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# When Satan Was Cast Out

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

Oftentimes the darkest day is in reality the brightest day. With Jesus, His coming into Jerusalem moved quickly into a worldwide disaster. He had come into this renowned city as a triumphant King; but He was soon dragged to trial as the worst of criminals. The world saw this tragedy as the judgment of the Son of God; but God saw it as the judgment of the world of wickedness and rebellion. An earthly governor tried the heavenly King, and even though the heavenly King received the sentence of crucifixion, the earthly governor faced a far greater judgment—the divine judgment of the eternal God.

Early in the final week, Jesus acknowledged that His "hour" had come (John 12:23). He painted that sacred moment with the colors of red and gold. He knew it held for Him a violent, blood red death. He said, "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27). The red of death, He knew, would become the gold of victory. It would be the time for which He had come, the time during which He would glorify the Father (John 12:23). He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). The fruit that the death of Jesus would bear was the casting out of the ruler of this world. After the battle of all time was waged, when the swords fell to the ground and the blood of struggle had been shed, the everlasting victory would belong to Jesus.

Focusing on Jesus' words, let us ask, "How did the cross of Christ cast out Satan?"

*His death destroyed the goals of Satan.* The prince of the world had set out to conquer the world, but, as a result of the grain of wheat dying in the earth, there arose a righteous stalk that conquered Satan. Any man, regardless of how tightly he is held in the clutches of Satan, if he is willing to repent and turn to the Lord for His grace and guidance, can be saved.

Jesus confronted Satan and foiled his plan of world domination. When Jesus gave Himself for our sins, Satan lost control of his dream. Peter pictured the devil as a vicious lion stalking the souls of men. He said, "Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8b). Jesus referred to him as the master of deceit and destruction. He told the Jews, "You are of your father the devil, . . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). How can this enemy of the soul be overcome? Peter said, "But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world" (1 Peter 5:9). Faith in a crucified Savior is the answer to the flaming darts of the devil.

*Furthermore, Jesus, with His cross, destroyed the works of Satan.* Much of the world had come under the sway of the devil. His works are all around us. Paul called him "the prince of the

power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Satan had led Him up to a high mountain, showed Him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world, and declared, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:6). He believed that he had most of the world in his hand—its power, its commerce, and its life.

Jesus, however, had come into the world to meet the devil on the field of battle and destroy his works. All the powers of Satan, Jesus overcame. John said, "The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8b). During His earthly ministry, Jesus had gone straight to the cross. The battle was fought not in a physical arena but in the spiritual sphere, "against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12b).

To the physical eye the conflict was won by the devil and his henchmen who had dragged Jesus through sweat and blood to an agonizing death. However, from heaven's viewpoint, the offering for sin and evil was made. The writer of Hebrews said, "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14).

*Thirdly, in His death, Jesus ultimately destroyed Satan himself.* In the Garden of Eden, it was prophesied, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel" (Genesis 3:15). At the cross, the power was unleashed that would bring down the powers of evil all over the world. Wherever the gospel would be preached, the devil would be cast out. Paul said of his preaching, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20).

The cross "laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:2). Through the blood of Jesus, Satan was thrown into the abyss, and it was shut and sealed over him. He had been defeated. He would continue to exert some influence over the world, but would do it under God's constraint

and permission. However, his power would be very small when compared to the great victory over him that was won at the cross. It could be like comparing "a short time" to "a thousand years." At the end of time, when the victory of the cross is fully visualized, the devil will be cast into the lake of fire. John wrote, "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

Jesus was subjected to Herod's cruel and cowardly mockery. He was brought before the contempt and reproach of the Roman soldiers. He was made to wear the purple robe and the crown of thorns and to hold the mock scepter in His hand. He was chosen in the place of a common criminal. He was condemned to the shameful death of the cross, nailed to the accursed tree as a public spectacle, and exposed to the reproach of the whole world. Yet, in the face of all of this, Jesus said that what was going to happen would result in Satan's being cast out! What the world saw and what really happened were two different events entirely! Since the time of His death, the world has been looking at the cross, but failing to really see it. Instead of being the death of Jesus, it became the death of the devil and all evil.

Eddie Cloer



*"What was historically, as men view the events of this world, the trial by the world of Jesus, was in reality the trial of the world by God. What was to all appearances the condemnation of the Son of man by the tribunal of the world, was in deepest reality the condemnation of the world before the tribunal of the Judge of heaven and earth. . . . [I]n that brief period when the Christ of God was tried, condemned, and crucified by the rulers of this world, the world standing . . . [actually] . . . in judgment before God, was tried and condemned."<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup>Herman Noeksema, *The Amazing Cross* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1944), 13.