

CHAPTER SIX

THE FALLEN ANGELS

The Holy Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition witness that besides the good Angels there are evil angels. In the Book of Genesis the evil one, as a serpent, appears to seduce Eve to disobey God's Commandment.¹ This evil serpent is called by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the "*great dragon, that serpent of old, called Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.*"² Many of the Books of the Old Testament refer to the existence of Satan, especially in the oldest Book, that of Job, where the evil one appears as a tyrant demanding the sufferings of man.³ In the New Testament our Lord and His Holy Apostles assured us of the existence of Satan, also giving us information concerning his evil attributes and thoughts, as well as the catastrophic influences and attempts, which are aimed against man and his destruction. Satan's existence is denied by the Rationalists, but it is proclaimed by all the Holy Fathers and ecclesiastical Scholars of the Orthodox Church.

Concerning the beginning and the origin of the evil spirits, it is a common belief by all the Holy Fathers, based on Holy Scriptures, that they were created at the beginning as good Angels, who fell from their first station because of pride and the desire to be placed above the Throne of God. Other Angels fell from Grace because they envied man,

¹ Gen. 3:1-6.

² Rev. 12:9; 20:2.

³ Job 1:6-12.

who was made in the “*image and likeness*” of God, and who they subsequently led to the Fall, caused to sin and thereby alienated from God. And it is true that because of Satan’s envy of man, humanity fell into sin after Satan himself had already fallen from Heaven. As an evil spirit he invented the wicked plan to mislead man. The opinion that the Angels desired sexual intercourse with women according to Genesis 6:2 is not acceptable.

In accordance to the origin of the evil spirits, it is obvious that they are bodiless, immortal and eternal, just like the good Angels. They have free will and by their own free will they alienated themselves from the Holiness with which God had decorated them, and becoming the inventors of evil, they became the source and the beginning of evil. Henceforth, as a deceitful liar and malicious spirit, Satan hates, without any valid reason, the creatures of God but especially mankind as being in the “*image and likeness*” of the Creator. Satan has the power to prevent and overthrow the Work of God by sabotaging the Plan of man’s Salvation. The Divine Wisdom, however, restricts him to certain boundaries and limits, not allowing him to test men over their abilities. God uses Satan’s devious actions to lead people to goodness. God assists pious and virtuous individuals, encouraging them to do good deeds and strengthening them through His Divine Grace. Thus the faithful are victorious against the evil spirits and prove themselves to be worthy of the Eternal Crowns and glory.

Although Satan and his evil spirits are deceitful and powerful, he is defeated by the faithful in Christ and since

his mind has alienated him from the Divine Light, he remains blind and in complete Spiritual Darkness, incapable of knowing or understanding the Divine Truths. Even more, he is incapable of knowing the Divine Actions and Will of God concerning Salvation.

1. The Existence of the Evil Spirits.

In the oldest Books of Holy Scripture we do not find the name “*Satan*” or “*diabolos*,”⁴ but right from the beginning, in the Book of Genesis we read of the Fall of man that was caused by Satan. The evil force, which appeared as speaking, thinking and acting,⁵ is not like the irrational, animal beings, but experienced and older than the new, simple and inexperienced man. The consequent punishment of the tempter by God⁶ would be inexplicable if he was a natural snake and not some intelligent and acting being. The explanations and clarifications given by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and His Holy Apostles, does not leave any doubt of this. The author of the Books of the Pentateuch sees Satan under the symbolism of the serpent but avoids clear explanation. The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon proclaims that “*through envy of the devil came death into the world.*”⁷ Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God,

⁴ Kefalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 238-240. Damalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 18-20. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 86-87. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, p. 68.

⁵ Gen. 3:2, 5.

⁶ Gen. 3:15-16.

⁷ Wisdom 2:24.

assured us that the devil “*was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the Truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*”⁸ St. Paul in 2 Corinthians says: “*The serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness.*”⁹ These three verses, in combination with the narration in Genesis concerning Eve’s deception, clarify the Fall of Adam and Eve being caused by Satan, who in the Book of Revelation is called the “*the great dragon, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan.*”¹⁰

If we bear in mind the prohibitions and differentiations in the Book of Leviticus¹¹ concerning ventriloquists and mediums, which are related directly to ideas and faith of evil spirits, the information found in 1 Samuel (1 Kings)¹² and 1 Chronicles,¹³ as well as the Book of Job,¹⁴ we can see that belief in the existence of the devil is wide spread in the oldest books of the Old Testament. King David in Psalm 95 (96):5 proclaimed that “*all the gods of the peoples are idols (demons).*” In Tobit it is also mentioned that “*Asmodeus, the evil spirit, had killed*” “*the seven husbands of Sarah,*” as well as describing the way that Sarah would be set free from the influence of the evil spirits on her wedding day.¹⁵

⁸ John 8:44.

⁹ 2 Corinth. 11:3.

¹⁰ Rev. 12:9; 20:2.

¹¹ Lev. 19:31 and 20:6.

¹² 1 Samuel (1 Kings)16:14.

¹³ 1 Chronicles 21:1.

¹⁴ Job 1:6-12.

¹⁵ Tobit 3:8; 6:7, 14-17.

The opinion expressed by contemporary Rationalists that the existence of evil spirits entered into the Jewish religion through the influence of the Babylonian or Persian religion, has proved to be unfounded.

As mentioned above, no one can deny that the teachings concerning the spirits were developed more systematically in Babylon and especially in Persia, but they did not have an essential influence. This is proved by the fact that the Teachings of the Old Testament concerning Satan differ from those of Parsism, which introduces dualism, accepts evil and its beginning as eternal that opposes the good God. However, in the Old Testament there is no indication of such teachings.

The New Testament's Teachings concerning the devil and his evil actions are manifested very clearly by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Frequently He speaks to His disciples about the devil, the evil one, the tempter, Satan or Beelzebub.¹⁶ Satan appears to have knowledge of Holy Scripture, speaking and inventing lies, totally alien to the Truth and fallen far apart from it. He turns against man with hatred and is called by Christ, the "*murderer of man.*"¹⁷ He snatches away from the hearts of men God's Word, in order for them not to be saved.¹⁸ He is the enemy who spreads "*tares*" in the world.¹⁹ When cast away from the heart of man, he

¹⁶ Matth. 4:3-11; 10:25; 12:24-27; 16:23. Mark 1:13; 3:23; 4:15. Luke 4:2-13; 10:18; 22:3, 31.

¹⁷ John 8:44.

¹⁸ Matth. 13:19. Mark 4:13-20. Luke 8:11-15.

¹⁹ Matth. 13:25.

returns with other spirits “*more wicked than him*”²⁰ and possesses the human soul with innumerable demons.²¹ As the ruler of the world²² he cannot find anything against the Lord.²³ At the end Satan will be cast out “*into the Everlasting Fire.*”²⁴

St John the Apostle, Evangelist and Theologian states that “*the devil has sinned from the beginning.*”²⁵ The manifestation of sin began with the Fall of Satan, being its father and inventor. St Jude refers to “*angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.*”²⁶ St. Peter also states, “*God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.*”²⁷

What was the sin of the angels? St Paul refers to it when he gives the instructions not to appoint as Bishop a newly Illuminated, “*lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*”²⁸ The Prophet Isaiah also referred to the fall of Lucifer saying: “*How has Lucifer that rose in the morning fallen from Heaven! He that sent orders to all the nations is crushed to the earth.*

²⁰ Matth. 12:43-45.

²¹ Mark 5:9. Luke 8:30.

²² John 16:11.

²³ John 12:30.

²⁴ Matth. 25:41. Rev. 20:10.

²⁵ 1 John 3:8.

²⁶ Jude 6.

²⁷ 2 Peter 2:4.

²⁸ 1 Tim. 3:6.

*But you said in your heart, 'I will go up to Heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of Heaven: I will sit on a lofty mount, on the lofty mountains toward the north: I will go up above the clouds; I will be like the Most High.'*²⁹ Thus pride was the reason for the fall of the angels. This was also the first sin committed by the Adam and Eve who were deceived by the devil,³⁰ as with the first killing of a brother.³¹

The place of the fallen angels is described as “*Hell*” and “*chains of darkness*” but until the appointed Day of Judgment they enjoy some kind of freedom, living in the Heavenly places from whence they attack men.³² This Spiritual Warfare is not “*against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness in the Heavenly Places.*”³³ St Peter instructs the faithful to “*be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*”³⁴ The betrayal by Judas³⁵ as well as the thoughts that prevent the Work of Salvation is ascribed to the devil.³⁶ But whatever the devil invents to prevent the Salvation of man, and no matter how he becomes the ruler of this age, at the end he will be “*cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone where the Beast and*

²⁹ Is. 14:12-14.

³⁰ Gen. 3:2-14.

³¹ Gen. 4:8.

³² 1 John 3:12. 2 Corinth. 2:11.

³³ Ephes. 6:12.

³⁴ 1 Peter 5:8.

³⁵ John 13:2.

³⁶ Matth. 16:22-23.

*the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*³⁷

The Faithful are advised to be watchful, sober and vigilant, concerning the assaults of the devil, for when they resist his attacks, he will retreat because his power against man is restricted, regardless of his anger or strength, for the Lord our God is with all those who are faithful and who love Him. For *“we know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him”*³⁸ for *“he who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.”*³⁹ And also *“in this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice Righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.”*⁴⁰

Consequently it is most essential that *“for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”*⁴¹ Had the devil not existed, it would not have been necessary for the Son of God to have been Incarnated, to have suffered, to have died on the Cross, to have Risen on the third day, to have Ascended into Heaven and to sit on the right hand of God the Father for the Salvation of mankind. If the devil did not exist, then how can man, being the source and inventor of evil, be capable of correction? The Salvation in Christ

³⁷ Rev. 20:10.

³⁸ 1 John 4:4; 5:18.

³⁹ 1 John 3:8.

⁴⁰ 1 John 3:10.

⁴¹ 1 John 3:8.

is based on the belief that men were not completely alienated from God but “*became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*”⁴² It was therefore necessary for the Son of God to become Man in order to Redeem mankind from the bonds and slavery of Satan and thereby become “*sons by adoption.*”⁴³

2. The Fall of the Angels.

The demons were created by God “*without having any impurity,*”⁴⁴ “*neither with an evil nature, but as good and without any sign of evilness*”⁴⁵ but by “*misusing their life and freedom, they had the authority either to remain with God or to be alienated from the good.*” However, they “*did not remain in the state that God created them but blasphemed,*”⁴⁶ “*falling from the Heavenly Places.*”⁴⁷

Origen noted that the Teachings during his time were insufficient with regard to the devil and his angels: what they are and how they were made. But he confessed that the devil was a good Angel who rebelled and convinced other Angels to follow him. These are referred to as ‘*his angels.*’⁴⁸

⁴² Rom. 1:21.

⁴³ Gal. 4:4-5; 3:13. Ephes. 5:16. Col. 4:5.

⁴⁴ St. Basil the Great, *To Isaiah*, ch. 14, § 278, in Migne, *P.G.*, 30, 608.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, *That God is not the cause of evil*, § 8, in Migne, *P.G.*, 31, 345.

⁴⁶ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Diabolos and Demons*, II, 18, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 876.

⁴⁷ Athenagoras, *Deputation*, 24, 25, in *B*, v.4, p. 301.

⁴⁸ Origen, *About Principals*, I, 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 11, 119.

Based on the words of our Lord that the devil “*does not stand in the Truth,*”⁴⁹ St Augustine observed that the devil in the beginning stood in the Truth, but did not remain in it. And again the biblical words that “*the devil from the beginning sins,*” must be interpreted that Satan did not sin from the moment of his creation but later when his pride became the cause of his sin.⁵⁰

St Cyril of Jerusalem observed that Satan “*sinned not because of his nature, for he was created good; he became ‘diabolos’ by his own free will and he received the name from his action.*” “*He was called ‘diabolos’*” because he was “*the slanderer.*”⁵¹

The Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church present Satan as the inventor of evil, “*the first born demon,*” “*the leader of the evil demons*” “*called the dragon and satan and diabolos,*” “*the criminal demon who is called Satan,*” and he “*who first rebelled from goodness and became evil*” and who, through his influence, detached innumerable other angels. Thus he became the leader of the army of the evil demons who rebelled against God.

It is a common belief amongst the Holy Fathers that the sin committed by Lucifer and his angels was caused by their puffed up pride in opposition to their Creator.⁵² Thus

⁴⁹ John 8:44.

⁵⁰ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XI, 15, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 330.

⁵¹ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis*, B’, § 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 33, 412.

⁵² St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Diabolus and Demons*, II, 18, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 876.

the bright Lucifer became darkness and due to his pride and that of the angels who followed him, they became creators of evil.⁵³

Theodoretos of Cyrus, comparing the words in Isaiah⁵⁴ concerning the pride of the king of Babylon, as well as those in Ezekiel⁵⁵ concerning the king of Tyre, noted that they indicate the essence of Satan's fall:⁵⁶ having become proud, he was condemned by God.

St Athanasios the Great of Alexandria proclaims that "*Satan*" was not thrown from Heaven "*because of fornication or adultery or stealing*" but because of his pride. "*For he said: 'I will go up to Heaven, I will set my throne before God and I will be like the Most High.'*"⁵⁷

S. Basil the Great observed that "*the first sin was blasphemy and pride, by which Satan blasphemed God Who gave him all the good things and [he] rebelled against God, detaching the opposing powers, saying: 'I will set my throne above the stars; and I will sit on the lofty mountain toward the north. I will go up above the clouds; I will be like the Most High.'*"⁵⁸

⁵³ St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily 38*, § 9, in Migne, *P.G.*, 36, 320.

⁵⁴ Is. 14:12.

⁵⁵ Ez. 28:12-18.

⁵⁶ Theodoretus of Cyrus, *Heresies, Homily 5*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 83, 476. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis*, B', § 4, in Migne, 33, 412-413. St. Augustine, *De Genesis ad litteram XXIII*, 30-32, in Migne, *P.L.*, 34, 441-442.

⁵⁷ St. Athanasius, the Great, *About virginity*, § 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 28, 257.

⁵⁸ St. Basil the Great, *To Isaiah*, ch. 2, § 88, in Migne, *P.G.*, 30, 261.

St Cyril of Alexandria assures us that “*the devil was cast out from Heaven*” because “*he dared to say ‘I will be like the Most High’* and he thought that he was able, as a creature, “*to rise to the level of the Creator’s Nature*” and “*to sit with Him Who holds everything in His Power.*”⁵⁹

The Divine Revelation does not speak in more detail of the conditions of the Fall of the Angels, so it is impossible for us to determine them. Holy Scripture witnesses that typhus and pride was the sin of Lucifer. Also, the fact that he wished to deify himself and to sit on a high throne to be like God, is clearly manifested in the Fall of man who was deceived into falling into the same sin as Satan. “*And the serpent said to the woman, you shall not surely die. For God knew that in whatever day you should eat of it, your eyes would be opened and you would be as gods, knowing good and evil.*”⁶⁰ Satan falsely accused God, presenting Him as a liar, and urged them to partake of the Fruit of the forbidden Tree of “*knowing good and evil,*” promising them that they would become “*as gods.*”

The Fall of Lucifer and his angels took place before the Fall of man. Satan, as a fallen angel, conceived the evil plan against man, according to the Book of Wisdom of Solomon: “*through envy of the devil came death into the world.*”⁶¹ The same opinion is expressed in Psalm

⁵⁹ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To John*, book 2, ch. 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 73, 809.

⁶⁰ Gen. 3:5-6.

⁶¹ Wisdom 2:24.

82(83): “*But you shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes,*”⁶² which St Justin the Philosopher and Martyr relates to the Fall of Lucifer who was one of the ‘*princes*’ of the Heavenly Hosts.⁶³

St Irenaeus expressed the opinion that the reason for the Fall of Lucifer was his ‘*jealousy*’ against man who was so loved by the Word of God.⁶⁴

According to Tertullian, the devil had fallen because he could not tolerate God creating man in His “*image and likeness*” and, being overcome by envy, he deceived man into disobeying God. He also assured us that Satan sinned first before dragging mankind into sin.⁶⁵

St Cyprian expressed similar Teachings by declaring that Satan had already fallen when he saw that man was created in the “*image and likeness*” of God and as a result, was moved by envy against him.⁶⁶

The opinion that the demons are the result of a sexual union between Angels of God and daughters of

⁶² Psalm 82(83):7.

⁶³ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *Dialogue*, 124, § 3, in **B**, v. 3, p. 324.

⁶⁴ St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book V, ch. 40, § 3; ch. 41, §§ 3-4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 1113; 1188. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 356, 358. St. Basil the Great, *To Isaiah*, ch. XIV, § 279, in Migne, *P.G.*, 30, 609.

⁶⁵ Tertullian, *De patientia*, § 5, in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 1256. *Ibid*, *De poenitentia*, § 5, in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 1235. *Ibid*, *De anima*, § 20, in Migne, *P.L.*, 2, 683.

⁶⁶ St. Cyprian, *De zelo et livore*, 3,4, in Migne, *P.L.*, 4, 640.

men,⁶⁷ is unacceptable, although supported by some Fathers.⁶⁸ Although Origen knew of these Teachings, he did not accept them.⁶⁹ St Athanasios of Alexandria, St Basil the Great and St Gregory consider this theory not worthy even of being mentioned. St John Chrysostom observed that Satan and his angels had fallen before the creation of mankind and if Satan was still a good Angel, then how could it be possible for a bodiless Angel, “*having such honour and glory,*” to envy man who is “*surrounded by a body*”? “*But, because, he fell from the highest glory into the lower disgrace, seeing man who was created with body and with such glory, he was overcome by envy.*”⁷⁰

St Augustine, when pondering how it was possible for the Angels of God to mix with women, thereby giving birth to giants, observed that in many manuscripts of the Book of Genesis, instead of “*the Angels of God*” it is

⁶⁷ Gen. 6:2.

⁶⁸ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *2 Apology*, 5, § 2, in **B**, v. 3, p. 202. Athenagoras, *Deputation*, 24, 25, in **B**, v. 4, p. 301. Tatianus, *Homily to the Greeks*, § 12, in **B**, v.4, p. 250. St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book IV, ch. 16, § 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 1016. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, p. 292. Tertullian, *De idol.*, § 9, in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 671; *De cult. Fem.*, I § 2, in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 1305; *De virg. vel.*, § 7, in Migne, *P.L.*, 2, 899. Clement the Alexandrian, in Migne, *P.G.*, 118, 800; *Pedagogus*, 3, 2, in **B**, v. 7, p. 196; *Stromata*, book V, ch. 1, in **B**, v. 8, p. 114.

⁶⁹ Origen, *To John*, book Vi, ch. 42, (25), 217, in **B**, v. 12, p. 49; *Against Celsus*, V, 55, 620, in **B**, v. 10, p. 50.

⁷⁰ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis, Homily 22*, § 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 188.

written “*the sons of God.*” And he favours this verse as referring to men and not to Angels.⁷¹

The rebellion against God made Satan and his angels competitors of the Divine Majesty. This was the first sin that caused their downfall from the Angelical Hosts. Their Fall was complete and the moral condition that was created in them, was beyond any restoration. Satan and his angels became vessels of all evil, receiving the illness of envy. They turned against man because of the honour and glory with which God had decorated him. Not being able to bear seeing the earthly beings rise up through Virtues to the glory of the Angels, Satan deceived mankind into disobedience. Thus Satan and his evil angels increased their evilness although they know that on the final Judgment Day they will be condemned to the Eternal Fire without any chance of repentance. For, “*as death is for men, likewise is the Fall for the angels; and after the Fall there is no repentance, as for men after death.*”⁷²

⁷¹ St. Augustine, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, I, 1 q. III, in Migne, *P.L.*, 34, 549. Ibid, *De civitate Dei*, XV, 23, § 1, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 468.

⁷² St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Diabolus and Demons*, II, 18, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 877. St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the reason of evil*, § 8, in Migne, *P.G.*, 31, 348. Theodoretus, *Heresies*, Homily 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 83, 477. Tatianus, *Homily to the Greeks*, § 14, in *B*, v.4, p. 251. St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *I Apology*, 28, in *B*, v. 3, p. 175. St. Athanasius, the Great, *About virginity*, § 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 28, 257. St. Basil the Great, *To Isaiah*, ch. 14, § 279, in Migne, *P.G.*, 30, 609.

3. The Nature of the Demons.

St Basil stated: “*the nature of Satan is bodiless according to the Apostle who said ‘for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against Principalities’ of wickedness.*”⁷³

St Cyril of Jerusalem noted that the word ‘*spirit*’ is generally used to signify that which is bodiless. He concluded: “... *because the demons do not have such bodies..*” that are solid, they are “*called spirits.*”⁷⁴

Ethereal and invisible bodies are ascribed to the good Angels as well as to the demons, which, when compared only to mankind, are considered as being “*bodiless.*”⁷⁵

St Augustine stated that “*since Satan and his evil angels were cast out from Heaven, they stay in the air, but they do not have any authority over the air.*”⁷⁶ They sustain their eternal nature and are reserved for “*Everlasting Chains under darkness for the Judgment of the great Day*”⁷⁷ as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the

⁷³ St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the reason of evil*, § 9, in Migne, P.G., 31, 352.

⁷⁴ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis*, 16, § 15, in Migne, P.G., 33, 940.

⁷⁵ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Diabolus and Demons*, II, 18, in Migne, P.G., 94, 876. St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the reason of evil*, § 9, in Migne, P.G., 31, 352. Athenagoras, *Deputation*, 25, in *B*, v. 4, p. 301.

⁷⁶ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 22, in migne, P.L., 41, 246.

⁷⁷ Jude 6. 2 Peter 2:4.

Son of God, assured us, saying that Satan and his angels will be cast “*into the Everlasting Fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*”⁷⁸

It is obvious that because of free will with which intellectual beings, including all Angels, were gifted by God, even Satan “*had the authority over his life either to remain with God,*” as a result of which he could progress in goodness and move to a higher level of Holiness, “*or to be alienated from goodness.*” But as soon as he invented evil and had fallen from his Order, he became enslaved to his own sin, according to the Words of Christ: “*...whoever commits sin is a slave of sin...*”⁷⁹ As a consequence, Satan became the source and beginning of evil for all Eternity.⁸⁰

According to his free will Satan progresses from evil to evil. Blinding and being blind, in order to mislead men, he chooses the worst of evil and the most tempting ways. He differs from irrational creatures and wild beasts in that, although they were created wild, they act within the boundaries into which they were placed from the beginning, not as evil beings, for God created them “*very good.*” On the contrary, Satan and his angels always seek wickedness and as a consequence of their Fall, they hate

⁷⁸ Matth. 25:41. Theophylactus of Bulgaria, *To Ephesians* 2:2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 124, 1052. St. Ecumenius, in Migne, *P.G.*, 118, 1188. St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *1 Apology*, 28, in **B**, v. 3, p. 175.

⁷⁹ John 8:34.

⁸⁰ St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the reason of evil*, § 8, in Migne, *P.G.*, 31, 345.

mankind without any reason, desiring his destruction.⁸¹ Thus Holy Scripture describes Satan as a wolf or as “a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”⁸²

In the Book of the *Shepherd of Hermas* the “Angel of Repentance” encourages man to “turn to the Lord with all” his heart, for the devil “cannot oppress God’s servants who hope in Him with all their heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot throw and pin them. So, if you resist him, he will be defeated and flee from you in disgrace. But those who are empty, fear the devil as if he had power ... For partially empty jars quickly turn sour and the taste of the wine is ruined. So also the devil comes to all God’s servants to empty them. All those who are full in the Faith resist him mightily and he leaves them alone because he finds no place where he can gain entrance. So then he comes to those who are partially empty, and finding a place he enters them, and then he does what he wants with them, and they become enslaved to him.” The Angel of Repentance therefore encourages man to “repent with all” his heart and “to strengthen” in Faith because if man “turns to the Lord with his heart, and practices Righteousness the rest of the days of his life, and serves rightly according to His Will, He will heal his previous sins, and he will have power to conquer the devil’s work.”⁸³

⁸¹ Ibid, St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 22, in migne, P.L., 41, 246.

⁸² 1 Peter 5:8.

⁸³ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Mandate 12, 4-6, in Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp. 234-235.

The devil's hatred of man is manifested in the tragic condition of the demon-possessed.⁸⁴ St Justin the Philosopher and Martyr witnesses that during his time "*many in the world and in the city*" of Rome were demon-possessed. The devil aroused cruel persecutions against the Church and "*the deadly Martyrdom*" that was "... *turned by the demons and the army of the devil against those who confessed their Faith to God and the Mystery of the Cross.*"⁸⁵

The demons were the cause in ancient times of men worshipping as gods "*Dionysios, Semelis and Apollo, who committed dishonouring acts of sex amongst men, which are shameful even to mention; and Persephone and Aphrodite...*" Even "...*after the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, the demons again manifested themselves to men as being gods.*" The crafty and seductive evil spirits who, as "*the ruler of the world*"⁸⁶ in our contemporary days, through heresies and sexual desires deceive those who are empty of Faith and seduces them into sin.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Matth. 4:24; 8:16, 28; 9:32-34; 10:8; 12:22-24; 15:22. Mark 1:32-34; 3:15; 5:12, 15; 6:13; 9:38; 16:9, 17. Luke 4:41; 8:2, 30, 36; 9:1, 49; 10:17; 11:15; 13:32. Tatianus, *To the Greeks*, 16, in **B**, v.4, p. 252.

⁸⁵ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *2 Apology*, 6, § 6; *Dialogue*, 131, § 2, in **B**, v. 3, p. 203; 329. Athenagoras, *Deputation*, 26, in **B**, v. 4, p. 302. Theophilus of Antioch, *2 Autolyucus*, in **B**, v. 5, p. 40.

⁸⁶ John 14:30; 16:11.

⁸⁷ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *1 Apology*, 25, § 1 and 26, § 1, in **B**, v. 3, p. 174. St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the reason of evil*, § 9, in Migne, *P.G.*, 31, 352. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To John*, ch. 14, 30, in Migne, *P.G.*, 74, 329. Theodoretus of Cyrus, *To Ephesians*, 6, 12, in Migne, *P.G.*, 82, 553.

Satan's power and strength is according to his nature and, as in the case of Job, when "*a great wind came from the desert, and caught the four corners of the house, and the house fell upon the children,*" they died.⁸⁸ This power of Satan is restricted by the Lord Who does not allow him to tempt man with more than that with which man can cope. God can at any time annihilate his power and banish him from existence but He chooses not do this for He always provides for us. Just like a doctor may use the venom of a snake to cure snakebite and to save the ill from death, likewise does God use the wickedness of the devil to exercise our souls. The tempter has the authority only to tempt us; he cannot force anyone to follow him. Therefore, to give into temptation means that we have co-operated with him. To gain victory over Satan makes him extremely angry because solely through the temptations may the Faithful become stronger and rise to a higher level of Virtue.

The Shepherd of Hermas noted the following: "So who, sir" I asked, "Are those who have been crowned and are going into the tower?" He answered and said to me, "Those who are crowned are the ones who have wrestled with the devil and conquered him. These are the ones who have suffered for the Law."⁸⁹

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, assured us that He "*saw Satan fall like lightning from*

⁸⁸ Job 1:13-19.

⁸⁹ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Parable 8, 3, 6, in Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 255.

Heaven,”⁹⁰ meaning that he had fallen from his Order and that Christ gave His Holy Apostles “*the Authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*”⁹¹

Satan, although renowned as the father of lies, inventor of evil, professor and teacher of deceitful schemes, remains blind to the Truth and whatever concerns the future of those whom he tempts. Because of his Fall, he has lost his brightness and became alienated from the Divine Light. Thus, according to the observation of Clement the Alexandrian, “*the devil tempts us knowing who we are*” and according to our weaknesses he realises that he assaults us “*not knowing if we will resist*” and not knowing the results of his attacks.⁹²

St John of Damascus observed: “... *the demons do not know the future; they forecast by seeing the present events...*” so being only able to presume, “.... *they lie in most cases.*”⁹³

St Augustine ascribes knowledge that is deprived of pure love to the demons, which puffs them up with false pride.⁹⁴ This knowledge concerns materialistic and temporary things that are considered as foolishness by the

⁹⁰ Luke 10:18.

⁹¹ Luke 10:19.

⁹² Clement the Alexandrian, *Stromata*, 4, 12, in **B**, v.8, p. 78.

⁹³ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Diabolos and Demons*, II, 18, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 877.

⁹⁴ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, IX, 20, in migne, *P.L.*, 41, 273.

bright Angels of God, but which are the cause of the pride⁹⁵ of the demons

It is obvious then that Satan cannot understand the Love of God towards man nor the greatness of Divine Humility in the Divine *Economia* of the Incarnation of the Word of God. Satan had a suspicion of what took place but he did not know that the Word became Flesh. For this reason he tempted Christ in the desert, but remained absolutely alienated from the Mystery of Divine *Economia*. Only he who has a clean and pure heart is able to see God. If, therefore, two people are in a similar situation but one has a clean heart, whereas the other has an impure heart, only the former will see God because He cannot be seen except by “a pure heart.” Sadly, those with impure hearts are unable to see God.

St Basil the Great said that to see God, or those who are close to God, is impossible without the Holy Spirit. For in darkness, if light is removed, our eyes are blinded and unable to evaluate the difference between gold and iron. Similarly with the intellectual adornment, it is impossible to understand the things of Divine Life without the Enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Ibid, *De civitate Dei*, IX, 22, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 273.

⁹⁶ St. Basil the Great, *About the Holy Spirit*, 16, § 38, in Migne, *P.G.*, 32, 137-140.