

Rebel Angels

By David Feddes

We've been thinking about the angels of God and the supernatural beings that God created as part of a realm that we don't always understand very well. It would be incomplete to talk about angels without also being aware of the rebel angels, some of the history of those rebel angels, and what they are involved in doing right now in our world. We're going to think a little bit about the rebel angels this morning. We're going to look, first of all, at two passages from Isaiah 14 and from Ezekiel 28.

Both of these passages are actually addressed to idol-worshipping kings. The Isaiah passage speaks to the king of Babylon, and the Ezekiel passage speaks to the king of Tyre. But in addressing these idol-worshipping monarchs, the Word of God goes beyond just talking to those men and addresses the great hidden powers that lie behind those men.

Isaiah says, "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!" That translates a word that means "shining one" in Hebrew. When it was translated into Latin, a famous word was used: "Lucifer." Lucifer has come to mean something very grim for obvious reasons, but Lucifer really means "shining one." It's a beautiful word to describe a very splendid creature.

¹² How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star [Lucifer] son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³ You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' ¹⁵ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

¹² "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. ¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned. So I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground. (Ezekiel 28:12-17)

We've just read about the great rebellion of the beings who wanted to be like God and even above God Himself. That angel rebellion is only hinted at in the Bible; we don't get a lot of detailed descriptions of it. But we know that throughout history, the fallen angels have been active. So we're going to look at the history of those rebel angels, and then we're going to look at how they try to affect our lives now and how Jesus reverses all of their attempts.

Rebel angels

- Tried in pride to surpass Most High
- Tempted Adam and Eve in Eden
- Mated with women before the Flood
- Misruled nations after Tower of Babel
- Defeated by Jesus (and by Michael)
- Harm humans as much as they can

When we read about the rebel angels, first of all, we read about the rebellion itself: how Satan and those who fell with him tried in pride to surpass God Most High. We see Adam and Eve in the garden being tempted by some sort of very enticing and shrewd and evil power. We read in the Bible of the sons of God coming down to the daughters of men in the time before the flood and mating with women. After the flood, the Bible talks about these powers misruling the nations after God scattered the peoples at the Tower of Babel. Then, most importantly, we read about the defeat of these powers in the ministry and in the cross, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. In Jesus defeating these powers, we also read of Michael and his angels defeating those rebel angels. Another thing that the New Testament reminds us of constantly is that even though defeated and cast down, these malicious powers are still trying to harm humans as much as they can. The devil goes around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Simply because we read of the defeat of those powers by Christ and by Michael does not mean that now we can take a nap because all is going to be easy from here on out. Those are the things that I want to highlight in the Bible's development of the history of the rebel angels.

Rebel pride

First of all, there is simply the rebellion itself. Ezekiel describes it as, “You were full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; you were an anointed guardian cherub” (Ezekiel 28:12-14). It seems that the evil powers were not only in heaven with God but at some point, they were even in the Garden of Eden.

We need to understand that the Garden of Eden was designed not just to be a place of flowers and fruit and nice things that we associate with a garden. Certainly, that's true. But gardens were made for places of worship. That's what they always were in the ancient Near East. The Garden of Eden was meant to be the place of worship, the place where heaven and earth connected. Not only did God walk with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day, but it seems that even great cherubim and great angels had some sort of involvement there.

And then, of course, Isaiah has those terrible words: “How you are fallen from heaven, O shining one! You said, ‘I will make myself like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:12-14).

Much of the angel rebellion lies shrouded in mystery. We might try to fill in a lot of the blanks with our great poets like Dante and Milton, but sometimes they go beyond the descriptions of the Bible itself. We should be cautious about filling in too many blanks and thinking we know too much.

It does seem that the greatest of the rebel angels, who came to be called Satan later on, was an extraordinarily beautiful and brilliant and wise and wonderful being. After a while, at some point, he became entranced with his own beauty, wisdom, power, and greatness. He began to think, "I ought to be the one running the universe. I ought to be supreme." When that thought came and when he enticed other angelic beings to go along with him, that constituted the rebellion against God.

That desire to be God and to surpass God was a terrible sin. It was, in essence, the sin of pride: thinking himself smarter than God, daring to dream that his way was more beautiful than God, and thinking that he might even be more powerful than God. No being, angel or human, fully knows God. There is nobody who understands just how wise, how beautiful, and how powerful God is. The demons, the angels, dared to rebel against him. Even they did not know what they were up against until they tried to take God's place. When God deals with us tenderly from day to day, when he showers His favor on us, when we see displays of His power in creation, we think a thunderstorm is a big deal, we think galaxies are a big deal, but nothing is a big deal compared to the power of God.

That's why pride is not only so wicked but also so insane. We have to take it on faith that the depths of the wisdom and the power of God are beyond everything that we've ever seen or imagined or experienced. Don't misunderstand me here, but even the Bible doesn't tell us everything there is to know about God. Even what God has shown us of His grace and mercy and beauty is not all there is to know. We will be with God for all eternity and there will still be a lot that we don't know. Part of what we need to understand, just from thinking about the rebellion of some angels, is how much more there is to God than even an angel can experience or imagine.

At any rate, in his pride, the chief and most beautiful of the rebel angels thought he could replace God. He managed to persuade some angels to join him in that rebellion. But they were cast out and no longer allowed to be in heaven with God.

Tempter in Eden

Satan took the form of a snake and talked with Eve. There must have been something very persuasive and even attractive in the conversation that Eve had with the evil one in the garden. When he talked to Eve, the first thing he did was to question God's Word: "Did God really say...?" (Genesis 3:1).

Even in raising the question, he already changes God's Word. That's always Satan's mode of operation, his way of acting. He's going to get you to question what God says. Even in getting you to question what God says, he'll distort just a little bit what God said. "Did God really say that you cannot eat of any fruit in the garden or touch it?" (Genesis 3:1-3) God hadn't said anything about touching it. He just said, "Don't eat it." But the serpent tries to make it sound a little stricter than it is.

Satan's first step is to question: "Did God really say...?" Once he's gotten you to question God's Word, then he flatly denies God's warning: "You shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). This is how he always operates. We've seen it in the history of the church in the last couple of centuries. One

step is to question and keep raising more and more questions about the Word of God, which we now have written in the Bible. Then the next step is to deny the penalties of rejecting the Word of God: “No, you won't surely die. There is no consequence. God is too nice. He would never do anything so mean.”

Satan denies God's warning, and then comes the direct attack on God's goodness: “God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5). According to the serpent, God is just a big killjoy. God is trying to keep you from reaching your full potential. He's trying to prevent you from enjoying complete happiness.

So even in the garden and in the Bible's description of how the serpent operated in the garden, we get a template of his schemes and how he continues to operate. He's going to get you to question God's Word and to think that you're going to get away with it, that there are no serious consequences: "All that talk about hell and judgment, no, no, no, that was just ancient primitive ideas. Besides, you're going to flourish if you can just cast all of that aside."

Satan rebelled against God. But then when his rebellion failed and God's power cast him down, the next thing he wanted to do was wreck those who made in God's image. That is why he came into Eden. That's why he tried to destroy Adam and Eve.

Before Flood

Centuries after the creation and fall, Satan and the fallen angels utterly corrupted the human race and mated with women before the Flood. "The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose... The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown" (Genesis 6:2-4).

In the Bible, the phrase “sons of God” sometimes refers to spirit beings, angelic beings (Job 1:6, 2:7, 38:7; Psalm 29:1, 89:6). Some Bible versions translate the phrase differently, but the Hebrew in these passages is literally "sons of God." Somehow these "sons of God," fallen angels, took on a form in which they could reproduce with women. We can't be sure whether they took on some sort of body of their own or whether they took possession of human men. But somehow fallen angels interbred with human women and produced the Nephilim, great hybrid-type creatures, mighty men of renown. They are one of the reasons why the great flood came.

Now, this sounds very strange to us, and sometimes it won't be taught this way. We might say, “Come on! It can't mean that fallen angels mated with women. It must mean just that the godly line mingled with the ungodly line.” This was the approach of the great Christian thinker Augustine. But that was not the understanding of the church before him. Augustine lived about 400 years after Christ. The earliest church fathers and many Jewish interpreters understood Genesis 6 to be telling about fallen angelic beings who were interbreeding with women.

This was another part of the rebellion of the wicked angels against God. God dealt with that rebellion and sent the Flood. That flood destroyed the Nephilim and destroyed everybody except for Noah and his family and the animals that they took into the ark.

After Babel

After the Flood, we read about the Tower of Babel. At the Tower of Babel, people wanted to build their own connection between earth and heaven. A tower or a ziggurat was built so that the gods would come down to your location, and you could control the interaction between earth and heaven. Those who built the tower wanted to be one people. They didn't want to scatter throughout the world as God had commanded. They were going to make a name for themselves.

Does that sound familiar? What is the original sin? It's pride: "I'm the greatest." That was Satan's sin, and it was the sin of the tower builders at Babel. They thought they could be like the Most High. They would ascend to heaven and bring God down from heaven to their location. They would make a name for themselves.

God said to his heavenly council, "Let us go down. We'll confuse their languages." They not only confused the languages but then they scattered the nations. Deuteronomy 32 says, "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But Yahweh's portion is His people" (Deuteronomy 32:8-9).

After Babel, the nations were scattered, and God disowned them, not permanently, but for a time. He put them under the control of lesser powers, angelic powers. It seems some of those angelic powers whom those nations came under were rebel angelic powers. Out of all the nations, God chose one people. He chose Abraham and the offspring of Abraham to be a people that he would work with in a special way. In his plan, he would eventually bless all nations through that one nation. He didn't cast off the nations completely, but for a time he puts them under lesser powers and dealt particularly and personally with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and their offspring.

Demon gods

But even God's chosen nation went the way of the other nations. "They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; they sacrificed to demons that were no gods" (Deuteronomy 32:16-17). "They served their idols [the idols of the nations]... they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons" (Psalm 106:36-37).

When the Old Testament talks about idols and false gods, it's not just saying that people made a stick or a statue and were stupid enough to worship it. Idol worshipers never thought the stick or the statue was the real god. They thought it represented some kind of spirit power that they didn't see. They were right about that. They were worshiping spirit powers, who were actually demons, rebel angels.

Even if we believe in a Creator God, we Westerners tend to forget the whole supernatural realm. When we read about those ancient gods and goddesses, we think it was all just imaginary

mythmaking. Well, I'm sure there was a lot of imagining and mythmaking going on, but behind those gods and goddesses lurked malevolent, nasty, wicked powers. People would sacrifice even their sons and daughters to those demons. When they were burning their sons and daughters to please Chemosh or Molech, they were sacrificing to demonic powers.

Many nations served such gods, and even God's chosen nation of Israel slid into serving those gods. That's why eventually they were judged and sent into exile.

God is over all "gods." "God (*elohim*) has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods (*elohim*) he holds judgment... I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High... You shall fall like any prince" (Psalm 82:1, 6-7). God was talking to those angelic powers whom he set over nations and who were not governing them rightly. God says they are going to fall like any prince.

Think back to the passages we started with. God was talking to the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14 and to the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28. But he was not just talking to those rulers. In each case, God was talking to the ruler behind the ruler, the invisible spirit power who backed the earthly king. God was going to judge those hidden powers that influenced nations. Similarly, Daniel 10 talks about "the prince of Persia" and "the prince of Greece" as evil spirit powers, and tells how the mighty prince Michael, the archangel, contended with those evil princes.

We need to remember that God reigns supreme. But we also need to remember that in the supernatural realm, there is more than just God. There are good angels and rebel angels.

Defeated by Jesus (and Michael)

The most important thing to know about the rebel angels is that they have already been defeated. When some of Jesus' followers came back from a mission, he told them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Jesus "disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them by the cross" (Colossians 2:15). At the cross, Jesus made us right with God by his sacrifice, but at the same time, he also destroyed him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, and freed people who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15).

At the cross, Jesus took Satan's two worst weapons, sin and death, and turned them against Satan. The worst sin ever committed was the crucifixion of the Son of God. The worst death anyone ever died was Jesus dying for all the sins of the world. Jesus took the worst sin and the worst death, turned them against Satan, and defeated with his own weapons.

In losing to Jesus, Satan and his rebel angels also lost to the great archangel Michael. "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back... And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan" (Revelation 12:7-9).

Some people think Michael's victory over Satan in Revelation 12 is the same event that's described already in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, where God and his faithful angels cast down Satan

and the rebel angels. But Revelation 12 is describing a different triumph over Satan. In Revelation 12, Michael defeated Satan right after a dragon failed to destroy a woman's child and the child was caught up to God and his throne. Because the Christ child came to earth and then ascended to the throne of God, Michael and his angels could overpower and cast down the fallen angels. Revelation 12 is not about the original war between the good angels and the bad ones before God created the earth. It's about the victory of the good angels over the bad ones after the victory of Jesus. We need to know that Satan and his demons have lost to Jesus, and they have lost to the good angels.

Harm humans

This does not mean Satan and the rebel angels are now harmless. “Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). “Woe to the earth because the devil has gone down to you. He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short” (Revelation 12:12). Satan is a defeated but still very nasty enemy.

In World War II, the decisive victory was won at Normandy, when the D-Day invasion succeeded, and the Allies began advancing further into Europe. At that point, the Nazi regime was doomed. Even so, they threw everything they had into one last offensive, which came to be called the Battle of the Bulge. Things were nastier in that battle than they had been even in the decisive battle at Normandy. Although the outcome of the war was already decided, the Nazis still fought back with everything they had, and it was a terrible time.

So it is after the victory of Jesus. Things didn't get easier for Jesus' followers after his victory. His followers were hunted and hounded, and false teachers sneaked into the churches. All kinds of bad things were going on after the victory of Jesus. But even so, Satan could no longer deceive the nations after that victory of Jesus (Revelation 20:3). The gospel was spreading into the nations that were previously without the light of God, but Satan continued to attack and to lie and to do as much harm as he could.

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That's a brief overview of the history of rebel angels. Satan and the fallen angels tried in pride to surpass God himself and failed miserably. They tempted Adam and Eve in Eden and succeeded in leading them into sin and into death. They mated with women before the Flood and helped to bring humanity under a terrible judgment. They misruled the nations after the Tower of Babel. They were defeated by Jesus and by Michael. Now they harm humans as much as they can until the time comes when Jesus banishes them to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Demons

- Detest
- Defame
- Deceive
- Defile
- Degrade
- Divide
- Distract
- Destroy

Next I want to think with you about some of the ways that rebel angels, now called demons, attack us. This is just a sample list; much more could be said.

Demons **detest**. They hate. Satan and his angels hate God, and they hate humans made in God's image. Their hate motivates them to do all the other damage that they try to do.

Demons **defame** God. In Eden the serpent said, in effect, "God acts like he's so good, but he's really trying to hold you back. He's trying to block you from your potential and hinder your happiness. That's the kind of being God is. He doesn't care about you being happy. He doesn't care about you flourishing and flowering. He is not what he claims to be." So Satan defames God himself.

Demons **deceive**. Jesus said of Satan, "When he lies, he speaks his native language because he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). In defaming God, Satan is lying, but he's always lying. He lies in various ways. Sometimes he gets you to believe false teachings. Sometimes he deceives you into thinking that your urges are the most important thing that you always ought to follow. Sometimes he fools you into having an artificially inflated opinion of yourself, leading you into pride the way he led the king of Babylon into pride, the way he led the king of Tyre into pride, the way that he leads many of us into an inflated opinion of how smart and great and perfect we are. When he deceives, he can sometimes take on his old shining angelic garb: "Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

That has literally happened. When Muhammad claimed to have a revelation from God, he said that an angel spoke to him and gave him all the words that are now written in the Quran. The Quran was written 600 years after the time of Christ. The Quran is at odds with much of the teaching of the New Testament. It denies that Jesus is God's unique Son. It denies the reality of the Trinity. It denies that we're saved by Jesus' death and says instead that Jesus didn't die at all. It says all these things, and allegedly it all came from the mouth of an angel. The apostle Paul said, "If we or even an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:8). We might say, "Muhammad just made it all up because he wanted to get a lot of power among the Arab tribes and take over." Maybe. Or maybe he really did hear from an angel, just the wrong kind of angel: a rebel angel disguised as an angel of light.

Consider Joseph Smith, the founder of the Latter-Day Saints, the Mormon religion. Joseph Smith said that the angel Moroni appeared to him and told him where some golden plates were buried. Those golden plates, when translated, became the Book of Mormon. Was Joseph Smith just making it all up to get himself a religious following? That's possible. But it's also possible that an angel calling himself Moroni and looking mighty splendid came to Joseph Smith. If Satan appears as an angel of light, why not?

Two of the world's most powerful religious movements, Islam and Mormonism, claim to be based on revelation through an angel. But they deviate very far from biblical Christianity. What claims to be from an angel is not from an angel at all, or it's from the wrong kind of angel.

The Bible tells of an old prophet who said, "An angel told me." The younger man he was talking to had already received a message directly from God about what not to do. But the old prophet, with his silver hair and his silver tongue, said, "An angel told me; change of plans." The old liar succeeded in deceiving the younger man, who was killed by a lion as a result. That was not the last time some genteel old man with silver hair and a persuasive voice was heeded by somebody to his own ruin. Satan goes around like a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8). A persuasive voice says, "An angel told me," and then a lion devours.

There are various forms of deception. It's not always somebody else telling you this or that. Sometimes it is our own ability to fool ourselves. Our fallen hearts are skilled at fooling ourselves and getting ourselves into trouble without any help from the rebel angels. Unfortunately, the demons are also there to make us even more prone to fool ourselves.

Another practice of the rebel angels is to **defile**. Satan likes to take what was holy, what was set apart to the worship of God, and then defile it. In the Old Testament, idol worshipers not only worshiped demons but they brought their images right into the temple of God.

Islam loves to take over a prominent place of worship and claim it as a place for Muslim worship. The temple of God was built on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. When the Muslims conquered Jerusalem, what did they do? They built the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, not just anywhere, but on the Temple Mount itself. When the Muslim Turks finally conquered Constantinople, they changed the magnificent Church of Holy Wisdom, the Hagia Sophia, into a mosque. They wouldn't build a mosque just anywhere; they insisted on turning that huge cathedral, which had stood for many centuries as a place for Christian worship, to be a place that Muslims would use now as a place of worship. Demons defile.

Homosexual activists chose June to be Pride Month. When Pride Month was first declared, June was the month when the most marriages occurred. They took the month most associated with marriage and redefined it. What symbol did they choose? The rainbow. In biblical visions, a rainbow encircles God's throne (Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 4:3). A rainbow is the sign of God's faithfulness (Genesis 9:13). Even though God would be right to destroy humanity because of our sin, he holds himself back because of his promise, symbolized by the rainbow. People who promoted sexual perversion took the rainbow that encircles God's throne, the sign of his promise that he upholds the world, and they made it into the symbol of a movement defying God's Word. There are many other ways that Satan defiles what is holy.

Satan has other techniques. Demons **degrade**. If you ever did anything that defiled anybody or if you ever did anything that was wrong, then Satan says you are worthless, no good, rotten, horrible. You might as well kill yourself. One of the devil's names, "the Satan," means "the accuser." He will accuse you and attack you: "There's no forgiveness for what you did. There is no acceptance from God for you. You are a loser. You're gone. You are beyond saving." Satan degrades you and makes you want to give up on life and give up on God.

Another strategy: demons **divide**. Satan will divide Christians against each other in the church. He will divide nations against each other in conflict and in war and in hatred and murder and animosity. He will divide families against each other, divide children against parents, children against each other, husband and wife against each other. We need to understand that oftentimes our conflicts involve the power of the rebel angels. Even without demons, we sinners are quick to bicker. We're good enough at having conflicts without any help. Fallen, sinful people are selfish enough to be fighting with each other a lot, but very often it goes beyond that.

Some of the terrible things that nations have done and some of the ways that wars have spun out of control, were beyond merely human evil. Adolf Hitler and his Nazi henchmen were involved in the occult. They launched World War II, the bloodiest war in history, and the Holocaust, which tried to wipe out all Jewish people.

Karl Marx, the founder of socialism and communism, wrote, "See this sword--the Prince of Darkness sold it to me." Was he being poetic? Maybe. Or maybe he really was in league with Satan. Marxism led to the death of countless millions. Truly. Terrible wars and conflicts arise out of human sin, but also out of demonic division.

Demons divide in marriage too. A husband gets suspicious of his wife and thinks the worst of her motives. She thinks the worst of his motives. Instead of looking at each other in a better light, married people think of each other in an accusing and degrading light. They don't even notice the demons who are influencing their thoughts and feelings.

In some churches, people have been friends for years and years. All of a sudden, they can't stand each other anymore. They argued over something small, but then it spun out of control and became a huge conflict. What used to be friendship and bonds of love can turn into ferocious conflict. Division is one of the demons' main strategies.

Another is to **distract**. One way demons distract is to get you looking at other people's sins. If I mention people who have same-sex attractions, you might say, "I'm glad I'm not a sinner like them. Okay, so I slept with somebody outside of marriage. I looked at porn this week. But I'm not like those people. I'm glad to be pure and clean." Or, "I'm glad I never had an abortion. I didn't sacrifice any of my children to the demons." But focusing on other people's sins instead of our own is a demonic distraction. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), but Satan distracts us from that fact.

He'll also distract us from paying attention to God. Sometimes a distraction can be an innocent thing. It might be that your smartphone occupies your attention so much that you didn't get around to reading the Bible today, and maybe not yesterday, or the day before, or the day before

that. There was nothing wrong with looking at your smartphone. But you became so distracted that you ignored God.

Sometimes you get distracted by politics. Before you know it, you're identifying the cause of a particular politician with the cause of God, even when the politician is obviously ungodly. He is supposedly representing God's cause because he's got a couple of political ideas that you're in favor of. Well, you can be in favor of those ideas if you want, but the man does not represent God. This has happened throughout history, where people hitch their wagon to this or that politician and lose sight of God

Sometimes they hitch their wagon to a country and think that God cares more about their country than other countries. Don't ever think that God's people is the United States of America and that we have a greater standing in God's plan than any other nation, or that God wouldn't be able to get along very well without this nation. He can. He will. Nations come and go throughout history. So you can love your nation and support it, but don't be distracted by thinking that your nation is the be-all and the end-all. There are many nations in the world that God cares about and that God has his people in. The church of Jesus Christ is God's holy nation (1 Peter 2:9), whom he has chosen from every tribe and language and people and nation (Revelation 7:9). So go ahead, be patriotic and love your country within proper bounds. Be thankful for what's good about it, and be repentant for what's bad about it, but don't confuse it or any of its political leaders with with God's kingdom.

In all these things, what is the devil really up to? He's out to **destroy**. When Satan degrades you and tempts you to suicide, he wants to destroy you. When he makes somebody hateful, so hateful they want to wreck somebody else, he's wanting them to murder and destroy. When he lures you into self-destructive behavior, he wants you to ruin yourself and wreck your life. He wants to wreck nations. He wants to wreck churches. He wants to wreck families. He just wants to wreck. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy," says Jesus. "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

Jesus

- Loves ~~detest~~
- Honors ~~defame~~
- Reveals ~~deceive~~
- Cleanses ~~defile~~
- Uplifts ~~degrade~~
- Unites ~~divide~~
- Attracts ~~distract~~
- Renews ~~destroy~~

We need to understand how Jesus counters the activity of the rebel angels. Where they detest God and detest humanity, Jesus **loves** His Father and he loves you and me. He loves humanity.

Where Satan and the fallen angels defame God, Jesus **honors** his Father and seeks to bring glory to him.

Where the fallen rebel angels want to deceive, Jesus **reveals**. He helps you to understand truth. He says, "I came into the world to bear witness to the truth. I am the truth" (John 18:37; John 14:6). Jesus wants to reveal truth, not deceive.

Where the fallen angels want to defile what is holy, Jesus **cleanses** and purifies what is unholy and makes it holy.

Where the devil wants to tell you that you're nobody and nothing and worthless and God has no use and no possibility of accepting you and degrades you, Jesus **uplifts**. Look how Jesus dealt with people. He dealt with prostitutes who were despised by all, and he lifted them up and made them his followers. He took the demon-possessed, those who were dominated by evil powers and were crazy, and he put them in their right mind and made them whole again. He took tax collectors who were despised and hated as traitors and made them his own followers. He took gossips and made them into honest truth-tellers. He took homosexual people and turned them into obedient followers of Jesus. He took fornicators and lifted them up and purified them and made them faithful in their marriages. 1 Corinthians 6 lists a bunch of bad things, and then it says, "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). Jesus took us where we were at, sunk in sin, and he lifted us up to be sons of God. The parable of the prodigal son says it all. We stumble home with filth all over us, and the Father puts on the best robe and puts the signet ring on our hands and welcomes us to being his children.

Jesus **unites**. Instead of the division, he takes people who are at odds with each other and makes them one.

Instead of distracting and getting you running off in all different directions, Jesus **attracts** you and your thoughts and your being to him. You find yourself no longer distracted or fragmented into many pieces. Instead, you are becoming integrated as a whole person, and you are also attracted to connect with other believers in him.

Jesus **renews**. Satan destroys. Jesus came to give life. He came to give new birth. He came so that anybody could belong to him. So no matter where you are, no matter how desperate your predicament, no matter how far you may have fallen, no matter how much in the grip of a rebel angel you might be, Jesus has disarmed those hostile powers and put them to open shame (Colossians 2:15). Jesus went to the cross to take all the garbage and deal with it. In dealing with that garbage, he sets us free.

We don't have to pretend anymore. We don't have to pretend that bad things are good. We don't need to lie to ourselves. We just have to confess our sins, our weaknesses, our failings to him and find in him forgiveness and cleansing.

The Bible tells us a lot more bad news than we're likely to read in the headlines. It's very unflattering. "There is no one righteous, not even one. There is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless" (Romans 3:10-12). "You were dead in your transgressions and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). There's nothing bad that the devil can say about you

that the Bible hasn't already said worse. But the Bible says those things in order to help you be honest and then to rescue you and bring you into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Besides the bad news about our sin, the Bible tells us bad news about unseen evil powers that are out to ruin us. In our modern world, we'd rather not think about that. But the Bible says the rebel angels are real and dangerous. So rather than pretend they're not there and then be ruined by them without even knowing what they did to us, face the fact that they are there. Don't let the lion eat you. Don't let the snake fool you any longer. Don't let demons intimidate you, accuse you, or anything else. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. You can have victory in him. Come to Jesus Christ, and you will have life and have it abundantly.

Rebel Angels
Slide Contents
David Feddes

¹² How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star [Lucifer] son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³ You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ ¹⁵ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

¹² “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. ¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned. So I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground. (Ezekiel 28:12-17)

Rebel angels

- Tried in pride to surpass Most High
- Tempted Adam and Eve in Eden
- Mated with women before the Flood
- Misruled nations after Tower of Babel
- Defeated by Jesus (and by Michael)
- Harm humans as much as they can

Pride

You were full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. You were an anointed guardian cherub. (Ezekiel 28:12-14)

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer. You said, “I will make myself like the Most High.” (Isaiah 14)

In Eden

Did God really say...? You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-5)

Before Flood

The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose... The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. (Genesis 6:2-4)

After Babel

When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But Yahweh's portion is his people. (Deuteronomy 32:8-9)

Demon gods

They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods... They sacrificed to demons that were no gods. (Deuteronomy 32:16-17)

They served their idols... They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. (Psalm 106:36-37)

God over gods

God (*elohim*) has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods (*elohim*) he holds judgment... I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High... You shall fall like any prince. (Psalm 82:1, 6)

Lost to Jesus

Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18)

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them by the cross. (Colossians 1:13-14; 2:15)

Lost to Michael

There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.... And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan. (Revelation 12:7-9)

Harm humans

Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

The devil has gone down to you. He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short! (Revelation 12:12)

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Demons

- Detest
- Defame
- Deceive
- Defile
- Degrade
- Divide
- Distract
- Destroy

Jesus

- Loves ~~detest~~
- Honors ~~defame~~
- Reveals ~~deceive~~
- Cleanses ~~defile~~
- Uplifts ~~degrade~~
- Unites ~~divide~~
- Attracts ~~distract~~
- Renews ~~destroy~~