

THE ROLE OF SATAN

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The purpose of my paper was to show that Satan is a **real** and active being who fulfills an important part of the Plan of Salvation although all his efforts are designed to destroy it. I discovered that in the pre-existence Satan was a personage of importance and power. Through his act of rebellion he was cast down and has since been attempting to a) take God the Father's throne and b) destroy the Father's plan. Failing this, he attempts to bring as many men down to his level of misery as he possibly can.

To accomplish his objectives, Satan has established his own church upon the earth as well as numerous political and social philosophies designed to imitate or detract from the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, he actively tempts men in numerous ways with the intent of destroying their souls. However, the Lord has placed bounds upon his powers to tempt or influence men and anyone who lives righteously can "bind" Satan in his own life.

Now, in the last days, Satan is more active than ever before. Although he appears to be triumphing over God's plan, he will be bound completely during the millenium and later cast out forever.

Consult: Standard Works.

Joseph Fielding Smith's Religious Truths Defined, Man, His Origin and Destiny and Doctrines of Salvation.

Journal of Discourses

Melvin R. Brooks' L.D.S. Reference Encyclopedia

Jennings, Satan: His Person, Work, Place and Destiny

(He is a non-member -- this is a good work to see how confused they are)

Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine

William Edwin Berret, The Restored Church

*Victor L. Shallow*

## THE ROLE OF SATAN

Throughout the history of mankind, there is a figure who is at times enshrouded with mystery and at times with mythology and superstition, but always partly concealed. Satan or the Devil are some of the many names given this being. Today, in a world which exalts science and demands evidence before it will believe anything, many people do not even believe in the existence of Satan. Joseph Fielding Smith, in his book Religious Truths Defined, presents some of the doctrines of modern Christendom concerning the devil. The Unitarians, for example, believe that Satan is but a fictitious character, created by man to represent evil. The Adventists, on the other hand, believe that, "Satan is a created being, a fallen angel who will finally be reduced to a state of non-existence."<sup>1</sup> Norman Vincent Peale believes that the devil is a personification of the evil which exists in the hearts of men as they struggle to do good.<sup>2</sup> This is as Satan would have men believe.

The purpose of this paper is to explain that Satan is a real, reasoning being who performs a necessary function in the plan of salvation although he is dedicated not only to the destruction of God's plan, but also to the robbery of His throne. To accomplish this, various aspects of the history and purpose of Satan will be presented. First of all, the pre-existent

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., Religious Truths Defined, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

position of Stan will be explained. Included in this summary will be a brief review of the Council of Heaven and the well known events following that Council. Next, the personality of Satan will be considered--in part through examining some of his many names to understand how they relate to his personality and purpose. After this, the major objectives of Satan will be discussed. Following will be an examination of some of the methods whereby Satan attempts to achieve his objectives. To conclude, the events of the last days and the position of Satan during and following the millenium will be discussed. In accomplishing these objectives, and describing and explaining the role of Satan, I will use the Standard Works, teachings of the General Authorities, books by non-members, and my own personal experiences and beliefs.

#### SATAN IN THE PREEXISTENCE

Almost all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have heard at some time of the great Council which was held before the world was created. The lack of information about that Council and the things that transpired there is one of the principal reasons for the confusion and ignorance which exists among non-members of the Church regarding Satan. One of the things which impressed me most about the beliefs of non-members is that they did not understand how this earth life is but a portion of our total existence. Handicapped by their lack of knowledge, many men, good men and believers in Christ, could

not really understand who Satan was and what he does today. Fortunately, modern scripture aids members of the Church to be aware of, and avoid, Satan's techniques. Concerning the Council of Heaven, the Lord said to Moses:

"...That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying--Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.<sup>2</sup>

At this time, when various plans were being considered whereby we might come to earth and successfully pass through this earthly existence in order to return to the presence of our Father, Satan proposed a plan whereby all might return to God's presence through force. This major drawback, that it would deprive us of our "free agency" and make us slaves rather than independent and reasoning beings, made Satan's idea unacceptable. Concerning the previously quoted passage, it is important to note that not only would Satan deprive us of our free agency but would also take upon himself the glory of God the Father. From this quotation we find an important part of Satan's personality--a great egotism and desire for personal acclaim.

We'll know to members of the Church are the events following that Council. It is understood how Satan's plan was vetoed, how God the Father's plan was accepted, with Christ presenting

<sup>2</sup>Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4:1

Himself as a willing and humble sacrifice to complete that plan, and how Satan and those he persuaded rebelled against the decision of the majority and were cast down. Before our discussion in class the other week I did not understand how Satan was cast out from the presence of the Father and denied the chance to come to earth not because he proposed his own selfish plan but rather because he did not accept the decision which the majority of the pre-existent spirits did.

Talking about this fall from grace, the Old Testament prophet Isaiah said these words:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!  
 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ...  
 ...I will be like the most High.  
 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.<sup>3</sup>

Already then, from recalling through scripture the Council of Heaven and the major role which Satan had in that Council, we gain a partial understanding of his personality and desires. Additional information comes to us from revelation given in this dispensation when the Lord, talking to Joseph Smith, said these words: "The devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the host of heaven turned he away from me because

<sup>3</sup>Old Testament, King James Version, Isaiah 14:12-15.

of their agency..."<sup>4</sup>

Satan demanded power. He demanded the honor of God the Father and he would not be content to accept a second place in the realm of spirits. Instead, he elected to attempt to gain power over those spirits and destroy the plan which God and all of us had accepted prior to this earth life.

#### THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

What kind of a being is Satan? I believe that we can understand a little of Satan through an examination of some of the names which have been given to him. A friend once told me, although I do not have a reference for his comment, that Jesus Christ has as many as 200 different names in the scriptures. All of these different names, titles, and descriptions either explain or describe a different aspect of the Savior and give additional information of what his purpose is and how he seeks to execute that purpose. Carlyle B. Haynes lists in his book, Satan, His Origin, Work and Destiny, not less than 20 different names and descriptions of Satan. Below are a few of the more important and revealing ones:<sup>5</sup>

- 1) Abaddon: This title means "the destroyer" and was anciently used to refer to hell itself.
- 2) Beelzebub: This title signifies Satan's position as

<sup>4</sup>Doctrine and Covenants, 29:36.

<sup>5</sup>Carlyle B. Haynes, Satan, His Origin, Work, and Destiny, p.11.

prince or chief of the devils--one of the 'baalim' or false gods.

- 3) Belial: This title means "worthlessness" and has connotations of recklessness and lawlessness implied.
- 4) The Father of Lies: This title is indicative of not only part of the personality of Satan, but also one of his major tools used to accomplish his purposes.
- 5) Lucifer: This means "light bringer" or "day star" and is applicable to Satan's pre-existent status.
- 6) Satan: This is equivalent to "the slanderer."

In addition, Satan is referred to in the scriptures as; a liar, murderer, the power of darkness, the prince of this world, the adversary, the angel of the bottomless pit, the serpent, the tempter, the wicked one, and the evil one. Each of these names is indicative of part of his personality and purpose.

We gain further understanding into the mind and spirit of Satan by some biblical references which present the Devil as being: Presumptuous (Matthew 4:5-6), proud (1 Timothy 3:6), powerful (Ephesians 2:2), wicked (1 John 3:12), malignant (Job 1:9), subtle (Genesis 3:1), deceitful (2 Cor. 11:14), fierce (Luke 8:29), cruel (1 Peter 5:8), and always active in promoting evil (Job 1:7).<sup>6</sup>

It was interesting for me to gain an understanding of

<sup>6</sup>Carlyle B. Haynes, p. 12.



the past power and dignity of Satan--a portion of which he still retains. Before examining this topic, I did not truly understand the position of importance he once held. In the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76, Satan is referred to as "...an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God..." Later in the same section, referring to the fall of Satan, the Lord said that Satan "...was called Perdition, for the heavens wept over him--he was Lucifer, a son of the morning."<sup>7</sup> How great must have been his station! What an important figure he must have been to have received these titles and also to have been able to influence so many of the host of heaven.

It is also of significance to note that Satan cannot be rebuked by the inherent power of an apostle or prophet except through the power and name of Jesus Christ Himself. Latter-Day Saints who have gone through the Temple understand that it is necessary to use the name of Christ to rebuke the devil. Furthermore, the experience of the disciples of Christ as related in chapter 17 of Matthew is instructive. On this occasion, we recall that the disciples were unable to cast out the possessing spirit of a devil in a lunatic boy. Christ Himself was able to rebuke the devil and the child was cured. However, when the disciples asked why they were not able to cast out the evil spirit, the Lord replied that they had not had enough faith to do so. Although we normally associate this story with

<sup>7</sup>Doctrine and Covenants, 76:25-26.

the concept that fasting and prayer are often necessary to perform the works of the priesthood, we can also see that the power of Christ, Himself, is really needed to be able to subdue the devil when he has power over a man. As I shall point out later on though, it is not necessary to have the priesthood or use Christ's name to prevent the Devil from having power over our own selves.

Another aspect of the power of Satan is seen in the temptations of Christ. In Luke, chapter 4, verses 5 and 6, we understand that Satan presented Christ with the temptation of receiving the entire earth. It appears from this scripture that Satan actually had power to give the Lord the earth-- at least for a short time. The Temple ceremony also confirms the fact that at this time the Devil is indeed, "the lord of this earth". However, here again, we shall see that his power will not continue forever.

#### SATAN'S MAJOR OBJECTIVES

Having examined both the pre-existent role of Satan and some of the principal elements of his personality, we will now look at some of his major goals. As was stated in the introduction to this paper, I believe that Satan has two major objectives. The first of these is the destruction of God's plan while the second is to take God's throne. Failing this, he wants to bring all men down to his level. I have found that the two major objectives are interrelated inasmuch as Satan's

motive to become greater than God, The Father, is what impulses him to attempt to destroy the Father's plan.

One of the principal ways in which Satan destroys God's plan is by having men worship him. At times, he actually commands men to do this. This is seen in the first chapter of the Book of Moses: "And it came to pass that when Moses had said these words, behold, Satan came tempting him, saying: Moses, son of man, worship me."<sup>8</sup> Bruce R. McConkie in his work, Mormon Doctrine, states that "Satan is worshipped when people obey his commandments."<sup>9</sup> Even as the Lord comprises the essence of all goodness and love and virtue, Satan embodies the essence of all that is evil, degrading, and sinful.

We have before us then, two beings whom we can worship-- God and Satan. To me this is of personal importance. Every time I disobey the commandments of Our Father in Heaven, I am in essence worshipping Satan. That is to say, I am placing Satan's purposes and goals above those of The Father. Of course, on the other hand, every time that I obey the commandments of God I weaken Satan's power. Applying this principle generally, we can see that if Satan can convince God's children to disobey His will and follow after Satan, he can destroy the Father's plan.

<sup>8</sup>Pearl of Great Price, Moses 1:12.

<sup>9</sup>Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 193.

Another way that Satan attempts to destroy the Father's plan and overthrow God's position is by destroying faith in God. I believe that this is the reason why Paul talks about resisting evil by "keeping the faith."<sup>10</sup> By having men lose their faith in God and placing it in himself, Satan can accomplish his objectives.

Still another way that Satan can destroy God's plan is by "destroying the souls of men."<sup>11</sup> Moroni, commenting upon Satan's desire to destroy men's souls, stated that, "...he persuadeth no man to do good, no not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him."<sup>12</sup> For example, at the Last Supper, Christ warned Peter saying, "...Simon, Simon,...Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat."<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the Devil attempts to destroy God's plan by destroying the key individuals upon which it rests. In every dispensation there has been a prophet of great significance upon whom the Lord's plan has rested. For example, in this dispensation, Joseph Smith was a key individual and as such, a major object of Satan's vengeance. One of the most serious perils that the Prophet Joseph faced was that of "false bre-

<sup>10</sup>Old Testament, 1 Timothy 6:12.

<sup>11</sup>Doctrine and Covenants, 10:27.

<sup>12</sup>Book of Mormon, Moroni 7:17.

<sup>13</sup>New Testament, Luke 22:31

thern." In this era, Satan still arouses apostates through motives of hate, envy, personal vengeance, and like base passions. Joseph Fielding Smith declared that Satan was aware of the fact that if the Church were effectively restored in this dispensation it would overthrow all his work.<sup>14</sup> It was for this reason that Joseph Smith, even before he received the First Vision, was the object of many serious and determined attacks by the devil. Indeed, if I had the time to pursue the subject, I would be interested in tracing how the Devil has attempted to tempt and destroy each one of the major patriarchs. Let us say simply that Satan has tried to destroy these men and thereby destroy the plan which the Lord had instituted and sought to bring to pass through them.

Once again, regarding the goals of Satan, the Temple service is enlightening. Inasmuch as Satan cannot permanently possess the bodies of the Lord's children upon the earth, he seeks to rule upon this earth by making their lives miserable. Unable to possess a physical body, weakened by the gathering numbers of people who believe in the true Church and make him partially powerless in their lives, fearful of his eventual defeat, he seeks to share his torment with others. The next section will explore some of the ways that he seeks to achieve his goals and make men miserable.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, Man, His Origin and Destiny, p. 108.

THE METHODS OF SATAN

To gain an understanding of the many and varied ways in which Satan attempts to achieve his objectives, some of the key events of the Old Testament will be considered. One such illustrative episode is the interchange between Satan, Adam, and Eve. As we studied the events in the Garden of Eden in our class we saw that Satan tempted Adam and Eve by emphasizing the supposed benefits or pleasures they would gain and by minimizing the dangers or consequences of their acts. "Ye shall not surely die..." said the Devel to Eve.<sup>15</sup> What an appropriate statement for the being called "the Father of lies." To continue his deception, Satan said unto Eve, "...Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil."<sup>16</sup> It is probable that the devil thought that by bringing about the fall of man, he would destroy God's plan, however, he probably did not realize, blinded as he was by ambition and pride, that he was acting according to the Father's plan.

In the incident involving the murder of Able, Satan also attempted to destroy God's plan by introducing murder into the world. Before we discussed this subject in class, I did not understand that Cain had made a pact with Satan and truly had submitted himself to his power. It was also new knowledge to me to learn that Cain had been of an evil nature even

<sup>15</sup>Old Testament, Genesis 3:4.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, Genesis 3:5

before he had come to this earth. Be that as it may, Satan certainly achieved part of his purpose by causing the first murder.

Another important incident at the beginning of the first dispensation concerns the temptations of the Devil to the children of Adam. Although Adam and Eve themselves received the gospel and rejoiced in it, Satan was quick to attempt to divert the attention of the people from the true religion to one of his own. "And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish."<sup>17</sup> The temptations of Satan at that time were so effective that wickedness spread throughout all the earth. One of the principal tools of Satan then, is to tempt man to seek for happiness in ways that are not acceptable to Our Father in Heaven. For example, prior to the flood, the sons of men began to commit adultery and whoredoms. The Book of Genesis tells us "...the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."<sup>18</sup> Because of the many sins which the sons of God were committing, it became necessary to cleanse the earth of their wickedness and begin anew the work of the gospel.

<sup>17</sup>Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:13

<sup>18</sup>Old Testament, Genesis 6:5

As we studied in class, another one of the ways in which Satan attempts to tempt man and lead them astray is illustrated in the incident of the Tower of Babel. In building the tower, the people sought to both satisfy their own pride and vanity and also to spite the Lord. Pride and vanity, as I have learned from our discussion of the Old Testament, are some of the principal weapons of the devil.

Time and space permitting, I would also be interested in exploring further the ways in which Satan has attempted to destroy God's plan through apostasy in the primitive Church or through the confusion he has created among sects today. However, I must suffice myself with the comment that the Devil has attempted to destroy the work of the Lord in every dispensation from the beginning of the world. The few episodes cited above are merely indicative of the ways in which Satan has attempted to undo the work of the Lord since the beginning.

I have mentioned in the past that temptation is one of the major tools of Satan. This topic bears greater discussion. We know that men are upon the earth to be tried. This can only be accomplished if they have a choice between good and evil. For this reason, as I will explain in greater detail later, is Satan upon the earth. However, in pondering the problem of temptation it is important to determine if Satan is limited in



freedom of action. The purpose of temptation is to make men disobey the Father. The Doctrine and Covenants tells us:

Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God. And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers.<sup>19</sup>

Every man, then, comes into the world in the same spiritual condition--innocent before God. However, we also learn from this passage that Satan desires to take away light and truth from men. This is the object of temptation. If he can cause us to disobey, if he can cause us to reject the truths that we have learned or prevent us from learning additional truths, he will be successful. But just how much power does Satan have to tempt? Brigham Young stated, "The power of the devil is limited; the power of God is unlimited."<sup>20</sup> In examining why President Young would say this, we find several rules or limitations placed upon Satan's actions.

One of the most important restrictions placed upon Satan is that he cannot tempt little children. Joseph Fielding Smith stated this in the book Doctrines of Salvation. In fact, President Smith said that, "Satan cannot tempt little children in this life, nor in the spirit world, nor after their resurrection."<sup>21</sup>

Another important restriction placed upon Satan is that he

<sup>19</sup>Doctrine and Covenants, 93:38-39.

<sup>20</sup>Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 68.

<sup>21</sup>Doctrines of Salvation, p.

cannot tempt us beyond our power to resist. I believe that this is what Paul meant when he said to the Corinthians:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.<sup>22</sup>

This is an important truth that I have found to apply in my own life. Although at times I fall to temptation, it is not because I am tempted above my power to resist but rather because I do not take the "way to escape" mentioned by Paul. The Lord knows us. He knows to what degree we can withstand temptation and become stronger. He, not at any time, tempts us to do evil. However, He does allow us to be tempted inasmuch as we have our own agency to choose for good or evil. By learning to make choices we learn to conquer Satan and willfully accept the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A related restriction placed upon Satan is that men are only subject to him to the degree that they allow themselves to be. President Young explained it this way:

You are aware that many think that the devil has rule and power over both body and spirit. Now, I want to tell you that he does not hold any power over man, only so far as the body overcomes the spirit that is in a man, through yielding to the spirit of evil. The spirit that the Lord puts into a tabernacle of flesh is under the dictation of the Lord Almighty...if the spirit yields to the body, the devil then has power to overcome the body and spirit of that man, and he loses both.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup>New Testament, 1 Corinthians 10:9

<sup>23</sup>Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 33-34.

Once again, I have found personal application to this truth. Although I seek to excuse myself from responsibility for sin sometimes, this is but a rationalization. The devil has no power over us except that which we give him. James said; "resist the devil and he will flee from you; draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh to you."<sup>24</sup>

To me then, the greatest limitation placed upon Satan and his operations is that of righteous living itself. One Church writer, William Edwin Berret makes a comparison between Satan's messages and the Lord's. Brother Berret states that Our Father in Heaven sends messages of direction and counsel throughout the universe. Of course, it is the will of the Lord that all his children hear His voice and obey His commandments. However, Satan also sends out messages as far as "...his knowledge permits."<sup>25</sup> Each man, a receiving set, can receive whichever message he desires. Anyone who truly desires to serve God and ignore the Devil can do so. I was impressed with Brother Berret's conclusion:

In reality, therefore, a man who has command of himself does not need to fear the evil one. He is not a force that can work harm, unless a man places himself under the subjection of evil; but, if the devil is allowed a hearing, he may become the master of the man, and lead him downward on the road to retrogression.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Now Testament, James 4:7-8

<sup>25</sup>William Edwin Berret, The Restored Church, p. 466.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

Another important restriction placed upon Satan is that he cannot force men to do evil. The definition of men's free agency not only prohibits the Lord from forcing men to do good, but also prohibits the Devil from forcing men to do evil. Satan is allowed to suggest ways of iniquity, he has become an expert at that, and he can even affect men's lives to some degree, as Job's experience illustrates, but he cannot force the human mind or body to obey his desires. The only exception to this rule is when a man places himself under Satan's rule, as will be explained.

In speaking about the limitations placed upon Satan, I should mention at this point that the Devil can possess the bodies of men if they allow him to do so. The Prophet Joseph is quoted as saying: "The punishment of the devil is that he should not have a habitation like men. The devil's retaliation is, he comes into this world, via men's bodies, and occupies them himself. When the authorities come along, they reject him from the stolen habitation."<sup>27</sup>

However, temptation is not the only tool which Satan uses in accomplishing his purposes of destruction. Satan also works through some man-made organizations. Speaking about the worship of Satan, Bruce R. McConkie explains that the church of the Devil, "...which is most abominable above all other churches," was set

<sup>27</sup> Documentary History of the Church, p. 403.

up to allow for more formal adoration of Satan.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Satan also influences the world through government and political philosophies. "Those educational philosophies which deny Christ, the divine origin of man as an offspring of God, are sponsored by Satan."<sup>29</sup> The next page is a comparison chart of the teachings which emanate from Satan contrasted to those which come from God. Satan, realizing that men may be deceived by things which have the appearances of God's truth, has counterfeited many of the Lord's doctrines or distorted them. This is another important part of his methodology.

#### SATAN IN GOD'S PLAN

In examining Satan's purposes, personality, methods, and history, the logical question is--What is the Devil's place in the divine plan? Has Satan really gained his complete freedom and power to do as he will to the detriment of God's plan? The answer is that the Lord God is in control of His plan and His creations. Satan performs a valuable, though destructive, service when he tempts men. This point is better understood with the help of the Book of Mormon. Lehi, speaking to his <sup>son</sup> Jacob, presents this concept well. He said:

And to bring about his eternal purposes in the end of man, ...it must needs be that there was an opposition.... Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act

<sup>28</sup>Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 194.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

COMPARISON CHART  
SATAN'S TEACHINGS AND GOD'S

1) Priesthood.	1) Priesthood used to dominate and restrict free agency of man. Or priesthood not necessary.
2) Prophets.	2) False prophets, fortune-tellers soothsayers, miracle men.
3) Prophecy and patriarchal blessings.	3) Fortune-telling, sorcery.
4) Miracles (not given as signs).	4) Miracles (given as signs).
5) Speaking in tongues (not for signs but to edify).	5) Tongues (given as signs).
6) Law of consecration.	6) Communism
7) Fore-ordination.	7) Pre-destination.
8) Fall of Adam.	8) Original sin.
9) Baptism by immersion.	9) Baptism not essential to salvation. Or, baptism by sprinkling or pouring.
10) Sacrament of the Lord's Supper used to commemorate Jesus' sacrifice	10) Sacrament used to sacrifice anew upon the altar the Christ.
11) Liquid and bread used.	11) Sacrament not administered. Or, wafer to member and wine to clergy.
12) Apostles and prophets.	12) Apostles and prophets not needed.
13) Salvation for the dead	13) Need to do work for living only. Or, masses for dead.

Source: Melvin R. Brooks, LDS Reference Encyclopedia, p. 436.

for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other.

...an angel of God, according to that which is written, had fallen from heaven; wherefore he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God.

And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind.<sup>30</sup>

Satan's role was part of the plan of God. Men could only learn to choose the way of the Lord if they had a choice between that way and another. And only through suffering the consequences of evil could men learn that it is better to obey God's commandments.

Concerning the purpose of Satan upon the earth, I was startled to read what President Young stated on the subject:

Do not imagine that I am in the least finding fault with the devil. I would not bring a railing accusation against him, for he is fulfilling his office and calling manfully; he is more faithful in his calling than are many of the people. God is not going to destroy wickedness from the earth. How frequently we hear it reiterated from the pulpit that he is going to destroy all wickedness. No such thing. He will destroy the power of sin.<sup>31</sup>

How strange, I thought upon reading this, to consider Satan as having a "calling" upon the earth. Of course, it would be a mistake to think of this as any kind of priesthood calling or any calling for the work of the Kingdom of God. However, the statement made by President Young illustrates the importance of the fact that Satan has a purpose--that he has a real and vital

<sup>30</sup>Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 2:16-18.

<sup>31</sup>Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 70.

purpose upon the earth. That he is engaging in his work with complete dedication is self evident.

SATAN IN THE LAST DAYS

The ancient American prophet Nephi, predicting the conditions which would exist in our day, gives insightful comments about how men will be tempted by Satan. Speaking about our dispensation, Nephi said; "...at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good."<sup>32</sup> Although this is a well-used tool in Satan's armory, it appears like it will have special importance in his fight against God in this day. I believe that, in part, Satan stirs men up to anger by causing those of guilty conscience to rebel against that which they know is right but do not do.

Nephi continues by saying:

And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well--and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away down to hell.<sup>33</sup>

From this prophecy we foresee that Satan will endeavor to make men feel secure and untroubled. It was for this reason that I mentioned at the beginning of this paper that Satan is pleased if men do not believe in his existence. He can work best among the unsuspecting. Lehi states this well when he says:

And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil,

<sup>32</sup>Book of Mormon 2 Nephi 28:20

<sup>33</sup>Ibid, 2 Nephi 28:21



for there is none--and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.<sup>34</sup>

Judging from the statements read about the beliefs of different sects regarding Satan, it would appear as if Satan is succeeding in all his lies and temptations. It would appear as if his power is at its height. Satan influences political organizations, actively sponsors his own church, breeds contention in the hearts of men everywhere, and has fostered so many denominations and sects that it is extremely difficult for even the pure of heart to find the true Church of Jesus Christ. However, from the ancient and modern day prophecies, we understand that his time of triumph is limited. The next section will study what will become of Satan during and after the millenium.

#### SATAN DURING AND AFTER THE MILLENIUM

I suppose that I am no different from many members of the Church when I think of the millenium as being both an exciting time and a frightening one. My own limitations and weaknesses cause me to think of it as frightening. However, in part because of the reasearch which I have done concerning the role of Satan during the millenium, I can also feel that it will be a very exciting time. Scripture tells us that Satan will be bound during the thousand-year millenial era.

<sup>34</sup>Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 28:22.

In Revelation, we see what will become of the Devil.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.<sup>35</sup>

George Q. Cannon has explained in greater detail how this "binding" will be accomplished.

We talk about Satan being bound. Satan will be bound by the power of God; but he will be bound also by the determination of the people of God not to listen to him; not to be governed by him. The Lord will not bind him and take his power from the earth while there are men and women willing to be governed by him.<sup>36</sup>

President Cannon also explained that this is the reason why he believes that the wicked will be destroyed before the millenium--so that Satan can be fully bound. This concept is in harmony with what we discussed previously about Satan having power over men only to the degree that they give him that power.

Nevertheless, the fact that Satan will be bound during the millenium does not mean that it will not be possible for men to sin during that time. Orson Pratt once explained that just because Satan would not tempt men did not mean the end to the agency of man. During the millenium men will be able to sin just as before. "But if they who live then do sin, it will not be because of the power of the devil to tempt them. But he will have no power over them, and they will sin merely

<sup>35</sup>New Testament, Revelation 20:1-2

<sup>36</sup>Journal of Discourses 16:119-120.

because they choose to do so of their own free will..."<sup>37</sup>  
Merely because a man has seen the Savior will not make him perfect. The weaknesses of the flesh, men's own ability to rationalize away the consequences of evil and the fact that sin may still have the appearance of desirability will insure the continuation of sin during the millenium.

The scriptures also tells us that at the end of the thousand years Satan will be loosed for a short time.

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,  
And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle...<sup>38</sup>

Some additonal insight into the temporary freedom which will be given Satan is given by George Q. Cannon in the Journal of Discourses. President Cannon opinioned that Satan would be loosed for a short span because men would, by then, partially reject the practice of the Law of Consecration. That is to say, that at the end of the one thousand years men would again be in a position to allow Satan to have rule over them. As President Cannon states: "He can in no better way obtain power over the hearts of the children of men, than by appealing to their cupidity, avarice, and low selfish desires."

<sup>37</sup> Journal of Discourses, 16:319-20.

<sup>38</sup> New Testament, Revelation 20:7-8.

<sup>39</sup> Journal of Discourses, 16:119-20.

After Satan is set free and has been allowed to roam the earth for a short span, there will be a great battle. Once again, Satan will attempt to overthrow the forces of righteousness. The prophet who reported seeing this in a vision, as related in the book of Revelation, said that he saw Satan, "...cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."<sup>40</sup>

Concerning the exact nature of Satan's post-millennial state I have no valid information. Like his origin, Satan's final end is something which will have to be revealed in greater detail. However, concerning his role and position upon the earth I have tried to present some facts and ideas which give an overview of this enigmatic character. This paper is by no means an exhaustive treatment of the subject at hand--such a work would be encyclopedic. But a few things have been revealed which are of interest and importance to us. Satan is a real, reasoning being. Once holding a position of authority among God's children his rebellion and fall placed him in the Father's plan in a necessary role. By tempting men, within the boundaries proscribed by God, he is a force for conversion and strengthening. On the other hand, if men

<sup>40</sup>New Testament, Revelation 20:10.

allow themselves to be deceived by himself and his lies, they can be lost, at least for a time and perhaps forever, from God's kingdom. Certainly they will be denied the state of happiness and glory they might have earned through obedience. This is what has been of most value to me in my research into the role of Satan- that only through an awareness of his plans, personality, and weapons can I avoid him. Perhaps the most important thing for me to do is realize what President Young said about the power of Satan being limited but the power of God being unlimited. With the power of God in my life, I can win my pseronal fight against Satan.

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