

Satan's Downfall— The Five “I Wills” of Satan

By Gerald E. Cumby

Although Satan played a significant role in early encounters with mankind, the major information on Satan (the evil one), his character, and his history is provided in two major Old Testament writings/passages of Scripture (Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-17). In Isaiah 14:12-17, the prophet Isaiah provides the significant statements by Satan (Lucifer, son of the morning), whereby one can see the real heart of the wicked one. **The five “I wills” of Satan seen in Isaiah 14:13-14 is the sin that went against the will of God.** Note that these five “I wills” of Satan are condensed down to one sin. From both the passage in Isaiah and 1 Timothy 3:6-7, it is evident that “pride” was Satan’s sin that removed him from his duty and high authority in God’s Kingdom. Pride has a multitude of rebellious actions attached to it; self-will, iniquity, arrogancy, and violence—all subtitles for a prideful and haughty attitude. All of these traits of Satan are evident in the passage in Isaiah.

Christ Jesus stated in John 8:44 that Satan abode not in truth and was dominated with an unholy desire...and that he was a murderer from the beginning. The same character Satan depicted and was charged with *“is the essential character of human sin.”*¹ The two passages in Ezekiel and Isaiah mentioned in the above paragraph are to be interpreted as truth although both give different viewpoints as to the history of the evil one. However, just as “All Scripture is inspired by God...” (1 Timothy 3:16a) and “it is impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18), these two Scriptures reveal a truth about the “angel of light” that the sincere and devoted theologian needs to understand to “rightly divide the Word of Truth.” One of the prophets is looking ahead and one is looking back in the annals of time. In Isaiah’s prophetic view, much that is predicted is unfulfilled and not yet concluded. Even in Ezekiel, the prophet foresees a

¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 2*, (Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications Co., 1976 Edition), page 47.

casting out of Satan. He states: “Thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God” (Ezekiel 28:16). “The two views/two prophetic passages about the evil one do not contradict one another; it only provides the wise theologian a contrast and picture of the role of Satan before and after His fall. *Ezekiel in his prophetic vision stood on the threshold of angelic history and saw in prospect on to the end of Satan’s career, whereas Isaiah in his prophetic vision stood at the end of this history and saw in retrospect what he records.*²

In the Isaiah passage, the words, “Thou hast said in thine heart...” emphasizes that Satan’s sin was intended to be a secret. However, since God is Omniscient, He knew the heart of Satan. Satan did not have to say it, he just stated to himself and it was counted to him as sin. Every Christian should contemplate on the relevance of this sin, for in doing so, the darkness of man’s heart is observed. The total depravity of man is revealed, for “every intent of the thoughts of man’s heart was (is) only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5; Matthew 15:19).

The five “I wills” of Satan reveal the truth as to why Satan was excommunicated and removed from his original duties and responsibilities. The disclosures of the character of Satan (Lucifer, son of the morning) has within his sin, a desire to “rise above the sphere in which he was created, and above the purpose and service assigned him” thus projecting a will to take the place of God.

Isaiah gives an account of the five “I wills” coming from the proud, arrogant, and boastful heart of Satan. Thus, this passage describes the nature of his aspiration (Isaiah 14:13-14). In each of the “I wills” Satan pitted his will against the will of the Almighty God. Satan substituted his will for God’s will and the five statements expressed by Satan (Lucifer, son of the morning) manifest the very essence of sin in general. It is the will of the creature set against the will of the Creator.

The five “I wills” of Satan that caused his fall found in Isaiah 14:13-14 are:

² Ibid, page 46.

1. **“I will ascend into heaven...”**—According to Chafer, this statement meant that Satan apparently “*proposed to take up his residence (abode) in the third or highest heaven.*”³ The third heaven (highest heaven) is where God and the redeemed reside (2 Corinthians 12:1-4). From all indications, the angels reside on a lower plane. Since Satan was created as the angel of light, his abode was in this lower plane. After Christ’s resurrection, Christ returned to the highest heaven where God is; that is, “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion” (Ephesians 1:20-21). Although Satan’s duties give him access to both earth and higher spheres (Job 1:6; Ezekiel 28:14), his residence was on the same realm with other angels. However, seeking a self-promotion, Satan desired a higher calling than that which he had been appointed by his Creator. Satan’s self-seeking intention is against the Creator’s purpose and plans. Satan has no right to this place because sin doth rage within him and he is headed to an eternal hell. God has prepared this place for the devil (Satan) and his angels. It is for sure, neither Satan nor the demons that follow him, desire to be cast into the lake of fire. However, what God says and declares...it will be fulfilled.
2. **“I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...”**—Satan was appointed to the guardianship of the throne of God. However, by this statement, he desires and aspires to the possession of a throne of his own. He further declares that he wants to rule over the “stars of God.” The Bible reveals that Satan’s desire to possess a throne has evidently been permitted. He has been recognized as king with throne-authority in the heavenly realm and on earth, i.e. Matthew 12:26 (kingdom of Satan); Ephesians 2:2 (prince of the power of the air); Colossians 2:15 (ruler with authority). However, in all cases he (Satan) will be judged, disarmed and eventually cast into hell.

³ Ibid, page 48.

3. **“I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North”---**

This announces and directly states Satan’s ambition to control all the affairs of the universe including Jerusalem, the holy city of God. Often in Scripture, “mountains and hills” refer to authority and/or the right to rule. In Isaiah 2:2, the Word declares, “Now it will come about in the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it.” Jerusalem has been the center of controversy and war for centuries, long before Jesus wept over the city. Jerusalem will be the center of attention in the last days as God’s forces match forces against the evil one and those that follow him. The quote in Isaiah 2:2 anticipates Messiah’s rule or kingdom, called here “the mountain of the house of the Lord,” and all the other kingdoms, mountains and hills, will be under His Kingdom. Therefore, this “I will” of Satan expressed his plan and determination to rule over the affairs of the entire universe. Again, this sin is evident.....the creature rebelling against the Creator.

4. **“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds”**—this thought (statement in his heart) revealed the true nature of Satan. Pentecost writes: “When Lucifer said, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,” he was saying, ‘I will take to myself a greater glory than belongs to God Himself.’ His rebellion turned him into a twisted, perverted being. While of great intelligence, he has literally become an insane fallen angel, no longer knowing right from wrong!⁴ Since Ezekiel described the beauty and the glory that belonged to Lucifer in terms of the sun shining on polished gems, it is evident that the glory that belonged to Lucifer was not his....because it was a “reflective glory” (according to Pentecost). God alone, who is the all glorious One, revealed His glory through the work that came from His hand and His alone. How

⁴ David C. Pack, website: <http://www.thercg.org> , Who is Satan? Page 2.

outrageously arrogant can a created being from the hand of God be! Satan was not only arrogant (still is), but also self-relying, self-promoting, and certainly thought of himself to be worthy for a higher position than what he had been created. He was not satisfied with the level of responsibility that he was assigned and was willing to declare himself “above” the other created things of God. In the use of the word “clouds”, Satan was evidently seeking for himself the glory which belongs to God alone. In approximately 2/3’s of the references to clouds in the Word of God, they are referring to the divine presence and glory of God. For instance, Jehovah appears in the cloud (Exodus 16:10) and He was present when the cloud filled the house (1 Kings 8:10). Christ is mentioned in Matthew 24:30 and Revelation 1:7 as coming in the clouds the same as he went. In both Psalm 104 and Isaiah 19, Jehovah is pictured riding upon a cloud.⁵ Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4 gives an insight as to the nature of Satan’s sin. In Jude the Scriptures tell of the angels who did not keep their position but abandoned them to strive for a higher one. Their sin resulted in their confinement in darkness until their day of final judgment....It is uncertain that Jude is describing the plight of all the wicked angels. From passages like Ephesians 6 it appears that some wicked angels are free to roam to inflict the saints. Not all are in chains until the judgment. Peter condemns the angels that sinned and were confined “into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.”⁶

5. **“I will be like the Most High”**—this is the culmination of Satan’s dastardly attack as to the thoughts of his heart against the Creator; God, the Holy One, the one that created, formed, and placed Satan (Lucifer) in his high and lofty position as “*the guardian of the throne of God.*”⁷ With this in mind, Satan’s character can be seen in

⁵ Ibid, Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, page 49.

⁶ Robert P. Lightner, *Sin, the Savior, and Salvation*, (Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications, 1991), page 43.

⁷ Ibid. *Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, page 48.

this “I will” as distinctly as any other particular passage identifying his motives and methods to elevate himself to a loftier height in the Kingdom. Although most impressions of the world concerning Satan are seen as being “unlike” God (conniving, cunning, wicked, selfish, unloving, etc.), Satan is seen in this “I will” as being striving and seeking to be “like God.” The ambition *was not to be like Jehovah, which no created being could ever be, but to be like the Most High, which title signifies the “possessor of heaven and earth” (Genesis 14:19, 22).*⁸ Therefore, it was Satan’s purpose and desire to gain and possess authority over heaven and earth. As with all sin, the essential element characterizing it...was and is an “*unwillingness on the part of the creature to abide in the precise position in which he has been placed by the Creator.*”⁹ Just as Satan desired and pursued that lofty position to be like God, he recommended and pursued to deceive Adam and Eve by tempting and suggesting that they, too...can “be as gods”. Yielding to that temptation, they began a course for mankind to seek the unholy thing of rebelling against their Creator. With that act, sin entered into the world and Satan is still using the same tactics to “steal, kill and destroy” all that God has declared good and holy.

There are various theories as to what the five “I wills” of Satan really mean. Does it really depict Satan as a seeker of a higher position than his maker or one that is equal to or “like” God Most High? Since 2 Thessalonians 2:4 reveals that the “man of sin (Satan) will exalt himself “above all that is called God, or that is worshipped”, one can assume that the devil (the evil one) is seeking to secure some of the glory for himself, if not all...that belongs to God alone. It is the way one reads the passage as to how high Satan really desires to be in the kingdom God has planned for only the Lord God and His followers. Ryrie’s translation of the

⁸ Ibid, Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, page 49.

⁹ Ibid, page 49.

passage in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 4 reads, “....*the man of lawlessness (sin) is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*”¹⁰ One can also assume that Satan’s ambition is to take God’s place. Sin, again, never sits idle and is always seeking the lofty place in man’s heart whereby it can manifest itself and take full root. This is one time that Satan is “good””good” at what he does best; that is, causing doubt in one’s mind and heart that Jesus was who He said He was. When doubt sets in, a root of bitterness, selfish pride takes hold and manifests itself to full rebellion. Only the full armor of God can resist Satan’s condemnations and accusations. Therefore, the Believer must “*put on the full armor of God, that he may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For His 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*” (*Ephesians 6:11-12*).

Summary:

Before Satan fell, Paul Enns writes “He enjoyed an exalted position in the presence of God; the brilliance of heaven was his surrounding (Ezekiel 28:13). He was called the ‘anointed...covering cherub’ who enjoyed the position of highest honor before God (Ezekiel 28:14, 16).He was filled with wisdom and beauty, and he was blameless (Ezekiel 28:12, 15).”¹¹

Satan’s original sin that immediately placed him out of fellowship with the Almighty God was the same sin that broke the fellowship that Adam and Eve had with God. The Serpent (Satan) presented “*the tempting possibility to Eve that she can be like God*” (*Genesis 3:5*)¹²

¹⁰ Charles Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible (New American Standard Translation)*, (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute, 1978), page 1812-1813.

¹¹ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), page 294.

¹² Russell L. Penney, *Equipping the Saints—Discipleship Manual*, (Fort Worth, Texas, Tyndale Biblical Institute, 1997), page 73.

Today the “old serpent”, Satan, uses the same tactics he has used for years. He presents to man all the lofty things that man can have if they will not follow God’s path toward salvation. He offers all the glimmering lights, fun and games that man, without a Savior, might see as worth the effort to attain. However, when attained...there is no satisfaction that will ever be considered permanent or lasting.

Satan’s sin is adequately and proficiently described in his five “I will” statements. The sin that is depicted from the deep and dark places of his heart has a purpose and objective to be promoted to or to secure:

1. The highest heavenly position (“I will ascend to heaven”),
2. Royalty (belonging to or befitting a king) rights both in heaven and on earth (“I will raise my throne above the stars of heaven”),
3. Recognition belonging to the Messiah (“I will sit on the mount of assembly, in the sides of the north”),
4. Glory which belongs to Jehovah God alone (“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds”),
5. A likeness to the Most High Exalted One—the possessor of heaven and earth (“I will be like the Most High”).

The plight of man goes in one of two ways:

1. The way of Satan and that of rebellion and dishonor, eventually leading to the 2nd death (Revelation 20:15), or
2. The way of the Cross in which man believes that Jesus died on that cross for man’s sin...once and for all; Jesus was resurrected, and is now mediator for the Believer at the Father’s right hand (John 3:16; Romans 10:9).

By saying in his heart “**I will** trust in Jesus”, man can and will overcome the evil one. It is true, “...neither death, nor life, nor angels or principalities, nor height or depth, nor

any other creature will be able to separate (the Believer) from the love of God through Jesus Christ the Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

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