

## Satan's Access to Heaven

The book of Job contains this interesting passage:

**Job 1:6-7:** “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 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 popular one and these verses are fairly well-known. However, it's easy to miss what this passage is saying. There's a surprising fact hidden in these verses which gets overlooked time and time again: *Satan has access to Heaven*.

This is so clear that it almost doesn't need an explanation. The passage says 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 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 he has access to Heaven.

Some people teach that this can't be true because Satan was cast out of Heaven long ago. To support this idea they quote these verses from Revelation:

**Revelation 12:7-9:** “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. 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.”

This passage tells us about a war in Heaven. Satan lost this war and was cast out. However, there's a very important question we must ask: when did this battle take place? Did it happen before human history began, or is it still in our future?

First of all, notice that this war is found in the *twelfth* chapter of Revelation – a little more than halfway through the book. It's very important to realize that Revelation was written to tell us about things which *had not yet taken place*:

**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.”

As of the time the apostle John wrote Revelation, the war in Heaven was still in the future. We know this because Revelation 4:1 clearly says that the things he was about to see hadn't taken place yet. This is made even more clear when you read the rest of Revelation 12:

**Revelation 12:9-12:** “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. 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. 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 inhabitors 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 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 problem for those who believe that the war in Heaven happened before mankind was created! Think about it: if the devil was accusing people who were killed for their faith in Christ, and the war in Heaven took place before mankind even existed, then that would mean the devil was bringing accusations against people who hadn't even been born yet! That doesn't make any sense at all. On top of that, verse 11 is in the *past tense*, speaking of people who *had* been martyred because they believed in Jesus. The war in Heaven couldn't have taken place before mankind was created because at that time no one had been martyred for believing in Jesus! Besides, if Satan's ability to bring accusations to God was revoked before mankind was created then what was he doing making accusations against Job?

These verses don't make sense if they're describing a war

which took place before mankind sinned in the Garden of Eden. However, they make a great deal of sense if they're talking about a future event. 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 the devil is indeed accusing us day and night then it's very comforting to know that there's someone who is speaking on our behalf! (For the record, the word “Satan” actually means “adversary”. It's more of a descriptive title than a name.)

There is one other verse that needs to be addresssed. Jesus said something very curious in the book of Luke:

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

Does this teach that the war in Heaven had already happened when Jesus walked the Earth? I don't think so. In this passage Jesus said that He saw Satan *fall* from heaven. However, Revelation 12:9 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 (Isaiah 14:12-15). Jesus watched that happen – He saw Lucifer become Satan. This would be consistent with what we find in Job. The devil lost the lofty position that he once held in Heaven, but he still goes to Heaven from time to time to accuse the saints.

So what does all of this mean? It means that it's quite likely Job wasn't the only person that Satan has brought accusations against. Revelation 12 tells us that the devil accuses the saints day and night. However, at some point in the future the devil will try to invade Heaven with his army of fallen angels. The devil will lose that war and be permanently cast down to

Earth. His days of accusing the saints will be over and he will be full of wrath, knowing that his remaining time is short. This knowledge will fill him with rage and he will pour out his anger upon those who are still on the Earth.

The war in Heaven will mark the beginning of the end. Although the devil will be full of rage, he will be unable to defeat the plan of God. The Lord Jesus Christ will return to this world, bind Satan for a thousand years, and usher in an unprecedented age of peace. A thousand years later Satan will be released from the bottomless pit. He will gather a massive army and march against Jerusalem – and God will send fire down from heaven and utterly destroy it. The devil will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, where he will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (You can read about all of these things in Revelation 20.)

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