

## Why was Sin Permitted?

*(Know this and you will forever love Jesus)*

### Introduction

If God knows the future – and He does (Jeremiah 1:5) – why did He create Lucifer, who became Satan? Just think how peaceful things would be now if He hadn't!

- **We can ask the opposite question:** What would the millions and billions and trillions of created beings think if God had said: "I won't create that angel because he will be evil?" They wouldn't understand because they'd never seen *evil*.
- Questions would be raised! God would appear as arbitrary.



**WOW!** Forever one would imagine: ***“What is God hiding? What was that evil He didn't like?”*** Then the natural reaction: ***“What if I do something He doesn't like and calls it evil?” “Maybe I should know what evil means!”***

God simply could not be understood. Was He a tyrant? ***His creatures would begin to obey Him from fear.***

- He would be seen as manipulative – He only creates beings who do what He wants.
- All this would really mean: God is **not** love! – His character is capricious, unpredictable.
- The universe could then never know what His love means!

**Let's pause right here to look at this more deeply.**



***One of the reasons*** Christ died was to give man another chance to “make a choice!!!”

***One of the reasons*** God gave the Ten Commandments written in stone was to say: “This is what will make an eternal friendship with Me – but it is your choice!”



**Free Choice** – called “man's will” – is inherent in every created being! **If** God hadn't created Lucifer (later to become Satan), He would have blocked the creation of a being who could choose right or wrong! That would not be love!!!

***BUT – God did create Lucifer, knowing that he would rebel!***

***From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate.<sup>1</sup>***

- We know this from Scripture because God is *omniscient*, which literally means “all-knowing” (Job 37:16; Psalm 139:2–4, 147:5; Proverbs 5:21; Isaiah 46:9-10; and I John 3:19–20), leaving no doubt that God’s knowledge is infinite and that He knows everything that has happened in the ***past, is happening now, and will happen in the future.***
- *God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and He made provision to meet the terrible emergency!!!*
- So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, “*that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16).
- “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily **was foreordained before the foundation of the world,** but was manifest in these last times for you*” (I Peter 1:18-20).

### **This is How it All Happened<sup>2</sup>**

Lucifer, the highest of all the angels, was continually bathed in God’s glory/His light; he was the ***covering cherub*** (Ezekiel 28:15).

- ***Sin originated with Lucifer, who had been most honored of God. It appears that he was the highest in power and glory among the created inhabitants of heaven.***
- Lucifer was called in a Hebrew metaphor: “*son of the morning*” (Isaiah 14:12). He was holy and undefiled, yet he led out in heaven’s rebellion.
- ***One can only imagine that this apostasy came little by little as he indulged in the desire for power and self-exaltation.*** The Scripture says, “*Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness*” (Ezekiel 28:17). “*Thou hast said in thine heart, ... I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.... I will be like the Most High* (Isaiah 14:13-14).

Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. He was not content with his position.

- Though honored above the heavenly host, ***he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator.*** Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections

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<sup>1</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

and allegiance of all created beings, ***it was his endeavor to secure the other angels' service and loyalty to himself.***

- The perfect harmony of heaven was broken.

Even in heaven Christ, though equal with God, worked in harmony with the Father.

The government of heaven – even before the creation of this world – was unique. God the Father seems to have been the supreme “King,” the highest of all beings. Jesus – who was not created – was second in command. Yet, everything He did was to bring glory to God the Father.

- God created Lucifer, giving him amazing *glory* and *light* (Ezekiel 28:13).
- Yet, that *angel* wanted the honor due God alone for himself!

### **The harmony of heaven and the universe was broken.**



- Billions, trillions, quadrillions or more of years had passed (we aren't told) since the angels were created.
- The happiness and peace of billions of galaxies were never marred until now.
- It was strange and uninvited. ***Lucifer now was called Satan and a devil*** (Revelation 12:9).

**Mystery!** Some theologians call it the “uncaused cause!” It simply cannot be explained!

***The issue now turns legal:*** One third of the angels chose Lucifer's side (Revelation 12:4). ***Was God right or was Lucifer right?*** God was on trial!

Since no one understood what *sin* is, a dilemma of “divine proportions” entered the universe!

There are many things about this apostasy we aren't told. But that rebellion must have gone on for a long time. Can you imagine a perfect, happy universe until now. A “stain” has come into its precincts.

### **What were God's options? What is He going to do?**

1. Let heaven remain in chaos with unhappiness and warring factions. This couldn't be tolerated.
2. Destroy Satan and any sympathizers. Love would then always appear as betraying the free choice or will. God would be a tyrant. “Do as I say or else ‘zap’!”



3. Let Satan live a period of time to permit rebellion to be fully matured. Then sin could be understood. Then every being in the universe might fully understand what he is really like – as his evil nature would become clear in time.

Can you imagine the God of eternity, with all power and presence being misunderstood?!

**What did God choose?** The third option. Satan was to live on.

- God made that choice to enlighten the mind and still preserve the free choice of mankind! **What a God!!!**
- **Then** – another new situation entered the universe:  
*“And there was **war** in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 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”* (Revelation 12:7-9).

There was no hope, no chance to redeem Satan or his angels! Why? **They rebelled while being bathed in God’s glory.** Nothing more could be done!

- Their **ultimate fate** must be annihilation – they must cease to exist. But that would have to come later.  
*“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever”* (Revelation 20:10). *“I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee”* (Ezekiel 28:18).
- But **the delay would permit** all intelligent beings time to really see what evil means! But what suffering that would bring! That would be part of the education that the universe would observe.
- That understanding would finally bring peace to the universe eternally. *“What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time”* (Naham 1:9).

Many minds have studied this **legal dilemma** facing God’s government:

- Everything must be done to preserve man’s freedom to choose.
- God’s love had to be demonstrated as never before seen in the universe. **But – He could not use force.**
- Satan’s deceptive hatred had to be unmasked in all its detail. **He would use force.**

A contrast between good and evil – God’s government and Satan’s rule – must be clear.

- **God could employ only such means as were consistent with truth and righteousness.**
- **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.

**End-time prophecy reveals the *drama* of the *last steps* in that conflict.**

God asks us to demonstrate the beauty of holiness. Satan is influencing his followers to exhibit evil as never before! We are in the time period that this war/conflict will be finished.

“The Conflict of the Ages”      ⇒



**The Only Plan that Could Resolve Sin’s Dilemma**

There would be no other way. **God had to go on trial.** When all evidence would be gathered and legal briefs presented, the inhabitants of the universe could make up their own minds.

**The sides?**

- Satan – prosecuting attorney (“accuser of the brethren” – Revelation 12:10)
- Jesus – defense attorney (“advocate” for the righteous – I John 2:1)

Satan represents his side.  
Jesus represents God’s government.

Maybe you are saying in your heart, “OK – this is how the battle will go forward and the courtroom of the universe will see this all ‘played out’ or finished.

***BUT – what about man?***

- The Bible says: “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23).
- Doesn’t that mean “all must die?” That **is** the sentence!



BUT – God goes the second mile. He not only addresses the rebellion of angels, but the rebellion of man!!!

God developed a “rescue mission” that is one of the most amazing evidences of His love and integrity.

### **Why it had to be Jesus!**

We saw why God had to permit sin.

- In time the universe and all mankind would see how terrible Satan and sin is!
- Then, when Satan, sin and sinners are destroyed, all God’s created beings will understand!!!

**But** – God had a problem **early on in that plan**. Satan appeared to be winning! One third of the angels followed him (Revelation 12:4). He was successful in influencing Adam and Eve (God’s first created beings on this new planet) to sin.



- Man was going to die – God had said so (Genesis 2:17).
- Adam’s fall seemed to **“prove”** again that God’s laws could not be followed.

The most dramatic committee meeting ever held in the universe convened. The Bible calls it the **“counsel of peace”** (Zechariah 6:13<sup>3</sup>).

- If someone would only die in man’s place – seemed unthinkable
- If someone could live a perfect life – seemed unthinkable
- Satan could then be defeated. His charges against God would be refuted.

In that great council Jesus, the very Creator of man, said: “I’ll die for them.” But – *why Jesus? **Here it is!*** (Genesis 3:15 tells the story.)

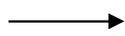
**“Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression.** None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. **Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin** – sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race.”<sup>4</sup>

Christ was the Creator. He volunteered to take man’s place (Colossians 1:14-17).

<sup>3</sup> cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63 (emphasis added).

A God (spirit realm)  
(eternity past)



A Man (physical realm)  
(eternity future)

- Thus came the story: Christ, the Lamb (the very Creator), was slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8) **and** God so loved the world He gave His Son (John 3:16) so we can become the “sons [and daughters] of God” (John 1:12).

### **But Jesus is a God. How can He die?**

We will study more about the Gods in heaven – but for now:

- He is the source of life – so he couldn’t die: “*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*” (John 11:25; cf. Genesis 2:7).
- He is a spirit – so He couldn’t die!

### **What is God going to do?**

- This may be the most amazing story the universe will ever hear – but it’s really true.
- The Bible calls it a “*mystery kept in silence through times eternal*” (Romans 16:25).
- We call it the “*incarnation*” – the “inclusion” or “adding a body!”

*“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me”* (Hebrews 10:5).

- Paul says that He came in the “*body of our humiliation*” (Philippians 3:21 – NET).
- God Jesus, as a spirit, came to ***live in the body of a human being!***
- But here is the stunning, most amazing, next-to-unbelievable fact:
  - God Jesus will remain in that body forever!
  - He will always be called our “*brother.*”
  - “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16).

So exciting and incredible was this event that God had Isaiah give a prophecy 700 years before Jesus came!

- “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).
- Immanuel means “God with us!”

“In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. But He stepped still lower in the path of humiliation. *‘Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.’* Philippians 2:8. As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. *‘He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.’* Isaiah 53:5.

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. *‘With His stripes we are healed.’*”

“By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan’s purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but ***in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen.*** In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken.”<sup>5</sup>

**Something amazing now unfolds!** Through Christ there is a “beginning again.” This is so real and so wonderful that Paul said:

*“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit”* (I Corinthians 15:45).

Jesus is called the “second Adam” – He succeeded where Adam failed. He took the penalty that was declared in the Garden of Eden.

### **What the Incarnation Does**

God the Son was isolated in a man’s body. ***The “man” Jesus:***

- ***Could be tempted***
  - And He was
- ***Could have sinned – yielded to Satan***
  - But He didn’t

*“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he*

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<sup>5</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

suffered” (Hebrews 5:8).

“Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?” (John 8:46).

Since He was perfect, Satan was defeated. Man could live that way **if** he were filled with the Holy Spirit as Jesus was (Luke 4:1, I Corinthians 10:13).

### **The “man” Jesus:**

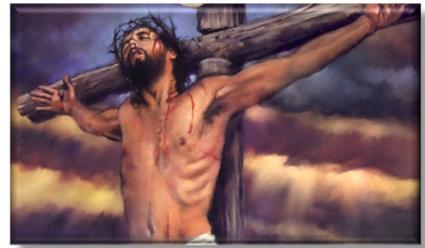
- **Could die in man’s place!**
  - And He did
- That means we can be:
  - Rescued from sin and death,  
This wicked world –  
And be restored to man’s original happiness and peace!

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6-7).

### **Another part of this story that we won’t deal with here – except briefly:**

As Jesus neared death, the record says:

“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**” (Mark 15:34).



All His life Christ had been sharing with others the wonders of God’s mercy and love. The withdrawal of that divine presence from Christ brought agony to our Savior that words or thoughts can never describe.

- Remember – He took our place.
- Jesus became “sin for us” (I Corinthians 5:14).
- He suffered the second death. He suffered God’s wrath.
- God’s throne of love is balanced between mercy and justice.
- “Sinner” Jesus was tortured, was in agony and died the “forever death” so we might have the “forever life.”

Christ felt the anguish that the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s wrath upon Him as man’s

substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, which broke the heart of the Son of God.

Because Jesus took your place, you now have the opportunity of salvation.

When will this opportunity pass? Soon – very soon. That will be the next study.

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