

Satan's Access to Heaven

In the book of Job we find this interesting passage:

Job 1:6: “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”

The story of Job is a very popular one and these verses are quite well-known. However, many people don't stop to consider what this passage is actually saying. There is a surprising fact hidden in these verses that gets overlooked time and time again: Satan has access to Heaven.

This is so obvious that it almost doesn't need an explanation. The verses state that there came a day when the angels (which are here called the “sons of God” for reasons I've explained elsewhere) came to present themselves before the Lord. In verse 7 Satan says that he *had* been on the Earth, which implies that he wasn't on Earth anymore. We know that God dwells in Heaven, so if Satan wasn't on Earth and he was standing before God, then it's pretty safe to say that he was in Heaven.

Also, notice that these verses seem to describe something that happened on a regular basis. This scene repeats itself in Job 2:1 when once again Satan made a trip to Heaven to present himself to God. If Satan is making regular trips to Heaven then that can only mean that Satan has access to Heaven.

Some people claim that this is not the case and that Satan was cast out of Heaven long ago. In order to support this idea they quote these verses from Revelation:

Revelation 12:7: “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

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.”

Here we find the account of a war that took place in Heaven. Satan lost this war and was cast out of Heaven. However, there is a very important question to ask: just when did this battle take place? Did it happen before human history began, as some claim, or is it still in our future?

First of all, notice that this war is recorded in the *twelfth* chapter of Revelation – a little more than halfway through the book. It's very important to realize that Revelation takes place in chronological order, which we can see from Revelation 1:19. There Jesus gave this commandment to John:

Revelation 1:19: “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;”

This is a basic outline that explains the structure of the entire book. After this verse Jesus dictated seven letters to seven churches, which represented the things “which are.” In chapter 4 (after all the letters had been written) the scene changes, and John is caught up into Heaven to see the things “which must be hereafter”:

Revelation 4:1: “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 show thee things which must be hereafter.”

After this a great many things take place – all of which happen at some point in the *future*. The seven seals were opened (Revelation 6), the 144,000 Jews were sealed (Revelation 7), the seven trumpets sounded (Revelation 8), and the two witnesses were killed (Revelation 11). All of these things are depicted in chronological order: first the first seal is opened, then the second one, and so forth.

The war in Heaven takes place between chapter 11, where the two witnesses are killed, and chapter 13, where the Mark of the Beast is instituted. As of the time John wrote Revelation it was still in the future. We know this because Revelation 4:1 clearly says that the things John was about to see had not yet taken place.

What this means is that the war in Heaven must take place in the middle of the Tribulation. In other words, *it hasn't happened yet*. This is made even more clear when you read the rest of the passage:

Revelation 12:9: “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.

10 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.

11 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.

12 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.”

After the devil is cast out of Heaven in verse 9 a voice proclaims that “the accuser of our brethren is cast down.” Satan had been accusing believers “day and night”, just as he had done in the book of Job. Now, however, his ability to do this was stripped from him and he was cast down to the earth. Verse 12 says that he was filled with “great wrath” because he had only a short time left.

What strikes me about this passage is verse 11, where it says that the people Satan was accusing “overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.” These people were clearly martyrs because it says “they loved not their lives unto the death.” This creates a real problem for those who believe that the war in Heaven happened before mankind was created. Think about it: if that was the case then Satan was bringing accusations against people who hadn't even been born yet! In fact, he was accusing a race that *hadn't been created yet*, let alone fallen into sin! On top of that, verse 11 is in the *past tense*, speaking of people who *had* been martyred because they believed in Jesus. If the war in Heaven took place before mankind was created then this makes no sense at all, because no one had yet been martyred for believing in Jesus! Besides, if Satan's ability to bring accusations to God was revoked before mankind was formed, then what was he doing making accusations against Job?

These verses simply make no sense at all if they are describing something that took place before mankind sinned in the Garden of Eden. However, they make a great deal of sense if they are talking about a future event that takes place in the middle of the Tribulation. We know that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us:

Romans 8:26: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not

what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

If Satan is indeed accusing us day and night then it is a tremendous comfort to know that there is someone else there who is speaking on our behalf. (For the record, the word “Satan” actually means “adversary”; it is more of a descriptive title than a name.)

This does bring up another question. What about this verse? Jesus had something very interesting to say in the book of Luke:

Luke 10:18: “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

Doesn't this imply that the war in Heaven had already happened as of the time Jesus walked the Earth? Not quite. In this passage Jesus said that He saw Satan *fall* from heaven. However, in Revelation 12:9 it doesn't say that Satan fell; it says that he was *cast out*. I think Jesus is referring to the time when Lucifer tried to exalt himself above God and fell into sin. Jesus watched that happen – He saw Lucifer become Satan. This would be consistent with what we find in Job.

So what does all of this mean? It means that it's quite likely that Job was not the only person that Satan has brought accusations against. Revelation tells us that he accuses the brethren day and night, using his access to Heaven to try to get God to bring disaster upon believers. However, midway through the Tribulation a war will erupt in Heaven, and Satan and the rest of his fallen angels will be permanently ejected from Heaven and cast down to Earth. His days of accusing the brethren will be over and he will be full of wrath because he'll know that he only has a little more than 3 years left before Jesus returns and binds him for a thousand years. This knowledge will fill him with rage, and he will pour out his anger upon those who are still on the Earth.

His eviction from Heaven marks the beginning of the end. The three years he is given on Earth are not enough to stop the return of Jesus, and when Jesus returns He will bind Satan for a thousand years and usher in an unprecedented age of peace. A thousand years later Satan will be released and gather an army, only to see the entire army destroyed by fire when it approaches Jerusalem. The devil will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, where he will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The bottom line is that Satan does currently have access to Heaven, but that will not last forever. His days of accusing the brethren are limited and will soon come to an end.