

Satan

In the time of Jesus, Satan had authority over this world (Luke 4:6, John 14:30).

- Paul implied in Ephesians 2:2 that, at the time of that writing, this was still the case.
- During the time when Jesus was on earth through the time when the New Testament was being written, Satan was active on the earth:
 - Tempting Jesus (Matthew 4, Luke 4)
 - Orchestrating demon possession (numerous places in the gospels and in Acts)
 - Taking away the Word to prevent belief (Luke 8:12)
 - Blinding the perishing (2 Corinthians 4:4)
 - Having the power of death (Hebrews 2:14)
 - Seeking those whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8)
 - Deceiving (Revelation 12:9)
 - Accusing (Revelation 12:10)
- The best efforts of Satan could be overcome by believers (Ephesians 6:11, James 4:7, 1 John 3:8, 4:4)

This situation was predicted to change and was described as having changed.

- Jesus implied that Satan's authority over the world would end soon (John 12:31).
- Zechariah predicted the end of unclean spirits (and prophets) in conjunction with the time of the Messiah (Zechariah 13). Jesus confirmed that this prophecy was about Him (Matthew 26:31).
- Paul told the Christians in Rome that "the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly." (Romans 16:20)
- Satan and his angels were defeated in a war in heaven after Jesus returned there (Revelation 12:5 – 8). He was exiled to earth after losing the war (12:9). The accuser was thrown down. *He knew he had only a short time on earth* (12:12). He tried unsuccessfully to overcome faithful Israelites (12:13 – 16). So, he set out to make war with the Gentile Christians (12:17).
- At some point, Satan is bound in the abyss (Revelation 20:3). This bondage was for "a thousand years." In the abyss, he is unable to "deceive the nations." (Compare to 2 Corinthians 4:4)
- When 2 Peter and Jude were written, that bondage had already begun (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6)
- Jesus is king of this world now, not Satan (Revelation 1:5, 2:27, 11:15, 12:5, 19:15, Psalm 2:8 – 9).
- After the thousand years, Satan will be released. (20:7 – 10) He will go out to "deceive the nations." His release will be short-lived. No battle is described, only preparation by Satan for the battle. The saints will not know that their camp is surrounded. If they did, then they would know Judgment was very soon, having read Revelation, which would ruin the "thief in the night" image. (Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32, 1 Thessalonians 5:2 – 3, 2 Peter 3:10)

Other points to ponder:

- Jesus described the events surrounding the destruction of the Jerusalem as the worst in all of history (Matthew 24:21, Mark 13:19). Further, Jesus said, "Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved, but for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened."
- Jesus applied Daniel 7:13 – 14 to Himself (Matthew 24:30, Luke 21:27, Luke 22:69, Matthew 26:64), "the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great power and glory," which describes Jesus returning to heaven and being presented before the Ancient of Days at which time He received an everlasting Kingdom. He will return that Kingdom to the Father when Death is destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:24 – 26). Death is destroyed at Judgment (Revelation 20:14). Jesus connects His "coming on the clouds" with "gathering together the elect from the four winds" (Matthew 24:31, Mark 13:27). Jesus was careful to specify that this was not the end of time (Matthew 24:34, Mark 13:30).