

## Moses 4:4. “He became Satan”

Satan means “the slanderer” (Bible Dictionary, “Satan”). “The English word devil in the [King James Version of the Bible] is used to represent several different words in Greek (slanderer, demon, and adversary) and Hebrew (spoiler)” (Bible Dictionary, “Devil”). Before his rebellion, Satan was called “Lucifer, a son of the morning” (D&C 76:26) and was “an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God” (D&C 76:25). In the premortal life, Lucifer sought the birthright position of Jesus Christ, the Firstborn of the Father (see D&C 76:25; 93:21), knowing that Jesus would be heir to the throne of God the Eternal Father. Lucifer’s justification for deserving the position of the Firstborn lay in his claim that he would lose none of the spirit children of God (see Moses 4:1–3). Lucifer’s proposal to redeem all mankind was not innocent or altruistic but was an act of rebellion against God through which Lucifer sought to gain followers for himself (see D&C 29:36–37).

The Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44) taught:

“The contention in heaven was—Jesus said there would be certain souls that would not be saved; and the devil said he would save them all, and laid his plans before the grand council, who gave their vote in favor of Jesus Christ. So the devil rose up in rebellion against God, and was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 209).

President Dallin H. Oaks of the First Presidency explained:

“The Father’s plan ... offered a genuine opportunity for his spirit children to achieve what he desired for them—immortality and eternal life. ...

“In his proposed modification, Lucifer [only] pretended to seek the same outcome. [In contrast to Jesus Christ (the premortal Beloved Son, who sought to further the work and glory of the Father), Lucifer sought to obtain the Father’s power for himself.]” (Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way* [1991], viii; the bracketed text is taken from the footnote on the cited page).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles discussed two truths concerning Satan that are important for us to remember:

“Number one, Satan, or Lucifer, or the father of lies—call him what you will—is real, the very personification of evil. His motives are in every case malicious, and he convulses at the appearance of redeeming light, at the very thought of truth. Number two, he is eternally opposed to the love of God, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and the work of peace and salvation. He will fight against these whenever and wherever he can. He knows he will be defeated and cast out in the end, but he is determined to take down with him as many others as he possibly can” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “We Are All Enlisted,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 44).