

Unmasking the Supernatural 01

“And (Jesus) said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven!” Luke 10:18

In order to really unmask the occult world, we first have to learn about sin because the fact of sin is what underlies all the many faces of spiritualism and the occult in our world today! So please kneel and pray for God’s Holy Spirit it guide you while you carefully read this account.

What is Sin and Where did it Come From?

The Bible gives us a simple and complete definition of what Sin is: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4.

What Law? It is, “The perfect law of liberty” (James 1:25); God’s Law of Ten Commandments, which was written upon stone by the very finger of God.

So it is sin that must be overcome. But where did sin come from? How did it get here? Here is the story of the origin of evil. We are going to learn that God is in no way responsible for this terrible evil.

Although surrounded by continual loving unselfishness, something happened. What could turn an angel of light into a devil—and do it right in the middle of heaven? As you read this true account, be sure to think carefully about the facts it tells us as these same principles are at work in our world today and indeed underlie all of what is selfish, hurtful and cruel!

Sin’s Origin:

To many minds, the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery, of which they find no explanation. And in their uncertainty and doubt, they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God’s Word and essential to salvation. 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 in a way that gives a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and what will be the final conclusion of sin to show us clearly the justice and benevolence (kindly goodness) of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in nowise responsible for the entrance of sin; there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government that gave any reason for the uprising of rebellion.

Sin is an intruder for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to try to excuse it is to defend it. Could any excuse for it be found, or a cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is “the transgression of the law”; it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.

Back in the Beginning, before the entrance of evil, there was peace and joy throughout the universe. All was in perfect harmony with the Creator’s will. Love for God was supreme, love for one another impartial. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ, the Father worked in the creation of all heavenly beings. “By Him were all things created, that are in Heaven . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” (Colossians 1:16); and to Christ, equally with the Father, all Heaven gave allegiance.

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 desires from all His creatures the service of love,—honor that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a

Unmasking the Supernatural: Lesson 01

forced allegiance; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service by choice not force.

How Sin Began: But there was one that chose to pervert this freedom. Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of Heaven. 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." Ezekiel 28:12-15.

Lucifer might have remained in favor with God, beloved and honored by all the angelic host, exercising his noble powers to bless others and to glorify His Maker. But, says the prophet, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness" (Ezekiel 28:17).

Little by little, Lucifer came to indulge a desire for self-exaltation. "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 28:6; Isaiah 14:13-14.

Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of His creatures, it was Lucifer's endeavor to win their service and homage to himself. And, coveting the honor which the infinite Father had bestowed upon His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power which it was the privilege of Christ alone to wield.

All Heaven had rejoiced to reflect the Creator's glory and to show forth His praise. And while God was thus honored, all had been peace and gladness. But a note of discord now marred the celestial harmonies. The service and exaltation of self, contrary to the Creator's plan, awakened fears 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 greatness, the goodness, and the justice of the Creator, and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law.

God Himself had established the order of Heaven and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and bring ruin upon himself. But the warning, given in infinite love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed jealousy of Christ to prevail, and he became the more determined.

Pride in his own glory nourished the desire for supremacy. The high honors given to Lucifer were not appreciated as the gift of God, and called forth no gratitude to the Creator. He gloried in his brightness and exaltation, and aspired to be equal with God. He was beloved and revered by the heavenly host. Angels delighted to execute his commands, and he was clothed with wisdom and glory above them all. 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 while Lucifer was not permitted thus to enter into the divine purposes. "Why," questioned this mighty angel, "should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He thus honored above Lucifer?"

Leaving his place in the immediate presence of God, Lucifer went forth to spread the spirit of discontent among the angels. Working with mysterious secrecy, and for a time 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 an unnecessary restraint.

Since their natures were holy, he urged that the angels should obey the dictates of their own will. He sought to create sympathy for himself, by representing that God had dealt unjustly with him in bestowing supreme honor upon Christ. He claimed that in aspiring to greater power and honor he was not aiming at self-exaltation, but was seeking to secure liberty for all the inhabitants of Heaven, that by this means they might attain to a higher state of existence. (The same trick he used later with man and is still using today!)

God, in His great mercy, bore long with Lucifer. He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, nor even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels. Long was he retained in Heaven; again and again he was offered pardon, on condition of repentance and submission. Such efforts as only infinite Love and Wisdom could devise, were made to convince him of his error.

The spirit of discontent had never before been known in Heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first see where he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings. But as his unhappiness was proved to be without any cause, Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong, that the divine claims were just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all Heaven. If he had done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at this time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had forsaken his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been re-instated in his office. But pride forbade him to submit. He persistently defended his own course, claiming that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed himself in the great controversy against his Maker.



*Lucifer
Marshaling
His Angels.*

A Master of Deception: All the powers of his master-mind were now bent to the work of deception so as to secure the sympathy of the angels that had been under his command. Even the fact that Christ had warned and counseled him was perverted to serve his traitorous designs. To those whose loving trust bound them most closely to him, Satan declared that he was wrongly judged, that his position was not respected, and that his liberty was to be taken from him. From twisting of the words of Christ, he went on to lying and direct falsehood, accusing the Son of God of intending to humiliate him before the inhabitants of Heaven.

He sought also to make a false issue between himself and the loyal angels. All whom he could not deceive and bring fully to his side, he accused of not caring about the interests of heavenly beings. The very work which he himself was doing, he charged upon those who remained true to God. And to sustain his charge of God's injustice toward him, he resorted to misrepresentation of the words and acts of the Creator. It was his policy to perplex the angels with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by clever perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah. His high position, in such close connection with the divine administration, gave greater force to his claims, and many were induced to unite with him in rebellion against Heaven's authority. (They thought he must know what he was talking about because he was so close to God. Lying had never been heard of before!)

God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of discontent ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed for their true nature and tendency to be seen by all. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he 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 that He had created; and Satan thought that if he could get the angels of Heaven to join with him in

rebellion, he could also win the other worlds over to his plan. He had cleverly presented his side of the question, using dishonesty and fraud to gain his objects. His power to deceive was very great, and by disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood he had gained an advantage. 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 show the angels the true nature of his work. Until fully developed, sin would not appear the evil thing it was. So far it had had no place in the universe of God, and holy beings had no conception of its nature and malignity. They could not discern the terrible consequences that would result from setting aside the divine law. Satan had, at first, concealed his work by pretending to have loyalty to God.

He claimed to be seeking to promote the honor of God, the stability of His government, and the good of all the inhabitants of Heaven. While placing discontent into the minds of the angels under him, he had artfully made it appear that he was seeking to remove dissatisfaction. When he urged that changes be made in the order and laws of God's government, it was under the pretense that these were necessary in order to preserve harmony in Heaven. (A 'good' reason can always be found to cover up our own selfish desires!)

In dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God, and had misrepresented His plan of government before the angels, claiming that God was not just in laying laws and rules upon the inhabitants of Heaven; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. Therefore it must be proved before the inhabitants of Heaven, as well as of all the worlds, that God's government was just, His law perfect.

Satan had made it appear that He Himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper (one who takes a position he has no right to), and his real purpose, must be understood by all. He must have time to show himself by his wicked works.

The discord which his own course had caused in Heaven, Satan charged upon the law and government of God. All evil he declared to be the result of the divine administration (God's Law). He claimed that it was his own aim to improve upon the statutes of Jehovah. Therefore it was necessary that he should demonstrate the nature of His claims, and show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him. Satan had claimed from the first that he was not in rebellion. 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. Since the service of love can alone be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must be from love, based on their belief in His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of Heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to understand the nature or 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 would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. Evil must be permitted to come to maturity. For the good of the entire 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, that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might forever be placed beyond all question.

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the wellbeing of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its punishment.

To the very close of the controversy in Heaven, the great usurper continued to justify himself. When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He repeated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty, and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law; that, freed from this restraint, the hosts of Heaven might enter upon a more exalted, more glorious state of existence. (This has been the false promise of every leader of rebellion in history! They always claim to be doing good for the people, but the result is always bloodshed.)

With one accord, Satan and his host threw the blame of their rebellion wholly upon Christ, declaring that if they had not been reprov'd, they would never have rebelled. Thus stubborn and defiant in their disloyalty, seeking vainly to overthrow the government of God, yet blasphemously claiming to be themselves the innocent victims of oppressive power, the arch-rebel and all his sympathizers were at last banished from Heaven.

The same spirit that prompted rebellion in Heaven, still inspires rebellion on earth. Satan has continued with men the same policy which he followed with the angels. His spirit now reigns in the children of disobedience. Like him they seek to break down the restraints of the law of God, and promise men liberty through transgression of its precepts. Reproof of sin still arouses the spirit of hatred and resistance. When God's messages of warning are brought home to the conscience, Satan leads men to justify themselves and to seek the sympathy of others in their course of sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprov'er, as if he were the only cause of difficulty. From the days of righteous Abel to our own time, such is the spirit which has been displayed toward those who dare to condemn sin.



Satan's Methods Unchanged: By the same lies about the character of God as he had used in Heaven, causing God to be regarded as severe and tyrannical, Satan induced man to sin. And having succeeded thus far, he declared that God's unjust restrictions had led to man's fall, as they had led to his own rebellion.

But the Eternal One Himself proclaims His character: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Exodus 34:6-7.

In the banishment of Satan from Heaven, God declared His justice and maintained the honor of His throne. But when man had sinned through yielding to the deceptions of this apostate spirit, God gave an evidence of His love by yielding up His only begotten Son to die for the fallen race. In the atonement the character of God is revealed. The mighty argument of the cross demonstrates to the whole universe that the course of sin which Lucifer had chosen was in nowise the fault of the government of God.

Behold what Love and Hate: In the contest between Christ and Satan, during the Saviour's earthly ministry, the character of the great deceiver was unmasked. Nothing could so effectually have uprooted Satan from the affections of the heavenly angels and the whole loyal universe as did his cruel warfare upon the world's

Unmasking the Supernatural: Lesson 01

Redeemer. The daring blasphemy of his demand that Christ should pay him homage, his presumptuous boldness in carrying Him to the mountain summit and the pinnacle of the temple, the malicious intent betrayed in urging Him to cast Himself down from the dizzy height, the unsleeping malice that hunted Him from place to place, inspiring the hearts of priests and people to reject His love, and at the last to cry, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" All this excited the amazement and indignation of the universe.

It was Satan that prompted the world's rejection of Christ. The prince of evil exerted all his power and cunning to destroy Jesus; for he saw that the Saviour's mercy and love, His compassion and pitying tenderness, were representing to the world the real character of God. Satan contested every claim put forth by the Son of God, and employed men as His agents to fill the Saviour's life with suffering and sorrow. The sophistry and falsehood by which he had sought to hinder the work of Jesus, the hatred manifested through the children of disobedience, his cruel accusations against Him whose life was one of unexampled goodness, all sprung from deep-seated revenge. The pent-up fires of envy and malice, hatred, and revenge burst forth on Calvary against the Son of God while all Heaven gazed upon the scene in silent horror.

When the great sacrifice had been consummated, Christ ascended on high, refusing the adoration of angels until He had presented the request, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (John 17:24). Then with inexpressible love and power came forth the answer from the Father's throne, "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:6). Not a stain rested upon Jesus. His humiliation ended, His sacrifice completed, there was given unto Him a name that is above every name.

Selfishness Unmasked: Now the guilt of Satan stood forth without excuse. He had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he ruled the children of men, who were under his power, he would have manifested had he been permitted to control the inhabitants of Heaven. He had claimed that the transgression of God's law would bring liberty and exaltation; but it was seen to result in bondage and degradation. Satan's lying charges against the divine character and government appeared in their true light.

He had accused God of seeking merely the exaltation of Himself in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, and had declared that while the Creator exacted self-denial from all others, He Himself practiced no self-denial, made no sacrifice. Now it was seen that for the salvation of a fallen and sinful race, 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). It was seen, also, that while Lucifer had opened the door for the entrance of sin, by his desire for honor and supremacy, Christ had, in order to destroy sin, humbled Himself and become obedient unto death.

What God Is Really Like: God had manifested His abhorrence of the principles of rebellion. All Heaven saw His justice revealed, both in the condemnation of Satan and in the redemption of man. Lucifer had declared that if the law of God was changeless, and its penalty could not be remitted, every transgressor must be forever debarred from the Creator's favor. He had claimed that the sinful race were placed beyond redemption, and were therefore his rightful prey. But the death of Christ was an argument in man's behalf that could not be overthrown. 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 a life of penitence and humiliation to triumph, as the Son of God had triumphed, over the power of Satan. Thus God is just, and yet the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

But it was not merely to accomplish the redemption of man that Christ came to the earth to suffer and to die. He came to "magnify the law" and to "make it honorable." Not alone that the inhabitants of this world might regard the law as it should be regarded; but it was to demonstrate to all the worlds of the universe that God's law is unchangeable. Could its claims have been set aside, then the Son of God need not have yielded up His life to atone for its transgression. The death of Christ proves it immutable. And the sacrifice to which infinite love impelled the Father and the Son, that sinners might be redeemed, demonstrates to all the universe, what nothing less than this plan of atonement could have done, that justice and mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God.

It Will End in Ashes: In the final execution of the 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, and robbed Me of the subjects of My kingdom?" the originator of evil can render no excuse. Every mouth will be stopped, and all the hosts of rebellion will be speechless.

The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death-bell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

Lucifer's desire for self-exaltation had led him to say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . . I will be like the Most High." God declares, "I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth . . . and never shalt thou be any more" (Isaiah 14:13-14, Ezekiel 28:18-19). 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).

Eternally Secure: The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the Word of God, "Affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9). The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.

When Satan brought the spirit of his rebellion to this world, he tricked Eve and through her, Adam, into wanting what he himself wanted—to take the place of God and cast Him from His seat of authority. They chose to believe the words of the tempter over the simple instruction God had given them, "Thou shalt not eat of that tree or you will die." Satan lied to them telling them they were immortal and could not die; he preached the first sermon on the 'immortality of the soul'!

(Selected from Great Controversy 1888 chapter 29)

Brief Bible Study about the Origin of Sin:

1. What is sin? 1 John 3:4.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

2. Who is the leader of the rebellious angels? Revelation 12:9.

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

3. What was his name before he fell? Isaiah 14:12.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

4. What position did he hold in heaven? Ezekiel 28:14.

"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."

5. Did God create a sinful being? Ezekiel 28:15.

"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

6. What did Lucifer do for God to cast him out and take away his position? Ezekiel 28:16.

"By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned:

therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.”

7. What sin did he first commit in his heart? Ezekiel 28:17. “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”

8. Whose position did he desire? Isaiah 14:13, 14.

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

“Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Luke 18:14.

9. As a result of this rebellion, what took place in heaven? Revelation 12:7.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,”

10. What percentage of the angels (symbolically referred to as “stars”) joined Satan in his rebellion?

Revelation 12:4. “And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

11. Was this rebellion successful? Revelation 12:8.

“And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”

12. What happened to Satan and his angels? Revelation 12:9. “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

13. What condition are they now in? Jude 6.

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

The Bible speaks of the fallen angels as “unclean spirits,” “evil spirits,” and “devils.” Their work of darkness is limited to this world.

14. What is Satan doing now? 1 Peter 5:8.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”

15. Why is he so desperately angry? Revelation 12:12. “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

To be continued.