

“Their leader is Satan—the fowler with the snare. The Bible calls him the prince of the power of the air. The lower-case god of this world—a reign of terror. Tempting people to make one of two major errors. One is saying he’s not responsible for anything. The other is saying he’s responsible for everything. So one part of the church, all they do is speak on him. The other part is just as bad because they sleep on him.” (Shai Linne, *Cosmic Powers*)

“We cannot use electric lights and radios and, in the event of illness, avail ourselves of modern medical and clinical means and at the same time believe in the spirit and wonder world of the New Testament” (Rudolph Bultmann, 1941)

Who are we talking about?

- “angels/demons” (throughout Bible)
- “god(s)” (Pss. 82:6a, 138:1; 2 Cor. 4:4)
- “sons of God” (Deut. 32:8; Ps. 82:6b; Job 1:6)
- “cherubim” (Gen. 3:24; Ezek. 10:14-21, 28:14)
- “seraphim” (Isa. 6:1-4)
- “stars” (Deut. 4:19; Isa. 14:12)
- “heavenly hosts” (throughout OT; Luke 2:13)
- “holy ones” (Ps. 89:5, 7)
- “spirits” (Heb. 1:14; 1 Sam. 16:23; Eph. 2:2)
- “rulers and authorities” (Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15)
- “princes” (Ps. 82:7; Dan. 10:13; Eph. 2:2)
- “watchers” (Dan. 4:13, 17, 23)

Five Epochs of Demonic History

I. Creation: all the angelic hosts praise their Creator | *Human timeline: probably before the Days of Creation*

⁴ Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵ Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (*Job 38:4-7*)

II. Fall: some of the angelic hosts reject their Creator | *Human timeline: before the fall of man*

¹⁸ And Jesus said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” (*Luke 10:18*)

⁷ “Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” (*Revelation 12:7-9; cf. Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-15*)

III. **Reign:** the nations are given over to the rule of Satan/demons | *Human timeline: Babel?*

⁸ When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹ But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. (*Deuteronomy 32:8-9; cf. 4:19-20, Daniel 10:13*)

³⁵ But they [Israel] mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did. ³⁶ They served their idols, which became a snare to them. ³⁷ They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. (*Psalms 106:35-37*)

¹ God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: ² "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? ³ Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute... ⁶ I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; ⁷ nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince." ⁸ Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations! (*Psalms 82:1-3, 6-8*)

"A system of delegated divine oversight" (Michael Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*)

NT Examples:

- ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. (*Ephesians 2:1-2*)
- ⁴ The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (*2 Corinthians 4:4*)
- ¹⁴ Canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands, this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. (*Colossians 2:14-15*)
- ⁸ The devil took him to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." (*Matthew 4:8-9*)

IV. **Decisive Defeat:** the rule of Satan/demons is overthrown at the cross | *Human timeline: 33 A.D.*

A. **The Buildup:** The Conflict Intensifies during Jesus' Ministry

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (*Mark 1:14-15*)

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. (*Luke 10:17-19*)

“The level and intensity of demonic manifestations in people during Christ’s ministry was unique, having no parallel in OT times or since; it was doubtless part of Satan’s desperate battle for his kingdom against Christ’s attack on it.” (J.I. Packer)

B. The Battle: A War at the Cross

¹⁵ I [God] will put enmity between you [serpent] and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (*Genesis 3:15*)

³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. (*John 12:31*)

⁸ The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. (*1 John 3:8b*)

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. (*Colossians 2:13-15*)

C. The Aftermath: The Church Age—the Devil is Disarmed but Not Destroyed

Disarmed...

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. ² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ³ and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. (*Revelation 20:1-3*; cf. *Jude 6*; *Colossians 2:15*)

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (*Matthew 28:18-19*)

¹⁶ I [Jesus] have appeared to you [Paul] for this purpose...¹⁸ to open their [the Gentiles] eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. (*Acts 26:18*)

...But Not Destroyed

⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (*1 Peter 5:8*)

V. Final Destruction: Satan/demons are cast into the lake of fire | *Human timeline: The Last Day*

⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison [*then he gets his buddies together to fight a battle, but God rains down fire*]... ¹⁰ and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (*Revelation 20:7-10*)

⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” (*Matthew 25:41*)

One Endless Epoch of Angelic History

Angels = God’s singer-soldiers

I. Creation: all the angelic hosts praise their Creator

⁴ “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (*Job 38:4-7*)

II. Fall of Man: angels serve as the agents of God’s purposes

²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. (*Genesis 3:24*)

Old Testament examples of angels serving God’s purposes: *Daniel 6:22, 10:13* (protection), *Exodus 23:20* (guidance), *2 Samuel 24:15-17* (judgment)

III. Redemption/Church Age: angels stand in awe at God’s wisdom and serve God’s work

A. Awe at God’s Wisdom

In Christ:

¹¹ [The angel said] “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And

suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” (*Luke 2:11-14*)

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands,¹² saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (*Revelation 5:11-12*; cf. *1 Peter 1:12*)

In the Church:

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. (*Ephesians 3:7-10*)

B. Serving God’s Work

¹⁴ Are they [angels] not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? (*Hebrews 1:14*)

In Christ:

- Angels minister to Jesus during his temptation (*Mark 1:13*)
- An angel strengthens Jesus during his passion (*Luke 22:43*)
- Angels bear witness to Jesus’ resurrection (*Matt 28:5-6; Luke 24:4-7; John 20:12*)
- Angels bear witness to Jesus’ return (*Acts 1:10-11*)

In the Church:

- An angel guided Peter to share the gospel (*Acts 8:26*)
- An angel breaks Peter out of prison (*Acts 12:6-11*)
- An angel struck down Herod, a persecutor of the Church (*Acts 12:23*)
- Angels played a role in giving us the Bible (*Galatians 3:19; Revelation 1:1-2*)

IV. Consummation: the constant choir continues into eternity

Eschatological service: *Matthew 13:36-43*

Eternal praise: *Revelation 4:8; 7:11-12*

Sovereign Wisdom on Display: An Ironic Equivalency Between Angels & Demons

- 1) Both angels and demons ultimately serve to accomplish God's purposes (whether they mean to or not)

¹ Then Job answered the Lord and said: ² "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. (*Job 42:1-2*)

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (*Romans 8:20-21*)

- 2) Both angels and demons ultimately glorify God

² [An angel] called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit... ⁸ she will be burned with fire for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her." (*Revelation 18:2, 8*)

Applications

- 1) Follow the angelic awe (*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!*)
- 2) Fear not the demonic animosity (*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God!*)

³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us... ³⁸ I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (*Romans 8:34, 38-39*)

- 3) Don't disregard the demonic/angelic
- 4) Don't obsess over the demonic/angelic
- 5) Rejoice in your salvation

²⁰ Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (*Luke 10:20*)

Book Recommendations

- *Against The Darkness*, Graham Cole
- *Cosmic Powers*, Shai Linne (Song)
- **The Unseen Realm*, Michael Heiser

*If you want to read this book, talk to me about it first. It's helpful but the author holds some unorthodox views.