

**Accused**  
**Revelation 12:7-12**  
**September 29, 2024**

This text starts out with a battle, a battle between angels. Oh, we see Michael fighting against a dragon but who is the dragon? It is Satan, the devil, the deceiver, the one who deceived Eve and Adam in the beginning days of creation.

The text talks of him being thrown down, thrown down to earth from heaven. Now one would think he and his minions wouldn't be allowed in heaven but we need to remember back to a time in the old testament to the time of Job. We can all remember how Job was tested by the devil but how did the book of Job start out?

Here is what it says beginning with verse 6 of the first chapter: *6-12 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.*

The sons of God mentioned here are the angels attending God. We can imagine them coming together to get their marching orders but this day there is another angel. This angel was none other than the devil, the deceiver of the world who had come to hear from the Lord as well.

The devil was there among the angels. He had been going to and fro over the earth. The Lord knew what he had been doing. He had been tempting others and yet the Lord allowed him to come into His presence that day. Yes, the Lord wanted to use Job to once again show His mercy and to show Satan a man who would trust in the Lord no matter what. Job would serve the Lord and in the end, be a stick in the eye of the devil as he didn't fold but looked to the Lord. Yes, Job looked to himself as one who

trusted in the Lord no matter what and maybe he had a little pride in that but the Lord made it evident to him that it was not Job, but the Lord who carried him through and that he, Job was not even close to being the same ball park as God.

The lesson for today is from the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ to St. John and because it was written down, it is the revelation of Jesus Christ to us as well. We are introduced to the great dragon, Satan, the devil, the deceiver, the accuser.

Satan was with the righteous angels that day after roaming the earth to see whom he could devour. The Lord brought up Job but Satan thought the Lord wasn't being fair and that the only reason Job lived his life to the Lord was because he was treated differently than others on the earth. Satan thought he could get Job to turn against God and yet he couldn't. Job proved to be greater than Satan. What a blow to Satan's pride who had gone against God again and lost. A mere human being standing up against him. What a great example for all who trust in the Lord to know the Lord is watching over us even though we are battling the devil and the spiritual forces of this world.

We talk of the spiritual forces of this world because as the text for today says, the devil and his angels have been cast down to earth. If Satan was there among the angels in heaven, as we read in Job, we may wonder when he and his angels were tossed out of heaven and thrown to earth.

One might think that since this account is found in the last book of the Bible and since many look to it to tell us of things that are yet to come, that this throw down must be in the future. We might think that but if that was the case then the devil would still be able to go to God and accuse believers of sins of commission and sins of omission. But we have One who has paid in full for those sins. So, if those sins have been paid for, what does the devil have to accuse us of?

Here is how Martin Luther tells of the ability of the devil to accuse, to do what he was doing in the days of Job: "When, I say, [Satan] comes to you and accuses you not only of failing to do anything good but of transgressing against the Law of God, then you must say: 'You are troubling me with the memory of past sins; in addition, you are telling me that I have not done anything good. This does not concern me. For if I either trusted in my performance of good works or lost my trust because I failed to perform them, in either case Christ would be of no avail to me. Therefore whether you base your objections to me on my sins or on my good works, I do not care; for I put both of

them out of sight and depend only on the freedom for which Christ has set me free' “  
(American Edition of Luther's Works Vol 27:11)

The devil has no right to accuse us anymore. He has fallen from heaven. When did this take place? It is when Jesus, on the cross paid for all sin and then as proof that what He had done was enough, He rose from the grave three day later. His payment was accepted as paid in full as the Lord raised Him from the grave, welcoming Him back to heaven to not only come back but to ascend to the right hand of God from where He, Jesus, will judge the living and the dead on the last day. When we read in the Old Testament where the Israelites were convicted of their sins, they did all sorts of repentant actions. They would sit in sackcloth and ashes, would tear their clothes and would offer sacrifices. Even though we don't do that, what do we do? We come before the Lord, confessing our sins, and the Lord in His mercy, listens to our confessions and forgives our sins, and cleanses us from all our transgressions.

No sacrifices of animals are required, His was the perfect sacrifice, accepted by God the Father who forgives for His Son has done what was required for those sins. The devil, the accuser has been overcome.

Even though the devil has been cast down, it was to the earth where he now dwells. Even though he can't accuse us who believe, not really, he is still around as Peter wrote in his first letter: *1Peter 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

Satan had been going to and fro on the earth before that day in heaven when he attended the meeting with God. He no longer can go to heaven to accuse as he has been relegated to the earth.

Jesus said He was coming again, this time to judge the world, those who believe He will take to be with Him and all who have died in the faith, others will find themselves in hell, because they chose not to look to Jesus for their salvation but looked to themselves and their works which did not avail them anything but judgement because their works were imperfect, filled with sin.

I know as Luther said, the devil can't accuse you but does he try? Oh, yes he will try to accuse you, to try to have you look to yourself, to make excuses for your sin or to get you to make light of your sin as if it isn't so bad and surely the Lord will overlook something as little as that. He can accuse but as we keep our eyes on the cross and the empty tomb and His ascending, we will be encouraged to confess our sins and He,

true to His promise to us, will forgive those sins and declare us righteous because of what He did for us on the cross.

When we look at our sins, even if the accuser doesn't accuse us, what does our conscience do? Yes, it accuses. It convicts us of our sins. Yes, we feel sorry for our sins and count on the Holy Spirit to aid in that conviction as He wants us to acknowledge our sin and look to Jesus who wants us to remember what He has done for us and for all.

Those in heaven are past the devil's claws. They have entered into the presence of Christ but we are here on earth where the devil is doing all he can to drive a wedge between us and our Savior. We see it now, in his wrath there is so much evil around us. He doesn't know when Jesus is coming again and neither do we. He would like nothing better than for us to give up on God and turn to this world and all its enticements.

We can witness to the great things of the Lord and that is good but what about all the evil and so many who question the love of God, who would allow so much evil. Yes, we may wonder about God and His allowing evil but if we think about it, if the Lord were to destroy all the evil in the world, where would He stop? Would He stop before or after He go to you or me?

Yes, we deserve God's judgement. We have sinned and fallen very sort of the Word of God. All you have to do is go down the list of the commandments and ask yourself if you have broken, 1 or all of them and you will have to admit you have broken them, broken that relationship the Lord wants to have with us.

We have His forgiveness and we also have His means of grace to help us to deal with the devil who is as Jesus said: *John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

We have life and if we think about it, it is abundant. We have life to use Jesus' means of grace, baptism and His Supper where He comes to us with His body and blood.

We have Jesus. The devil who accuses has been defeated even though he is on a short chain for awhile longer. He will do all he can do as his time is short. Though short, he is pulling out all the stops to cause believers to fall. Believers may have to give their lives for Jesus, but knowing what He has done, what can the world do to me?