

Origin of Evil/Sin and the Fall of Lucifer

"God is love." His nature, His law, His government, His dealings with man, and every one of His manifestations are expressions of His love. [1 John 4:16](#). And God's love is associated with other qualities of His character. See chapter I. Then how could God permit evil to originate?

All intelligent beings were created free to choose between obedience or disobedience to the great principles of truth, righteousness, and love. Lucifer (meaning "light-bearer"), one of the most exalted cherubim, misused his freedom of choice. [Deuteronomy 30:19](#); [Galatians 6:7, 8](#). This was the beginning of the great rebellion in heaven. Lucifer became Satan (Hebrew Shatan, meaning "adversary"). He set aside the law of God through self-exaltation, deception, lying, and murder. [Ezekiel 28:13-15, 17](#); [Isaiah 14:12-14](#); [Revelation 12:7, 8](#); [John 8:44](#) (cf [1 John 3:15](#)).

When Satan and his angels were expelled from heaven, they found their abode on this earth, where they continued the work of rebellion as our first parents yielded to him. [Revelation 12: 9, 12, 13](#); [Job 1:6, 7](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#); [Jude 6](#) (cf [Matthew 8:29](#)); [Genesis 3:1-15](#) (cf [Romans 5:12](#)).

Satan falsely claims that this earth, with everything that is in it, belongs to him. He became the "god" and "prince of this world," not by right, but by usurpation. [Luke 4:5, 6](#); [2 Corinthians 4:4](#); [John 12:31](#); [1 John 5:19](#).

The final victory of Christ over Satan was obtained in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. [John 14:30](#); [16:11](#); [Hebrews 2:14, 15](#). As a result Christ's victory, we can also overcome. [1 Corinthians 15:57](#); [James 4:7, 8](#); [Revelation 12:11](#).

During the millennium (1000 years), Satan will be bound by a chain of circumstances on this earth, and at the end of the millennium he and his followers will be loosened for a short time, and then they will finally be destroyed, and neither root nor branch will be left. [Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10](#); [Malachi 4:1, 3](#); [Isaiah 14:15-20](#); [Ezekiel 28:16,18, 19](#).

Where and How Did Sin Originate?

"The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of 'the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.' Rom. 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, 'that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' [John 3:16](#)."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

"Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Lucifer, 'son of the morning,' was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God rested upon him."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

Satan puts the following questions into the minds of infidels: If God knew that our first parents would fall into temptation, why did He create them? Or, why didn't He, instead, create a different man and a different woman, who would not fall when tempted? But he does not ask the same questions about himself, since he is the originator of sin, and the one who tempted Adam and Eve to transgress God's command. The origin of sin is a mystery to us. [Deuteronomy 29:29](#).

"There are thousands today echoing the same rebellious complaint against God. They do not see that to deprive man of the freedom of choice would be to rob him of his prerogative as an intelligent being, and make him a mere automaton. It is not God's purpose to coerce the will. Man was created a free moral agent. Like the inhabitants of all other worlds, he must be subjected to the test of obedience; but he is never brought into such a position that yielding to evil becomes a matter of necessity. No temptation or trial is permitted to come to him which he is unable to resist. God made such ample provision that man need never have been defeated in the conflict with Satan."—[Patriarchs and Prophets](#), pp. 331-332.

"The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service."—[Patriarchs and Prophets](#), p. 34.

"But there was one [Lucifer] that chose to pervert this freedom. Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven."—[The Great Controversy](#), p. 493.

"When the conflict was renewed upon the earth, Satan again won a seeming advantage. By transgression, man became his captive, and man's kingdom also was betrayed into the hands of the archrebel. Now the way seemed open for Satan to establish an independent kingdom, and to defy the authority of God and His Son." —[Patriarchs and Prophets](#), p. 331.

"At the time when sin had become a science, when the hostility of man was most violent against heaven, when rebellion struck its roots deep into the human heart, when vice was consecrated as a part of religion, when Satan exulted in the idea that he had led men to such a state of evil that God would destroy the world, Jesus was sent into the world, not to condemn it, but, amazing grace! to save the world. The unfallen worlds watched with intense interest to see Jehovah arise and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth, and Satan boasted that if God did do this, he would complete his plans and secure for himself the allegiance of unfallen worlds. He had arguments ready by which to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the world's above; but at this crisis, instead of destroying the world, God sent his Son to save it."—*Signs of the Times*, February 5, 1894.

"Why was it that Satan's existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation."—[Education](#), p. 308.

MANY PEOPLE TODAY AGREE THAT OUR WORLD IS A BATTLEFIELD OF GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITUAL POWERS. THEIR ACTIVITIES ARE EVIDENT, FOR INSTANCE,

IN THE DRAMATIC CONTRAST BETWEEN THE HAPPINESS OF LIFE AND THE PAIN OF DEATH, THE BEAUTY OF LOVE AND THE CRUELTY OF HATE, OR THE FACT THAT SOMETIMES GOOD PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WHO SUFFER THE MOST (CF. PS. 73:2-17; MAL. 3:13-18). IN JESUS' PARABLE OF THE WEEDS (MATT. 13:24-29), THE SERVANTS ASKED THE OWNER OF THE FIELD, "SIR, DIDN'T YOU SOW GOOD SEED IN YOUR FIELD? WHERE THEN DID THE WEEDS COME FROM?" AND THE OWNER REPLIED, "AN ENEMY DID THIS."

The mysterious coexistence of and dispute between good and evil do raise a few crucial questions: Did that controversy have a beginning, and will it ever end? What is its basic theological meaning? And, more, how widespread is it in our world today? This article seeks to find some biblical answers to these three foundational questions.

How It All Began

The great controversy is a currently ongoing cosmic conflict that had a beginning and will have an end. Its mysterious beginning in the heavenly courts was foreseen but not ordained by God, who "made provision to meet the terrible emergency." After losing his gratitude to God and becoming increasingly jealous of Him (Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-17), Lucifer began to spread his apostasy in the heavenly courts. "God in His great mercy bore long with Lucifer,"³ but there came a time when the rebellion was consolidated, and Lucifer (who became Satan) and his angels were "hurled to the earth" (Rev. 12:7-9).

With the fall of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3), earth became the battlefield of good and evil.

Great Controversy

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the worldwide flood. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation. (Rev. 12:4-9; Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-18; Gen. 3; Rom. 1:19-32; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; Gen. 6-8; 2 Peter 3:6; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14.) Human history is much more than just the stage of human actions. It is indeed the scene of a continuous struggle between Satan's deceiving strategies and God's redemptive plan. Despite Satan's success in misleading the vast majority of human beings, God is still in control of the whole struggle and allows it to develop only within certain limits (cf. Dan. 4:32). Whenever those limits are pushed, God intervenes through His judgment, as in the destructions of the antediluvian world by the Flood (Gen. 6-7) and of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim by burning sulfur (Gen. 19:23-29; Deut. 29:23; Jude 7).

The pagan theory of natural immortality of the soul suggests that sin had a beginning but will never come to an end. By contrast, the Bible teaches that sin and sinners finally will be destroyed, and the universe will be restored to its original perfection and harmony. Through God's timely design of the plan of salvation (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 13:8) Christ's triumph over Satan, sin, and death (John 12:31; 14:30; 19:30; Rev 1:18) is assured. This

great controversy will be concluded with the final destruction of Satan, his angels, and all the wicked (Mal. 4:1; Jude 5-7).

What Does This All Mean?

The whole cosmic controversy gravitates around God's character as expressed in His moral law. Throughout history Satan developed different strategies to distort people's relationship with that law. In Old Testament times, up to the Babylonian exile, God's people were always tempted to transgress the law by idolatry. After the exile, the pendulum went to the opposite extreme of legalism, when the law was considered an end in itself for salvation. In the post-apostolic period, the cross of Christ, which confirmed the law (Rom. 3:31), began to be regarded as having abolished it. Meanwhile, the unconditional commitment to the law of God's end-time remnant people places them under the special fury of Satan (Rev. 12:17).

Some people consider the cosmic controversy as the center of biblical theology. But neither it nor any other theme can replace God as the unfolding center of all true doctrine. The cosmic controversy provides the basic theological framework in which all Bible doctrines and lifestyle principles become meaningful and rightly focused. Furthermore, it also gives us a correct understanding of history as a huge stage where human beings play their life role either for Satan and his misleading cause or for God and His saving plan.

Global Reality

As the great controversy moves toward its end, evil, temptation, and sin have become more aggressive in nature and more widespread in scope. In the Garden of Eden temptation was delimited geographically to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16, 17). With the fall of Adam and Eve temptation became a global reality with external (environmental) and internal (human nature) expressions (Gen. 3:7-19). In centuries past, the homes of God's children were often (though not always) fortresses of spiritual and moral values (cf. Joshua 24:15; Job 1:5). Yet, with the intrusion of modern media into our lives, all kinds of temptations became available to God's children everywhere.

Crucial within the great controversy is the dispute for the human mind, which commands personal and social behaviors. Christ explained that "from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly" (Mark 7:21, 22). The force of evil is recognized in Paul's words, "For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want" (Rom. 7:19, NASB).^{*} Only the supernatural power of God's saving grace can rescue sinners "from the dominion of darkness" and bring them "into the kingdom" of Christ (Col. 1:13, 14; cf. Eph. 2:1-10), restoring in them "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16) and making them "new creation[s]" (2 Cor. 5:17).

The great cosmic controversy began in heaven through the rebellion of Lucifer and his angels, was transferred to this world through the fall of Adam and Eve, and will last until the final destruction of sin and all impenitent sinners (including Satan and his angels) at the end of the 1,000 years mentioned in Revelation 20. Since sin is not eternal, nor sinners immortal, they will be destroyed, and God will restore this earth to its original perfect condition. Then, the pain of death will be replaced by the happiness of life; the cruelty of hate will be overruled by the beauty of love—and no longer will good people have to suffer. At last, good will have triumphed over evil.