as sin. After all, Jesus did say that if we lust for a woman in our heart, He deems that adultery already (Mt 5:28). So we can sin internally with no one else even aware of the transaction that has occurred

between God and His creature. Anyway, my guess is that Satan, fairly soon after this error/sin in self-estimation, then made the first public display of a sin. It was probably some kind of a pride, self exaltation act or word. And what do you suppose was the reaction in the angelic ranks? Let's construct the scene with some background information and some ... thought. I like to think of this as "*biblically informed imagination*." I am careful about such exercises as this can descend into lethal excesses. But, in this instance, I am willing to indulge and take some risk. The reason is because there is a point I will make that will translate into "*answers*" for today.

The Original Angelic Order: All Unique ... and All Sinless

All the angels were created sinless. How long they operated in this state is beyond the information we now have. It could have been eons - or however time is reckoned in such an environment. Moral perfection was the only thing known. Additionally, whatever "*substances*" made up their "*world*" and "*bodies*" (some type of visible forms) - the beauty and intricacies were/are beyond our comprehension. In such a state, certain things about the Creator would be known, but other things unknown. With no sin present, there would be no knowledge (certainly no experiential knowledge) that the Creator had a capacity of anger. No situation would cause its exposure. Similarly, His wrath would remain hidden. So too, jealousy, mercy, grief, patience ... the list goes on. And there is no way the extreme depths of a redemptive love in a system of justice and mercy - culminating on the cross - could ever be known ... or imagined. That particular episode (salvation plan) created "*things into which angels long to look*" (1Pet 1:12). This is a picture of angels stooping down and peering into something as they are thinking, inquiring, and trying to figure out God's redemption plan. They are creatures who learn.

Anyway, go back and place yourself as best as you can in this pre-sin, no-sin, no-concept-about-sin environment. Can you imagine the scene when it became known that a violation against God occurred? The angels were most likely stunned by such an unknown experience - with no vocabulary to even describe what they just witnessed. Even I, as one born in sin and surrounded by it, remember the first "*big one*" quite vividly. It was a cuss word by my friend directed at me from an embittered heart - and it shocked me. It is as vivid today (50+ years later and a lifetime of sin) as when he said it. The shock in heaven ... I am sure every single angel - even the ones who fell later - remember that first one in extremely vivid detail ... even though they have since witnessed myriads upon myriads of sins in their own ranks as well as the mountains of sin in thousands of years of sinful human activity. I am certain every angel can recall the shock of ...

That First One

When some kind of understanding began coalescing in their minds as to what had just happened, I imagine terror ripped through the entire order. Again, there was probably not even a word to place on the event. I have worked in a couple of different businesses that lacked the vocabulary needed to describe some process. It is amazing how disconcerting this is when attempting to communicate one's thoughts. In this instance, though unable to enunciate much of anything, I am sure they instinctively knew something quite different than anything they had ever known or seen - was coming. What it would be ... they probably had no clue - but knew they were about to witness previously unknown activity from their Creator. Since then, an entire array of new characteristics and divine abilities have unfolded before them. It would be of great interest to hear their stories of this journey - testimonies from "*His chosen angels*" (1Tim 5:21). Maybe that experience awaits us in glory.

A Point for Answers for Today

Have you ever heard this type of question/charge before? *“If God is so good, why did He create a world filled with so much suffering?”* Or, *“If God is all powerful, and a God of love, why do innocent children starve to death ... why do tyrants rule ... why so many natural disasters?”* The basic question ... *“questions”* God's love, goodness, power and ability to rule. The answers coming from Christian's are usually pathetic. Arguments citing man's choice does not explain an inherited sin nature. We “go astray from birth” (Ps 58:3). To then assert, *“He had to make us with the ability to choose good and evil or else our obedience and love for Him would be robotic”* - is ridiculous. The angels in the pre-fall state were not robots, and His chosen angels (1Tim 5:21) still aren't and never will be. And heaven will not be inhabited by robots ... man, angel, or any other order. But beyond any of this, how is God's love central ... for people doomed to an eternal Hell, after only a short time here, with no exit from its torments? This makes no sense if love is the **central** motivating force behind all of God's activity ... especially when one factors in the tremendous obstacles in sinful man's way. Billions so doomed will have lived their entire life in a time or location (or both) where the Bible was either prohibited by an oppressive government or not even written yet. Multitudes of individuals will leave this life as guilty sinners having never even heard of the Bible - much less having opportunity to hear its salvation message ... which is the only option for escaping God's wrath. And where the Bible was available, everyone was born to sinful parents, surrounded by anti-God forces and messages from the start (with an inherited sin nature inclined toward some of those presentations) ... and born under the authority, and in the domain, of malicious, deceiving, powerful angels. Satan is “the god of this world” (2Cor 4:4). He exempts no nation. If love is the center of God, and everything emanates from that core, then this *“thing”* makes no sense.

One brother, with whom I worked at a street gospel mission 30+ years ago, said he remembered me often say, *“Somehow God is going to come away from this thing clean.”* What I was saying is that God has no fault in the evil of this age, or in evil in the ranks of the angels, or the final disposition of any moral being in either order - even in light of the preceding paragraph. God works in all of this ... for His purposes. I believe, as stated earlier, that He determined to allow sin to come into existence - and all the mayhem and situations of sin - to reveal many aspects of His being that would be unknowable otherwise. Yet, He will emerge *“clean.”* I am also of the persuasion the fall in these two orders of created beings will never be repeated anywhere else for all eternity. If there are other orders of morally sentient beings, they may be schooled in the occurrences of this period, so as to have deeper understandings of their Creator, but will ever experience sin and its consequences.

I have written more about this entire matter in some detail in an article, *“Why Would a Perfect God Create Imperfect Beings?”* You may find it of interest. Bottom-line: Love is not the center of His being. He is the center of His being with love being one attribute He possesses ... but not the only one.

Getting Back to Satan. “Satan ... Lied”

When Satan took it upon himself *“to correct”* Eve's understanding of God's command about the fruit, he said, *“You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil”* (Gen 3:4,5). This was a lie ... with a little truth sprinkled in. Adam, if he was indeed right there, remained mute as multiple charges were levied against God. According to Satan, God lied about the consequence of eating the fruit. The reason God was lying was because He wanted to withhold benefits in knowledge from this couple. Satan wanted Adam and Eve to see themselves as victims of a God who's intent was to keep Himself superior ... and them stupid. Even the one thread in Satan's attack that did hold some truth was flawed. Do people now really know *“good and evil”*? Sometimes. But the Bible is full of examples of man's confusion on what

is actually good ... or evil. Here is a passage that warns of this general situation. *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”* (Isa 5:21). This world is filled with people who believe abortion is a right *“right.”* Or, how many people do not believe legitimate heterosexual marriage is required in order for morally acceptable sexual activity to occur? Man's confusion, after his eyes were “opened,” abounds. After all, the first thing Adam and Eve noticed was *“they were naked.”* So, *“they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings”* (Gen 3:7). So it is evil ... to see your marriage partner naked? Did God forget to include this in the Law of Moses when He established all kinds of sexual law for the Israelites as He defined sin for them? Let's get back to Satan ... lying.

Cherishing Sin

One dire consequence of sin is that it is possible for sinners to fall in love with some sin - to cherish it. The Koine Greek word that describes this activity is, *“phileo(v)”* and *“philos/philia(n).”* The verb can be translated *“to kiss”* and the nouns, *“a kiss, a friend.”* Endearment, or cherishing, is the concept and involves warm activity toward objects, often with an accompanying emotional attachment. Look at this list of potential cherishings.

Troublesome Phileo(v) Uses:

Pharisee's cherishing public praying (Mt 6:5).
Cherishing father or mother more than Christ (Mt 10:37).
Cherishing son or daughter more than Christ (Mt 10:37).
Pharisee's cherishing the place of honor at banquets (Mt 23:6).
Pharisee's cherishing the chief seats in the synagogues (Mt 23:6).
Pharisee's cherishing respectful greetings in the marketplaces (Mt 23:7).
Pharisee's cherishing the title, *“Rabbi”* (Mt 23:7).
Cherishing one's own life (Jn 12:25).
The world cherishing its own (Jn 15:19).

The noun, *“philos(m)/philia (f)”* can be compounded with other words ... thus marrying an emotional endearment to those things, too.

Troublesome Philos/Philia(n) Compound Word Uses:

Cherishing silver/money/covetousness - *philarguria* and *philarguros* (1Ti 6:10 and Lk 16:14, etc.).
Cherishing of one's self - *philautos* (2Ti 3:2).
Cherishing of pleasures - *phileedonos* (2Ti 3:4).
Cherishing strife - *philonikia* and *philonikos* (Lk 22:24 and 1Cor 11:16).
Cherishing preeminence - *philoprotuo* (3Jn 9).
Cherishing worldly “wisdom” - *philosophia* and *philosophos* (Col 2:8 and Acts 17:18).

I left out two. Here they are.

Cherishing lying (Rev 22:15).
Cherishing the practice of lying (Rev 22:15).

Who might be the father of that? (Jn 8:44). When Satan lied to Eve, and she succumbed, and God's wrath came crashing down on this world, do you think he ... had any regrets? If joy erupts in

liars when their lies succeed - you have found one who cherishes lying. Satan, most assuredly, has fathered this line. With his first lie, he evidently fell in love with that ability and has built an entire existence upon it. As a disguised “*messenger of light*” (2Cor 11:14), these lies ... he “*phileo*”s doing. Earlier I said that I will not be surprised if we find Satan functioned in this lying role 99.9999% of the time. I now think ... that is all he does. So, make that 100%.

The Destiny of Fallen Angels

Jesus tells us that Hell, “*the eternal fire ... has been prepared for the devil and his angels.*” Satan knows this. He also knows that all people who are finally “*on His left*” are “*accursed ones*” and will share this same fate (Mt 25:41). Additionally, he knows he will have no power there and will not be inflicting any torment on anyone. God created this place and it will be eternally ruled by God. As the most culpable of all who are there, Satan will occupy its worst place ... with God Himself as the Punisher. In truth, “*it is a terrifying thing to fall into the Hands of the living God*” (He10:31).

Satan wants us there. He wants all of us there. But if he achieved this, would he be happy? Well, if he ever did experience happiness, I am sure that capacity has long since vacated his experience. He is now “*full of wrath, knowing that he has only a short time*” (Rev 12:12). I think “*full*” means “*full.*” This creature is entirely filled with ill will toward every human being. He knows our dire straights in our natural condition, and he knows the lone avenue God has provided for escape from our doom. What is even more amazing is that each action he makes against us is adding to his “book.” He is making his coming sentence worse with each act. This ... he also knows, yet, it restrains him not.

Billions of Subjects

There are billions of people on this planet. The Bible says Satan is, “*the god of this world*” (2Cor 4:4) and the “*whole world reclines in the evil one*” (1Jn 5:19). If Satan, and the fallen angels, are active in well-planned strategies toward unbelievers, constantly hatching tailor-made facades designed to keep them away from a saving knowledge of God ... how fast are they? While they are spirits (Eph 6:11,12), and may be “*other dimensional*” - they do have some kind of “limits.” After all, they are not God who is everywhere at all times (Ps 139:1-18, Heb 4:13). And if they are constantly probing and setting up attacks on thousands and thousands (millions?) of Christians worldwide ... such “*physical*” abilities quickly pass comprehension. Can you even begin to grasp the abilities of such creatures?

Thousands of Years

Additionally, these fallen angels have been engaged in these actions ... for thousands of years. I will not be surprised if they require no rest as they operate at an energy level wholly different from our experience. No time off, no vacations, no need for sleep. And they do accumulate knowledge. For example, Satan thought he could get Job to curse God to His face (Job 1:11). The first attempt failed. Later, when God brought up this failure, Satan had obviously regrouped and issued another challenge scenario. God gave him a second opportunity ... which likewise failed (Job 2:3-6, then read the rest of the book). Do you think Satan learned anything from these failed attempts? Do you suppose the deceptions and tactics of fallen angels have grown more refined over time? Think of some skill you possess. I play the guitar. My current ability is nothing like the first time I touched one. Maybe at The Judgment we will be shown differences in early demonic attacks upon Adam, Eve, Cain, etc. (early sinners) ... and attacks leveled today. And even though we are all unique, we still fall into rather narrow “*personality types.*” This means, these angels have had opportunity to attack individuals a lot like each of us. Do you suppose they gained some insight as to what might, or might not, work? But, ...

it is also quite possible that we, in sin, are so simple and predictable, and they are so superior, this has always been child's play ... with Job as a rare exception. I mean ... I know I am no Job. I am easy prey. You ... probably are, too. Sorry.

A Side Note

As I re-read this account about Job, I was struck by the exchanges between God and Satan. They were (are?) on speaking terms ... and calmly conversed. As his Creator, God knows Satan thoroughly and understands him fully. He knows why Satan is the way he is - and what he will do in each and every circumstance. Proof of this lies in the fact that God has declared "*the end from the beginning*" (Isa 46:10). If Satan, or any of his, were any kind of "*wild card*," such predictive capability would not be possible. Now, here is my point. God has decided to withhold mercy toward this creature. Justice alone awaits him ... and all the fallen angels. Who are you when compared to such creatures as these? If these creatures are not indispensable to God, and His well being, I am not so sure our presence ... is too critical. If this does not put the fear of God in you, I don't know what will. "*For if anyone thinks he is something, being nothing, he deceives himself*" (Gal 6:3). "*I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment ...*" (Ro 12:3). You might think you are "*somebody*" - but only what He thinks ... matters.

A Side Note About Deceivers and Manipulators

What does a successful deceiver think about those he has deceived? How does a manipulator view ... the manipulated? Are these individuals considered equals? Is respect generated? The matured result of such a relationship is disdain for the inferior boob. While "*the victor*" might experience great satisfaction in such an arrangement, there is no guarantee this sweet taste will always be the case. Have you ever had a job that was at first a challenge - only to later become a bore? Initially, less informed customers were eagerly worked with - but, at some point along the way, the ignorance level became tiresome. Boredom carries its own innate torture. I am not at all sure we are that "*challenging*" to these angels. It may be torture in itself to stoop down to our level to engage us. But the thought of us gaining eternal, undeserved pardon, coupled with their desire we enter Hell with them ... motivates them to press on. They may now be functioning in a boring, yet compulsive, angst. It may be a grudging work ... the duping of uninteresting simpletons.

More Questions/Observations

There are other questions about these angels and their environment. We are told there was "*war in heaven*" and Satan, and the other fallen angels, were "*thrown down to the earth*" (Rev 12:7-10. Whether this is a past tense event or one to be fulfilled in the future is irrelevant to the present discussion). Such a scenario brings forth several inquiries at once. There must be some kind of "*physical*" contact possible among these beings - but do they use weapons? Can they be injured "*physically*"? It does not appear they can kill one another - but they still seem to be able to prevail territorially. Satan was cast out. So, how might all these matters apply to us?

A Little Lower Than the Angels

We are described as having been made "*a little lower than the angels*" (Ps 8:5). When Adam was in a state of innocence, man might have been pretty close in station to angels. But, in our present situation, and fallen condition, the gap surely widened considerably - in about every way one might measure. But the time is coming when that gap may close to its original size. Follow me on this.

“Not Yet” (Referenced Earlier) Has Arrived: At The Judgment and Beyond

Assuming the material in Isaiah and Ezekiel can be rightly applied to Satan, some aspects to his demise are found there. In Isaiah, look at the last line. *“How you have fallen from heaven, O star (shining one, day star), son of the dawn! You have been cut down to earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven. I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High.’ Nevertheless, you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you saying, ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’”* (Isa 14:12-17).

In Ezekiel, look at the last few lines. *“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings that they may see you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore, I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you. You have become terrified and you will be no more”* (Ezek 28:12-19).

When a tyrant is completely de-weaponized, the ensuing scene is often ... bewildering. With henchmen gone, weapons gone, and all retributive power gone it is amazing how small they look ... and are. They look small in intellect. They look small in foresight. They look small and perverted in personality. Wisdom is absent, logic is nonexistent. And error exudes from every pore of their being - error in intellect, error in foresight, error in personality. When this initial amazement passes, onlookers and survivors then move into reactions of disdain. They are sickened by the intellect, foresight, personality - foolishness - of the ex-tyrant. But any thought of pity for them, or mercy towards them, is not entertained even for a moment. For them to reap what they have sown becomes the sole and universal thought. This has happened to men all through the ages and Satan knows a moment is coming when he will arrive at this same point ... but not yet. With the demise of each tin-horn dictator, Satan witnesses a preview of his own coming fate ... but not yet. But, the time is coming when “not yet” will be past tense. That will come on Judgment Day when we will have been transformed into ...

Our Glorified State

Great changes are in store for the Christian mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. Actually, these will not be great changes ... they will be monumental changes. Mentally, we will “know fully” even as we “have been fully known” (1Cor 13:12). Emotionally, we will feel the same way about things as God does. What angers Him will anger us, what causes Him joy will cause us joy (1Cor 6:2,3). Spiritually, we will be eternally confirmed in righteousness and never sin again (1Pet 5:10). And physically we will be in a body like the one in which Jesus arose - immortal, never again subject to disease, injury or want. And we will be able to pass through walls if need be (Jn 20:19). Whatever the environment, we will dominate. When elevated to that state, Satan's “not yet” will give way to “your rule is over.” Dis-empowerment will be total and he will never again be able to inflict anything on anyone. He will be finished: “... you will be no more” (Ezek 28:19).

In this glorified state, you can see that the gap between a glorified Christian and any of God's fallen angels will be significantly narrowed – and in some ways even closed. We will “judge angels” (1Cor 6:3) ... these angels. And I think we will also find some degree of narrowing even with God's preserved angels. There is no evidence they will undergo radical changes before or after The Judgment like what we will have experienced. But, we will still probably remain a little lower than those “chosen

angels” (1Tim 5:21).

However, there is one matter which will forever place us in a unique category. We will be the only creatures who actually sinned ... and lived. We will be eternal trophies of mercy, boasting about God and His redeeming activity during our rebellion and ignorance. We will eternally declare His manifold graces and multifaceted mercies ... to all who came before us and to whatever orders of moral beings may be created after us. And in moments of reflection, we will exude gratitude from a unique place - a recess in us that a non-sinning creature will never know.

Conclusion

If you are reading this, Satan is still operating. While he knows doom is coming, without the reality of it ... this may still be somewhat theoretical. I do not think it is possible to know what Hell will actually be like before the reality of it. This is a terrifying contemplation. In the meantime, may God keep the hedges up (Job 1:10) and protect us from these malicious beings. At the same time, may He use us to assault Satan's domain and plunder his house as we lay down Christ penetrating avenues of exit for all whom He allows us to touch. God bless us all.

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