

The Four Falls: Unveiling the Cosmic Rebellions

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Throughout Scripture, God's plan of redemption is set against the backdrop of repeated rebellion by both heavenly beings and humanity alike. The late Dr. Michael Heiser often described three major rebellions in Scripture, but many include the fall of Satan as a sort of prequel to the three that are most emphasized. Thus, the four major rebellions of Scripture are: the Fall of Satan, the Fall of Mankind, the Genesis 6 rebellion of the Sons of God, and the Tower of Babel. Each of these episodes helps us understand why the world is broken, why evil persists, and why we need the Messiah to restore all things.

1. The Rebellion of Satan

Long before Eden, Scripture hints at a celestial rebellion. Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, while directed against the kings of Babylon and Tyre, both echo the pride and fall of a spiritual being who sought to exalt himself above God. This figure—the adversary, Satan—desired the throne of heaven and in his rebellion became the deceiver of nations (Revelation 12:9).

Satan's rebellion introduces the archetype of pride and self-exaltation. He is not merely a tempter but a usurper, seeking to corrupt God's creation and derail His purposes. His fall sets the stage for the spiritual conflict that threads through the entire biblical narrative.

2. The Fall of Mankind

The rebellion of Satan very quickly entwines itself with human history in the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 3, the serpent deceives Adam and Eve into grasping for wisdom and autonomy apart from God. This is humanity's first fall: rejecting trust in God's goodness to define good and evil for themselves.

The result is catastrophic. Humanity is exiled from God's presence, creation is cursed, and death enters the world. It's pretty powerful to ponder that even in judgment, God issued the most amazing promise:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel" (Genesis 3:15).

This protoevangelium is the first glimmer of hope that one day a Deliverer will arise to crush the serpent and restore creation.

3. The Sons of God and the Corruption of Humanity

Genesis 6 describes another rebellion—enigmatic, but deeply significant. The “sons of God” took human wives and fathered the Nephilim, a race of giants. The book of 1 Enoch, echoed in Jude and 2 Peter, portrays this as an angelic rebellion in which these beings corrupted humanity with violence, forbidden knowledge, and immorality.

This event provides a significant context for much of the Old Testament’s spiritual backdrop. The giants (Nephilim and later Rephaim) appear in the biblical conquest narratives as enemies of God’s people, tied to the dark powers behind the nations. This rebellion isn’t just about strange offspring—it is about the deliberate attempt of heavenly rebels to corrupt humanity and thwart God’s plan to bring forth the promised Seed.

4. The Tower of Babel: The Division of the Nations

The final rebellion in this sequence comes in Genesis 11, at the Tower of Babel. Humanity, united in one language, sought to make a name for themselves and build a tower to the heavens. God judged their pride by scattering them and confusing their languages.

But as Deuteronomy 32:8–9 (in its Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint form) explains, this scattering was more than linguistic. God “*fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.*” In other words, God allotted the nations to the rule of spiritual beings, while reserving Israel as His own inheritance. These “sons of God” became corrupt, turning nations to idolatry (Psalm 82). Thus, the world of the Old Testament becomes a battleground of YHVH versus the gods of the nations.

The Storyline of Scripture: From Rebellion to Restoration

Taken together, these four falls explain why the world is as it is:

- The Rebellion of Satan introduces pride and cosmic opposition to God’s rule.
- The Fall of Man brings sin and death into humanity.
- The Sons of God in Genesis 6 unleash supernatural corruption and violence.
- The Tower of Babel fractures humanity into idolatrous nations under the influence of fallen spiritual powers.

This is the stage on which God’s redemptive drama unfolds. Israel is chosen to be the vehicle of blessing, the Messiah comes to reverse the curse, and through His death and resurrection, Jesus triumphs over Satan, sin, death, and the powers of darkness. Ultimately, the nations are reclaimed through the gospel, and the kingdom of God will restore what was lost.

Conclusion

Heiser often said, *“If you don’t understand these rebellions, you won’t really understand why the world is the way it is—or why the Bible tells the story it does.”* These four falls are not disconnected myths but the backbone of the biblical worldview. They explain the depth of humanity’s problem and highlight the glory of God’s solution in Christ, the skull-crushing Seed who will make all things new.



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