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## What is Satan's Fate? Will he live forever, or will he cease to exist?

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Much has been speculated as to the nature of Satan's ultimate fate. From all the available Scriptures, we can safely say that Satan will not repent, nor will he cease to exist.

To begin with, we want to quote from pages 51 and 52 of our free booklet, "Angels, Demons and the Spirit World":

"The angels who sinned are presently in chains of darkness, to be reserved for future judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They are living today in a state of darkness. They are spiritually imprisoned by their own perversions. Sin has enslaved them. Before God frees us from sin, we, too, are slaves of sin. The same is true for Satan and his demons. They are not literally imprisoned and jailed at a certain place. Rather, they are roaming to and fro on this earth. Satan is compared to a roaring lion, walking about, to see whom he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

"Demons are waiting for their judgment. Demons asked Christ whether He had come to 'torment' them 'before the time' (Matthew 8:29). Luke 8:31 adds that they begged Christ not to command them 'to go out into the abyss.' At this point in time, they are not yet in that 'abyss.' Satan is not in it either; rather, he will be placed in it at the beginning of the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3, 7 - the word 'abyss' is translated there as 'bottomless pit.').

"What is the 'abyss'? The word is used in Romans 10:7, where we read, 'Who will descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).'

"In Romans 10, the 'abyss' is used as an analogy in association with the dead who are buried. It is also

used as an analogy in Luke 8 and in Revelation 20. When Satan and his demons will be placed in the 'abyss' at the beginning of the Millennium, they will be as good as dead -- unable to influence and deceive the nations any longer during that time period (compare Revelation 20:3). The fact that they won't be able to destroy others will give them spiritual torment -- that is why they asked Christ whether He had come to torment them before 'the time.'

"Satan's spiritual torment, and that of his angels, will continue. After a time period called the Great White Throne Judgment, Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41). Their torment will be spiritual, as they will see all of their evil works destroyed by fire (compare 2 Peter 3:10-13), and their influence on others will be gone forever. Their final fate might be revealed in Jude 13, referring to 'wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.' Compare too, 2 Peter 2:17.

"God knows what is in store for them, and so do they."

In addition to this quote from our booklet, please note the following excerpts from an old letter of the Worldwide Church of God, setting forth the long-held understanding of the Church on this subject:

"Satan and his demons are spirit beings, created with inherent immortality (see Luke 20:36). They cannot die. Paul wrote that Jesus Christ would 'destroy' the devil through His sacrifice (Heb. 2:14). Paul, however, was not saying that Christ will kill Satan or completely blot him out of existence. According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, the word 'destroy' can also mean 'neutralize' or 'make subject to a crushing defeat.' The original Greek word, 'katargeo,' translated as 'destroy' in this verse, means 'to render inactive' or 'idle.' Notice 1 John 3:8: 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the WORKS of the devil.'...

"The Bible gives us only a clue as to the nature of

Satan's punishment [after the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment]. Jude describes some as being 'wandering stars [stars are symbols of angels], to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever' (verse 13). Apparently, God will banish Satan and his demons from the universe. They will never again associate with or influence the glorified inhabitants of God's realm."

Some claim that Satan and his demons will have to die, since they sinned, and -- so the argument goes -- Romans 6:23 and Ezekiel 18:4 teach that the wages of sin is death, and that the soul that sins shall die. However, these and similar Scriptures apply to human beings -- not to Satan and his angels. When man sinned, he incurred the death penalty. Christ died for man so that man does not have to die eternally. Romans 6:23 teaches that the wages of sin is death (for man), but that the gift of God is eternal life (for man). That is, when man repents and accepts Christ's sacrifice, he can be spared from death. This cannot refer to spirit beings, as they ALREADY have eternal life. The wages for their sin cannot be death, and God's gift to them, if they were to repent, would not be eternal life (since they already have it). When the Bible says that there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (compare Hebrews 9:22), then this applies strictly to human beings, who have and who are flesh and blood.

There are several Biblical indications and hints as to what the penalty for Satan and his demons will be (compare, for example, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 13). In the final analysis, however, we are not expressly told the specific final destination and fate of Satan and his unrepentant demons -- except as to say that God has decreed that they, as spirit beings, will not die.

Some, who understand that Satan and his demons are spirit beings that cannot die, claim that God will change Satan into a man, and that He will kill Satan, once he is flesh and blood. We must understand, however, that this speculation is nowhere taught in Scripture. We read that only Jesus Christ, a Spirit being, gave up His divinity and became a human being, through the power of the Holy Spirit of God the Father. We read that

Christ became the "ONLY-begotten" (John 1:14) -- He was and will always be the only being who was Spirit and became flesh. (Please read, for an in-depth study of this question, our free booklet, "Are You Already Born Again?") Nowhere does the Bible suggest that other spirit beings could or will become flesh in the future.

Some point at a passage in Ezekiel 28:18-19, claiming that Satan will be devoured by fire and turn to ashes. However, the context shows that God is not talking about Satan in that passage. Ezekiel 28 is first talking about a man -- the "prince of Tyre" (Ezekiel 28:2), then about Satan, the "king of Tyre" (Ezekiel 28:12), who is influencing the man, and then again about Satan's human instrument, the "prince of Tyre." Ezekiel 28:18-29 describes the fate of the human prince of Tyre -- not of Satan the devil. (For more information on this subject, please read our free booklet, "The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.")

Satan was created as a spirit being. Based on the Biblical revelation, God has decreed that spirit beings will not die. Please note that Lucifer, when he became Satan, was, at that time, "destroyed... from the midst of the fiery stones" (Ezekiel 28:16). He was cast out of heaven (compare Luke 10:18) -- experiencing "crushing defeat." But, he was not destroyed in the sense of being killed -- as he continued to live as Satan, the adversary of God. From all the Biblical evidence revealed to us, Satan will continue to live, as a spirit being, for all eternity.