

ACCUSER OF THE BRETHREN

Rev 12:10 -

For the accuser of our brethren is cast down - The phrase “our brethren” shows by whom this song is celebrated. It is sung in heaven; but it is by those who belonged to the redeemed church, and whose brethren were still suffering persecution and trial on the earth. It shows the tenderness of the tie which unites all the redeemed as brethren, whether on earth or in heaven; and it shows the interest which they “who have passed the flood” have in the trials, the sorrows, and the triumphs of those who are still upon the earth. We have here another appellation given to the great enemy - “accuser of the brethren.” The word used here - **κατήγορος** katēgoros, in later editions of the New Testament **κατήγωρ** katēgōr - means properly “an accuser,” one who blames another, or charges another with crime. The word occurs in Joh 8:10; Act 23:30, Act 23:35; Act 24:8; Act 25:16, Act 25:18; Rev 12:10, in all which places it is rendered “accuser” or “accusers,” though only in the latter place applied to Satan. The verb frequently occurs, Mat 12:10; Mat 27:12; Mar 3:2; Mar 15:3, et al.

The description of Satan as an accuser accords with the opinion of the ancient Hebrews in regard to his character. Thus he is represented in Job 1:9-11; Job 2:4-5; Zec 3:1-2; 1Ch 21:1. The phrase “of the brethren” refers to Christians, or to the people of God; and the meaning here is, that one of the characteristics of Satan - a characteristic so well known as to make it proper to designate him by it - is that he is an accuser of the righteous; that he is employed in bringing against them charges affecting their character and destroying their influence. The propriety of this appellation cannot be doubted. It is, as it has always been, one of the characteristics of Satan - one of the means by which he keeps up his influence in the world - to bring accusations against the people of God. Thus, under his suggestions, and by his agents, they are charged with hypocrisy; with insincerity; with being influenced by bad motives; with pursuing sinister designs under the cloak of religion; with secret vices and crimes. Thus it was that the martyrs were accused; thus it is that unfounded accusations are often brought against ministers of the gospel, palsying their power and diminishing their influence, or that when a professed Christian falls the church is made to suffer by an effort to cast suspicion on all who bear the Christian name. Perhaps the most skillful thing that Satan does, and the thing by which he most contributes to diminish the influence of the church, is in thus causing “accusations” to be brought against the people of God.

Is cast down - The period here referred to was, doubtless, the time when the church was about to be established and to flourish in the world, and when accusations would be brought against Christians by various classes of calumniators and informers. It is well known that in the early ages of Christianity crimes of the most horrid nature were charged on Christians, and that it was by these slanders that the effort was made to prevent the extension of the Christian church.

Which accused them before our God - See the notes on Job 1:9-10. The meaning is, that he accused them, as it were, in the very presence of God.

Day and night - He never ceased bringing these accusations, and sought by the perseverance and constancy with which they were urged to convince the world that there was no sincerity in the church and no reality in religion.

