

Why Doesn't God Just Destroy Satan?

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: (NASB) ³*And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,* ⁴*in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*



HOW God gives each being free choice and the ability to make fair and just choices.

LET'S BEGIN BY ANSWERING THE QUESTION:

*Why doesn't God
just destroy Satan*

First of all, God WILL destroy Satan, but that time has not yet arrived.

God's continued allowance for Satan to keep on living is an integral part of His plan to benefit ALL of His created beings.

Satan's rebellion and fall from God's grace serves God's plan in two ways:

- 1** **Satan's continued existence and influence**
serve as an undeniable and unavoidable example of the results of rebellion against God's righteousness.
- 2** **Satan's continued existence and influence**
serve as the basis for testing each and every one of God's created beings. Every intelligent created being will ultimately choose to stay loyal to God's righteousness OR to follow the darkness of Satan.



Do we really need to be tested?



Yes! Anything in a place of responsibility needs to be tested for safety. Think of an engine intended to supply power for a long period of time. Engineers do not just build it and put it into service; it is tested to make sure it will work as intended. God built us for eternity; therefore, tests are absolutely part of the process.



God uses the rebellion and evil that Satan created as a test to ultimately root out ALL rebellion and evil!

God's plan is revealed in the Bible and has **PAST Truths**, **PRESENT Truths** and **FUTURE Truths** that are all necessary for us to comprehend. By looking at the past, present and future, we begin to get an understanding. These truths show us Satan's role and destiny. God uses Satan's rebellion as a tool. He is so powerful and wise that He is able to use evil as a tool for ultimate and eternal good.

Romans 8:28: (KJV) *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.*



PRESENT Truth God allows Satan to exist and have power over all His earthly creation.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: (NASB) ³And even if our gospel is veiled (meaning covered up), it is veiled to those who are perishing,

The Apostle Paul is making a simple point - the gospel message is not able to be recognized by "the world." They do not see it.

⁴in whose case the god of this world has blinded (meaning to make blind, to obscure) the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

People cannot change the fact that they are under Satan's rule.

The masses of the world have been blinded by Satan. These points display the fundamental truth that the gospel is simply shut off from billions of people. This is a clear and unfair disadvantage driven by Satan that seems to be okay with the Apostle Paul!

Many people lived and died before Jesus was even born. It does not seem like much of a plan if all of those people are lost through no fault of their own.

This is why we have to look at **PAST Truths**, **PRESENT Truths** and **FUTURE Truths**. Putting them all together shows us what seems unfair is ultimately wise and profound.





Jesus plainly taught this with the Parable of the Sower. This parable uses four types of ground - a pathway, rocky soil, thorny ground and good soil - as a metaphor for the heart conditions of the people and how they either receive or do not receive the gospel message. We want to cultivate “good soil” in our hearts in order for God’s message to “take root.”

Jesus starts the lesson:

Matthew 13:18-19: (NASB) ¹⁸Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

Satan has control! He snatches away that which was sown but was not understood.

After speaking this parable, Jesus explained a significant principle that drove his teaching:

Mark 4:10-12: (NASB) ¹⁰As soon as he was alone, his followers, along with the twelve, began asking him about the parables. ¹¹And he was saying to them, To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, ¹²so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.

This seems odd that the Messiah purposely spoke cryptically so that people would not understand him. Presumably, he could have snapped his fingers and given anyone all knowledge, but he did not! Why would Jesus purposely hide the gospel from so many? Is this not exactly what Satan wants? Was Jesus falling into Satan’s trap?



Biblically clarifying WHY we preach the gospel to others

Jesus quoted an instruction given to Isaiah and applied that instruction to his own mission:

Isaiah 6:8-10: (NASB) ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I. Send me!

Prophetically, this is speaking of Jesus responding to his Father, saying he would come to earth and act as a ransom for the human race.

⁹He said, Go, and tell this people: Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand. ¹⁰Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed.

Jesus is clearly following Isaiah’s prophetic instruction. He was doing exactly what he was supposed to do in order to unfold God’s precise plan.



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHY DID JESUS SPEAK IN PARABLES?
christianquestions.com/youtube

Jesus' mission was not to change the hearts of every person he met. He knew that not everyone would become a follower; not everyone would try to understand. Instead,

he was looking for those who wanted to lead better lives, who were hungry for knowledge and truth with a strong desire to understand his message. But did that exclude everyone else? No, we will get to that shortly.

Jesus gave us indication as to how the fall of Satan would occur:

Luke 10:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷The seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. ¹⁸And he said to them, I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

The seventy return after having God's power working through them in the name of Jesus. They are amazed that even the demons respond to Jesus' name! His response is unusual - *I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*

Satan had not yet fallen from power. He had fallen from God's side but was still in charge of this world. Jesus was saying that the pieces were already being put in place for his future fall from power.

Jesus went on to say that their rejoicing should be in their call to heaven, and not in any power they would be given in Jesus' name. In other words, be humble.

He then continued:

Luke 10:21: (NASB) ²¹At that very time he rejoiced greatly in the holy spirit, and said, I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden (to conceal away) these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.

Again, Jesus proclaims that the transforming message of the gospel has been kept from those who were "influencers." These verses tell us that this unique approach of the gospel is one ingredient to the ultimate fall of Satan. This "ingredient" seems convoluted, but wait! We need to see it through God's eyes and not our own.



The simple **PRESENT Truth** is Satan does have power and influence, and it is clearly allowed by God. Because this was plainly acknowledged by Jesus, we can rest in the fact that however bad the world gets under Satan, God does have the end result in His control.




While this is a relief, it still opens the door to a number of further questions.

Acknowledging the degree of power Satan has raises the question, how did such an evil being get so much power?

This is a powerful question because its answer will either draw us to marvel at God's wisdom or shake our heads in disbelief at what may look like God's folly. To find the answer, we need to go back before the creation of the earth and examine what the Bible reveals regarding the foundational principles of God's plan.

To know who Satan is now, we need to understand who Satan was before by looking at some **PAST Truths**.

How can we know this? Scripture gives us several clues.


 **PAST Truth** Lucifer was identified by a very glorious title.

Isaiah 14:12: (NASB) *How you have fallen from heaven, O **star of the morning** <1966>, son of the dawn...*

Star of the morning: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance from #1984 *heylel*; (in the sense of brightness); the morning star

King James Version translates this as Lucifer (the king of Babylon)

Satan was once known as Lucifer, a bright and early light in the heavens! There is great glory in this title - the star of the morning is an early, bright and beautiful light visible just before dawn.

 **PAST Truth** Lucifer's pre-satanic life was powerful and harmonious. He was in an honored position before the earth was created.

Job speaks to God with a bit of an attitude. God challenges him to fully acknowledge His great power to put Job back in his proper place:

Job 38:3-7: (NASB) *³Now gird up your loins like a man, and I will ask you, and you instruct Me! ⁴Where were you when I **laid the foundation** <3245> of the earth? (the literal planet) Tell Me, if you have understanding.*

Foundation: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3245 *yasad*; to set (literally or figuratively); intensively, to found; reflexively, to sit down together, i.e. settle, consult



God is describing to Job the founding, the design and the blueprints of Planet Earth! God has allowed Job to just talk and talk and God finally gives him - and us - an indication of just how high above us He is. We might think: *Who does Job think he is, challenging God like that about Satan!* But we humans do this all the time and have been doing so for centuries!

This is one of the reasons why we need to talk about this subject! Looking at Job's example is a great way of looking in a mirror.



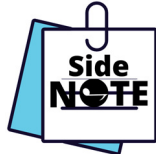
God continues to answer Job with a little sarcasm:

⁵Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? ⁶On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷When the **morning <1242> stars <3556>** sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Morning: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1242 *boqer*; dawn, day, early, morning

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) morning, break of day
1a) morning 1a1) of end of night 1a2) of coming of daylight

Stars: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3556 *kowkab*; probably from the same as #3522 (in the sense of rolling) or #3554 (in the sense of blazing); a star (as round or as shining); figuratively, a prince



The Greek Septuagint (the earliest of Hebrew Bible translations where the Hebrew is translated into Greek) reads as *morning star* rather than the proper noun, *Lucifer*, as found in the Latin Vulgate translation.

Stretched a line...bases sunk...laid its cornerstone - here is more of that blueprint phase of creating the Earth. There was harmony, great joy and excitement in the heavenly realm as God was about to create the earth and us to live on it!

There was more than one morning star, and they were in perfect harmony with God.

In Revelation, Jesus proclaims himself as a morning star. This means there were at least two of them:

Revelation 22:16: (NASB) *I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright **morning <3720> star <792>**.*

Morning: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3720 *orthrinos*; relating to the dawn, i.e. matutinal (as an epithet of Venus, especially brilliant in the early day): morning

Star: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #792 *astēr*; a star (as strown over the sky), literally or figuratively: star

The Bible identifies only two morning stars: Jesus in his pre-human existence and Lucifer. We assume there were only two because only two are named.

When the morning stars sang together - Jesus and Lucifer were brothers singing in harmony from the beginning of creation.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Vernon McGee) Satan is a created being. He was created perfect in beauty. If you think of Satan as a creature with horns, a forked tail, and cloven feet, you are wrong. You have been reading the literature of the Middle Ages which has its origin in Greek mythology that goes back into Asia Minor.

Here we have Lucifer proclaimed as a *morning star* in his early existence when he was good, righteous, powerful and working God's will. Jesus, in his pre-human existence, was the other *morning star*.

Jesus was the:


- *root of David* - the Lord over David (the root is where it begins; Jesus' pre-human existence was before David was alive).



- *descendent of David* - of the line that Messiah was to come from - Jesus fulfilled this prophecy.
- *bright morning star* - the shining brilliance of the beginning of the creation of God.

Jesus fulfills all these different roles. We can see how the **PAST Truths** of Lucifer's glorious title and his pre-satanic life fit. He was powerful and in line with the will of God. *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy!*

At the beginning and throughout the creation of the earth, there was harmony, great joy and excitement in the heavenly realm - all were unified - and Lucifer was right in the middle of it! God was expanding His own creativity into another realm - a physical realm where life would be extraordinarily different from the angelic. So, now we can answer that Satan (as Lucifer) received so much power because he was given it when he was the wonderful, harmonious morning star who sang with Jesus.

 **PAST Truth** Lucifer did NOT stay in harmony with God.

When did he begin to turn?

Isaiah 14:12: (NASB) *How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!*

Once the creation of the physical world (the foundation of the earth stage) was underway, PERHAPS God revealed the significant details of the next phase of His creative plan - how the earth would be inhabited and how it would be overseen (arranged) from the heavenly perspective. The Bible shows us the physical creation and then the creation of the governmental body over that physical creation. During the initial physical creation phase there was beautiful harmony. The book of Job tells us this. But then Lucifer fell from that position of incredible favor.

Revelation 13:8: (KJV) *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from **the foundation <2602>** of the **world <2889>**.*

Foundation: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2602 *katabole*; a deposition, i.e. founding; figuratively, conception

World: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2889 *kosmos*; orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration; by implication, the world (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally])

PERHAPS Lucifer's new job description was laid out here.

PERHAPS it was here that Lucifer's heart began to turn to darkness.

Ezekiel 28:11-14 (KJV), refers to Lucifer as originally being *the anointed cherub that covereth* in Eden. This tells us Lucifer was in charge of the Garden of Eden and its inhabitants. God gave the oversight privilege of this new physical creation to one of the highest, most trusted and most respected beings of all His creation.



Tracing the glory and the fall of the devil



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WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SATAN?
christianquestions.com/youtube

By looking at **PAST Truths**, we can see ancient history, before humanity began counting time. Honor and glory were given to Lucifer who was working together with Jesus and the rest of the angels. Then we see a fall on Lucifer's part at some point. This becomes the basis for the permission of evil.

Jesus as *the Word* (Logos in Greek) was a willing, sacrificial Lamb from before the moment that there was a shadow of doubt cast upon the harmony of God's creation. In Revelation 13:8, Jesus was *the lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. He was not literally slain at that time, but he was prepared and ready from that time. God's plan was prepared and ready at that time as well, long before anyone knew anything about evil rising. God had it in hand. He saw it and acted upon it before the fact in a way we cannot understand.

God knew ahead of time. All these scriptures show us several of God's clearly defined steps:



PAST Truth

Lucifer (not Satan yet) was identified by a very glorious title.
He was one of God's *highest* creations.



PAST Truth

Lucifer's pre-satanic life was powerful and harmonious.
He was one of God's *most trusted* creations.



PAST Truth

Lucifer did NOT stay in harmony with God.
Great power brings great testing. Lucifer failed this test, while the Logos passed it!



How did such an evil being get so much power?



He was not evil at the beginning. He was there with the Logos. He was there in a position of authority with loyalty and power in God's creation. He had that power because of his position and his righteousness. With great power comes great temptation - his rebellion started on the inside and worked its way to the outside.



Earlier we said **Satan's rebellion and fall from God's grace serves God's plan in two ways.** Let's refresh ourselves on the first point:



Satan's continued existence and influence
serve as an undeniable and unavoidable example
of the results of rebellion against God's righteousness.

Satan's continued existence and influence after his fall are an extended example of what rebellion ends up looking like for the rest of God's creation. God allows him to continue in existence, wreaking havoc on mankind, only so long as is needed so that God's intentions through His plan will never be questioned again.



The mind of God is beyond our understanding. Obviously, He has a plan that was so comprehensive and detailed that it anticipated and solved any and all challenges to His sovereignty or to the welfare of His creation. The key to all of this was God's plan for all of His spirit and human creatures to have time for the full exercise of free will.



Having the full measure of time to exercise free will is necessary so that mankind will really learn the lessons. Cut off too soon, and we tend to fall back on saying we could have done better, given more time. There is great power and wisdom in allowing free will to fully develop.

Several weeks ago we talked about whether our lives have a motivating vision.



Learning how to make the driving vision of our lives reflect God's vision

The prophet Habakkuk was overwhelmed by the evil around him, so God comforted him with this:

Habakkuk 2:3: (NASB) *For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.*

Even though we look and feel like it is past time for this evil to be stopped, our time is not His time. God's timing is perfect; our timing is restless and anxious. Thinking about the magnitude and power of Lucifer's previous glory is eye-opening and tragic all at the same time.



How much time is enough time for God to know whether one of His creations will be eternally loyal or rebellious?

Both angels and humanity were created as *sons of God*. A primary lesson for ALL His created beings is to learn that unchangeableness is in God's character. How quickly God knows something is wrong is not relevant. What matters is how quickly and fully His created beings can know their own hearts and minds and learn to be like their heavenly Father...or choose something else.



We can only presume Lucifer was with God for eons before he rebelled. One of our CQ contributors asked us: *Why is 6,000 years not long enough for humans to understand their mistakes? Why was 4,000 years or 1,000 years not long enough for humans to realize that they would rather have good with God than evil with Satan? We have been waiting for centuries.*

First, God told Adam to fill the earth. That takes a long time, especially when evil reigns and people therefore die. That promised blessing must be fulfilled, but also free will must be allowed to be fully expressed. God is patient. But that full expression takes much longer than we would like, because we have such a finite view of things.

God DOES want all to be repentant and live:

2 Peter 3:8-9: (NASB) *⁸But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*



As God is patient towards us, is it not reasonable that He was and is patient towards His spiritual creation as well? Of course, He has patience with them and with the world of mankind in the future. He is unchangeable.

Next is an interesting twist at looking at the problem of evil in a different way:



Be more reflective, Does the Problem of Evil Make God Unlikely, drcraigivideos

- *Interestingly, I've never forgotten the story, a true story, about a young university student in Scotland not long after - probably, as I suspect, during the Depression years; things were grim. And he knocked on the door. It was of a small cottage that was opened. There was a returned servicemen from the First World War, and when he realized the young man wanted to talk to him about God, he said, "Go away." He said, "I was in the trenches in France and I stopped believing in God when I saw all that evil." And the young man said to him, "I respect that. That must have been terrible. And I certainly won't test you, but can I just make the observation that I wonder if I'd been there, I might not have stopped believing in man rather than stopped believing in God." And the old man looked at him, tears welled up in his eyes. And he said, "You better come in. We need to talk about this." It's an interesting take on evil. I sometimes think that one of our problems is that we're not self-reflective enough.*

This is a powerful nugget point. We are not self-reflective enough. We are so willing to say, "God should...!" "If God would only...!" "Where is God...?"



Since we have control over our own actions, why are we not saying, “Where is Rick...?” “Why doesn’t Rick only...?” “How come Rick doesn’t...?” We need to be able to reflect on ourselves and ask, “How am I showing what I think God should show in my own tiny little way?”

War is a big, complicated, but often distant concept. For this man, it became personal enough to be faith-ending. We might not fight in a war, but all of us know someone who died too soon - like cancer taking an individual who was kindhearted and generous to others, or the random shootings we hear about every day. Our hearts hurt, and we start blaming God without thinking through the bigger picture.



Recently, my daughter’s friend was at another friend’s house two weeks ago. The mother there had three children under five years old. She was suffering from massive post-partum depression. Her husband was working from home because they knew she was having trouble, just not to what extent, but he left for just a half hour to pick up some food. When he came back, she had killed the children and then tried to kill herself. When we hear something like this, we ask God, WHY? My daughter was overwhelmed by this - she is a mother of a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old. We wonder why this is allowed to happen.

We must remember the message to Habakkuk - the vision IS coming! Eventually all tears will be wiped away and the earth will once again be a place without evil (Revelation 21:4). But that may not help while we are in the midst of this kind of tragedy. We have to understand and share that this, right now, is not the end. There is a resurrection coming, and every single human being will find a new life which Jesus will give to them. Their experiences will not be allowed to hurt them anymore.

We have to take hold of this and work on being righteous and godly now - giving hope to others who are struggling and overcome in the face of such dire, personal tragedy. It was heartbreaking to sit with my daughter. She was crying; I was crying trying to bring her comfort.

The bottom line is that God will balance these horrible scales. Those children will come back in the promised resurrection, whole, perfect, not traumatized. For them it will be but an instant since their last moment - the next thing they will know will be a beautiful, amazing life. It is difficult, but we must give comfort to those who mourn.



Lucifer’s fall was a growing, festering and deadly thought process.

Isaiah 14:12-15: (NASB) ¹²How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! ¹³But you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High. ¹⁵Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, (the grave) to the recesses of the pit.



The deadly spread of sinful THOUGHT:

- *You have said in your heart -*
it always begins in the heart when we entertain dark thoughts
- *I will ascend into the heavens -*
it was already arranged that he would be God's earthly representative
- *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God -*
he was already one of the stars of God
- *I will sit in the mount of congregation in the uttermost parts of the north -*
where God abides
- *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds -*
having a greater influence than God's presence with man
- *I will make myself like the Most High -*
not replacing, but rivaling the Most High - such arrogance

Lucifer was looking for a dominion, more power and authority. He was looking to usurp the rights of his Creator for whom he should have been honored to work for and represent! We do not know how long these thoughts built quietly inside of Lucifer, but it is reasonable to assume that it was a VERY long time. They started out small and worked their way to the point of him taking evil action.



Often our own temptations are tiny step-by-step moves in the wrong direction, and before you know it, we are way off course and not where we are supposed to be. It seems like Lucifer was considering, plotting, turning over in his mind the possibilities until he was too far gone to turn back. We do not see any indication of his considering his exit strategy because he should

have known God would never allow this rebellion of evil to continue forever. He could not have planned an exit strategy because he obviously chose to think he would never be vanquished. He made the choice to go his own way and to entice others to follow him.

The angels who followed Satan were also given time to develop their choices and see the results of those choices:

2 Peter 2:4: (WEY) *For God did not spare angels when they had sinned but hurling them down to Tartarus consigned them to caves of darkness, keeping them in readiness for judgment.*

Tartarus represents the earth's atmosphere. Remember, the devil is called the *prince of the power of the air* in Ephesians 2:2. These fallen angels are separated from the holy angels. The sinful angels were cast out of God's heavenly light into a condition of darkness and limitation.

These angels are limited by God in where they can travel and what they can do. They should have known that rebellion against God was wrong. Now, even if they were deceived by Satan, they have the opportunity to observe what is happening with sin and to reflect on being locked away from their Creator.



This should get their attention, but will it? Will they see their mistakes, or will they be too proud? What about us? Do we recognize our own failings clearly?

Adam sinned and was subject to death:

Genesis 2:16-17: (NASB) ¹⁶The LORD God commanded the man, saying, From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; ¹⁷but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.

Adam lived 930 years as we see in Genesis 5:5. Remember, Peter tells us (2 Peter 3:8) that a day with the Lord is a thousand years. Therefore, Adam did die “within a day.”

Yet Adam lived a LONG time after his sin. Why? Because God fulfilled the blessings He had given to Adam before his sin. God is a God of His word:

Genesis 1:27-28: (NASB) ²⁷God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

These were all blessings God promised before Adam's sin. God allowed Adam to fulfill these blessings before he died.

It is reasonable to assume that God also fulfilled the blessings He had given to Lucifer. God originally gave him power and authority. Lucifer messed up badly, but God is still a God of His word and always has the end result firmly in hand. God would let Lucifer (now Satan) rule, just like Adam was able to live, until his time would expire.

Wouldn't it be an easy solution if God simply stopped all of the awful things we fear?



Intervention 100 percent of the time, Why Does God Allow Evil, gotquestions.org

- *God could compensate for people's evil actions through supernatural intervention 100 percent of the time. God would stop a drunk driver from causing an automobile accident. God would stop a lazy construction worker from doing a substandard job on a house that would later cause grief to the homeowners. God would stop a father who is addicted to drugs or alcohol from doing any harm to his wife, children, or extended family. God would stop gunmen from robbing convenience stores. God would stop high school bullies from tormenting the brainy kids. God would stop thieves from shoplifting. And, yes, God would stop terrorists from flying airplanes into buildings.*
- *While this solution sounds attractive, it would lose its attractiveness as soon as God's intervention infringed on something we wanted to do. We want God to prevent horribly evil actions, but we are willing to let “lesser-evil” actions slide - not realizing that those “lesser-evil” actions are what usually lead to the “greater-evil” actions.*

Yes, of course we want God to stop all these things, but where should He draw the line? Here is where humanity falters and loses its bearings.



How much time is enough time for God to know whether one of His creations will be eternally loyal or rebellious?



It is the amount of time for evil to fully bloom and for the free choice of spiritual and earthly beings to be exhausted in that context. Why does that need to happen? Because that way there will never be a question of what is good and what is not. God would know immediately whether someone will rebel or not. But that is not relevant. What is relevant is the time it takes for us to know, to live, experiment, choose, decide and follow through - for both us and the spirit beings as well. It is allowing His created beings to understand and make choices in order to learn something incredibly valuable.



PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE Truths all show us that God allows His spiritual and physical beings time to develop their chosen directions. He allows evil to develop as He also allows righteousness to develop. God then allows His creatures to see the results of their choices.



He is not just allowing these things to happen; He allows those involved to understand the consequences of their choices. God is so much more omniscient than we can ever comprehend.

We see, once again, God's foresight and wisdom come into play. He really does have it all in His control.

So, God gives ample time for our freedom of choice and our understanding of those choices. But what about Satan's destruction?

We have clearly seen that all of God's plans and purposes unfold in His time frame which is usually much longer than any of us anticipate. However, once God's timing is achieved, His actions are clear and dramatic. He WILL do exactly what He has said and the way He said it. All we need to do is be patient and comply!

Remember, God is always in control:

Psalms 2:1-4: (NASB) ¹Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? ²The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His anointed, saying, ³Let us tear their fetters (shackles for ankles - leg cuffs) apart and cast away their cords from us! ⁴He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them.

We think we are so smart, but the LORD looks at us like a parent with a small child who thinks they know better. He has control and allows this rebellion to happen with a purpose. Satan is a tool in God's hands for ultimate good and righteousness.



Proverbs 19:21: (NASB) *Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand.*

God's plan is irrefutable and will unfold exactly on time.

Intervention some of the time, Why Does God Allow Evil, gotquestions.org

- *Should God only stop actual sexual affairs, or should He also block our access to pornography or end any inappropriate, but not yet sexual, relationships? Should God stop "true" thieves, or should He also stop us from cheating on our taxes? Should God only stop murder, or should He also stop the "lesser-evil" actions done to people that lead them to commit murder? Should God only stop acts of terrorism, or should He also stop the indoctrination that transformed a person into a terrorist?*

Now it is getting personal! We want what we want because we like it, but we want condemnation for everything outside of our own box. That is hypocritical. If God should stop all evil, then it needs to start with us first.

This is the conundrum for humanity. We want it to be a certain way as long as I can have my way. But that is not the way evil works.



God will have righteousness rule and ALL humanity will be a part of it.

Isaiah 45:22-24: (NASB) ²²*Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.* ²³*I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.* ²⁴*They will say of Me, Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength. Men will come to Him, and all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.*

the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back - He sent it out, and when it is time, there is nothing in heaven or earth that will stop God's plan from unfolding.

Remove the guilty, Why Does God Allow Evil, gotquestions.org

- *Another choice would be for God to judge and remove those who choose to commit evil acts. The problem with this possibility is that there would be no one left, for God would have to remove us all. We all sin and commit evil acts (Romans 3:23; Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 John 1:8). While some people are more evil than others, where would God draw the line? Ultimately, all evil causes harm to others.*

This really feeds into our title question, "Why Doesn't God Just Destroy Satan?" There are a lot of considerations to get to the point where the attractiveness for the choice of evil is greatly reduced, and we are grateful God has a plan for all of this.

Evil is attractive! We easily agree that God should get rid of "that," but not "this." The permission of evil, allowing Satan to stay alive, is important. It is a tool of righteousness used for God's plan to unfold.



There will be salvation by just and merciful inclusion for ALL of humanity:

Romans 5:18: (NASB) *So then as through one transgression (Adam who sinned) there resulted condemnation to all men (his progeny who inherited sin), even so through one act of righteousness (Jesus paying the ransom price for Adam by his death on the cross) there resulted justification of life to all men (an opportunity to live again in the kingdom).*

The “ALL-ness” shines through! No one is forgotten. A ransom for all.

This salvation by just and merciful inclusion reveals God’s vast opportunities for all of His human creation:

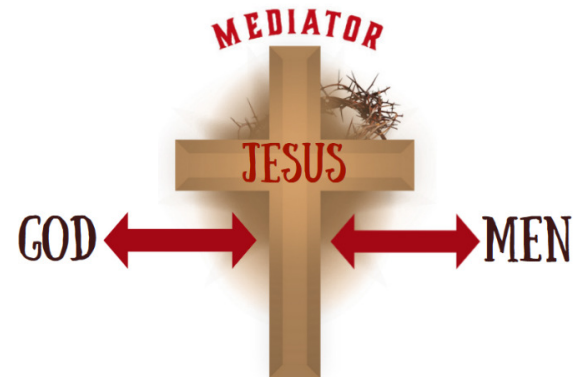
1 Timothy 2:1-6: (KJV) *¹I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; ²For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

In other words, be respectful to the people around us. We want to be blessed in order to do godly things in an ungodly world.

³For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ⁴Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; ⁶*who gave himself a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time.

This part of salvation is God’s intention - *a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time*. There is no “calling” attached to it. This is a free gift and everybody is on the receiving end of this gift.

People today ask, “Are you saved?” But notice the order here: *God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*. The mediator, Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, mediates between God and man after they are resurrected in the future kingdom on earth.



Mediator = A go-between to effect reconciliation

A mediator sits between two opposing parties. God is at odds with humanity because they will be still sinful after the resurrection and are in need of mediation as they walk up the *highway of holiness* described in Isaiah 35:8.

His ransom guaranteed all are saved from death - *as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive* - 1 Corinthians 15:22. But then earth’s billions will need to learn about God and His ways of righteousness in order to continue to live. For many, it will be their first opportunity to hear the name of Jesus.



Uncovering the destiny of humanity's billions who don't go to heaven



This salvation by just and merciful inclusion shows us that those invited to follow Jesus are especially privileged:

1 Timothy 4:10: (NASB) *For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.*



From the moment that Lucifer proved himself thoroughly disloyal, God planned for his restraint and destruction.

Again, who should decide on what is good and what is evil? It is all in the hands of God, as humans are unable to agree on what is good and what is evil.

Later after the resurrection, we will see God restrain Satan so His plan moves forward:

Revelation 20:1-3: (NASB) *¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ²And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.*

God restrains Satan - He pulls Satan back. This is part of the process of Satan's destruction.

Then we see how God's plan brings all darkness and evil to an end during the 1,000-year day of judgment:

Revelation 20:7-10: (NASB) *⁷When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. ⁹And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰And 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.*

Fire and brimstone - fire either purifies or destroys. When you burn a log, there is nothing left. **Brimstone** is an old-fashioned word for sulfur. Sulfur is one of the most volatile elements on earth and makes a fire burn hotter, creating highly toxic and flammable gases, as well as more heat and smoke. When brimstone is added to fire in the symbol, it intensifies the thought of destruction.

Verse 14 goes on to say that this *lake of fire is the second death* - a death from which there is no recovery, no resurrection, as Jesus only died once for all.

Tormented day and night forever and ever -

Tormented: (verb) scripturally can mean the act of testing or revealing one's true core.

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon definition includes: To test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal



A touchstone is used to test the purity of and identify minerals. What does this mean in this scripture? The devil, beast, false prophet and their followers are totally destroyed in the lake of fire, the second death. Their sins and corruption will continue to be revealed (they leave identifying streaks on the touchstone), even after their destruction. This will provide an eternal lesson.

Speaking of destruction, obviously this destroys any idea of Satan running an eternally-burning hell. And why would God give him the desire of his dreams - to live forever, eternally torturing humans with no end game and no purpose? That makes no sense. God would not permit such an evil act.



Satan's rebellion and fall from God's grace serves God's plan in two ways:

- 2 **Satan's continued existence and influence**
serve as the basis for testing each and every one of God's created beings. Every intelligent created being will ultimately choose to stay loyal to God's righteousness OR to follow the darkness of Satan.

When we look back at our lesson, we can see how Satan's life, his evil and his longevity are teaching tools in the hand of God.

Why would God go through all of this just to show us what evil looks like?

John 3:16-17: (NASB) ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send the son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

God allows this because He loves us and His ultimate plan is bigger than evil.



God is ALWAYS in control. Sometimes that control is seen in His granting blessing for those loyal to Him. Sometimes it is seen in His standing in the background and letting free will on all levels take its course. Sometimes it is seen in His taking complete control and asserting His will. Satan was blessed, but he is rebellious and will be destroyed. God's plan of righteousness and harmony will prevail!





Why doesn't God just destroy Satan? Because Satan is a tool in the hand of the Almighty God to show everyone - both humans and spirit beings - the negative consequences of not worshipping Him alone.

God does have it in control, and He will destroy Satan. Every human being who has ever suffered from any form of evil whatsoever will be raised from the dead because of Jesus.

*So, why doesn't God just destroy Satan?
For Jonathan, Rick, Julie and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.



Join us next week for our podcast on February 6, 2023

Ep. 1267: What is Truth?

Study Questions follow

Christian Questions Weekly Newsletter

CQ Rewind Show Notes and Study Questions

Text
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Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1266: Why Doesn't God Just Destroy Satan?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1266-destroy-satan/>

See:  **CQ Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. What are two ways Satan's rebellion and fall serve God's plan? How does Satan's existence and influence serve to test intelligent beings? Who are "God's intelligent created beings"? Why is this testing necessary?
2. Which groups of people have either never heard the gospel message or do not recognize it? Is this a choice on their part? What does the Parable of the Sower tell us about heart conditions? Why do God and Jesus purposely hide the gospel from so many? (See 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Matthew 13:18-19, Mark 4:10-12, Isaiah 6:8-10)
3. What was Satan's name when he was first created? What was he like in the beginning? What was his position or title before the earth was created? Who else held that position? Did Lucifer maintain that relationship? What was his new job description? (See Isaiah 14:12, Job 38:3-7, Revelation 22:16, Ezekiel 28:11-14)
4. When did God prepare His plan? What was Jesus' name in his pre-human existence? Why do you think Jesus was called this? What part of God's plan did Jesus willingly accept? How did Satan get so much power? Why would he have turned his back on his Father? (See Revelation 13:8, Isaiah 14:12, Ezekiel 28:15-17)
5. Why is it necessary to allow the exercise of free will a full measure of time? While the evil around us may be overwhelming, what does God promise? How long was Lucifer with God before he rebelled? What does Peter tell us is the reason the LORD seems "slow about His promise"? (See Habakkuk 2:3, 2 Peter 3:8-9)
6. Dissect the parts of Lucifer's boast. What did he ultimately want? What does God say would be his fate? How does Peter describe the environment of the sinful angels (including Lucifer)? How could this give them a chance to repent? In what way should the degeneration of Lucifer be a warning to us? (See Isaiah 14:12-15, 2 Peter 2:4)
7. Why did God give Adam (and Lucifer) a long time to fill out their lives? What does this time allow to develop in their lives and in our lives? Why would God stopping all evil not be a popular decision? What do you think will be necessary to get mankind to accept this kind of oversight of evil? (See Genesis 1:27-28, 2:16-17, 5:5)
8. How does God react to man and angels' plans against Him? What is His promise to us? Who is included in this promise? What is the order after resurrection? (See Psalm 2:4, Proverbs 19:21, Isaiah 45:22-24, Romans 5:18, 1 Timothy 2:1-6)
9. Are Christ's followers the only ones who will be made alive again? What happens to Satan after the resurrection? What happens to Satan after an extended period of time for educating mankind in righteousness? (See 1 Corinthians 15:22, Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10, 14)
10. Why would God go through all of this just to show us what evil looks like? (See John 3:16-17)