

### The Devil and Christ's Birth

What does the Devil or Satan have to do with the birth of the Messiah Jesus? Or to expression it in terms of our celebration of the incarnation, ***“What does the devil have to do with Christmas?”*** Actually, Satan is very involved in the birth of Jesus, the Christ. Lets consider the reasons from God's Word.

The Devil or Satan is involved Messiah's birth story because he is under God's curse for his actions in the garden after Adam and Eve were created.

Satan is God's enemy, and he is opposed to God's actions to redeem people. The enmity (hatred, antagonism, hostility) of Satan to God seems to have begun long before mankind existed. Isaiah 14:12-14 *“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’”* In a way Satan's hostility seems to have increased at the creation of mankind. He specifically targets Eve and Adam. His deception of Eve, and Adam's willful transgression, resulted in humanity's bondage to sin and death.

Although we are not told the story of Lucifer's fall it is a necessary inference since he appears in Eden as an agent of sin, evil and temptation. Jesus said, *You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.* John 8:44

Consider the Fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. After Adam and Eve had sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, in his curse on the serpent God said to him, *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”* Genesis 3:15

### What does the Devil/Satan have to do with the incarnation, the birth of the Christ?

Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us. *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

John the Apostle writes, *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.* 1 John 3:8

After the descent of man into the state of sin, God began to work his plan of redemption by his revelation of himself and his purpose of salvation. Afterwards God chose Abram

and his offspring as the channel through which God would bring the Redeemer. Therefore, in the history of the chosen race you see the continual effort of Satan to destroy them. Satan sought to destroy them from within and without. Within by sin, especially idolatry, but also in efforts to wipe out the race. The Book of Esther relates God's providence in preserving the people and a remnant of faith through which the Messiah would come. *When the time came to completion, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.* Galatians 4:4

It is with this background understanding that we can read with understanding the vision John saw recorded in Revelation 12.

*A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 She was with child. She cried out in pain, laboring to give birth. 3 Another sign was seen in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven crowns. 4 His tail drew one third of the stars of the sky and threw them to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, he might devour her child. 5 She gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. Her child was caught up to God, and to his throne. 6 The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that there they may nourish her one thousand two hundred sixty days.*

The woman here is Israel, but focused in time by the chosen mother of Messiah, Mary, who gave birth to Jesus the Christ. This child was born to save his people from their sins.

The male child is the Messiah who came from the line of Abraham and of David and through the Holy Spirit-induced pregnancy of the virgin Mary. The dragon is Satan, the Serpent, the Devil. Satan stood on the ready to destroy the child when he was born.

The historical reality of this event is recorded in Matthew 2 when the Magi from the East came to see the newborn King of the Jews. They first went to Jerusalem to the court of King Herod expecting to find the King in waiting. Listen to the story as recorded by Matthew. "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." King Herod did not know and was agitated by such news. He shrewdly has the chief priest summon scribes, the experts in the Old Testament, and he related the prophecy as to where the Christ would be born - in Bethlehem, a small village not far from Jerusalem.

Herod pressed the visitors to locate and inform him as to where the boy child was so he too could go and worship him. But he spoke a murderous lie from the father of lies - Satan the dragon devil.

9 After listening to the king, they [the wise men] went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them, until it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.”

Look! -there is the child-king, born of the woman. And in the palace in Jerusalem the red dragon stirs Herod, his pawn, into action. The instruction is in his ear- “They left you and did not return. Go get the child and kill him!”

God was also active. 13 Now when Magi had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.”

14 He arose and took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” [Hosea 11:1](#)

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the wise men, was exceedingly angry, and sent out and killed all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all the surrounding countryside, from two years old and under, according to the exact time which he had learned from the wise men. 17 Then that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying,

18 “A voice was heard in Ramah,  
lamentation, weeping and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she wouldn’t be comforted,  
because they are no more.” [Jeremiah 31:15](#)

So the first crisis passed and Jesus lives to grow into manhood and began his ministry of dismantling the kingdom of darkness. We have these reports from those days of Jesus’ kingdom invasion. In Acts 10 Peter summarized to Cornelius, the Roman officer, “You yourselves know what happened, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.”

Listen Jesus own words to his disciples. [Luke 10:17-20](#)

17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" 18 **And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.** 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

The week close to Jesus' suffering crucifixion John tells us, 20 "Now there were certain Greeks among those who went up to worship at the feast. 21 These, therefore, came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." 22 Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn, Andrew came with Philip, and they told Jesus. 23 Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Most certainly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 He who loves his life will lose it. He who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, let him follow me. Where I am, there my servant will also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

27 "Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say? 'Father, save me from this time?' But I came to this time for this cause. 28 Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came out of the sky, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

29 Therefore the multitude who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

30 Jesus answered, "This voice hasn't come for my sake, but for your sakes. 31 Now is the judgment of this world. Now the prince of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." 33 But he said this, signifying by what kind of death he should die.

***I saw Satan falling.*** John 12:31

**1 John 3:18** *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.* Jesus accomplished this by means of entering the judgment against man as the sin bearer and having passed under the curse on the behalf of fallen humanity he rose victorious, for the debt was paid, the penalty born by the Sinless Man and incarnate God. Thus Paul writes: He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him [Christ]. Colossians 2:15

In the vision of Revelation 12 the man child ascends but now the Dragon Satan pursues the people of Messiah, the believers in Jesus Christ, spiritual Israel, the regenerated church. Spiritual warfare through persecution, temptation, sin and hardship follow. This is to mature believers and to advance the kingdom in the present dark realm.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Luke 6:22

Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted 1 Timothy 3:12

As God's people faced with hostility, remember our victory is sure and certain. We may lose a battle, but Jesus has already won the war for us!

John Bunyan in Pilgrims Progress relates Christian approaching the Palace Beautiful and sees two lions. They roar and charge. Now, the Lions are tethered, they're chained, but Christian cannot see the chains. All he can see are the Lions. The Porter urges him.

“Is your strength so small? Fear not the Lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for Trial of Faith, where it is, and for Discovery of those that have none: Keep in the midst of the Path, and no hurt shall come unto thee.”

So Pilgrim obeys the summons and enters the place of refreshment.

If you are mindful and aware of the pursuit of the dragon now remember this sure promise .*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* Romans 16:20

Wayne Conrad

Dallas, Texas

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