

The Devil and His Work

Introduction:

It has been said that in order to defeat your enemy you must know your enemy. Satan is the enemy of all Christians. Let us examine this foe in light of the scriptures.

I. The origin of Satan:

- A. God has made all being, both earthly and heavenly, through the word and they are good (Cf. Jn. 1:3; Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16).
- B. The heavenly beings God made were given law to follow and apparently had a free will to obey just as man:
 - 1. What this law entailed we are not told but law they did have to keep (Psalms 104:4; Heb. 1:7).
 - 2. Some did not keep their proper place, sinned and were cast out (II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
 - 3. One of these rebellious heavenly beings seems to be at the forefront of disobedience. He is referred to in scripture as the “*prince*” (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2).
 - 4. The word “*prince*” is defined as one over “evil spirits, whose hierarchies resembled human political institutions. ‘The devil’” (AG 113). “Of the devil, the prince of evil spirits... the ruler of the irreligious mass of mankind” (Thayer 79).

II. Names of Satan which help us understand the enemy:

- A. **Satan** (*satan*) = “adversary; the prince of evil spirits, the inveterate adversary of God and of Christ” (Thayer 572). “Adversary; the enemy of god and all of those who belong to God” (AG 744).
- B. **Devil** (*diabolos*) “prone to slander, slanderous, **accusing falsely; false accuser;** Satan, the prince of demons, the author of evil, persecuting good men” (Thayer 135). “The slanderer” (AG 182). Examine the examples below:
 - 1. Job 1:9-11
 - a. Satan accused Job of serving God out of selfish motives.
 - b. Satan accused Job of being weak and that he would not serve the Lord if he were in pain (2:1-7).
 - 2. Apparently the devil accuses every Christian of some wrong to God day and night (Revelation 12:9-10).
 - 3. The devil works the other way as well. He accuses God of wrong to men (Cf. Gen. 3:4-5).
- C. **The Adversary (I Peter 5:8):**
 - 1. (*Antidikos*) “An opponent in a suit at law; devil... because he accuses men before God” (Thayer 50).
 - 2. “Opponent in a lawsuit... of the devil, since he appears in court as an accuser I Pet. 5:8” (AG 73).
- D. **Tempter** (*peirazo*) (Matt. 4:3): “to test one maliciously, craftily to put to the proof his feelings or judgment, Mt. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35; to try or test one’s faith, virtue,

character, by enticement to sin; hence; to solicit to sin, to tempt; James 1:13” (Thayer 498).

- E. Beelzebub** (*beelzeboul*) (Matt. 12:24) “Lord of dung or of filth, i.e. of idolatry” (Thayer 100). His every work is unclean and defiled. The devil is immoral, corrupt and filthy. Certainly the Christian should recognize his influence and flee!
- F. The enemy** (*echthros*) (Matt. 13:39) “The hostile one; i.e. the most bitter enemy of the divine government” (Thayer 265). Here is rebellion personified. The authority of Jesus Christ means nothing to the devil.
- G. Belial** (*belial*) “worthlessness, wickedness; a name for Satan” (Thayer 955).
- H. The “god of this world”** (*theos tou aionos*) (II Cor. 4:4):
 - 1. The word “*world*” (*aionos*) is defined as “age; a human lifetime; life itself; the devil, who rules the thoughts and deeds of the men of this age” (Thayer 19).
 - 2. The word “*kosmos*” translated “*world*” has the meaning of space and time. *Aionos* indicates individuals who live in space and time. It is their lives. Apparently, those who do not render obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, i.e., the “*unbelieving*” (II Cor. 4:4) are said to be governed by the “*god of this world*.”
- I. Prince of the power of the air** (Eph. 2:2):
 - 1. The word “*air*” (*aeros*) is defined as used in Eph. 2:2 indicates the “ruler of the powers (spirits,...) in the air, i.e. the devil, the prince of the demons that according to Jewish opinion fill the realm of the air” (Thayer 13).
- J. Prince of the world** (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11):
 - 1. Here the Greek word “*kosmos*” is used in connection with the realm of the Devil. *Kosmos* is used in connection with the above passages as “the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, therefore hostile to the cause of Christ” (Thayer 357).
 - 2. The devil is therefore the spiritual father of all those who reject the authority of Jesus Christ whether they want to admit it or not (Jn. 8:44). Those who so live are to be handed over to Satan’s rule by the church (I Cor. 5:4-5).
- K. Father of lies and liars** (Jn. 8:44):
 - 1. Thayer defines the word “father” as it is used in Jn. 8:44 as, “the originator and transmitter of anything...one who has infused his own spirit into others, who actuates and governs their minds” (495).
 - 2. The governing powers of Satan are produced through lies. He lied to Eve and he lies to us today.
- L. The deceiver** (Rev. 12:9):
 - 1. “Lead astray, cause to wander” (AG 671).
 - 2. “To cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way” (Thayer 514). (Compare to Gal. 1:6 and Eph. 4:14-15).
- M. The destroyer** (*Apollyon*) (Rev. 9:11):
 - 1. “Ruin and destroy” (AG 94).
 - 2. The devil is one who is out to ruin man spiritually through his lies, deceptions and temptations that he may truly be the god of your life and ultimately ruin you as he is ruined! Indeed he is “**the evil one**” (I Jn. 2:13).
- N. The dragon or serpent** (Rev. 12:3-17):

1. "A figurative term for the devil" (AG 205).

III. The work of Satan:

- A. The devil is depicted as one who walks about through the earth ever watching for weak moments in individuals lives (Job 1:7; I Pet. 5:8; I Cor. 7:5).
- B. The devil seeks to gain advantage over God's people that they will fall (II Cor. 2:11). The objects of the devil's wrath are the saints of God and the Lord's church (cf. Rev. 12:17). To do his work he has "*devises.*"
 1. He tempts the mind through lust and vanity (I Jn. 2:16).
 2. Satan's temptation:
 - a. Lust of the flesh (I Jn. 2:16; I Cor. 7:5).
 - b. Pride of life (I Jn. 2:16)
 - c. Covetousness (I Jn. 2:16).
 - d. Persecutions (I Thess. 3:5).
 - e. Humanism (Man's dependence upon his own reasoning for direction in life)
 1. Self delusion (I Cor. 4:6-13).
 2. Another deludes through false teaching (II Thess. 2:9-10).
 3. He uses craftiness (II Cor. 11:3; Eph. 6:11).
 4. He may fashion himself into an angel of light (II Cor. 11:10-15).
 5. He may work through false religion and false teachers (II Cor. 11:26; I Tim. 4:1; II Pet. 2:1; Gal. 2:4).
 6. He plays a part in snatching the word of God from the hearts of men before they grasp the true riches of the gospel (Matt. 13:19).
 7. He blinds the minds of unbelievers that they may not benefit from the teachings of Jesus (II Cor. 4:4). Such are blind to their own error. Thereby Satan deceives many to think that they are preaching truth when in all reality they are doing the crafty and deceitful work of the devil (Matt. 7:15-23). The errorist today is no doubt a "sincere false teacher;" however, we must define the area of sincerity (cf. II Cor. 2:17). One cannot be "good and sincere" in truth while preaching error (Matt. 12:33-36).
 8. He creates doubt in the words of God in the hearts of men as he did with Eve (Gen. 3:1-6).
 9. He "*hinders*" Christians from helping other Christians (I Thess. 2:17-18).
 10. His success is well known (I Tim. 5:15).
 11. Yet the devil is only as successful as each of us let him be.

IV. The Work of Christ is set in Juxtaposition to Satan's Work:

- A. Speaking to man by divine revelation (Heb. 1:1-2).
- B. Offered a one time sacrifice that man may receive the forgiveness of sins (Heb. 8:3).
- C. Jesus now makes propitiation for the sins of man (Heb. 2:17).
- D. Jesus rescues the sinner from the consequences of sin (Heb. 2:18).
- E. Jesus mercifully helps us in times of our sin (Heb. 4:16)

V. The Work of the Church set in Juxtaposition to Satan's Work:

- A. Preach gospel message to the lost of the world so that they too can have the forgiveness of sins (II Cor. 11:8-9).
- B. Edify the members of the church that they may not be "*tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind or doctrine*" (Eph. 4:11-14).

C. Provide care for the needy saints (Acts 4:32, 6:1; 11:29; Rom. 15:25-26; I Cor. 16:1ff; II Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12).

VI. The Work of the Individual Christian is set in Juxtaposition to Satan's Work:

A. Test the spirits to determine whether their teaching represents truth (I Jn. 4:1ff).

B. Watch and warn others of the consequences of sin (Matt. 18:15ff).

C. Preach gospel to the lost (Matt. 28:18-20).

D. Respect existing government (Rom. 13).

E. Provide for self and family (II Thess. 3:10; I Tim. 5:8).

Conclusion: Is there hope or defense against such a foe?

A. Yes: Because he is no match for Jesus. When Jesus was crucified on the cross, he dealt a judgment blow to Satan that he will never recover from. Jesus took away the power of sin from the devil. Mankind is no longer in bondage to sin but have the possibility of being free from sin in Jesus Christ (Jn. 8:32; Heb. 2:14-18).

B. Yes: God and Jesus will end the reign of the Devil forever in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). Physical death will no longer be a part of humanity and the devil will be crushed (I Cor. 15:26).

C. Yes: The Lord promises us these things (Cf. Rom. 16:20).

D. Yes: There is hope now in Christ Jesus. We are promised that if we will "*resist the devil, he will flee from you*" (James 4:7).

1. Paul said, "*be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord*" (I Cor. 15:58).

2. The apostle John said, "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life*" (Rev. 2:10).