

# How Satan Became Satan

by Zac Poonen

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*The origin of evil in the universe is attributed to the fall of Lucifer, a created being who became proud and wanted to exalt himself above God.*

**Duration:** 24:32

**Scripture:** Isaiah 14:12

**Topics:** "Satan And Sin", "Fall Of Man"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the origin of evil in a universe created by God, exploring the role of freedom of will in the existence of good and evil. It discusses the fall of Lucifer, a once perfect angel who became the devil due to pride, discontentment, and rebellion against authority. The sermon draws parallels between Lucifer's downfall and the sins of Adam and Eve, emphasizing the importance of humility, contentment, and submission to authority as exemplified by Jesus Christ for salvation.

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## Transcript

We want to look today at the origin of evil in a universe created by God. There would have been no evil in this universe if God had not given freedom of will to any of his created beings. The planets, for example, are incapable of doing evil.

The trees that grow automatically according to God's laws are incapable of doing evil. But then the planets are incapable of doing any moral good either. They have no moral nature.

So if God had made the universe full of created beings without freedom of choice, then there would be no good or evil in the universe. And it would have been pretty boring. Imagine a universe where it's just Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and just a lot of planets and stars and galaxies floating around in space.

It would be like a billionaire who's got a lot of property, but no children, no workers, nothing, just machines doing everything. It would be pretty boring. God, in his great wisdom, created beings with freedom of will.

And long before he created the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, he created millions of angels. The man and woman whom he created were superior to the angels in the sense that they had the ability to be able to receive God's nature and manifest his image. We don't know too many details about the angels, but we do know they have freedom of choice.

And they are created to be servants to do God's will as he commands them. Well, one of the angels, we don't know his name. His name is not clearly mentioned, though he's commonly known as Lucifer, which just is referring to his shining being.

He was a shining person, but that's not probably what he was known as. His name is not known. But he was the leader of the angels.

He was the one who led the angels in their worship of God. And very soon, he decided that he wanted people to worship him. He wanted to take the place that God had.

He was the highest created being in the universe, leading the angels in the worship of God. But because he had freedom of choice, he could choose to obey or disobey. He was tremendously gifted.

God had given him numerous abilities and gifts, more than what man has, what fallen man has anyway. And this made him puffed up. He was puffed up because of his wisdom, intelligence, his beauty, and his position.

In the book of Ezekiel, in chapter 28, we read about him. In the early chapters of Genesis, we don't read anything about the devil. He just all of a sudden appears in Genesis chapter 3 to tempt Adam and Eve.

Well, he didn't start existing from nothing. He was obviously created. There's nothing in this universe that's not created.

God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the only ones who existed from all eternity. But the angel, this angel was created, head of the angels. And his fall is not described in the early chapters of Genesis because the Bible was written to describe man's history.

And so it doesn't begin with the devil. It begins with man's history. That's the only reason why it doesn't come there.

And God revealed this truth later on to two of his prophets, how this angel became the devil. And that's described in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. And some of you Christians may have read this already, but there are certain lessons we can learn from this for ourselves when we see how this perfect angel became a devil.

In Ezekiel 28, we read here, the Lord speaks a word to the king of Tyre, verse 12. And this was really the devil who was living inside this human king. And the Lord speaks to the devil, just like when a person is demon possessed, you speak to the demon inside that person.

So he speaks to this king of Tyre, which is the devil, and says, you had the seal of perfection. Now, obviously, a human king didn't have a seal of perfection. Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, you were in Eden, the garden of God.

No king of Tyre was ever in Eden, the garden of God. This is obviously referring to a spirit being that was dwelling inside that earthly king. And so we learn here that this angel originally was in the garden of Eden, not the garden of Eden that we read of in Genesis 3, but the original garden of Eden, which God created in Genesis 1, verse 1, where it says, in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

And whatever God creates is always perfect. God never creates anything in stages, like some people teach in evolution, that God made man in stages, first as an animal, and then as a man. It's a lot of

rubbish.

And there are some people who teach that God made the earth also in stages. In Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, it was dark and empty and shapeless. He made it like that and then made it beautiful in the rest of that chapter.

It's not true. The rest of the chapter, we read that God made, the word made is M-A-D-E, made. Whereas in the first verse of Genesis, it is created.

But in the second verse of Genesis, you read the earth became, that's how I understand it, empty, dark, shapeless. How did it become like that? Because something happened between those two verses, and that was the fall of Satan. And that's described here.

And that at that time in Genesis 1, 1, there was an Eden, which was probably remade again for Adam to dwell in, as we read in chapter 2 and chapter 3 of Genesis. But in the original Eden, the garden of God, here was this beautiful angel, the head of the angels, and he was perfect in wisdom, perfect in beauty, and he was anointed, verse 14. He was a cherub, anointed and placed by God on his holy mountain.

He was blameless. Ezekiel 28, verse 15 says, he was blameless in his ways from the day he was created. He was created until unrighteousness was found in him.

And he sinned and he was cast down from the mountain of God. And the reason for his sin is also mentioned here in verse 17. His heart was lifted up.

He became proud because of his beauty and because of his wisdom. So there we see that the first sin that raised its ugly head in this beautiful universe that God created was pride. Pride is the root of all other sins that came later.

This was the first one. There was nothing called sin in the world until that time, but you know, wherever you give a person freedom of choice and a free will, there's always the possibility that the person can become proud or commit any other crime. The moment you give a person free will, there's freedom of choice to either obey God or disobey God.

And so he became proud, lifted up in his heart because of his wisdom and his beauty. He thought he was somebody very important. And of course he was important, but he began to think of himself as more important than God had made it.

And God brought him right down. The other passage of scripture that deals with Satan is in Isaiah chapter 14. In Isaiah chapter 14, you read about the same person and certain other details are mentioned about him, where we read that he is called in verse 12, the star of the morning.

Isaiah chapter 14, verse 12, Helel or Shining One or it's from this verse that they get the word Lucifer, which is probably a Latin word referring to the star of the morning, the sun of the dawn. You've been cut down to the earth. You have weakened the nations.

You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven. You see, this is what this Lucifer, this shining star, this head of the angels said in his heart, I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of the assembly.

I will ascend. I will make myself, verse 14, like the most high. He wanted to become like God.

He wanted to exalt himself above even God. And that's why he was cast down and will finally end up in hell. Now, this is how sin came when a created being was not satisfied with the position God had given him.

There's a boundary God had drawn around him and he wanted to go outside that boundary. It was discontentment. He was not satisfied with the position he had.

He wanted something more. He was proud of his wisdom, his beauty, and it lifted up his heart and he fell and became the devil. So what we see here is that pride can turn an angel into a devil in a moment.

It didn't take long. In a moment, he became the devil and it came through pride. And so it's important for us to see that because pride can ruin a person even today in exactly the same way.

The other thing we see here is discontentment. He was unhappy with the boundary God had drawn around him. It was a very huge boundary because all the angels were subject to him.

He was the head of the angels. He was the highest of all created beings. And one would have thought what more does a man want? He's got position and he's got beauty, he's got wisdom.

What more does an angel want? But he was not satisfied. He was discontent even with the tremendous amount of things God had given him. What we learned from that is that discontentment can also make a beautiful angel into a devil in a moment.

Pride or discontentment, not being satisfied with what God has given you. And so we see here the danger of these two sins particularly being discontent. We find human beings all over the world discontent with what they have, their financial resources, their looks.

People are discontent with their house, they're discontent with their wife, their husband, and job. And the world is full of discontented people and that's the reason why they're so miserable. They've got this character of the devil all over them.

Even though God has blessed them in so many ways, they are unhappy with something or the other. And that's what makes angels into devils and that's what makes good men like devil. So pride and discontentment are the things that we see here as what ruined this beautiful angel and can ruin you.

And it says here when he said I'm going to exalt myself above the throne of God, God said I'm going to push you right down. You see this is something we discover in the New Testament is a law of God that God lifts up those who humble themselves and pushes down those who exalt themselves. And the first example of that is this Lucifer, the head of the angels, pushed down by Almighty God because he was so proud and he was discontent.

And the opposite of this is what we see in our Lord Jesus Christ. So here we see sin came through pride and discontentment through a created being wanting to exalt himself. God pushed him down.

Sin came through pride. Salvation came through the opposite of this, through humility. Here was an angel, a created being wanting to exalt himself above the throne of God and make himself like God.

That's how sin came. Salvation came by one who was God from all eternity, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, giving up that position of equality and coming to earth as a man, giving up his access to the resources of God, becoming an ordinary person and humbling himself even after he became a man by being a servant

to everybody, ending up washing his disciples' feet. And God exalted him to the highest position in the universe, not because he was the Son of God, though he had every right for that position, but because as a man, Jesus Christ humbled himself and took the low place.

So here we have the operation of two spirits. One is the spirit of Satan that's always trying to go up and God keeps pushing it down. And the other is the spirit of Jesus Christ that's always seeking to go down and God exalts that spirit.

Now, every human being in the world is influenced by one of these spirits. Christendom is full of people who are influenced by one of these spirits. Don't think that everybody who calls himself a Christian is taking the way that Jesus went of humbling themselves and going down all the time.

If every Christian did that, every Christian would be a spiritual Christian. Every church would be a spiritual church. But you and I know that's not true.

All the problems, and when I say all, I mean all. All the problems that have come in every Christian's life and in every family, in every home, in every church has its root and origin in pride, in wanting to lift oneself up in discontentment. That's what we learn from the story of Lucifer or whatever his name was and is becoming the devil.

We see the same thing with Adam and Eve. God drew a boundary around Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and said, every tree here you can eat all except one. So it was a huge area that is bounded by that circle and only one tree was outside.

That was very easy. I mean, if the circle was so small that God had put only one tree inside and told Adam and Eve, there are thousands of trees there, but you can't eat any of them. You just eat one of these.

Well, that would have been tough perhaps, but it was so easy. There were thousands and thousands of beautiful trees there with fruit and everything else and one tree outside, and the best tree of all was within the circle, the tree of life. That was right in the middle of that circle, the best of all, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil was outside the circle, and Adam was discontent.

He was not happy with the boundary God drew around him, Adam and Eve, and that is how sin came. The same poison that made that angel into a devil made this beautiful man that God had created into a sinner in a moment. What was it? Discontent with the boundary God had drawn around him, the same sin as Lucifer had, and it can happen to you.

You can call yourself a Christian, born again, whatever you like, but if you're discontent, you're going to be like the devil. In your character and behavior, you continue like that, you'll end up with the devil for all eternity, whatever you call yourself. The other thing is pride.

Adam and Eve were proud to think that they could defy God and escape without facing the consequences. God had told them, don't eat of that tree, and they were shaking their fist at God, as it were. What do you mean we can't eat of that tree? We're going to do it.

Isn't that arrogance? When a father tells his little son, don't do that, son, and the son turns around and says, I'm going to do it. What is that? That's pride and arrogance. That's exactly what Adam and Eve did.

God told them, don't eat of that tree, and they said, who do you think you are? We're going to do it. That pride, that poison was injected into them by the devil, and that's why this spirit of pride is so evil. It's pride, discontentment, and we could also say rebellion against authority.

God was in authority over Lucifer, the only authority over him. He rebelled against that authority. He said, I don't want any authority over me.

The same thing Adam and Eve did. You find the sin is absolutely the same because the poison that was injected into Adam and Eve was from the devil, so they rebelled against authority. The authority that God had over Adam and Eve, they rebelled against it and said, we're not going to listen to you.

Now in the human race, all around us, we have human beings who commit all these three sins, pride, lifting themselves up above others, and discontentment with their lot in life, complaining, grumbling. Why is complaining and grumbling so serious? Because it is an expression of discontent. It's a sin of Lucifer, and rebellion against authority.

Children rebel against parents, and students rebel against teachers, workers rebel against their masters, and that's why it's so important if you're a Christian and you've got children to teach them to submit to authority. Because if they don't learn that, the poison of the devil is going to destroy them all through life. And that's why it's so important that parents teach their children to listen to them.

It's a very serious thing when a child does not listen to his father and mother at home, when he doesn't listen to his teachers in school, when he doesn't, as he grows up, submit to his masters at work. So we see it's very serious. That's why it's so important.

If he can recognize these sins which made an angel into the devil, let me repeat them, pride, discontentment, and rebellion against authority. And that's why when Jesus came, he did exactly the opposite. He always humbled himself throughout his 33 years on earth.

He was always content with his lot in life. When he had no place to lay his head during the three and a half years of ministry, he never had a complaint. We read in John chapter 8 verse 1, when everybody went to their own house, Jesus went and slept under the trees in the Mount of Olives and he had no complaints.

He was happy with that very limited lot in life. He grew up in a very poor home and he never had any complaint. And he submitted to authority.

We read in Luke chapter 2 that he submitted to Joseph and Mary who were very imperfect. Here was an angel, Lucifer, could not submit to the perfect authority of God. And here we find Jesus submitting to an imperfect authority like Joseph and Mary.

Salvation came by Jesus countering every one of these evils that the devil brought into the universe. And if you want to follow Jesus, you have to follow him in these areas. That in every situation, you humble yourself.

In every situation, you are content with what God has given. And in every situation, you submit to legitimate authority over you. That is the way to follow in the footsteps of Christ.

Every other way, contrary to that, will make you like the devil. Let's learn that lesson. God bless you.

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