

# Salvation: God's Love Forever

Bethany Bible Church, Adult Sunday School Class, September 8, 2013

## Our Salvation = Satan's Frustration

In this closing section of our study of salvation, we'll touch on some things that don't necessarily fit into some of the other categories--but that are wonderful things to think about nevertheless. And first, we'll talk about someone who doesn't look as positively on the 'wonder' of our salvation as we do . . .

### I. WHY SHOULD OUR SALVATION EVEN BE OF INTEREST TO SATAN?

- A. Satan is an angelic being. He is the most powerful of all the angelic intelligences that God has made. And in that respect alone, he would naturally have an interest in our salvation. 1 Peter 1:12 tells us that our salvation involves "things which angels desire to look into."<sup>1</sup> God's plan for our salvation involves the revealing of mysteries in the eternal purpose of God, "to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10). Our salvation will result in the hosts of God's elect angels praising Him in the heavens with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain . . ." (Revelation 5:12). So, as an angel--though a fallen and evil one--Satan would be as interested in what God has done to save us as all the other angels would be.
- B. But Satan's interest would not be the same as that of the elect and holy angels. He has a special interest in our salvation because it is something that is a personal threat to him and that involves his eternal doom. The Bible tells us that the redeemed are destined to be his judges. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians and told them, "Do you not know that we shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:3). The angels are often depicted in paintings and poetry as judging men. But the judgment of men is something that is given to Christ (see Acts 17:31). It is the angels who will be judged by the redeemed. And our redemption thus means Satan's doom in particular. As Paul said in Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."
- C. What a frustration it must be to Satan; to realize that we are destined in Christ to share in a glory that will immeasurably exceed that of his own! What an insult he must consider it to be that he--the most powerful being in all of creation up to this point--will be judged by us! And so; he has a vested interest in thwarting God's plan for our redemption:
  1. He constantly fights to hinder the spread of the gospel. Jesus said, "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart" (Matthew 13:19). With respect to his missionary work, Paul wrote to the Thessalonian believers and said, "Therefore we wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us" (1 Thessalonians 2:18; see also Romans 1:13; 15:22). Paul sought to preach the gospel plainly; and said, "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
  2. He continually accuses the saints before God. Just as he did with Job in Job 1-2, he makes a case against us before God. We're told that, during

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the time of the great tribulation, it will be said, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down” (Revelation 12:10). We are still living in a time that precedes the great tribulation; so Satan still accuses us before God. How grateful we should be, then, that God is the one who justifies us. “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect?” (Romans 8:33).

3. He seeks to cause division among the saints. And sadly, he often succeeds in this way to bring disrepute upon God’s people in the eyes of the unbelieving world. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians in their time of divisiveness, “Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:10-11).
4. He seeks to cause God’s people to trip up and fail in the faith. He seeks to discourage us and thus cause us to lose ground in our work in the gospel--and sometimes to lose the rewards of faithfulness in our labors. As Peter--who knew a thing or two about failures in the faith!--once wrote; “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world” (1 Peter 5:8-9). Paul wrote, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:10-12). Among the pieces of armor we’re to take up, Paul wrote, “above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one” (v. 16).

## II. WHAT DOES OUR SALVATION DO TO SATAN?

- A. It disarms him. One of the great weapons Satan has used against mankind is death--and particularly, the fear of it. After death comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27). Death came upon the human family because of the sin of Adam (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12); and Satan was the one who tempted Adam into that sin. But Paul writes of our victory over death in 1 Corinthians 15:54 and says; “So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’”
- B. It releases his prisoners. Very much along the lines of what was mentioned above, Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us this about the Lord Jesus: “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Our union with Jesus means the conquest of death; and the conquest of death means that Satan no longer has us in his shackles. The chains of the fear of death have been broken; and we are set free!
- C. It makes a public spectacle of him. One of the means by which Satan accuses God’s people is by the handwritten requirement of the law--which law we have failed to keep. But Paul writes; “And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out

the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” (Colossians 2:13-15). The very thing Satan accuses us of has been fully fulfilled for us by our Savior!

- D. It ensures his ultimate doom. Jesus brought this about for us by His death on the cross. Once our Lord’s approach to the cross was established, He Himself declared, “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (John 12:31-32). And ‘cast out’ Satan will quite literally be! Revelation is, no doubt, a book that’s on Satan’s “Most Hated” list; because in Revelation 20:7-10; we’re told--after a brief rebellion at the end of the thousand year reign of our Lord, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

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Do you remember the story of how God first spoke of Satan’s defeat? It happened back in the Garden of Eden--after he tempted Adam and Eve into sin. God told the serpent, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15). The Seed of the woman is none other than our Savior--the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan may have thought that he struck a fatal blow to Jesus at the cross; but it was not a fatal blow. It was only a blow to the heel. It resulted in our salvation! And by our salvation, Jesus struck the fatal blow to the head of Satan!

No wonder our salvation means Satan’s frustration!