

## **The Accuser's Downfall**

### **By David Feddes**

Picture yourself in a courtroom; you're being charged and accused. Now, in this courtroom, there's a judge. There's a prosecutor, there's a defender, an attorney who is speaking for you. And then there are some others in the courtroom as well.

The prosecutor has been charging you with all sorts of terrible crimes, but the judge has been ruling in your favor, and your defender has been doing a great job of speaking up in your favor. The judge has ruled that all charges against you are ruled out. Anything you've done wrong has already been taken care of and paid for, and the prosecutor doesn't really have a case against you anymore. And on top of that, the judge rules that the prosecutor is himself a crook, and the prosecutor is ruled out of court.

When the judge makes that ruling, the prosecutor is furious, and he's got a number of his own henchmen in the courtroom. He urges them to try to take over the whole courtroom. But the judge has his people in the courtroom as well. He's got his chief officer, the bailiff, and other enforcement officials who are working with him. The judge orders the chief officer to clear that prosecutor and all of his henchmen out of the courtroom and to throw them out and to not let them back in again.

And that's exactly what happens. He's thrown out of court, and you're left there in the room with the judge who declared you not guilty, with your defender who's been speaking in your favor, and with the court officer and others working with him who just threw your accusers out of the courtroom. So you're in a good situation: you've been declared innocent, you've got some very strong defenders, and everybody in that court is in your favor.

That's kind of the picture that the Bible gives us in Revelation chapter 12. At the beginning of Revelation chapter 12, it talks about the birth of a child who grows up, and there's a terrible dragon representing Satan who tries to destroy the child. But then the child wins the victory and goes up to heaven. And then Revelation 12 tells us what happens next:

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."  
(Revelation 12:7-11)

So there you have a picture of the heavenly courtroom and of a great conflict in it, and of the devil and his angels being thrown down.

## Courtroom conflict

- **Defendant:** Christian
- **Judge:** God the Almighty
- **Defender:** Jesus the Messiah
- **Prosecutor:** Satan the accuser
- **Officer:** Michael the archangel

In this courtroom conflict, we see that the defendant is the Christian, the one being accused. Satan is the accuser of our brothers, the accuser of fellow believers. And so there's a sense in which we're the defendants who would have to face charges. The judge is God, the Almighty, and he, in this picture, has ruled in our favor. Our defender is Jesus, the Messiah, the child who was born and who was caught up to the right hand of God. He's our defender. And the prosecutor, the crooked, evil prosecutor, is Satan. He's the accuser of the brothers in this passage.

And who is the enforcer in the court? Well, the officer is Michael, the archangel, and all the other angels who are working with him. On the orders of the judge and based on the fact that our defender, Jesus the Messiah, is right and has won the victory, Michael and his angels fight and successfully defeat the dragon, the devil, and his angels and cast them out of the heavenly throne room, out of the heavenly court where they can no longer accuse. This is a tremendous picture of a courtroom conflict in heaven and of the victory that God wins, and of the blessing of not being accused by Satan anymore in heaven's court.

## Earthly courts

Now, this vision of Revelation 12 was quite a contrast with what was going on at the time that Revelation was originally written. The earthly courts were finding Christians guilty and were killing them based on a wide variety of accusations. Roman courts killed Jesus' followers based on accusations of:

- Rebellion and treason
- Atheism
- Cannibalism
- Incest
- Arson

Christians were accused of **rebellion and treason** because they refused to swear and to say, "Caesar is Lord." Instead, the Christians insisted, "Jesus is Lord." They weren't really trying to rebel or commit treason against the Emperor, and they were willing to obey the just laws that the Emperor might have. But they wouldn't worship the Emperor or say that he was Lord. And that was considered to be treason, and so they could be executed on accusations of treason.

They were charged with **atheism** because the Christians did not believe in all those different gods and goddesses that were part of the Roman and Greek pantheon—the god collection—and they wouldn't offer sacrifices to those various gods. And so they were sometimes considered to be total unbelievers who didn't accept the gods, and they were just atheists.

Polycarp was a man who had been personally discipled by the apostle John and later became leader of the church in Smyrna. Polycarp, when he was an old man, was being accused, and he was told to swear to Caesar. Then he was told to say, "Away with the atheists," and he was in a big stadium filled with people who were there to watch his execution. Polycarp turned and pointed to the crowd and said, "Away with the atheists." But he was supposed to be accusing his fellow Christians of atheism. Of course, they were not atheists; they believed in the one true God. But they were charged with atheism, convicted of it, and killed for it because they wouldn't believe in the gods and goddesses of Rome. Polycarp died that day.

They were charged with **cannibalism**. There were some who made up stories based that Christians had secret gatherings where they ate body and blood together. Christians didn't allow non-Christians to come in and celebrate the Lord's Supper with them. And so false rumors could get started and circulated that this notion of eating body and blood meant they were taking little babies and killing them, covering them with dough, and then eating them. And so they were charged and accused, in rumors and in courts, of cannibalism.

Christians often spoke of each other as beloved brothers and sisters, and they were told to treat each other as family members and to love one another. And there was language of Jesus being the husband and the church being his bride. All of these images got mixed together, and they were accused of having sexual relations among family members. So **incest** was one of the charges against them in the Roman courts.

They were charged with **arson**. Of all the crimes and misdeeds they were accused of, the worst crime they were charged with at the time of Nero was burning down the whole city of Rome. Now, it was said by a number of others that Nero himself and his cronies had started that fire because they wanted to launch some new building projects and clear out some of the old structures. Whether that was true or not, Nero had to shift the blame onto somebody else, so he accused the Christians of starting the fire that burned so much of Rome.

So, on these and other charges, Christians were being dragged into Roman courts and charged with all sorts of horrid crimes and found guilty. Some of the Christians must have wondered, "Where is the Lord? And does the Lord cast us off and consider us guilty?"

### **Heavenly court**

If they ever wondered such a thing, the vision of Revelation 12 said that in heaven, everything was okay for them. "The accuser of our brothers has been thrown down" (Revelation 12:10). God the judge had ruled in their favor, and Christ, their defender, was speaking for them at the right hand of God and interceding for them. This vision of what happened in the heavenly court, with the accuser and his cronies being thrown out, was a tremendous comfort to Christians who were being murdered by earthly courts.

That's the original setting of this vision, and it's still a vision that has a lot of encouragement for us today—the idea that God is on our side, and that Satan, our accuser, no longer has a voice in the heavenly court, nor any charge that he can legitimately bring against us.

## Six titles for the chief evil angel

- "the great dragon": mass murderer
- "that ancient serpent": sly god-player
- "the devil": diabolos = slanderer
- "Satan": adversary, prosecutor
- "the deceiver of the whole world"
- "the accuser of our brothers"

As we think about this whole idea of the accuser's downfall, let's look at six titles for Satan in this passage—six titles that are given to the chief of the evil angels.

He's called **the great dragon**. This picture of Satan as a dragon captures what he's like as a mass murderer. This dragon has seven heads, gobbles, slaughters, and he's red—blood red. Satan has been a killer from the very beginning, wanting to bring death into the world.

Another thing that's true of Satan and how he's described is he's **that ancient serpent**. Remember, all the way back to the Garden of Eden, he came in the form of a serpent, and that ancient serpent deceived Eve by saying, "Oh, you could become like gods." Satan himself thought he could become like God. He tried in his pride to take God's place, and when he failed, he then tried to get other people to think they could play God.

Another title in this passage is **the devil**. That's a translation of the word *diabolos*, from which we get our word "diabolical" or "devilish." It means a slanderer—one who falsely says things, damaging someone's reputation, always trying to get them into deeper and deeper trouble.

He's also **Satan**. We sometimes take Satan as a proper name, but Satan is really more of a title or label than it is a name. He's introduced as "the Satan" in the book of Job, and later in the Bible he's also called "the Satan," meaning the adversary, the prosecutor—the one who's against you and trying to nail you and bring you down.

Another title he's called in this passage of Revelation 12 is **the deceiver of the whole world**. Jesus said that Satan was not only a murderer from the beginning—that's the dragon part—but Jesus also said that Satan is a liar and the father of lies. So he's the deceiver of the whole world, always trying to trick people. John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* has Satan saying at one point, "Evil, be thou my good." He's going to love evil and hate good, and part of being a deceiver is to spend his career calling good evil and evil good, trying to trick people into hating what's good and loving what's evil. What a deceiver!

A final title for him--the one I'm emphasizing in this talk is **the accuser of our brothers**—the one who keeps on accusing. This has a lot in common, of course, with "diabolos," the slanderer, and with "Satan," the prosecutor. But here he's clearly called "the accuser of our brothers."

There are other things said of Satan in the Bible, but these six things appear right here in Revelation 12.

## Accuser/Slanderer

- Satan said **God** lied and didn't want what was best for humanity. (Genesis 3)
- Satan said **Job** worshiped God only to get health and wealth. (Job 1-2)
- Satan claimed **Moses'** body. (Jude 1:9)
- Satan wanted God to condemn **Joshua** the high priest in filthy robes. (Zechariah 3)
- Satan demanded **Peter**. (Luke 22:31)

Let's focus on that work of Satan as an accuser who is always trying to bring charges against us but who has been thrown out of heaven's courtroom.

As the accuser or slanderer, Satan will accuse and slander anyone, starting with **God** Himself. Satan told Adam and Eve that God had lied to them, that they would not surely die if they took the forbidden fruit, and that God just wanted to keep them from becoming like gods. He implied God was holding them back, not wanting what was best for humanity, and questioned God's trustworthiness. If Satan is willing to make accusations against God Himself, to slander the only perfect, Almighty God in the universe, he's certainly willing to make accusations and bring slander against human beings.

Elsewhere in the Bible, Satan looks at the best guy in the whole world—**Job**. The Bible said there was nobody else like Job. God Himself said Job genuinely worshiped and loved Him. Satan said Job worshiped God just because it paid off, for health and wealth. Satan claimed that if Job's wealth and health were taken away, Job would curse God. Job didn't curse God, but Satan was willing to accuse this outstanding man of God.

Satan also claimed rights to **Moses'** body. The Bible says Satan was disputing over the body of Moses. We don't know exactly what he said, but maybe he reasoned this way: "God, you didn't let Moses into the Promised Land because he sinned out there in the wilderness when he struck the rock instead of speaking to it as you instructed and lost his temper. God, I want Moses' body. I want Moses." The Bible says Michael, the chief archangel, rebuked Satan, saying, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan!" My point here is that Satan claimed rights over Moses' body, which God Himself buried, despite the fact that Satan had no legitimate claim on Moses.

Satan wanted God to condemn the high priest of Israel, **Joshua**. In the prophet Zechariah's vision, Joshua was wearing filthy robes, and the sins of the people were tied to him. Satan was standing there accusing this high priest Joshua in the presence of God.

Satan demanded to have **Peter** and his fellow disciples. Jesus said, "'Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat" (Luke 22:31). Peter was the chief spokesman among the disciples.

Just look at that list! God was accused by Satan. Job was accused by Satan. Moses was accused by Satan. Joshua, the high priest, was accused by Satan. Peter was accused by Satan. This is one nasty accuser who is willing to charge and accuse anybody of just about anything.

Sometimes, because we're sinners, there might even be a basis for his accusation. But even when there's no basis for accusation, Satan will still try to accuse. Remember the vision: he's been thrown out of the courtroom, the accuser has been cast down, but he still remains a nasty accuser, and he will accuse the innocent.

### **Accusing the innocent**

- Jezebel hired slanderers to get Naboth convicted and killed. (1 Kings 21:13)
- Judas accused Mary of wasting money on Jesus. (John 12:1-8)
- False witnesses in rigged court accused Jesus of sin. (Matt 26:60)
- Stephen's enemies recruited and set up false witnesses (Acts 6:11-14)

Here are just a few stories from the Bible where innocent people are accused. **Jezebel**, that wicked wife of King Ahab, the vicious, cruel queen of Israel, hired slanderers because her husband wanted a vineyard belonging to a man named Naboth. Jezebel hired these false accusers to say that they had heard Naboth curse God and curse the king. It was all a pack of lies, but they accused him of it, he was convicted, he was killed, and Ahab took over Naboth's vineyard. Of course, Jezebel and Ahab later perished under God's judgment, but the point here is the role of slanderers in bringing about murder.

**Judas** is remembered as the person who betrayed Jesus, but shortly before that, Judas accused Mary. She took extremely expensive perfume, broke the jar open, poured it on Jesus' feet, wiped his feet with her hair, and just loved the Lord Jesus. It was a tremendous act of love and devotion. Judas looked at it and said, "What a stupid waste of money! It should have been given to the poor." Behind that accusing spirit was the spirit of Satan himself, who looked at a beautiful act of worship. Jesus said, "She has done a beautiful thing, and it will be told wherever the gospel goes." So you've got Judas the accuser on the one hand, and the joy of Jesus on the other.

How was Jesus convicted? The leaders rigged the court and brought in many **false witnesses who accused Jesus** of sin. All those accusations fell apart because they couldn't get their stories straight. Finally Jesus was asked, "Are you the Son of God?" Jesus said he was, and then they convicted him of blasphemy. But notice that false witnesses were brought in to accuse the innocent Jesus.

When Stephen, the first martyr, was killed, what happened? **Stephen's enemies** recruited and set up false witnesses against Stephen. They charged him with cursing God, denouncing the law of Moses, and all sorts of things Stephen had never done. Stephen was murdered by that hostile mob.

Again and again in the Bible, we find false accusations against the innocent leading to murder. That's how serious it is. Jesus paired these two things: He said Satan was a murderer from the beginning and a liar and the father of lies. His roles as a killer and as an accuser go together.

## **Condemning saved sinners**

Back to that vision of the high priest Joshua in the Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter three. Joshua is standing there wearing filthy robes. In literal language, he's standing with robes covered in manure—filth—and Satan is accusing him, trying to get the Lord to reject the high priest of Israel and then reject all of Israel along with him.

What happens in the vision? These words are spoken: "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments... And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments" (Zechariah 3:2-3).

Satan wants to accuse, condemn, and destroy. God says, "I rebuke you, Satan. I cleanse, I clothe with clean robes, and I have saved Jerusalem. I have saved this man from the fire, and no amount of your accusing is going to change my mind." That vision is a tremendous comfort still today. We may feel like we're wearing robes covered with manure and like we stink—and there's a sense in which that's true—but there's another sense in which God says, "I've saved this person. I've plucked him from the burning. I've clothed him, and nobody has a right to accuse the one I've declared innocent and set free."

## **Canceling the record**

How did that come about? Colossians 1 says, "And you, who were dead in your trespasses... God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. (Colossians 2:14-15)

Go back to that picture we started with of a courtroom, where an accuser is trying to use the law against us. Satan himself is worse than we are; he's more crooked than we are. He's a bigger criminal than any of us sinners will ever be, yet he's using God's righteous law to accuse us. But all that we have done wrong has been nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ. Jesus, our defender, is in the courtroom, pleading the merits of His own sacrifice and saying that everything we've done has already been paid for. We're in the clear, the judge is ruling in our favor, and Satan has been disarmed. He has nothing more that he can say against those whom God has forgiven. He's embarrassed, put to open shame, thrown out of the courtroom, and shown to be the main crook in the whole affair. That record is canceled because of what Jesus did.

That is the key to the accuser being cast down. He has nothing on which he has the right to accuse us in God's presence anymore—ever again. This is so very important for us to know in our own hearts. If we are pastors ministering to others whose consciences may condemn them and whom the devil constantly tries to bring down and discourage, it's crucial to affirm that the devil is disarmed and the accuser is cast down. The judge is on your side; Jesus is your defender.

## Worldly grief vs. godly grief

Now, there is a time to feel convicted of sin. Here's an important verse in the Bible: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death" (2 Corinthians 7:10). There are two different kinds of grief: one is godly, the other worldly. There are two different kinds of conviction: one from the Holy Spirit, the other from the devil. Sometimes, when we feel guilty for sin, we *should* feel guilty because we've done bad things, and we need to repent and turn away from them. But there are also times when we're just burdened by guilt, weighed down and almost wallowing in despair. That's not from the Holy Spirit at all—it's from the devil.

How do you tell the difference? It can be complicated, but here are a couple of simple ways.

- **The Spirit's conviction** moves you to give up on yourself, to seek salvation in Jesus, and to live by the Spirit.
- **Satan's accusation** moves you to give up on God's mercy and love.

When dealing with the Spirit's conviction, He moves you to give up on yourself, seek salvation in Jesus, change, and live by the Holy Spirit. He wants you to know you've sinned and need cleansing, but then He shows you that you can be cleansed. He shows you Jesus, draws your attention to Him, and places His Spirit's power within you to help you live for Christ and start changing. That's Holy Spirit conviction about sin.

Satan's accusation is different. It makes you feel so lousy that you give up on God's mercy and love and feel hopelessly bad.

Consider an example of each:

Peter denied Jesus and felt horrible afterward. After denying Jesus three times, even using foul language and curses, the rooster crowed as Jesus had predicted. Jesus, though on trial, turned and looked directly into Peter's eyes. Seeing Jesus, Peter was heartbroken, went out, wept bitterly, and later was restored. It was the look of Jesus that caused those tears and drew Peter back.

Judas is another story. He betrayed Jesus, sold Him for 30 pieces of silver, handed Him over, and identified Him with a kiss. Later, Judas realized the horrible thing he had done. The Bible says that before Judas acted to betray Jesus, Satan had entered Judas's heart. Afterward, Satan filled Judas with suicidal despair, and Judas killed himself.

This stark contrast shows Satan's accusation versus the Holy Spirit's conviction. One moves you to sorrow for sin, look into the eyes of Jesus, and seek His salvation; the other leaves you feeling utterly worthless and destroyed. It's essential to know the difference. If the guilt you're feeling is despairing, not turning you toward God, it's likely Satan's accusation. If the guilt causes you to recognize your wrongs before God and drives you to seek freedom from sin, that's not Satan—it's the Holy Spirit and Jesus working on you. Understand clearly the difference between worldly grief from Satan and godly grief from Jesus through His Holy Spirit.



## **Conquering the accuser**

How do we conquer the accuser? Revelation 12 says, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. (Rev. 12:10-11)

Part of conquering the accuser is recognizing that you don't have to do it yourself; it's already been done for you. Jesus canceled the accusations, and Michael and his angels, in the power of God, have thrown out the devil and his evil angels.

Yet there's another sense in which we also do some conquering. Revelation says, "They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." You conquer by the blood of the Lamb. When the accuser attacks, you say, "Jesus shed His blood for me. Those sins Satan accuses me of—some may be real, but they're paid for. And some accusations aren't even bad; they're good things I've been doing for the Lord. I do not listen to Satan. He's a liar." Thus, you conquer by the blood of the Lamb, taking refuge in Jesus' death and resurrection.

By the word of your testimony, you refuse to back down from your faith despite Satan's accusations. Today, if you say Jesus is the only way of salvation, you'll face accusations of intolerance and bigotry. If you maintain biblical standards of sexuality—that sex belongs within marriage between a man and a woman—you'll face many accusations. These accusations don't come from God but from the evil one. Remember God's word, live by it, and hold fast to your testimony, even if it leads to suffering or death. The heavenly vision shows the Judge ruling in your favor, Jesus as your defender, Michael and his angels fighting for you, and the accuser cast down. If suffering comes on earth, so be it; we belong to the living God.

## **Sore loser**

Satan is a sore loser. Revelation 12:12 says, "Rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" He will cause as much damage as he can, attacking your conscience and trying to discourage you. But always remember that God doesn't listen to his accusations against those who belong to Jesus. If God won't listen to Satan, neither should you. Declare confidently, "I am right with God. I listen to the Holy Spirit, who pours God's love into my heart and draws me closer to Jesus."

## **Don't be an accuser.**

Understanding Satan as an accuser means we must not become accusers ourselves. The Bible says, "You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people" (Leviticus 19:16). Slander is serious: "rash words are like sword thrusts" (Proverbs 12:18), destroying lives. The tongue can be "a fire set on fire by hell" (James 3:6). When we falsely accuse, gossip, or discourage others,

we're doing Satan's work. Churches and families can be devastated by slander, highlighting why the Bible lists gossip and slander among severe sins like murder and immorality.

Jesus said, "Judge not, that you be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). Don't pass final sentences on others, declaring what they deserve and condemning them without hope—that's Satan's work. Instead, offer the gospel of hope and reconciliation. Don't be an accuser, and don't despair when accused.

### **Don't despair when accused.**

The apostle Paul emphasizes this strongly in Romans 8. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... If God is for us, who can be against us? ... Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us" (Romans 8:1, 31-34). Jesus intercedes based on His blood. God has justified and chosen us, so neither Satan nor anyone else can condemn us.

Paul confidently asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble, hardship, famine, nakedness, persecution, danger, or sword? No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39).

The accuser has been cast down. God is for us, and no one can stand against us.

## **The Accuser's Downfall**

### **By David Feddes**

### **Slide Contents**

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. (Revelation 12:7-11)

### **Courtroom conflict**

- **Defendant:** Christian
- **Judge:** God the Almighty
- **Defender:** Jesus the Messiah
- **Prosecutor:** Satan the accuser
- **Officer:** Michael the archangel

### **Earthly and heavenly courts**

**Earthly:** Roman courts killed Jesus' followers based on accusations of:

- Rebellion and treason
- Atheism
- Cannibalism
- Incest
- Arson

**Heavenly:** *"The accuser of our brothers has been thrown down."* (Rev 12:10).

### **Six titles for the chief evil angel**

- "the great dragon": mass murderer
- "that ancient serpent": sly god-player
- "the devil": diabolos = slanderer
- "Satan": adversary, prosecutor
- "the deceiver of the whole world"
- "the accuser of our brothers"

## **Accuser/Slanderer**

- Satan said **God** lied and didn't want what was best for humanity. (Gen 3)
- Satan said **Job** worshiped God only to get health and wealth. (Job 1-2)
- Satan claimed **Moses'** body. (Jude 1:9)
- Satan wanted God to condemn **Joshua** the high priest in filthy robes. (Zech 3)
- Satan demanded **Peter**. (Luke 22:31)

## **Accusing the innocent**

- Jezebel hired slanderers to get Naboth convicted and killed. (1 Kings 21:13)
- Judas accused Mary of wasting money on Jesus. (John 12:1-8)
- False witnesses in rigged court accused Jesus of sin. (Matt 26:60)
- Stephen's enemies recruited and set up false witnesses (Acts 6:11-14)

## **Condemning saved sinners**

"The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments... And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments." (Zechariah 3:2-3)

## **Canceling the record**

And you, who were dead in your trespasses... God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. (Colossians 2:14-15)

## **Worldly grief vs. godly grief**

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. (2 Corinthians 7:10)

- **The Spirit's conviction** moves you to give up on yourself, to seek salvation in Jesus, and to live by the Spirit.
- **Satan's accusation** moves you to give up on God's mercy and love.

## **Conquering the accuser**

Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. (Rev. 12:10-11)

### **Sore loser**

12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

### **Don't be an accuser.**

- You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people. (Leviticus 19:16)
- There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. (Proverbs 12:18)
- The tongue is a fire... set on fire by hell. (James 3:6)
- Judge not, that you be not judged. (Matthew 7:1)

### **Don't despair when accused.**

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... If God is for us, who can be against us? ... Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (Romans 8:1, 31-34)