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God's Plan of Exalting the Humble—P4

“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt. 23:12).

As Lord over all things, God has chosen in His wisdom that among His creation, *“the greatest among you shall be your servant”* (Matt. 23:11). God had planned this from the beginning, that His mighty angels would *“serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation”* (Hebrews 1:14b), but satan did not like it. He did not trust that God's plan of putting everything in subjection to man would be good for creation, especially the angels. In satan's “wisdom,” the “smartest” or “strongest” should be in charge—perhaps he thought God was showing folly or weakness by the declaration of His Word concerning mankind. Rather than obey God's Word, he took matters into his own hands! But God told him, *“you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor”* (Ezekiel 28:17b).

In the service of his own will, satan not only wanted to maintain his splendor but also to exalt himself further by taking what had not been given to him: *“You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high...I will make myself like the Most High’”* (Isaiah 14:13-14). When satan inspired King Saul's rebelliousness, God told Saul, *“rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king”* (1 Sam. 15:23). Like Saul, satan presumed he knew God's purpose, just as he presumed his way was better. Rather than trust God in humility, satan rejected God's Word in rebellion, choosing to serve his own will instead. But he learned that while *“the Lord lifts up the humble; He casts the wicked to the*

ground” (Ps. 147:6), for *“You save a humble people, but Your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down”* (2 Sam. 22:28). Unlike satan who rejected God's Word, God says He looks to the one *“who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My word”* (Isaiah 66:1-2). Satan was cast to the earth, where he has inspired the “religion of rebellion” against God's Word. In all his labors in the earth and his rule of this present world, he teaches men to rise by taking what they want through craft and force (deceit, theft, incrimination, violence, murder). To this day, we see that in satan's kingdom *“the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them”* (Matt. 20:25b), rather than the great serving the lesser as God decreed.

Satan's presumption misjudged God's plan that He would reveal in Jesus. This revelation was not entirely clear to the angels from the beginning, for God's plan of salvation for mankind involved *“things into which angels long to look [gain a clear glimpse]”* (1 Peter 1:12). In his presumption, he did not see that God purposely *“chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God”* (1 Corinthians 1:26-29). Truly *“the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, ‘He catches the wise in their craftiness’”* (1 Cor. 3:19). Just so, God caught satan in his craftiness.

Satan, who wouldn't even serve mankind because of his pride, did not understand that God Himself would not only come into the world to serve mankind, but give His life for mankind to save them from the power of sin that satan had inflicted on them—the very Word of God he had rebelled against would come into the world as God's Son. Amen.

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