

The War to End All Wars

“Grandpa, tell me a bedtime story!” “Well, Trevor, what kind of story would you like me to tell you?”, Grandpa asked. “Tell me about the greatest war ever fought, Grandpa!” “Ah,” Grandpa said, “the greatest war...that is what I would call the ‘war to end all wars.’ It is a real war that is going on right now. In fact, it was the first war and it will be the last war. It started all wars and it will end all wars. This war will last almost as long as time itself will last. It is a war being fought between the most powerful forces in the universe and it includes every human being. That is why I call it the ‘war to end all wars,’ Trevor!”

“To tell this story I have to take you all the way back to the beginning of time: all the way back to when God created the heavens and the earth on the very first day of creation. On that day God created all the angels (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11). He actually breathed them into existence (Ps. 33:6). Instantly, there were an uncountable number of angels! God continued to create for five more days until, at the end of six days, He had created everything. God created the heavens, the earth, and everything they contain, including the angels, man and woman, and all the animals. At the end of the sixth day, God looked at everything He created and saw that it was all very good, and He rested on the seventh day.

“Let me tell you a little about the angels that God created. First of all, angels live forever (Luke 20:36) and have great wisdom (2 Sam. 14:17,20) and strength (Ps. 103:20). Angels even have levels of importance, like ranks in the military (Col. 1:16). There are archangels, cherubim, seraphim, and others. But, there is one particular angel, a cherubim angel (Eze. 28:14), I need to tell you about. A cherubim angel covers and protects God’s holiness, God’s ‘separateness,’ from sin. One of these cherubim-type angels that God created was so magnificent that God gave him

a ‘seal of perfection’ and called him ‘full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (Eze. 28:12).’ God called him the ‘anointed cherub (Eze. 28:14)’ and made him the highest ranking angel in God’s presence. His name was ‘shining one’ or ‘morning star (Is. 14:12)’ (BDB, 237) which became ‘Lucifer’ when the Bible was translated into Latin (Page, 38). This best-of-the-best angels, Lucifer, started out his life in perfect goodness, like everything else God created.

“It was not long after creation that this anointed cherub angel, Lucifer, became proud about his perfection (Eze. 28:17). His pride produced discontent with his position (1 Tim. 3:6). He was not satisfied to just be the best of all the angels. He wanted to be like God, the very God who had created him (Is. 14:12-13). So, Lucifer led a revolt in heaven against God (Rev. 12:4) and convinced a third of all the angels to join him (Rev. 12:4). God cast Lucifer and his angels (Matt. 25:41) out of heaven and told him that he would put him into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Is. 14:15; Rev. 20:10). The Lake of Fire is a lake that burns with fire and brimstone in which God will eternally punish the wicked (Rev. 19:20; 20:14-15; 21:8). When God cast him out of heaven (Is. 14:12; cf. Luke 10:18), he became ‘Satan,’ the adversary. So, that was how the ‘war to end all wars’ began!

“Satan’s first recorded battle with God was soon after creation. God created Adam and Eve and put them in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15). They were sinless like the angels. However, one day in the Garden, Satan appeared to Eve through a serpent and deceived her into sinning against God (Gen. 3:1-6). One of the first things you must understand about Satan is that he is a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). When he went into the Garden of Eden that day to do battle with God, murdering and lying was exactly what he had on his mind. You see, God told Adam and Eve that there was only one thing that they could not do. They were not allowed to eat from the Tree of Life (Gen. 2:17-18). God said that if they did, they would die! So, what did

Satan do? He came to Eve and challenged God's command. Satan lied to Eve by telling her that God was the liar! He told her that the reason God did not want her eating that fruit was because, when she did, she would become like God (Gen. 3:5). Unfortunately, Eve listened to the liar, Satan, and so did Adam. They ate the fruit and Satan watched them bring death into the world with their sin against God (Gen. 3:17-19). That was Satan's first victory. But, before that day was over, God let it be known that He would crush Satan when this war was over (Gen. 3:15).

"I want to tell you what Satan is like. His names and titles describe his character (Bellshaw, 26-28). 'Satan (Rev. 12:9)' is his most common name. The word means adversary or accuser (Easton, electronic). Satan is the adversary of God, the holy angels (Rev. 12:7-9), and Christians. He continually accuses Christians of evil (Rev. 12:10) in an attempt to bring God's judgment on them. Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God to step in as the advocate of Christians and protects us from these accusations (1 John 2:1; Heb. 4:14-16). 'The devil' is his other common name. 'Devil' means one who slanders or one who trips up. He slanders God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Bible, Christians and everything related to God. He is also 'the old serpent (Rev. 12:9)' because he is crafty, subtle, sneaky, wily, deceitful and deceiving (2 Cor. 11:3). A very graphic name of Satan is the 'great red dragon (Rev. 12:3,7,9).' This indicates his power and destructiveness. He is a terrifying, destructive beast who is out to destroy. He is also the 'roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8).' Do you know when lions roar? Lions roar when they have their prey. Lions do not roar when they are chasing their prey, or when their prey knows they are coming. When a lion reaches his prey and is assured of victory, he roars before he devours. By the time you hear Satan roaring, it is too late to escape. He captures you and devours you in sin! Satan is also 'the evil one' (John 17:15) because he is pure evil. He is never satisfied with his own evil, but desires that everyone is evil. 'The Tempter' is another of

his names because he entices men to do evil. Even though he has other names, I only have one more name for tonight. He is ‘the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2).’ This means that he works evil in people who are not Christian. Satan controls every person in this world who is not Christian, who does not follow Jesus Christ.

“As I said before, when Satan sinned and God cast him out of heaven, he did not go alone. He took with him a third of the angels of heaven (Rev. 12:4). How many is one-third? I do not know! I do know that angels neither procreate nor die (Matt. 22:30) and that the number of God’s angels is ‘myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands (Rev. 5:11).’ Satan’s army of angels, i.e., demons, are highly organized (Eph. 6:12) and, since the whole evil world lies in power of Satan (1 John 5:19), he controls much of what occurs in the world.

“Jesus Christ was Satan’s primary target in this war. God’s plan from the beginning was to defeat Satan through the work of His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:14-15). God planned to have His Son come to earth and live a life without sin and then to die to pay God’s price for sin. By doing this, He would defeat Satan and He could then deliver those who chose to follow Him, out of the control of Satan and into His kingdom (Heb. 2:14-15; Col. 1:13). First, Satan unsuccessfully tried to destroy the line of ancestors (Aldrich, 479), the messianic line, leading to Jesus, so that His birth could not take place. When Jesus was very young, Satan worked through King Herod to issue a decree to find Jesus and kill Him (Matt. 2:16–18). When that failed, Satan tried to defeat Christ in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11). He failed in the wilderness too. Satan opposed everything that Christ did on earth. Finally, after all of his strategies to defeat Jesus Christ failed, Satan used Judas Iscariot (John 13:2,27), the Jewish leaders (John 11:49-50), and the Romans (John 19:16) to put Jesus on the cross to die. However, Jesus had successfully carried out His Father’s plan and so, won the victory and defeated Satan (Heb. 2:14). When

Jesus died, He went and proclaimed His victory over the demons (1 Peter 3:18–20), then rose from the dead and ascended into heaven.

“Even though Jesus Christ defeated Satan at the cross, God’s plan still allows him to operate in this world until Jesus Christ returns to earth. In the 2000 years since Jesus rose from the dead, Satan has been busy warring against God’s people. First, he has continually tried to destroy the nation of Israel, knowing it is crucial to God’s eternal plan because of the promises God made to Abraham to make Israel a great and everlasting nation (Gen. 12:2; 17:7). Israel’s history is a story of persecution and holocaust because of Satan. During the final battles led by Satan, an even greater holocaust will occur on earth as he attacks Israel, but God will protect Israel (Rev. 12:4–6).

“Second, Satan has attacked Christians for the past 2000 years. Satan hinders God’s servants from carrying out their ministry (1 Thess. 2:18) and attempts to trap Christians in sin (1 Tim. 3:7). Satan also brings vicious accusations against Christians to God in hopes that God will judge them (Rev. 12:10). The battles of this war that are fought with Christians are called spiritual warfare. Every person on earth is involved in this war and is either in God’s army or Satan’s army (Bieterhard, 274). God supplies His army of Christians with spiritual armor so that each person can withstand the attacks of Satan and his army (Eph. 6:10-20). Satan will flee from a Christian who resists him while wearing spiritual armor (James 4:7)!

“Finally, a day will come in the future when Jesus Christ will return to earth and the war will end. Christ’s return will begin a time of tribulation, a seven year period before Christ’s earthly kingdom begins. This time of tribulation will see God unleash His judgment against the earth. During this time, God will banish Satan from heaven and send him to earth (Rev. 12:7-9). The tribulation time will culminate in a battle between Satan and his armies and Jesus Christ and

his armies in the plains near the Mt. Megiddo in Israel. This is the battle called Armageddon. Jesus Christ will come on a great white horse with His armies of angels in white riding white horses. Jesus' angels will seize Satan and throw him into the Lake of Fire, which burns with fire and brimstone! Jesus Christ will kill all of Satan's armies. Jesus will then rule on earth for 1000 years while Satan stays bound and sealed in the Lake of Fire. At the end of the 1000 years, God will free Satan one last time to deceive the nations (Rev. 20:7-8). Satan will once again gather an army, but fire will come out of heaven from God and devour them all! God will cast Satan and all of those who followed him into the Lake of Fire for eternal punishment. Jesus Christ will win the war that Satan started back in the beginning of time. This war will end all wars because for all eternity thereafter, death and suffering will pass away and Jesus Christ will reign (Rev. 21:3-7) over all those have followed Him."

"Grandpa?" Trevor asked, "Can I sleep in your bed with you tonight?" Grandpa nodded, closed his Bible, and off they went to bed.

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