



The Destroyer

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The LORD will
pass over the door,
and will not suffer
the destroyer to
come in

Exodus 12:23

NEVER in the history of the world had so much devastation and destruction occurred with such intensity as it did over the entire country of Egypt. Wave after wave of catastrophic disaster came as each shock left the land ever more empty of substance, structure, and life itself. The great

river Nile, the source of fertility and growth, died in a pool of blood. Plagues of swarming, dying, stinking frogs spread across the delta. Flies and lice followed. Cattle died. Hail destroyed the crops, pounding the grain flat with the ground. An outbreak of anthrax afflicted man and beast. Then a supernatural unearthly darkness descended for a whole three days, paralyzing the entire nation—except for only one district, the land of Goshen.

Jehovah said, “Yet will I bring one more plague upon Pharaoh. About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sits upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that



is behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that you may know how that the LORD does put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” Exodus 11:1,4-7.



Jehovah had announced each plague before it came, specifying exactly what would happen—and then it happened. Each one worse than the previous. The message was obvious: the God of heaven was unleashing His power on Egypt, pounding it into submission to finally let Israel go.

The tenth and final devastation would indeed be the worst of all: the death of every firstborn child. But it was not inevitable; a remedy was announced. The firstborn in every home could be spared if they followed Jehovah’s instructions. A substitute was to be sacrificed and

its blood applied to the doorposts of each home that obeyed and death would pass them by.

Actually, the way in which the Lord described it, *He* would pass over the blood-stained doorways and prevent the *destroyer* from coming in! God was not the one who destroyed Egypt. He spared the land as long as He could.

It was Jehovah’s warning to the king of Egypt when Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh. Aaron spoke for Moses and presented a demonstration of what would happen if Pharaoh refused to let Israel go. “Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.” Exodus 7:10. The rod in Aaron’s hand was a benefit to Aaron and to those he served. Like the rod and staff in the shepherd’s hand that is a comfort to the sheep in guiding and protecting them (Psalm 23:4), the rod of Christ, the Good Shepherd, is a symbol of His power to provide and defend His flock. As long as the rod remains in the hand of God’s Son, all is well. But when the rod is forced from His grip, there is no longer any control over the forces of nature.

As the Egyptian ruler progressively resisted the pleadings of God, the powers were slowly released with great reluctance and increased pleading that Pharaoh would listen to the voice of God. “I have no pleasure that you should die. So turn from your ways and live!” Ezekiel 18:32.

Sadly, Pharaoh only hardened his heart more and more until at last his own people said, “We be all dead men.” Exodus 12:33.

Jesus would later reveal the true identity of the Destroyer. “The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10. One takes life; One gives life. One is a Destroyer; One is a Restorer and Protector. One speaks truth; One only speaks lies.

There came a day when the sons of God presented themselves before the King of the universe. “Adam, which was the son of God” on earth (Luke 3:38), should have been among the other sons that day. But another came in his place. “And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” But Satan had a complaint to make: You have made a hedge about Job, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side. You won’t let me even touch him. No wonder he serves you!

This was not only the experience of Job. “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people.” Psalm 125:2. He is “a strong tower: the righteous run into it, and is safe” Proverbs 18:10. “The God of my rock; in him will I trust: He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my

refuge, my Saviour; thou savest me from violence.” Psalm 22:3.

But the Destroyer seeks only to steal, to kill, and destroy with all manner of violence. When God withdrew His hedge of protection around Job and gave all that Job had into the hands of Satan, the destroyer wasted no time in wreaking havoc on Job’s possessions.



The Sabeans stole his cattle and slew his servants. “The fire of God” fell from heaven and burned up his sheep and servants. The Chaldeans stole all his camels and slew more of his servants. Finally, a great desert wind smote and collapsed the house where his children were gathered and all died.

Job concluded from all the evidence he had that “the LORD hath taken away” Job 1:21. Like many today, Job actually believed that it

was God who stole his livestock, burned up his sheep, and destroyed his own children. Yet after all that Job did not “charge God foolishly.” “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” Job 13:15.

But the Destroyer was still not satisfied. “Touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse you,” Satan sneered. The Lord said, “He is in your hand, but save his life.” Job yet trusted God, and God trusted Job. He would allow the Destroyer yet more freedom but only so far. Satan was still limited by one remaining bit of hedge: Job’s life.



“So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job.” Job 2:7. It was Satan that did the smiting; it was the Destroyer who stole, and killed, and sent fire from heaven. It has always been so and it will be seen again at the end of time. He will “make fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” Revelation 13:13. And once again many will believe this “great miracle” will be the

hand of God, but it will only be the work of the Destroyer who “deceives them that dwell on the earth” verse 14.

Satan likes to use fire. It’s an excellent deception because fire is so much a part of God’s presence. Satan was once a flaming minister for God (Heb 1:7), “walking up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” Ezekiel 28:14. The throne of God is “like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire” Daniel 7:9. “A fiery stream issued and came forth before Him” verse 10. And those that live with Him will “dwell with devouring fire...and everlasting burnings” Isaiah 33:14.

Yet there is something different about God’s fire. It only burns sin. The bush on mount Horeb burned with fire, but it was not consumed (Exodus 3:2). Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael walked through the fire with the Son of God but they were not burned. In fact, “the fire had no power” on their bodies, “nor was a hair of their head singed” (Daniel 3:25,27; Isaiah 43:2).



The disciples were baptized with fire on the day of Pentecost when “tongues of fire” were on 120 heads and no one was harmed. Yes, “God is a consuming fire” Deut 4:24, but His fire only consumes sin.



When God and His Son came down on mount Sinai, the top of the mountain was “altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire” Exodus 19:18. God warned the people to not come too close or they would perish. Aaron’s sons were warned not to bring any strange fire into the sanctuary. But the Destroyer never warns before striking.

When the children of Israel murmured, they expressed doubt in God’s mercy and care for them. Though He delivered them from slavery, opened the Red Sea before them, rained manna from heaven, sent in clouds of quail to satisfy their lust for flesh food, brought water from the rock to quench their thirst—they repeatedly complained that they had been taken out of Egypt to die in the wilderness!

Their lack of faith prevented God’s continued protection from all the dangers threatening them on all sides. Poisonous snakes invaded their camp, the Amalekites attacked the weak and aged, and they were “destroyed of the Destroyer” 1Cor 10:10.

Moses died at 120 years of age and was buried. Then Michael the archangel came to resurrect him and the devil **contended** with him over the body of Moses. Judge 9. But the Lord had said, “the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will **contend** with him that contends with thee” Isaiah 49:25. Satan wanted to keep his captive in the grave. That’s where he wants to keep all of God’s children. In the end, when he is “brought down to hell,” all those that are there “shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and **destroyed** the cities thereof; that **opened not the house of his prisoners?**” Isaiah 14:16,17.

Satan can only kill; he cannot give life, he cannot resurrect those he has destroyed. “They had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” Revelation 9:11. Both Abaddon and Apollyon are translated “Destroyer.”

Satan, that old serpent, the Devil, is the Destroyer. Latin translations of this text use the word “*exterminans*” or exterminator. The Hebrew word Abaddon appears six times in the Old Testament: Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Psalm 88:11; Prov 15:11; 27:20 and every time is translated Destruction.

In great contrast is the loving, giving, restoring character of Jesus. When offered the chance to repay the ingratitude of the Samaritans who refused him hospitality by calling down fire from heaven on them and consuming them like Elijah did in 2Kings 1, the Saviour corrected the sons of thunder. “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” Luke 9:54-56. The Son is not a destroyer but a Saviour.

Satan bound a poor woman for eighteen years leaving her unable to stand up straight. Luke 13:11-16. But Jesus laid his hands on her and restored her to perfect wholeness. And she shouted glory to God for His goodness!

The evil spirits that left their first estate along with Satan share his bent for destruction. When a mob of them inside a tortured man requested permission to enter into a herd of pigs, they promptly drove the swine off a cliff into the sea and drowned! They begged Jesus not to send them into the deep abyss, and then the crazed herd of hogs dove into the sea of Galilee anyway “and

perished in the waters” Matt 8:32. Such is the nature of God’s judgments. “The LORD is known by the judgment which he executes: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.” Psalm 9:16.



God sent the Seed of the woman, His only begotten Son, into the world. But “Satan comes immediately, and takes away the word that was sown” Mark 4:15. The Father gives; the destroyer takes. The God of truth plants good wheat but the father of lies sows weeds. “An enemy has done this,” Jesus said. Matthew 13:28.

Satan entered into Judas. Luke 22:3. When Judas allowed that, his destruction was certain. With the Destroyer inside, it was inevitable that he would be destroyed. When Judas saw that he had “betrayed the

innocent blood,” he “departed, and went and hanged himself.” Matthew 27:5. “The wages of sin is death” Romans 6:23. Judas was given thirty pieces of silver to kill himself. How diabolical!

The Destroyer “opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God” 2 Thessalonians 2:4. The Father is the one true God; He cannot lie and His Son is the truth. John 17:3; Numbers 23:19; John 14:6. But the Destroyer destroys the truth, “because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44.

The Destroyer has destroyed the truth by telling lies about God. He began by doubting the very words of God. “Has God said?” And then he came right out and flatly denied what God had said! “You shall not surely die.” Genesis 3:1,4. The Creator warned Adam of his mortal danger, but the serpent denied it, and because man believed the lie, death was brought into the world.

Eventually, the Destroyer will himself be destroyed. “Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2Thessalonians 2:8. And when the “Son of man shall come sitting on the right hand of power” Matthew 26:64, “in the glory of his Father.” “The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and

every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains” and shall say “to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” Revelation 6:15,16.

And they ask, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” The answer comes: “He that walks righteously, and speaks uprightly” Isaiah 33:14, 15. Only those who have allowed the transforming power of God to cleanse them “as a refiner’s fire” Malachi 3:2 and “purge them as gold and silver” (verse 3) will enjoy living in God’s presence which will be to those who hold on to their sin as a consuming fire.

“Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you.” Isaiah 33:11, “therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth...and never shalt thou be any more.” Ezekiel 28:18.

**And the glory
of the Lord shall be
revealed and all flesh
shall see it together.**

Isaiah 40:5