

Church of God, The Eternal

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Fundamentals of Belief #8 Fundamental 5A; The Origin of Satan

**Edited Sermon Transcript
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We are up to fundamental number five, so let me read to you fundamental number five. It is a little bit longer than some of the ones we have had up to now. I can already tell you before I begin; I am not going to get through fundamental number five in one sermon. It is going to be at least two sermons. Here is how it reads:

We believe Satan is a personality, a spirit being; and as the Devil is the adversary of God and the children of God; and that he now has dominion over the world which God allowed him for a definite "week" of seven thousand-year days—the first six of which are his six working days for his labor of deception, leading the children of Adam into rejection of God's law and therefore rebellion against God—the seventh thousand-year day of which will be the DAY OF THE LORD (the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God), during which Satan will be forced to rest from his work of deception while Christ rules the nations of the earth. Satan's power is merely to influence and lead, not to force men arbitrarily against their will. He has ruled by deception with the aid of a host of demons which are rebellious angels, spirit beings, who have followed Satan in his rebellion.

That is fundamental number five. In trying to organize how I wanted to approach covering all the different elements included in that, I decided that today we are going to address the first part of the first sentence and the very last part. These parts are, "We believe Satan is a personality, a spirit being; and as the Devil is the adversary of God and the children of God;" and then the very last part, "He has ruled by deception with the aid of a host of demons which are rebellious angels, spirit beings, who have followed Satan in his rebellion."

The reason why I am dividing it up this way is because I want to take it more in a story form. This afternoon I want to address what I will call, "The Origin of Satan." How did Satan come into being?

If you remember, there was an old article written by Mr. Armstrong way back years and years ago, entitled something to the effect, *Did God Create A Devil?* We want to look at the very origin of how Satan came into being and who are these other demon spirits that he leads? How did all of this come about? Then, in the subsequent sermon we will look at the work of Satan today. We want to bring it up from the very past, his origin as a spirit being, coming through to his rebellion against God and what that means. Then next, we will take the middle section of this fundamental, which deals with his activities today, his dominion on the earth today, and what his future is going to be.

First, we believe Satan is a personality, a spirit being. Satan is real. For some of us in our minds, that may go without saying, yet, how many people in the world absolutely deny the existence of any kind of an evil spirit? They might believe in a concept of a ying and a yang or offsetting, opposing forces of dark and light, which they believe, are required, absolutely, in order to keep the universe in harmony and in balance. In that sense then, they do not believe in the concept of a personality of an evil being who is out repudiating the very Truth of God—especially not one who is acting as our adversary and seeking our personal destruction as human beings on this earth.

Our fundamental of belief and that which we were taught from the beginning, is that Satan is a personality. You better believe he is real. First of all, let's look at one of the scriptures that speak of these angels and how angelic beings were created and came into being. Turn with me to Psalm 104:1–4:

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire.

We find God made the angels—"he maketh his angels." Of what substance did He create those beings that we call angels? He created them spirit, unlike human beings, whom He created mortal flesh and blood, subject to death in returning to the dust from which we were made. The angelic beings that God created, that host, He created them spirit. They are eternal beings, even of the same spirit, like unto that which God is made of Himself, yet, with lesser capacity—only those capacities and abilities God has granted them. They are certainly not created with perfect character, the potential of perfect character, yes, but not with perfect character, as we shall see.

"Who maketh his angels spirits." Why do we believe Satan is a personality and that he is a spirit? Because we read here, one of many texts, that he "maketh his angels spirits; his ministers," those ministers being servants, "a flaming fire." He created angelic beings

to be servants at His throne. He created them to become servants of the God family that would be expanded according to His perfect plan for the salvation of mankind in order to fulfill those roles in His family. ". . . his ministers, [His servants, those angelic beings,] a flaming fire."

He gave these spiritual beings, this angelic host awesome capabilities. They do have a manifested glory that God gave to them because He created them as such. They did not come into being on their own, God created them and He created them for a purpose.

Who is this particular personality we now call, Satan? What was his origin? How did he come into being? Because he is one of those angelic beings we read about, then we know he also was created of God. Ezekiel 28:11–15:

Moreover the word of the [Eternal] came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus . . .

Here, if you read the commentaries, you see many of the commentaries that attempt to explain this whole passage of scripture as having to do with a man. They do not recognize the duality here, and the use of this scripture to represent a spirit being, even the one who became Satan, the Devil. No, they attempt to explain it all away, but look at how it follows as a description of this king.

. . . and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

This was a description of that king. What human being in the flesh could ever be defined by the Creator God, who is perfect, as "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty," when man, He created with a totally different nature? Let's read on.

"Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." How many men could that apply to? Are we talking about Adam? Adam was the only man in the garden and he was thrust out. No, we are talking about an angelic being. A being that preceded the creation of man.

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold . . .

Those ten, by the way, correspond to those stones that represent ten of the tribes of Israel. What that relation is, I am not prepared to tell you, but it is interesting. Whoever this being was, he was covered; God clothed him with these brilliant stones.

. . . the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee . . . [This is one of the scriptures where we find that this being who was created had some musical ability. He was created for purposes which included in his responsibility that of providing music in heaven. How glorious must have been that creation, created by God to fulfill that very purpose.] . . . in the day that thou wast created . . . [God created him and he was created for purpose.] . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth . . .

In this further description we find out, not only was this being created beautiful, full of wisdom, perfect in beauty, with all of these capabilities, clothed in all of these fiery stones, but he was also anointed a cherub that covereth. We are going to see in a moment, what that cherub is and what the functions of the cherubim are at the throne of God.

. . . and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God . . . [Yes, he was at the very throne of God.] . . . thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire . . . [I am not sure that anyone has an exact definition of what that is. I often wonder myself, if it has a relationship to those very stones in which he is clothed and shrouded.] . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created.

So, to answer the question, did God create a devil? No, He created a perfect being. He created a perfect spirit, angelic being, who was intended to be a ministering spirit at the throne of God—a covering cherub to perform his functions, to provide glorious music at the throne of God, a bright and a beautiful and a wise, angelic being. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Hold that thought because we will come back to it.

Let's look at what the very functions of those angels are and especially those cherubim at the throne of God. Turn with me to Exodus 25:16–22. Here are the instructions for the creation, the formation, of the Ark of the Covenant:

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high . . .

So, we learn something else new. We know that those cherubim were winged.

. . . covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee . . .

Included are those tables of stones with the law.

. . . And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

What we find out, brethren, is that God's instructions in the formation of that mercy seat, as the covering on the Ark, was a depiction of the very throne of God. It was the symbol of His majesty, His power and His authority from which He rules from His very throne in the third heaven. He ordered the Israelites to fashion the mercy seat to picture that very place where He rules and from whence His authority emanates.

Just as we are going to find out, the very throne of God in heaven is set between two beautiful cherubim. These cherubim stretch out their wings over that throne, over the very throne of God, where He and the Son sit and rule this entire universe. It was pictured even in the Ark of the Covenant.

Isaiah 37:15–16. Is it just a presumption that this was a picture of the throne of God? Let's notice it: "And Hezekiah prayed unto the [Eternal], saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims." Hezekiah recognized that the very throne of God is covered by the wings of these cherubim that stand one on one side and one on the other and stretch forth to cover the throne.

O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

What does this throne of God look like? What environment are we talking about? Even though we recognize we cannot begin to grasp as human beings what the throne of God looks like in that heaven, the best description we have—just to give us a little bit of a glimpse through that murky plain—is in Revelation 4. We want to set the stage to understand, as closely as we can with our limited human minds, the environment that God created in His very throne. The environment that He created from whence He is served by these angelic beings that He created and what they participated in. It becomes all the more fulfilling to understand then, what it was they gave up and what the level of their arrogance was when they rebelled against their Creator God.

The throne of God in Revelation 4 is described in a vision of John. Remember, the whole book of Revelation is a revelation of Jesus Christ. It is Christ who is giving this vision to John, who wrote it down. Revelation 4:1–11:

After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald . . .

Try to keep all of these adjectives in mind as you picture the configuration of this setting.

. . . And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal . . .

Imagine what that must be like, panning out in front of the throne of God, a floor that appears to be a sea of crystal. When you think about the attributes of God, think about how bright that Being is. The Father and the Son who sit upon that throne, who themselves are light. A manifestation of the brightest light that would consume us if we ever dared look upon those Beings. Those Beings that will replace the very need for the sun in the new heavens and new earth because their brightness will fill that New Jerusalem and there will be no need for a body called a sun. Think about the brightness of those Beings, sitting upon this throne and what their reflections must be off of that sea of crystal. How glorious and bright, must be the image of the very throne of God!

. . . and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four [more appropriately translated, creatures] [creatures] full of eyes before and behind. And the first [creature] was like a lion, and the second [creature] like a calf, and the third [creature] had a face as a man, and the fourth [creature] was like a flying eagle. And the four [creatures] had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those [creatures] give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast

their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

There is worship going on, constantly, at the throne of God as these created, angelic beings show their allegiance and pay homage to their very Creator. They understand the responsibilities with which they were created, with brightness and beauty and yet, to fulfill their ministering roles at the very throne of God. Then, think about what it must be like for these covering cherubim, who were created of all the archangels, the brightest, covering the very throne of God in the midst of all of this glory emanating from the throne.

How then, did the brightest of those beings, even that one which was given the greatest honor of God, whose name was given to him as Lucifer, become ultimately a rebel—hating the very Being who gave him life and gave him beauty and gave him responsibility and glory at the throne of God? How did he become a devil? Back to Ezekiel 28:15–17.

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned . . .

Somewhere, brethren, within this perfectly created being, given all of this glory, sin entered in. God did not create these angelic beings incapable of sinning. He obviously did not create them with perfect character. He created them with the opportunity to choose between right and wrong. He gave them everything that should have made them content. For He is a God of love, a God of mercy and you know that there was no error in God, in the way that He carried out His responsibilities, even in dealing with the angels. Somehow, God's perfect character was not enough to attract the loyalty, or maintain the loyalty of all of those created beings. I am going to make a comment about that in just a moment.

. . . therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Whatever that represents, God did cast him down and he lost his beauty and he lost the responsibility of covering. Think about what that covering was, when we read above that he is covered in all those brilliant stones that reflect light. If this was a being that was clothed in all of those precious stones, what must the glory of God reflecting from that being have been like? Recognize that that was not an inherent glory because the angels were created to perform a function. They only resonated the very reflection of the light of God. Those who rebelled against that God lost that light and they became dark.

As it is, we can only retain the light of God if we are willing to allow God, Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to live within us. The very minute that we think that we are going to live according to our own inherent glory, we turn off the light and we become darkness as well. That is exactly what happened to this being. "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty . . ."

How long it was that he held that position from the time God created him, we don't know. How many years, how many thousands of years, how many millions of years, we don't know. Ultimately, something happened. What was the original concept of mind, the foundation, the root cause of his ultimate turn from such a glorious being? It was that he was lifted up because of his own beauty. Keep it in mind.

"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness . . ." Where did he get his brightness? Was it not a gift from God? It was not that which he created. It was not that which he should have taken for granted, yet, one day he did begin to take it for granted. He began to view the light that secondarily emanated from him, to be that which he controlled of his own. He became haughty and arrogant in that light. "I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee."

Turn next to Isaiah 14:12–14, for more of the story. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . ." Here, we find his name—the name given to that great archangel when he was created.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:

Those stars are always symbolic of angelic beings. He was saying, "I will exalt my throne above the other angels."

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

There is no indication here that he attempted to totally dethrone God the Father and the Son, or that being that became the Son. No, he just wanted his share. He wanted what he saw as his just due, his just recognition along with God. He just wanted to share the authority. He just wanted to share the recognition because he thought within him was something that was worthy—worthy of being worshipped, worthy of being appreciated. He forgot that the light that was within him, was that which was given to him by that God and that without that living God sustaining and keeping him, he had no light of his own.

What was the first seed of rebellion, as we read in Ezekiel? "He was lifted up because of his beauty." He began to think himself worthy of something that he wasn't getting. Once that seed is planted in a mind, the next ultimate reaction is to seek the manifestation of appreciation from others. First, it is born of thinking of ourselves as being worthy and then, convincing others that we are worthy.

That is exactly the formula, brethren, which happens to human beings that causes rebellion against God. "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation . . ." In other words, "Yes God; I just want you to share it with me because I am worthy. I am bright and I am beautiful and I have so much to offer. I have done so much, I am glorious, I am righteous and I deserve to sit and share that throne with you. I deserve to have the other angels bow before me and worship me as they do you. Give me my due—give me my just dessert": "I will be like the most High," he said.

That, brethren, is the formula for the destruction of human beings. We will find later on, a point we are not covering this afternoon, that God implanted within us the same nature of this very being—that of rebellion and rejection of God's authority, God's way of life and His truth. It always emanates, brethren, from us beginning to think that we are something when we are not. When we think that we are worthy of something more than we have. When we think that we should have a position or some kind of recognition and then we set about, because of that flawed thinking, trying to generate something for ourselves. Slowly, but surely, behind the scenes, dropping hints, sending up trial balloons. However long it takes, the manifestation is always in trying to collect others into support. It is exactly what Satan did.

Part of our fundamental of belief is also, ". . . he has ruled by deception with the aid of a host of demons which are rebellious angels, spirit beings, who have followed Satan in his rebellion." So, when that seed of rebellion was born in his own mind against the very Creator that made him and gave him that glory, he turned to try and pull the other angels with him.

We are going to start back at the beginning and go through a little history. We have to talk about the creation before we can recognize everything that goes into this history when we are talking about the origin of Satan. That Lucifer, besides being the covering cherub, was also given dominion. He was given a jurisdiction, he did have authority, he did rule. Our fundamental says, "He has ruled." It says he ruled by deception, but he didn't start off ruling by deception; he was given responsibility over thousands and thousands and probably millions of angels. He was an archangel. Let's look at it from the beginning. Genesis 1:1–2:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

For those of you that have been in the church for many years, you have heard the explanation of Genesis 1:1–2 and recognize that the proper translation is "In *a* beginning." God was in the beginning and has lived forever—no beginning, no end. This, which we are talking about in Genesis 1:1 is only from the time that God decided to create the heaven and the earth—to begin to execute this master plan for building his family, whenever that was in time. This is the beginning, or *a* beginning, that we are talking about when this plan began to be executed.

In that beginning, in a beginning, "God created the heaven and the earth." Now, the question becomes, how did He create it? Verse 2 says: "And the earth was without form, and void . . ." Those words, "without form and void," are the Hebrew words *tohuw* and *bohuw*. The earth was *tohuw* and *bohuw*. *Tohuw* means, "a worthless thing, empty space, confusion, without form, vain." *Bohuw* means, "an undistinguishable ruin, empty, void." What this says is, the earth was a worthless, empty, confused, undistinguishable ruin. That is what the earth was. The question is, is that the way God created it? If you read it the way it is written here, you would assume or presume that God created this vain, worthless, ruined condition upon this earth. Is that true?

1 Corinthians 14:33 tells us, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." If this God is not the author of confusion then we probably cannot conclude that the very earth and heavens that He created, He created as a confused, ruined, worthless, vain thing. So, what is the explanation?

Let's look further, Job 38:4–7. This tells us something about what was taking place and something that took place at the very creation of that earth.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? [God speaking to Job] declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, [What are those stars? Angelic beings] and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

"The sons of God . . ." At that time, were men created? No. Who were these "sons of God" being described here, that sang at the very foundation of the world? They were those angelic beings that were there, serving God. If God created the earth, *tohuw* and *bohuw*, devastated, in vain, indistinguishably ruined, worthless, empty, in confusion and chaos, how can we believe then that the angels would have been joyously singing?

When God created the heaven and the earth, He created something beautiful. He created something awesome and inspiring and it was perfect when He created it. That is why

it says, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Isaiah 45:18:

For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain . . .

Guess what the word "vain" is here? *Tohuw*. It says, He created it not *tohuw*. If God did not create the earth worthless, empty, confused and chaotic to begin with, then something must have happened to bring it into that condition sometime after the original creation by God. What was it that happened? Let's notice something else that gives us a clue.

Genesis 9:1: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Now, we all recognize that at the time of Noah, when this command was given, it was after the flood and all of mankind except for eight people had been destroyed. When the waters receded, and they left the ark and He gave this command to Noah, He said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and *replenish* the earth." Had he been the first man and had that been the first family on the earth, would He have used the word, "replenish?" No, if it were the first time the earth was to be inhabited, He would have said, "plenish" or "populate the earth."

We all recognize that there was a vast society before that time. How many thousands of human beings existed before the flood? We don't know, but we do know there was a civilization. Therefore, with their destruction and the salvation of Noah and his family, he was commanded to replenish, repopulate, the earth because they were a replacement for a population that existed before. So, what does that have to do with anything? Turn back with me now, to Genesis 1:28 and we see the same word used.

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them," speaking to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth . . ." Did you ever notice that? Even Adam and Eve were instructed and commanded of God, not to populate for the first time, but to repopulate the earth because it had been populated once before. "Replenish [repopulate] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

If Adam and Eve, therefore, were instructed and commanded by God to repopulate, replenish the earth, who was it that populated the earth before? Adam was the first man. Whoever it was, brethren, it could not have been a human being. Who was it that populated this earth? Confusion, waste and destruction, you see, are always a result of sin.

Who was it that sinned and caused the earth to become *tohuw* and *bohuw*? Man was not created yet. It was not man's sin that caused the earth, the perfect creation of God from His hand when He first created it, to become waste, chaotic and confused. No, but there was

authority given to someone who populated this earth, who abused and distorted that authority, who rebelled and who then caused the very chaos that reigned. 2 Peter 2:4:

For if God spared not . . . [Who? Who was it that sinned, that brought chaos?] . . . the angels that sinned . . . [That's who it was.] . . . but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness . . .

Here, we are seeing the very same examples of Noah. Even of Sodom and Gomorrah, used to define exactly the same circumstances that occurred back at the creation of the earth when it was first brought to devastation.

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly . . .

What was it that caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? First, it was at the hand of God, was it not? Who destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—God? But, why did He destroy it? Because of sin and because of their rebellion against His perfect law. Rank rebellion caused God to destroy them and their habitation. What was it then that brought on the destruction of the world by flood? Was it not sin and rebellion against the ways of God by those of the old world? God brought the flood, He caused the destruction, but as a penalty for sin. Therefore, if that is an example of a direct correlation of what happened with the angels who sinned and had habitation first on the earth, was it not because of their sin then, that God, in battle against these rebellious spirits, destroyed their very habitation likewise? That, my dear brethren, is how the earth came to be confused and chaotic and in ruin.

Lucifer was given rulership over a jurisdiction, over many millions of angels. He was an archangel with great beauty, great power, great authority, given to him by God.

Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate . . ." You see, they were given an estate, they were given a responsibility, they were given a jurisdiction, accountability. Their habitation was the earth; they were responsible for it, to keep it in the perfection that God created it. How beautiful was that world? We can only, vaguely, try and capture it in our own minds. To think about what this earth must have been like when it was first created by God, when they were given rulership over it and told to keep it and to take care of it.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation . . ." What was their habitation? It was the earth. ". . . he hath reserved in everlasting chains

under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." In his rebellion, Lucifer corrupted one-third of God's holy angels. He not only allowed the seed of rebellion to enter into him because of his own vanity, but then he turned to try and lure as many of the other angels of God as he could into rebellion with him.

One-third of those angels, as we are getting ready to see in Revelation chapter 12, rebelled. One-third rebelled. Revelation 12:3–9, let's read it:

And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven . . . [This dragon, which was that being, Lucifer, who became Satan the Devil, drew one-third of God's holy angels in rebellion] . . . and did cast them to the earth . . .

We have already seen that he was cast out of heaven. What we know in the story is that he left his habitation; he was given rulership over the earth. He led one-third of God's angels in rebellion and instead of staying in his jurisdiction where God had placed him; he rebelled and sought to overtake the throne of God. So, he declared war on God and he went to get what he thought was his.

. . . and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born [speaking of the church].

We also know that Lucifer was not victorious and was cast down to earth by God. Notice it in verse 7:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

That covering cherub, who had the highest exalted office given to him, commissioned by God, to stand with his wings covering the very throne of God, glorious in his reflection of the beauty of God's power, was cast to earth. Verse 9:

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

He wasn't successful. He thought too much of himself, he began to believe that he had inherent glory and he didn't.

Let me stop and ask this question; do you think God maybe did something wrong? You know one-third of His angels rebelled against Him. Now, in our society today, if you were running a company, or if you were given responsibility in a company or some sort of a physical endeavor and you had one-third of your staff rebel against you, and reject your authority, it would be very, very easy to conclude, there is something wrong with the leadership, wouldn't there? What would justify one-third rebelling if there wasn't something that had precipitated it by the one in charge? Isn't that a common thought? Wouldn't that naturally come to your mind if you were dealing with human beings? Hasn't that naturally come to mind and been the very source of rebellion, even within the church? Yes, if there is enough that rebel, it must be the leadership, so human beings say.

I am not justifying mistakes that have been made by leadership in the church over the years. We are all aware that the ministry failed miserably to uphold even the very things that they were teaching. Those things are obvious, brethren. What about when the fruits are still the same, the truth is still being upheld and you have those that rebel, accuse and seek to sway others to rise up?

Is there a natural tendency to think that God was responsible? That there is something He could have done, should have done? Are we so sure that those that are in the very physical offices that Jesus Christ gave to take care of the church are not going to face the same type of spirit? Are we not fighting the very same demonic spirit that led Satan to lead one-third in rebellion, even against the perfect God?

No, human beings are not perfect. Lest anyone accuses, no, I am not claiming to be perfect and I am not claiming that Raymond Cole is perfect. As long as we live in the flesh we are going to continue to fight our own problems and our personal weaknesses. However, I guarantee you, brethren, if this is the Church of God, and if that leadership is being led by the Holy Spirit, those administrative decisions are being led by God as much as we are holding onto the faith once delivered. It comes in a package. Please do not try to pick it apart and think that we can hold onto the truth that was revealed through Mr. Armstrong years ago by the use of the Holy Spirit, and yet, in administrative responsibilities and decisions that we make, day to day, that somehow we abandon that Holy Spirit and turn to our own minds. I guarantee you the administrative work that we are doing is led as much, by the same fasting and prayer that helps us hold onto the very foundation of the truth. It comes as a package.

We fight our own weaknesses, just like each one of you do, and we will as long as we live in this flesh. When we do make personal mistakes then we pray that you will forgive us. We also ask, brethren, for the support. Otherwise, we are looking at the opportunity for the same spirit of rebellion as Satan entices each one of us to try and second-guess—to think that perhaps, we should get more than what we are getting and have more recognition and should share in something that God has not provided or given.

Unless we think that God had some accountability—did God have accountability for the revolt of His angels? One-third of them deserted Him; one-third of them abandoned Him, revolted. Maybe He should have compromised more. Maybe He should have met Lucifer half way. Maybe, if He would have been willing to just come to the table, admit some accountability, take a different approach, administratively, be willing to give a little bit to Lucifer, maybe, this glorious being would have stayed with Him and remained faithful. Is that what we think? No, it didn't make a difference. That God was perfect and yet, one-third rebelled. One-third rebelled.

Luke 10:17. Yes, God was more powerful than those angels that He created. There is no being, no matter how great in power and glory, that He ever created, with His power and ability. Even Christ prophesied, because He was there as God of the second part on the throne when this war in heaven took place and He said to the disciples, beginning in verse 17:

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

He fell in great destruction. He was rejected and repelled at the very throne of God and God cast him down, even as a bolt of lightning to the earth. All of those hosts of millions of angels who went after him and revolted with him in war against their Creator, He cast them all to the earth where they are now in a state of restraint. They lost their glory, they lost every attribute of good and righteousness that they received and retained in their service of God, and became utter darkness and chaos and evil. But even in that state of restraint they do yet have dominion on this earth because God has not removed Satan. He has retained dominion over the earth. That, we will cover, not at this time, but in the next sermon.

Let's look at the next section of the fundamental we want to complete this afternoon. We say in our fundamental also, "and as the Devil is the adversary of God and the children of God . . ." Let's look at just a few scriptures, quickly, that show that he is our adversary. He is the adversary of God, he is therefore, also, our adversary.

Notice it in 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary . . ." Who did Peter say was our adversary? ". . . your adversary the devil . . ." This very same being, Lucifer, who became Satan "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour . . ."

He has an advantage too, brethren. You know what his greatest advantage is? He has got our nature, or we have his nature. It is the same, the same things that we want to do naturally, are the same things that he is very willing to encourage us to do. In his deception,

he can find many, many ways to make us think that we are doing the will of God while we are actually fulfilling, exactly, our own wills under his direction. Back to Revelation 12:10–13:

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Is he your adversary, brethren? You had better believe it.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

That is the church, brethren. His sole aim and goal is to destroy the church. Those that have their opportunity now for salvation, who have been given the truth, the way, who have set their hands to the plow, it is you, brethren, and it is me, who are at risk. The rest of this world is not at risk, he has them. They do the bidding of Satan because their natures agree with him in every regard. It is we, brethren, that were called out of the world and accepted that way of life that are at risk because we are supposed to be walking totally opposed to our natural natures. We are supposed to be taking on the very nature of Jesus Christ and living a totally different way. So, it is you that Satan wants to destroy through his subtlety. He is your enemy.

Matthew 13:19, and 38–39, just a glimpse of that adversarial relationship:

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, [which all of you have] and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Then skipping down to verses 38–39:

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

In this life that we have been born into and even in our calling we have an adversary. We have a being who became a rebel, who had all the power and glory that God gave to him to fulfill a commission, even at the very throne of God. He was even given a dominion over millions of angels, to take this earth and to rule it and to govern it under the authority of God. He rebelled and rejected it because he thought himself to be worthy of more and therefore warred against his very Creator.

Final scripture this afternoon, Acts 13:9–10:

Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy [Spirit], set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Yes, a child of the devil is an enemy of righteousness. Anyone who follows the spirit of that rebel becomes a child of the devil and therefore, becomes an enemy of everything that God holds dear and true, a perverter of the right ways of the Eternal God.

Next time, we are going to talk about the current dominion of that spirit being on this earth. How it fits into God's overall plan in allowing him to continue to act in authority in spite of that evil, despicable, nature and what his end will be and how it fits together in the overall plan of salvation.