

II. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT SATAN AND WHY A PERSON NEEDS TO BE INFORMED ABOUT HIM

by Pastor Richard H. Jones

A. SATAN IS DESCRIBED AS A POWERFUL FALLEN ANGEL WHO SURPASSES MAN IN HIS STRENGTH AND WISDOM.

1. Before his fall, Satan was created to serve God and given a special position in heaven (Ezek. 28:12,15).
 - a. As anointed cherub, he held a position which was over all the cherubim whose duty it was to guard the throne of God (Ezek. 1:15-18; 10:19, 21,22; 28:14).
 - b. As anointed cherub, he held a position second only to God. He possessed complete beauty and wisdom (Ezek. 28:12).
2. The reason for Satan's fall involved pride and self-will (I Tim. 3:6).
 - a. Satan sought to seize the position of authority which belonged to God (Isa. 14:12-14). Note his 5 "I wills".
 - b. Satan led a third of the angelic host to follow him in his rebellion against God (Rev. 12:4).
 - c. Satan's sinful rebellion confirmed him in a state of wickedness along with all those angels who followed him (Jn. 8:44; I Jn. 3:8; Rev. 12:3,4).
 - d. Satan's rebellion resulted in his being cast out of his God-given position and the angelic host being divided. Those who chose not to follow Satan became the elect angels of God. Those who followed Satan were also cast out of their heavenly positions (Isa. 45:18; Lk. 10:18) and became fallen angels.
3. After his fall, Satan became the arch-enemy of God and the prince or ruler of this world, and began his warfare against God's program of the ages (Jn. 16:11).
 - a. To get back at God, Satan set his sights upon destroying man whom God had set as the crowning glory of His creation to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26).

Satan went about to tempt Eve and to introduce sin into the world which brought about the fall of man and the subsequent curse (Gen. 3; II Cor. 11:3; Rom. 5:12). This also brought man under Satan's dominion and rule (Col. 1:13; Acts 26:18).
 - b. To get back at God, Satan has continued his efforts to keep men under the curse and lost, so that they will die and spend eternity with him in hell (Matt. 25:41; I Jn. 3:8; Ga. 3:13).
 - c. To get back at God, Satan works against those who get saved to tempt them to sin and then accuse them before God (Rev. 12:10; I Thess. 3:5). He also hinders those who would serve God.

B. SATAN IS DESCRIBED BY CERTAIN NAMES WHICH REFLECT HIS WICKED AND

DECEPTIVE CHARACTER.

1. Satan means "adversary" and that is no doubt fitting since he is against God and against God's people (Matt. 4:10; Acts 5:3; Rev. 12:9).
2. Devil means "slanderer" and this describes his ungodly sentiments and activities against God's people and the things of the Lord (Matt. 4:1; Jn. 8:44; I Pet. 5:8).
3. Beelzebub means "lord of flies" and intimates the dirty and vile work over which he is the head (Matt. 12:24-26).
4. "The evil one" describes his evil nature as well as his purposes in this world (Jn. 17:15; I Jn. 5:18-19).
5. "The serpent" is a designation referring to the deceptiveness of his character as he first appeared to mankind and will yet appear (Gen. 3:1; II Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9; 20:2).
6. "Dragon" has reference to his fierce nature in conflict and how ferocious he can be when he attacks (Rev. 12:3,7,9; 20:2).
7. "The tempter" has reference to the manner and means he employs to accomplish his will in getting men to disobey God (I Cor. 7:5; I Thess. 3:5).
8. "The prince of this world" and "the god of this world" refers to his position as ruler over this present world system, so that it might have an organization and operation with no dependence nor allegiance to God (Jn.12:31; II Cor. 4:4).
9. "The prince of the power of the air" refers to his position over the fallen angelic host over which he presently rules and uses to accomplish his will in this world (Eph. 2:2).
10. "The father of lies" speaks of the means he also employs in accomplishing his will through deceit (Jn. 8:44).
11. "Accuser" refers to his present activities before God against believers (Rev. 12:10). This work of his will terminate in the middle of the tribulation period.
12. "Lucifer" means "shinning one" and has to do with the way in which the devil manifests himself in and through others (Isa. 14:12; II Cor. 11:14,15). Illustrations of this are seen in the King of Babylon (Isa. 14:4)and the King of Tyre (Ezek. 28:12).

C. SATAN IS DESCRIBED AS A GREAT DECEIVER WHO IS SCHEMING TO DESTROY THE SOULS OF MEN.

1. To accomplish his plan, Satan works through various things in this world to distract people from focusing on God and eternal things (II Cor. 4:3,4).
 - a. Satan's appeal is to keep a person's mind upon "self" rather than God and to live for the "here and now" (I Jn. 2:15-17; II Cor. 4:18).
 - b. Satan's instruments may include worldly pleasures, worldly practices, worldly philosophies, or worldly people through whom he may work (Heb. 11:25; Col. 2:8; Eph. 2:1-3;

4:18,19; Jn. 8:44; III Jn. 9, 10).

2. To accomplish his plan, Satan works through a counterfeit system of religion in this world to distort the truth and keep unsaved people from getting saved (Matt. 13:24-30; 38:43).
 - a. In this religious system, Satan has his ministers who appear to be preaching and teaching the truth (II Cor. 13:3,4, 13-15).
 - b. In this religious system, Satan deceives people's minds through a counterfeit message of the gospel to think they are saved (Ga. 1:6-9; I Tim. 1:3-7; Titus 1:10,11).
3. To accomplish his plan, Satan works on the minds of those who hear the truth in order that they might disbelieve it (II Cor. 4:3,4).
 - a. When a person hears the truth, Satan will pluck it out of his heart by getting him to doubt it or to procrastinate concerning it (Lk. 8:12). Someone has well-said, "One of the devil's most successful wiles is to wait awhile." It is no doubt true, that the devil is content to keep a man lost one day at a time.
 - b. When a person hears the truth, Satan may bring up different arguments and excuses to his mind why he shouldn't believe it. Most people don't know what a liar he is and therefore they believe his suggestions (Jn. 8:44).
 - c. When a person hears the truth, Satan oftentimes brings up the sinful testimonies of unfaithful believers or statements which are contrary to the Word of God. He may even bring Scriptures to mind or speak through someone else with a counterfeit message to keep others unsaved (Acts 16:16-18).

D. SATAN IS DESCRIBED AS A GREAT ADVERSARY WHO FIGHTS AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF GOD AND THE WORK OF GOD.

1. To defeat a believer and prevent him from serving the Lord, Satan goes about it using a two-fold strategy.
 - a. Firstly, Satan appeals to a believer with various temptations. These come through three avenues to draw the believer, by his own lust, to do contrary to God's will (I Thess. 3:5; I Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 1:13-15). The purpose is to get the believer to commit sin and destroy his testimony.
 - b. Secondly, Satan has a way of assaulting the believer to prevent him from doing God's will and work. This may involve physical illness (Lk. 13:11,16; II Cor. 12:7). If so, it is only by divine permission. Satan's assault may involve certain kinds of hindrances when believers are trying to do God's work (I Thess. 2:17,18). It may involve personal attacks from unbelievers who are used by Satan (Acts 7:54-58).

It can even involve mental thoughts such as profane words or thoughts (I Sam. 16:14).

2. To defeat a church and prevent it from doing the work of God, Satan will employ all kinds of devices.
 - a. Satan will tempt believers to commit immorality which will destroy the testimony of a church (I Cor. 5:1-8; 7:5).
 - b. Satan will lead people to harbor grudges and have an unforgiving spirit (II Cor. 2:10,11).
 - c. Satan will cause a person to act out of selfishness and vain glory and not out of love and concern for others (Acts 5:3).
 - d. Satan will use spiritual pride among believers in a church to cause dissension and divide it, so that it cannot carry on the Lord's work effectively (I Cor. 1:10-17; Phil. 2:14-16; 4:2).
 - e. Satan will use pride in certain individuals to take positions of oversight which God has not given them, and in an attempt to run things they can become offensive, hurt others, and destroy the ministry of a church (III Jn. 9,10; Heb. 5:4; Acts 20:28; I Thess. 5:12,13; Heb. 13:7,17; I Pet. 5:1-3).

Why wouldn't a person want to follow Satan? The number one reason is simply this - those who follow Satan will end up in a devil's hell for all eternity.