

no more secrets

Revealing Jesus - Discussion Guide #1

INQUIRY

1. As Caden makes his first visit to The Record Keeper, what is his motivation?
2. What is the General's accusation about the Administration?
3. Why do you think the Administration is seeking an "objective account" of events?
4. Caden says they are "on display in front of the whole universe." Do you think that is true for us today?

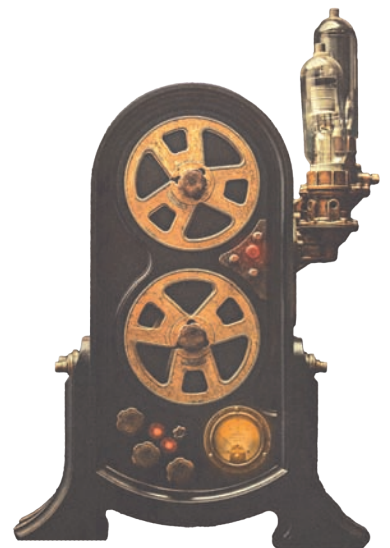
INQUEST

The Bible doesn't give a straightforward telling of Satan's rebellion. Indeed, Satan is rarely mentioned in the Old Testament, though Revelation 12:9 tells us that the devil is one and the same as the deceptive serpent in the garden of Eden. The ancient prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel both refer to a being in God's court who tried to usurp God's authority. Read Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-18.

1. What aspiration sparked the devil's rebellion?
2. The Bible tells many stories of people whom God richly blessed, yet who ended up taking God's blessings for granted and trying to do things in their own power. The first king of Israel, Saul, was humble until pride led to his downfall. God blessed King Solomon with supreme wisdom and material wealth, yet Solomon nearly lost sight of God. What similar examples can you think of in the modern world?
3. How can we keep our focus? How can we avoid the potential pitfalls of success?
4. Ezekiel wrote, "You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you." Scholars call this "sudden sin" the "mystery of iniquity." Can sin ever be fully explained?
5. The devil promised "something for nothing." How else can we describe Satan's false promises?

Read Revelation 12:1-12. The Greek word for devil, *diabolos*, means "slanderer." The Hebrew word "Satan" means "adversary" or "accuser." Stars in Revelation symbolize angels (Rev. 1:20), as verse 9 compared to verse 4 makes clear. The devil's slanders caused a third of God's angels to lose their place in heaven. Compare with Daniel 8:10.

1. Who is this battle between? See verse 7.
2. In verse 10 the devil is called "the accuser of our brothers and sisters." The angel who accused God now slanders God's children. How should this knowledge shape how we treat others?



The devil and his angels lived in heaven, face-to-face with God. If anyone should appreciate God's majesty and character, it should be them—yet, despite their personal knowledge, they rejected love. The Bible's famous "love chapter," 1 Corinthians 13, tells us that all knowledge, skills, righteous actions, and even faith are utterly worthless without love. Read 1 Corinthians 13.

1. How would you define love?
2. What is the opposite of love?
3. How can it be possible to possess such shining attributes without the love that should empower them?
4. James 2:19 tells us that the demons shudder to think of the truth, yet the knowledge is not sufficient to save them. How can we avoid their fate and let God's love grow in and shine through us?

CROSS EXAMINATION

"It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning the origin and final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God."

1. If sin's origins can never be truly understood, how can we understand love?
2. What is the difference between love and lust?
3. How does Jesus' humility in becoming human contrast with Satan's desire for glory and control?

"The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service."

1. Do you think Satan missed out on some things he sought because he tried to steal them?
2. How can we be undone by presumption?
3. God values our free will, yet Satan also trumpets "freedom" and "liberty." What is the difference between the freedom God values and that which Satan claims to stand for?

"In His dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. The true character of the usurper, and his real object, must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works."

1. Why is it necessary for sin's effects to be fully demonstrated?
2. Was God at a disadvantage?
3. This chapter suggests that the devil has no power without deception. What lies do people tell about God today?

"Satan's rebellion was to be to the universe a testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. His rule would show the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. The history of this terrible experiment was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences to save them from sin and its punishments."

1. Why would God create people with free will yet who are ultimately dependent on Him?
2. What makes a thought or action sinful? Is something always sinful, or can it depend on our attitude or motive?
3. If God wants the entire universe to understand both love and the consequences of sin, what role do we play as residents of a sin-scarred planet?

Chapter 1— *Why Is There Suffering?*

Many see the work of evil, with its woe and desolation, and question how this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, power, and love. Those who are disposed to doubt seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. Tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin.

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning the origin and final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God. God was in no wise responsible for sin; there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for rebellion. Sin is an intruder for whose presence no reason can be given. To excuse it is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, it would cease to be sin. Sin is the outworking of a principle at war with the law of love, which is the foundation of the divine government.

Before the entrance of evil there was peace and joy throughout the universe. Love for God was supreme, love for one another impartial. Christ the Only Begotten of God was one with the eternal Father in nature, in character, and in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." Colossians 1:16. The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended on their accord with its principles of righteousness. God takes no pleasure in forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.

But there was one that chose to pervert this freedom. Sin originated with him, who, next to Christ, had been most honored by God. Before his fall, Lucifer was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. "Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering. . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. . . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." "Thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God." "Thou hast said, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation. . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Ezekiel 28:12-17; 28:6; Isaiah 14:13, 14.

Coveting the honor which the Father had bestowed upon His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power which it was the prerogative of Christ alone to wield. A note of discord now marred the celestial harmonies. The exaltation of self awakened forebodings of evil in minds to whom God's glory was supreme. The heavenly councils pleaded with Lucifer. The Son of God presented before him the goodness and justice of the Creator and the sacred nature of His law. In departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and bring ruin on himself. But the warning only aroused resistance. Lucifer allowed jealousy of Christ to prevail.

Pride nourished the desire for supremacy. The high honors conferred on Lucifer called forth no gratitude to the Creator. He aspired to be equal with God. Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father. In all the counsels of God, Christ was a participant, but Lucifer was not permitted to enter into the divine purposes. "Why," questioned this mighty angel, "should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He thus honored above Lucifer?"

Discontent Among the Angels

Leaving his place in the presence of God, Lucifer went forth to diffuse discontent among the angels. With mysterious secrecy, concealing his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God, he endeavored to excite dissatisfaction concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that they imposed unnecessary restraint. Since their natures were holy, he urged that angels should obey the dictates of their own will. God had dealt unjustly with him in bestowing supreme honor upon Christ. He claimed he was not aiming at self-exaltation but was seeking to secure liberty for all the inhabitants of heaven, that they might attain a higher existence.

God bore long with Lucifer. He was not degraded from his exalted station even when he began to present false claims before the angels. Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of repentance and submission. Such efforts as only infinite love could devise were made to convince him of his error. Discontent had never before been known in heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first understand the real nature of his feelings. As his dissatisfaction was proved to be without cause, Lucifer was convinced that the divine claims were just and that he ought to acknowledge them before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. If he had been willing to return to God, satisfied to fill the place appointed him, he would have been reinstated in his office. But pride forbade him to submit. He maintained that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed himself in the great controversy against his Maker.

All the powers of his master mind were now bent to deception, to secure the sympathy of the angels. Satan represented that he was wrongly judged and that his liberty was abridged. From misrepresentation of the words of Christ he passed to direct falsehood, accusing the Son of God of a design to humiliate him before the inhabitants of heaven.

All whom he could not subvert to his side he accused of indifference to the interests of heavenly beings. He resorted to misrepresentation of the Creator. It was his policy to perplex the angels with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of God. His high position gave greater force to his representations. Many were induced to unite with him in rebellion.

Disaffection Ripens Into Active Revolt

God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature might be seen by all. Lucifer was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. God's government included not only the inhabitants of heaven, but of all the worlds He had created; and Satan thought that if he could carry the angels with him in rebellion, he could carry also the other worlds.

Employing sophistry and fraud, his power to deceive was very great. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading.

Satan had been so highly honored, and all his acts were so clothed with mystery, that it was difficult to disclose to the angels the true nature of his work. Until fully developed, sin would not appear the evil thing it was. Holy beings could not discern the consequences of setting aside the divine law. Satan at first claimed to be seeking to promote the honor of God and the good of all the inhabitants of heaven.

In His dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. The true character of the usurper must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works.

The discord which his own course had caused in heaven, Satan charged upon God. All evil he declared to be the result of the divine administration. Therefore it was necessary that he demonstrate the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him. The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked.

Even when it was decided that he could no longer remain in heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. The allegiance of God's creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice. The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted from existence, they would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor the spirit of rebellion eradicated. For the good of the universe through ceaseless ages Satan must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings.

Satan's rebellion was to be to the universe a testimony to the terrible results of sin. His rule would show the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. The history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences to save them from sin and its punishment.

When it was announced that with all his sympathizers the great usurper must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, the rebel leader boldly avowed contempt for the Creator's law. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of liberty and declared his purpose to secure the abolition of law. Freed from this restraint, the hosts of heaven might enter upon a more exalted state of existence.

Banished From Heaven

Satan and his host threw the blame of their rebellion upon Christ; if they had not been reproved, they would never have rebelled. Stubborn and defiant, yet blasphemously claiming to be innocent victims of oppressive power, the archrebel and his sympathizers were banished from heaven. See Revelation 12:7-9.

Satan's spirit still inspires rebellion on earth in the children of disobedience. Like him they promise men liberty through transgression of the law of God. Reproof of sin still arouses hatred. Satan leads men to justify themselves and seek the sympathy of others in their sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprove, as if he were the cause of difficulty.

By the same misrepresentation of the character of God as he had practiced in heaven, causing Him to be regarded as severe and tyrannical, Satan induced man to sin. He

declared that God's unjust restrictions had led to man's fall, as they had led to his own rebellion.

In the banishment of Satan from heaven, God declared His justice and honor. But when man sinned, God gave evidence of His love by yielding up His Son to die for the fallen race. In the atonement the character of God is revealed. The mighty argument of the cross demonstrates that sin was in no wise chargeable upon the government of God. During the Saviour's earthly ministry, the great deceiver was unmasked. The daring blasphemy of his demand that Christ pay him homage, the unsleeping malice that hunted Him from place to place, inspiring the hearts of priests and people to reject His love and to cry, "Crucify him! crucify him!"—all this excited the amazement and indignation of the universe. The prince of evil exerted all his power and cunning to destroy Jesus. Satan employed men as his agents to fill the Saviour's life with suffering and sorrow. The pent-up fires of envy and malice, hatred and revenge, burst forth on Calvary against the Son of God.

Now the guilt of Satan stood forth without excuse. He had revealed his true character. Satan's lying charges against the divine character appeared in their true light. He had accused God of seeking the exaltation of Himself in requiring obedience from His creatures and had declared that while the Creator exacted self-denial from all others, He Himself practiced no self-denial and made no sacrifice. Now it was seen that the Ruler of the universe had made the greatest sacrifice which love could make, for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. In order to destroy sin Christ had humbled Himself and become obedient unto death.

An Argument in Man's Behalf

All heaven saw God's justice revealed. Lucifer had claimed that the sinful race were beyond redemption. But the penalty of the law fell upon Him who was equal with God, and man was free to accept the righteousness of Christ and by penitence and humiliation to triumph over the power of Satan.

But it was not merely to redeem man that Christ came to earth to die. He came to demonstrate to all the worlds that God's law is unchangeable. The death of Christ proves it immutable and demonstrates that justice and mercy are the foundation of the government of God. In the final judgment it will be seen that no cause for sin exists. When the Judge of all the earth shall demand of Satan, "Why hast thou rebelled against Me?" the originator of evil can render no excuse.

In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy* which had been so long in progress was then decided, the final eradication of evil made certain. When "the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; . . . all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Malachi 4:1.

Never will evil again be manifest. The law of God will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again turn from allegiance to Him whose character has been manifested as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.

* The "great controversy" between Christ and Satan is over God's character, His justice, and His law.

Sources

In the list below, under each chapter in the current work are listed the source chapters in *The Great Controversy* that correspond to it:

Chapter 1, “Why Is There Suffering?”

The Great Controversy, chapter 29

Chapter 2, “Hope for Triumph Over Evil”

The Great Controversy, chapters 30, 31

Chapter 3, “Dangerous Seductions”

The Great Controversy, chapter 32

Chapter 4, “Everlasting Life”

The Great Controversy, chapter 33

Chapter 5, “False Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapter 34

Chapter 6, “True Peace”

The Great Controversy, chapters 7, 27

Chapter 7, “Our Only Safeguard”

The Great Controversy, chapter 37

Chapter 8, “In Defense of the Truth”

The Great Controversy, chapters 3, 25, 26

Chapter 9, “Real Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapters 1, 17, 36, 38, 39

Chapter 10, “The Great Rescue”

The Great Controversy, chapter 40

Chapter 11, “Victory of Love”

The Great Controversy, chapter 42

A revealing
look at the
battle between
good and
evil — and
who wins.

The Great Hope





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How it all began

YG began just after the turn of the century as a high-energy, contemporary worship service highlighting multimedia, upbeat music, and timely, creative messages – all focused on reaching young adults. Today, YG transcends age and program boundaries, making authentic efforts to foster the great commandment and great commission in new generations. www.vimeo.com/channels/ygchurch



Intimacy

We are wholeheartedly pursuing a 24/7 experience of the living GOD. Our worship is for His fame. Each week Younger Generation Church offers a powerful worship experience, Saturday mornings, 10:15 am [Central], where we authentically gather to focus our attention and adoration on Christ Jesus. www.YGchurch.com



Community

We express best who GOD is by doing life together well. Our relationships express His love. Younger Generation Church enjoys LIFEgroups affording our members an opportunity to build inspiring community and foster healthy relationships. We love having fun and taking time to enjoy each other's company. www.facebook.com/ygchurch



Grace

We are compelled to share the hope we have with others. Our compassionate witness reveals His Good News as real. Younger Generation Church generously shares the grace of Jesus Christ with whomever we might serve. Feeding the hungry, encouraging the orphan, consoling the widow—being grace dispensers to the least of these bring us joy. @YGChurch