

"Two Masters"

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"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15.

When God created the angels they all were pure and good like everything else that God made. Their hearts were filled with joy and praise as they looked in the loving face of their Creator and thought what He had done for them. He gave them their beauty and wisdom and strength, and let them live in all the light and glory of His heavenly home. Lucifer was the wisest and most beautiful of all the angels. He was with God more than any of the other angels, and was loved and honoured next to Christ. God says that he was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created, till iniquity (sin) was found in him. {Ezek. 28:15}

And this is the way sin came into his heart. Little by little he began to think of himself instead of God, and began to love himself in place of God. He looked at his own beauty, and thought of his great wisdom, and was too well pleased with the love and honour that was shown him by the angels. Instead of looking at Jesus and praising the wondrous beauty and tender love of Him who had created him and given him all that he had, he looked at himself and praised himself and felt jealous of his Creator. He thought that he ought to be obeyed and honoured as much as God Himself. He became so proud that he thought he knew more than God, and thought he was able to be a better master to the angels than Jesus. Instead of a pure-hearted angel he became Satan; and that means "an enemy."

He began to work slyly against God. He secretly talked with the angels and found fault with God, and told things about Him that were not true, until he caused many of the angels to think that he was right, and God was wrong. He caused them to believe that if they would follow him he would be a better leader than Jesus. You see he wanted to be king himself, and have the angels honour him instead of God.

God's love for Satan and his followers was great. It grieved Him at His heart to see them destroy their own happiness. They were no longer contented and happy, for you remember that no one can be truly happy without Jesus. He bore with it long and did all that He could do to draw them back to Him, but they would not.

Finally Satan got his followers to believe that they were stronger than God and His Son, and could easily overcome them and have the kingdom. Thinking of self he made his heart so ungrateful and cruel that he gathered his followers together and fought against his Creator! "And there was war in heaven," Jesus and His angels fought against Satan; and Satan fought and his angels. {Rev. 12:7} But the One who could create was stronger than the ones created, so the angels who had made themselves so evil could not overcome Jesus. And Satan was cast out of heaven and, as lightning, fell to the earth; and his angels were cast out with him. {Rev. 12:9} Once more love and harmony was in heaven. Never again came Satan into the beautiful home that he had left; but it was all his own fault.

God knew that Satan did not deserve to live another moment, but he had done his evil work so secretly that others did not know how bad he was, what terrible thing sin would bring. If God had destroyed him then they would have thought that He was cruel, and would not have served Him because they loved Him, but because they feared Him. So God in His goodness still allows Satan to live that all may see how wicked he is, and what a terrible thing sin is. Then they will know that God does right when He finally destroys him. God has said that by and by Satan and his angels and all his followers will be burned up. Then there will be no more sin or sorrow nor anyone to tempt or trouble the followers of God.

Now which of these two masters will you choose: Jesus or Satan? God says you may follow just which one you please. Jesus loves you and does all things for you. Satan hates you and tries in every way to destroy you. God says, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." He lovingly says to you, "Do not give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27), but "Come unto Me." Matt. 11:28. If you listen to Satan, he will put his own hateful, selfish mind in you just as he put it in those angels in heaven who listened to him. But if you listen to Jesus and love His words, He will put His pure, unselfish mind in you, and you will think of God and His goodness and live to please Him, instead of living to please yourself. God says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." {Phil. 2:5}

1. Who created the beautiful angels? Col. 1:16.
2. When God created them how many were pure and good?
3. What did God give them?
4. Where did He allow them to live?
5. Must not that have been a beautiful home?
6. As long as they all looked to Jesus and remembered His love, how did they feel?
7. Which was the wisest and most beautiful of all the angels? Ezek. 28:12; Isa. 14.
8. How was he treated by the other angels?
9. How did sin finally come into his heart? Ezek. 28:12-15, 17; Isa. 14:12-15.
10. Then when we think more of ourselves than of others, and praise ourselves instead of praising God, like whom are we becoming?
11. What kind of mind has Jesus?—Unselfish; He is always thinking of others instead of Himself, and trying to make others happy. Phil. 2:5-8; Acts 10:38.
12. What will Satan do if we listen to him?—He will put his selfish mind into us.
13. Why?—Because he hates us and wants us to be destroyed.
14. What will Jesus do if we let Him?—He will put His unselfish mind into us. Phil. 2:5; Rev. 3:20.
15. Why?—Because He loves us and wants us to be saved.

16. What does God say that you should do this very day? Joshua 24:15.
17. How has God felt when He saw His brightest angel destroying his own happiness and leading others astray?
18. What did God and His Son and the good angels all plead with him to do?
19. Would he do it?
20. How did he finally treat the One who had made him, and given him all that he had? Rev. 12:7.
21. Where were he and his followers cast? Rev. 12:9.
22. Whose fault was it?
23. Why did God not destroy him then?
24. Will Satan always tempt and trouble God's people? Rev. 20:7-10.