

The Purpose of Man

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In studying the fate of the angels, God dealt with and condemned Satan and his fallen angels for their rejection of His authority and for their rebellion:

Job 4:18. Behold, He does not place trust in His servants, but charges His angels with error.

Matthew 25:41. Then He will say to those on His left, "Away from Me, you accursed ones, into the eternal fire [already] prepared for the devil and his angels.

John 16:11. Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

Satan's case (and that of his followers) has thus already been adjudicated and his ultimate fate has been pronounced. At the end of the millennial rule of Christ, Satan will face the execution of his sentence (Revelation 20:10; Isaiah 24:21-22). The question that may come to mind is, "why the delay in judgment? What is the role of Man?"

I. The Purpose of Man

Man is meant as a response to Satan's rebellion. God has created mankind,

- To demonstrate to all angelic kind His ability to reconcile His creatures to Himself, and
- To actually replace all that was lost through the devil's defection.

1. Man created to demonstrate God's righteousness:

Satan did not count on God's willingness to pay for sin Himself through the sacrifice of His Son, so that we might justly be accounted righteous in His eyes (2 Corinthians 5:21):

Romans 1:16-17. For I am not ashamed of the gospel ... the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, ...

We are dealing here with the power of God's love, His mercy and His lovingkindness. The devil has greatly underestimated God. Angels, being spirits and so not subject to the material limits that so try our human hearts of flesh, they must learn by observation, and observe us they do in great earnestness (Job 1&2; Matthew 18:10; Luke 15:10; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:12).

2. Man created to replace Satan and his angels:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and the angels (Genesis 1:1). The angels led by Satan rebelled against God and the earth became without form and void. Then God cleaned up the mess by recreating the earth in six days (Genesis 1:2). With judgment set, execution of God's sentence against the devil would be inevitable if not immediate (cf. Revelation 20:10):

Isaiah 24:21-22. And it will come to pass on that day that the Lord will punish the host of heaven above, and the kings of the earth below ... And after many days **they will be punished.**

The principle of God's desire to retrieve what is lost and replace what is missing is clearly seen in scripture in the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:4-10), the law of levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-6), and, of course, in His longing for all mankind to accept the gift of Jesus Christ and return to Him (cf. Matthew 18:14; John 12:47; 2 Peter 3:9):

1 Timothy 2:4. [God] who wants all men to be saved and come to accept the truth.

There is ample evidence to suggest that elect mankind is, in effect, replacing fallen angelic kind in God's universal order (Luke 10:17-20; 1 Corinthians 6:3; Revelation 20:4).

3. Man created for the glory of God:

The replacement of Satan and his followers with willing worshipers, and the ample demonstration of God's love and righteousness through the sacrifice of His Son to save these sinful human beings speaks abundantly to the great glory of God.

Revelation 5:13b NIV. To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!

It is for God's praise, for God's glory, that we have been created (Isaiah 60:21; John 17:10; 21:19; Romans 9:23). By making us and by saving us through Christ, God shows His love and exposes the devil's lies.

Ephesians 1:5-6. Having foreordained us for adoption to Himself .. for the purpose of producing praise for the glory of His grace which He has graciously bestowed on us in the Beloved [One].

Ephesians 1:11-12. In whom we also have an inheritance ... that we who have previously placed our hope in Christ might serve the purpose of generating praise for His glory.

Isaiah 43:7. Everyone who is called by my Name, for My glory I have created him.

Human beings who choose to reject God's gracious gift of Jesus Christ will share the fate of the devil and his followers in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). And everyone, whether rebellious or regenerate, will eventually acknowledge the majesty, the righteousness, the glory of God:

Isaiah 45:23-24. By Myself I have sworn. ... that every knee will bow to Me, and to Me every tongue will swear. They will acknowledge Me: "Only in the Lord are righteousness and might."

II. The Creation of Man

God was under no obligation to create the human race. He did not have to give His Son to die for us. Yet create us He did. In making us, He shared Himself with us. these are the acts of a God who is *love* itself, and we are truly blessed to call Him *Father*.

God gave life to our first parents, Adam and Eve, forming them and depositing them in a place of perfection:

Genesis 1:26-27. Then God said, "Let us make Man *in our image, according to our likeness*, so that he may rule over ... over the whole earth.

Genesis 2:5b. Now Man did not yet exist *to care for the land*. (and there was no man to till the ground, NKJV)

Genesis 2:15. So the Lord God took Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden to care for it and to guard it.

Satan was the first trustee of earth, he seized temporary control in his bid to lead the angels in revolt. The most critical point of comparison in each case, for both Man and angels, is the ability of making a conscious choice to serve faithfully. To be proper replacements for Satan and his followers, mankind had to possess a spiritual makeup that was the same as the angels in two important respects: The *ability to make responsible and responsive choices*, and *Individuality*.

Genesis 1:26-27. Then God said, "Let us make Man in our *image, according to our likeness*, so that he may rule ...

Ephesians 2:4-10. But God, who is rich in *mercy*, because of His *great love* with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses .. For by *grace* you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.