

Was Satan Ever in Heaven? (Again! Really?)

By Paul R. Blake

A fellow evangelist recently shared his concerns with me: "What are your thoughts about those who think and say that Isaiah 14:12 and Ezekiel 28 refer to the origin of Satan or are talking about Satan? Many say that Satan was an angel and sinned and was cast to earth? Is that true? That would suggest then that God created Satan, as an angel, and then he rebelled and God cast him out."

Answer - There is a lot of speculation and confusion on this subject in the denominational world. However, I am as astonished as you are that some members of the Lord's Church seem so smitten with this doctrine. Just let the text speak for itself. Isaiah 14 is talking about a man; it says so more than once in more than one way. He is a pagan Babylonian king who is feared and powerful who ends up in a grave. Not Satan; a man. *"You will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say... Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms... All the kings of the nations, All of them, sleep in glory, Everyone in his own house; But you are cast out of your grave... like a corpse trodden underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land and slain your people"* (Isa. 14:4ff, 16, 18-20ff).

Ezekiel 28 is talking about the king of Tyre. It is clear in the context. *"The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, 'Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre'... Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him'..."* (Ez. 28:1-2ff, 11-12ff). People love myths and mystery and want to make more out of prophetic and figurative language than is actually there.

Luke 10:18 records a prophecy of Jesus who spoke of Satan's fall from power. Jesus used the "prophetic past tense" just as did many of the prophets who spoke of future events. Heaven does not always mean God's abode in scripture and this is especially true in prophecy. When speaking of a ruler, a fall from heaven represents a fall from the heights of power and glory. "Falling as lightning" simply means that Satan's fall from power over death and sin will be sudden and catastrophic, nothing more.

Satan was never an angel in heaven who sinned and was cast out. To advocate this creates a contradiction in the unchangeable and perfect natures of Almighty and All-powerful God and the eternally sinless realm of heaven. It is a position built on a combination of denominational mythology and a weak, limited grasp of the text. The Bible does not speak regarding the circumstances of the origin of our Adversary; therefore, admonish the brethren to use their time wisely in pursuits other than empty speculation. *"O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge-- by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith"* (1Tim. 6:20).

The 44th President

By Kent Heaton

On April 30, 1789, George Washington took his oath of office as the President of the newly formed United States of America. Two hundred twenty-four years later the 44th President took his oath of office. For the child of God the events of inauguration set a course defined by the will of Him who ordained the authority of governing bodies. What attitudes are found in the heart of Christians when a President is sworn in to the office of Commander-in-Chief and Chief Executive of this country?

First there is subjection. The Holy Spirit said, *"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and*

those who resist will bring judgment on themselves" (Rom. 13:1-2). The Christian's role regarding the 44th President is one of subjection. Refusing to be in subjection to the governing authorities will bring judgment from God (v2). In the text of Romans 13 Paul reminds the Christian to "do good" (v3), recognize the President as the "minister of God" (v4) and we must all "be subject" (v5). He concludes by saying, "*Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor*" (Rom. 13:7).

Secondly we recognize the need to honor the 44th President. Peter uses the same language in 1Peter 2:12-17 – "*Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men--as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*" Our conduct needs to show honor to those in authority by submitting to "the ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" so those in the world may see our light and know the salt of our influence (Matthew 5:13-16). The fear of God goes hand in hand with the honor given to the "king" (Prov. 24:21).

Third, we are to pray for the 44th President. Paul exhorted Timothy to offer "*supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*" for all men and "*for kings and all who are in authority*" for this is "*good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior*" (1Tim. 2:1-3). These prayers are efforts to obtain good things through the mercy of God. Supplications seek to avert evil that may come; prayers invoke the blessing of good things on this land; intercession desires action on behalf of others; and giving of thanks. Jesus taught His disciples to "*bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you*" (Mat. 5:44) and this includes those who sit in authority in this nation.

We know the President does not rule in the affairs of men – God does (Dan. 4:25). The attitudes of the children of God must be in accordance with His will – regardless of who is President. May our hearts be attuned to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16) as we subject ourselves to the 44th President.

A Moments Wisdom

- Today's new friend is tomorrow's family.
- The language of prayer is forged in the crucible of trouble.