

Reflections by the Pond

THE WRITINGS OF DAVID S. LAMPEL

ANGEL OF LIGHT



BIOGRAPHIES are not only interesting and informative from an historical standpoint, filled with hitherto undiscovered details and facts, they can (and very often do) reveal character traits from which the attentive reader may draw inspiration for his or her own life—either in the form of positive reinforcement or negative alarm.

God’s word is filled, overflowing with characters from which we can learn either beneficial character traits to write into our own lives, or destructive traits we are to avoid—or unlearn.

For this the tenth and final year of the present decade, *Reflections by the Pond* will be offering a series of twelve character studies from Scripture, each a colorful story of God working in, through, or against a life. And in this first issue of the year we present perhaps the most colorful—and disturbing—character of all.

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Issue #837, January 2020.

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ADVERSARY

- Item:** Two people are dead and another is in critical condition after a Sunday morning shooting at the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas. The shooter is reportedly one of the deceased.
- Item:** US Marines arrive in Iraq to reinforce US Embassy. Militia and protesters begin to pull back after a second day of violence in Baghdad.
- Item:** Captain America actress Mollie Fitzgerald charged with fatally stabbing her mother in Kansas.
- Item:** Between 1932 and 1945, Japan forced women from Korea, China and other occupied countries to become military prostitutes.
- Item:** Between 1915 and 1923, the Ottoman and Turkish governments systematically exterminated approximately 1.5 million Armenians, leaving hundreds of thousands more homeless and stateless, and altogether virtually wiping out the more than 2 million Armenians present in the Ottoman Empire in 1915.
- Item:** And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

WHERE DOES EVIL COME FROM? How did it all begin? Who is responsible? Sure, *our* evil, our inherent depravity, is inherited from our root stock: Adam and Eve. But whence came theirs? Who created depravity in our corporate mother and father, thus introducing it into Creation as a whole?

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God

knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

Genesis 3:1-7

Was that evil, that rebellion against God, created by the hand of God along with their flesh and bones, or was it placed in them by the serpent? Since what God made in His creation was declared by Him to be "good," it would seem that the first man and woman were not created with evil in them.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth"... God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them... God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was eve-



ning and there was morning, the sixth day.
Genesis 1:26-27, 31

Adam and Eve were created “good” by God—not good by the standards of man, but good by the standards of a holy God, which is as good as “good” gets. They were without sin, utterly clean

and innocent, enjoying a remarkably intimate, face-to-face relationship with their Maker. Later they would become the root stock from which all of humanity would be born in sin, depraved, and lost. What happened in between? Satan.

COVERING CHERUB

THERE ARE ONLY TWO INDIVIDUALS that inhabit all of Scripture, by name, from the beginning to the end, from Genesis to Revelation. The first is, of course, God, mentioned as the fourth word in Genesis 1:1 (albeit in the plural). The second is Satan, revealed on earth as the third word in Genesis 3:1 (but also pre-dating Creation), and remaining in Scripture until he is permanently dispatched in Revelation 20:10.



Satan was and remains a created being. No historians, save for the Holy Spirit, were around at the moment of his creation. So our only information about the “early life” of Satan is from the book the Spirit wrote: God’s word, the Bible. This information, however, is presented in an indirect fashion, *pointing* to Satan while describing two earthly and evil kings: the king of Tyre and the king of Babylon. This is not an uncommon technique used in God’s word, describing or prophesying something temporal while also prefiguring (or, in the case of Satan, looking back toward) something extraordinary, even supernatural. For example, the prophet Zechariah was told by Yahweh to crown the high priest Joshua in Jerusalem.

“Take silver and gold, make an ornate crown and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Then say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on

His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.’”

Zechariah 6:11-13

But the word the Lord God uses for “crown” is not the typical word for the turban worn by the high priest, but a crown of many diadems, such as the one worn by the Word of God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords in Revelation 19. The passage in Zechariah describes a scene where a priest would also be crowned king—which, according to Mosaic Law, was impossible, since the priestly and kingly lines were from different tribes. But there *is* One who will wear both crowns: the Word of God, even Jesus the Messiah. Thus the passage has an earthly application, but also foreshadows the day when Christ will return to rule, as priest and king over the entire earth.



It is in a similar way we learn of the early days of Satan. The prophet Ezekiel records what the Lord God told him to prophesy about the king of Tyre, but the prophecy is also thought to be—by some, but not all—a description of the pre-Creation beginnings of Satan.

Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD GOD,
 “You had the seal of perfection,
 Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
 You were in Eden, the garden of God;
 Every precious stone was your covering:
 The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
 The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
 The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;

And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,
 Was in you.
 On the day that you were created
 They were prepared.
 You were the anointed cherub who covers,
 And I placed you there.
 You were on the holy mountain of God;
 You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.
 You were blameless in your ways
 From the day you were created
 Until unrighteousness was found in you.””
Ezekiel 28:11-15

Here is a picture of an angel included in the upper echelon of heaven, a “covering” cherub. These angels were assigned to protect and guard, such as the cherubim that overshadowed the mercy seat atop the ark of the covenant. This angel—Satan, if that was already his name—was also beautiful, “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty,” created “blameless.” In human terms, he had everything going for him. Like his first two human victims, he was created perfect, yet with the capacity for evil.

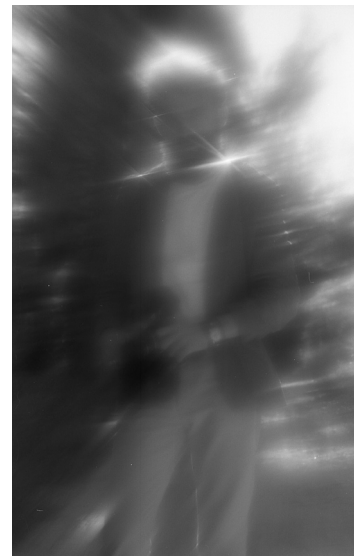
And at some point prior to Creation, Satan’s capacity for evil became reality, and then the driving force in his very existence.



The prophet Isaiah records a similar passage that speaks directly of the king of Babylon, but indi-

rectly, like Ezekiel, of the downfall of Satan.

“How you have fallen from heaven,
 O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
 You have been cut down to the earth,
 You who have weakened the
 nations!
 But you said in your heart,
 ‘I will ascend to heaven;
 I will raise my throne above
 the stars of God,
 And I will sit on the mount of
 assembly
 In the recesses of the north.
 I will ascend above the
 heights of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the
 Most High.’
 Nevertheless you will be
 thrust down to Sheol,
 To the recesses of the pit.”
Isaiah 14:12-15



In his arrogant pride, the ambition of this covering cherub of heaven overwhelmed everything else, and he imagined himself worthy of replacing very God upon His throne. Oddly enough, though he was ejected from heaven, Satan was given a throne and a kingdom. Henceforth his kingdom would be this globe—the earth. He would be granted dominion over the very planet he had despoiled through its first humans.

BY ANY OTHER NAME

In God’s word there are many names by which Satan is known. In the Revelation, he is called Abaddon from the Hebrew, or Apollyon in the Greek; the scribes and Pharisees accused Jesus of performing miracles in the name of Beelzebul; in his second letter to the Corinthians Paul referred to him as Belial; and, of course, throughout the New Testament he is referred to as “the devil.” We get the name “Lucifer” from the King James Version’s translation of the Hebrew *helel* in Isaiah 14:12.

Over the centuries Satan (which means “adversary”) has been given countless other appellations by the inhabitants of his kingdom, including Mephistopheles, Beelzebub, Prince of Darkness, Lord of the Flies, and Ash-Shaytan. He is further described in God’s word as “the accuser,” “the dragon,” “the god of this world,” “prince of the power of the air,” and a “roaring lion.”

THE GOD OF THIS WORLD

We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

1 John 5:19

WHO CAN SPEND MORE THAN ONE DAY in this world and not be assured that it's ruler is, indeed, Satan. For corruption is the default pattern of this fallen earth; it is in its very soil, it is woven throughout its DNA. This, too, began in Eden, where far more than man was cursed by God.

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life."

Genesis 3:17

At the same time, while society and this depraved culture may be wholeheartedly in Satan's corner, the earth is not. It groans along with all believers, awaiting the resurrection of the dead.

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Romans 8:19-22



Man fell. Earth fell. And evil became the default condition for both. But how is that evil sustained? What is the invisible yet deadly engine driving it all?

There is something missing in the familiar story of Jesus' temptation by Satan, when the devil leads Him to the top of a high mountain.

And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours."

We wait for Jesus to respond with something like, *Who do you think you are? I created this world and everything in it. This is My kingdom—not yours. But He doesn't. Instead He simply points out that Satan is no god to be worshiped.*

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'"

Luke 4:5-8

Why doesn't Jesus dispute the claim of the impertinent Satan? Because what he said was and still is perfectly true. It all began, as did so many things, in the Garden; for his role in the fall of man, Satan was cursed.

The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed."

From this point on, even though the serpent has just been cursed by God, man (the woman's "seed") will grapple with evil—both in terms of his congenital, sinful nature, and in terms of a regenerated individual's personal battles with the flesh and the depraved society in which he still dwells. The perennial struggles with sin that we all endure find their root in this cataclysmic moment in the Garden of Eden.

“He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel.”
Genesis 3:14-15

God went on to promise that even though the “seed” (Christ) would one day be “bruise[d]...on the heel” (pay a physical price for redeeming man), ultimately Satan would be dealt a fatal blow “bruise[d]...on the head” by Christ Himself.

From those inaugural, fateful moments in the Garden Satan was cursed, but between then and his ultimate, tormenting demise in the lake of fire, for many thousands of years the devil will be the prince of this fallen world.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.
Ephesians 2:1-2

There is always someone running the show. If not literally pulling the strings of the actors, there is always someone who directs the action by laying the groundwork for the play, by instilling his own personality and motives, by setting the tone of the interaction from player to player.

*May be the devil, and the devil hath power
T’ assume a pleasing shape.
Yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I’ll have grounds
More relative than this. The play’s the thing
Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the king.*

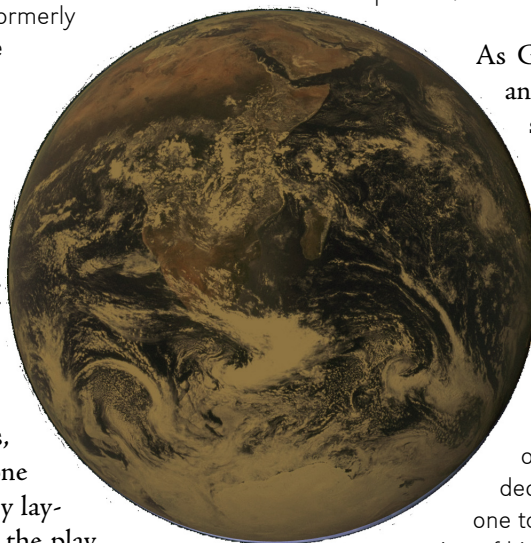
William Shakespeare,
Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 2

It was God the Father who set the verdict for man; because of his disobedience and rebellion, man would henceforth be alienated from God, born in sin, surrounded by sin, live in sin and, even in Christ, grapple with sin. The verdict was God’s, but Satan was left as an instigator, a

tempter, a teacher.

This harsh yet warranted consequence was not unlike the apostle Paul’s verdict to the Corinthian church, when he learned that one of its members was sleeping with his stepmother.

It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father’s wife. You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst. For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.



As God had expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden, so Paul insisted that the Corinthian church expel this man from their fellowship.

In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus...

Both penalties reflected the mercy of a just and compassionate God, as Paul expressed it.

I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5

Here, voiced by the apostle, is the dichotomy of our existence—both the torment and hope of even a life in Christ: We are flesh and we are spirit; though, in Christ, we have the Spirit of God within us, we remain flesh, in which is ingrained vestiges of our base, fallen nature.

And the latter is constantly being fed and directed by the king of this world.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to

those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4



Even amid plentiful evidence for its Creator, the evidence for Satan being the ruler of this temporal kingdom is rife within its boundaries. Death lies all about us, corruption and disease is inevitable, and in the human condition one must *learn* to be good; bad comes naturally.

Satan, as king of this world, is not omnipotent, but he is exceedingly more powerful than any human not in Christ. And every human being alive now was born into his kingdom. When

we “convert” to Christ Jesus, we are not converting from nothing to something, but from one thing to another. As king David tells us in his confessional Psalm 51, we are born “in sin,” in allegiance to a master: Satan. Those who are not in Christ have been purposely blinded to the truth by their lord. They are his, they belong to him, in their ignorance to his presence they nonetheless obey his precepts. Only the Holy Spirit can break this bondage and illumine the mind and heart to the truth, and then convert the soul from allegiance to Satan to allegiance to Christ.

There can be only one lord and master, and it will be one or the other. One is either ruled by Satan or ruled by the Lord Jesus. There are no other options.



LIAR

WE MAKE A DANGEROUS, perhaps fatal mistake by thinking of Satan as the cartoonish devil in red tights with a forked tail. For who in his right mind could take seriously that silly image. That graphic lie is from Satan himself, and meant to delude the world into thinking he is nothing more than an impish scalawag who haunts our bad dreams and coaxes us from one of our shoulders to cheat on a test or our taxes.

Reality is far more disturbing.



Satan presents himself not as evil, but good. The apostle Paul tells the Corinthians that “...even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” He swathes himself in glorious light as he draws us into his dark web. He is not ugly, but beautiful.

“You had the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect
in beauty.”

Ezekiel 28:12

He hides his evil in pleasantness; his voice is not coarse and repulsive, but sweet to the ears. When we do his bidding we are persuaded by him that we are doing only what is rational, profitable, even good. He is, after all, the father of lies.

[Jesus said to the Jews,]
“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

John 8:44

He is in fact and nature “a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour,” but in appearance and guile he is a gentle lamb seeking to be cuddled. You

may have passed him on the street and thought him a gracious stranger, but all the while he was devising ways to steer you into a dark alley down which you never meant to travel—and from which he means for you to never return.

Satan is not omniscient, but he is extraordinarily clever and persistent. You will almost certainly lose any argument you attempt with him. He has been around a long time, and is exceedingly street-smart. He outwitted the first couple, and was not the least intimidated trying to outwit the very Son of God.

As an angel the devil is a shape-shifter, and can indwell either animals or humans to force them to his will.

Jesus then answered, “That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.” So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

John 13:26-27



We are not to attack Satan; we are not to invite him into battle. We are instructed to “stand firm,” to “resist,” but never to initiate contact. Even Michael, the powerful archangel, “did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”” Our natural defenses are insufficient;

flesh alone will always lose against the father of lies, which is why we are instructed to gird ourselves with defensive holy armor. And if we are forced into a confrontation with him, and must fight back, there is only one weapon we are to wield—the same one used by Jesus: the word of God.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor

of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:10-17

Like the dragon Smaug in *The Hobbit*, Satan is pure evil. The most depraved human can have moments of pause, pangs of guilt, or at least of regret. But Satan has none of these. Destruction is his goal, it is his bliss. He can with glee raze entire villages of men, women, and children to dessicated ash; he can with singular delight destroy marriages and families; and his steady pursuit, one which brings him almost orgasmic joy, is to destroy the reputations of those who publically proclaim the name of Christ.

All of this evil is masked inside an inviting, pleasant individual who whispers in our ear, "My way is the best. My way is fulfilling and brings profit. My way brings satisfaction and exquisite joy. Pay no attention to that other Guy."

NECESSITY

It is almost impossible to talk about Satan without talking about the One who created him. And when we contemplate the two, our mind fills with questions, and unease.

If God is omniscient—and He is—then He knew when He created him that that particular covering angel would go bad. And by allowing him to continue—by letting him "fall" rather than be immediately destroyed for his rebellion—God was setting up the inevitable fall of the human race, and the crucifixion of His own Son.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely

curse You to Your face." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

Job 1:6-12

It is not a stretch to conclude that the fallen angel named Satan is somehow *necessary* to the cosmic plan of God. He plays a vital role. At any point God could have dispatched him, but He didn't. God permitted him, He bargained with him, He used him—but God never *removed* him. Satan tempts Adam and Eve, he tests Job, he tempts Jesus in the desert, he abducts Judas in the upper room; he is the ultimate genesis and cause of all the misery, the sickness and disease, war and hate and evil on this earth, yet God permits it all. Satan as an individual and a force is permitted to wreak havoc seemingly at will until far into the end of all things. And even then, after incarcerating him for a thousand years, what does the Lord God do? He releases Satan to unleash even more misery on this earth, gathering his armies for one last war against righteousness, before being, at long last, taken out for good.

Somewhere in a place beyond the ken of man the Lord God keeps His reason for keeping Satan around.

GOOD NEWS

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

Revelation 20:1-3

SATAN'S END BEGAN AT THE CROSS. In the feebleness of our fleshly minds we cannot comprehend or appreciate that even though we must still contend with him, the devil's end was set in place almost two thousand years ago.

Ever since Eden, Satan had been the lord of death on this earth. One might say, in a sense, he created it. Until Eve took that bite of the fruit, death did not exist on the earth. Man was made perfect, and good, and would not die. But sin, injected into Paradise by the devil, wrought all the evil that came after, and from a cosmic standpoint, foremost among all evil was death—not death as the Christian today knows it, as a doorway to heaven, but eternal death, the death of *separation* from God.

Death is what Satan invented for earth, and he reveled in it. It was his calling card. Disease, corruption—these were only foretaste to the final act of a human life: death.

But at the moment Christ Jesus breathed his last upon the cross and His spirit rose to be with the Father, that patent on death, that copyright, for Satan expired. He was no longer lord of death, and man was no longer held in slavery by his fear of death.

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Hebrews 2:14-15

The purpose for which the eternal Son of God entered human life was to vanquish our adversary. He assumed a mortal human nature “in order that he might nullify” the power of an evil tyrant who possessed the power of death and so

rescue those who had been enslaved.

William L. Lane

Now the largest weapon in Satan's arsenal against humanity was gone. In His death Christ paid the price for sin and death; now humanity had an alternative to death: eternal life in and with Christ.

Even so, that blinding cosmic event did not *remove* Satan, nor his minions or his influence. It just took away his victory. Now he was a marked “man”; now his *own* death warrant had been signed.



At the beginning of the Millennium, when Christ comes to rule on earth, His first act will be to throw Satan into prison. And there he will remain for one thousand years. During that time he will be stripped of his power to directly affect humanity on earth. Yet this does not mean the spirit of his evil will be missing on earth; that seed was planted millennia ago in Eden, and is renewed with every birth. This earth will still be home to those who reject Christ, and at the end of the Millennium they will be gathered together into an army by the recently paroled Satan.

The once lord of death, the great deceiver, will go out as he came in: lying to gullible human beings. He will form this last army by convincing millions of individuals that the smart thing to do will be to go to war against God.

When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

Revelation 20:7-8

In the Revelation account, however, this vast army, larger than anything before in the history of the earth, will not even fire a shot. God will wipe them out before they even reach their goal.

And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

Revelation 20:9

Then and only then will creation be rid of his evil. Satan and his minions will be consigned for all eternity to the torment of his own devise.

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Revelation 20:10

For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:53-57