

SATAN – THE ENEMY OF GOD

In this study we will focus on identifying Satan and his methods of attack against believers in his ongoing war against God. How does this relate to prophecy? I believe these attacks and the deceptive powers of evil spiritual forces is going to continue to increase until the Lord Jesus returns to take His throne as King of kings. It's important that the believer be vigilant and aware of the enemy's tactics.

1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

From the earliest beginnings of man's time on earth, Satan emerged as the enemy of God and of His special creation—man and woman. We know that the angels were created before man since the book of Job declares that the sons of God rejoiced when the earth was created.

Job 38:4–7 "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

One can't help but wonder what happened to make Satan the enemy of God. The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel provide some insight.

Isaiah 14:12–14 "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

Satan developed a misplaced sense of pride. At some point he determined in his heart that he would position himself in authority over all the other angels and ascend to the dwelling place of God to become like God or equal with God. The obvious question—Why would he ever think such a thought?

Ezekiel 28:11–15 "Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

It is obvious from the wording of this section of verses that though addressed to the king of Tyre, the reference is to the evil source of power behind the earthly king of Tyre—Satan. He is identified as having “been in Eden the garden of God.” The only intelligent beings identified as being in Eden were God, Adam, Eve, and the serpent; and scripture specifically identifies this serpent as Satan.

Revelation 12:9 “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan....”

Revelation 20:2 “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan....”

Ezekiel tells us that Satan possessed the fullness of wisdom and beauty to perfection. He was adorned with the most beautiful gems and was evidently a very gifted singer. He had also been chosen to serve as one of the cherubs covering God’s throne. In fact, he is described as “perfect in thy ways” until iniquity or unrighteousness was found in him. I believe this iniquity was found in him the moment that he voiced in his thoughts the intent to be like God.

We know from the record of the Revelator that Satan had enough influence among the angelic host to cause a third of the angels to join in his rebellion.

Revelation 12:3–4 “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:”

This rebellion resulted in their falling from heaven and being cast to the earth. I believe it is this fall to which Jesus referred in the words recorded by Luke.

Luke 10:18 “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

I also believe that it was this fall that marred the original creation of earth and resulted in the six-day recreation that included man. (See the journal on Genesis 1 at my website for further details.) Satan didn’t wait long to once again act against God and recruit man to join his rebellion. Sadly, this proved to be far too easy.

When Satan planned his attack against God through man, he decided that the woman would be the more easily deceived. I am reminded that he possessed fullness of wisdom, and I am sure that it was easy to observe how much the man treasured the woman God had given him. Maybe something he observed made him realize that the woman would be easier to deceive. He seemed to understand that the man would be more easily enticed by his wife.

So what ploy did Satan use to deceive Eve? He used the most cunning creature, the serpent; he caused her to question God’s word and awakened in her spirit a sense of discontent.

Genesis 3:1–6 “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, **hath God said**, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.** And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, **and a tree to be desired to make one wise**, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

Once the enemy had awakened a sense of discontent, a desire for more than God had given her, other senses came into play. The fruit looked good and appetizing. I am convinced that the serpent ate some of it right in front of her to convince her that there was nothing to fear. After all, everything in her life had been good to that point. What did she really understand about fear of death?

Sure enough, as soon as she took of the fruit, she gave some to her husband; and he ate of the fruit from the hands of his wife without hesitation. The difference being—he acted in willful disobedience.

1 Timothy 2:13–14 “For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

It wasn't long before God confronted Adam and Eve with their sin and they began to understand the consequences of disobedience to their Creator. The Lord responded by declaring that though Satan had won a victory, he would be defeated in the end. The wording declared that there would be an ongoing battle between Satan and the woman, between the Seed of the woman and the seed of Satan. Point is made that the Seed of the woman would deal a fatal blow to Satan, but Satan would only be able to wound the One who would defeat him. I think the NIV expresses the truth most clearly.

Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

The wording was carefully chosen; God already had a plan for the redemption of man in place. It is through the seed of man that children are born of woman; through the seed of man each child inherits the sin nature. There would come One born of a virgin, of seed planted within her by the Spirit of God, the very Son of God, who would one day defeat Satan.

Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...and his name shall be called...The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Matthew 1:18-23 “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost....And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins....Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring

forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

1 John 3:8 "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Thus began the war between the spiritual forces of good and evil in the fight for the souls of men. Paul identifies this struggle in his letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 6:11–12 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The "wiles" of the devil speak of his methods, the tricks and/or strategies he uses to deceive. His great joy is to see us fall for his tricks and then accuse us before God.

*Revelation 12:9–10 "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for **the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.**"*

Job 1:6–7 "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

I believe that one of the places in which we are most vulnerable to the attack of the enemy is in the security of our own home. It was in the form of a very cunning creature in the garden, her home, that he approached Eve. He often does the same with us. It is in our homes that we are often most vulnerable to his attack, because that is the place where we tend to be least on guard, least expectant of his attack. That attack has become so much easier in light of the social mores and technology of our day.

In America and many other countries, Satan and his "seed" have been very successful in getting us to accept change in the moral culture. Things that were morally unacceptable and were done in secret fifty years ago are now practiced openly under the banner of freedom of choice. Fashions today are geared toward flaunting sexuality, and appealing to sexual appetites is a prime marketing tool used in ads daily through various media. Language today is openly rude and blasphemous in light of "equality for women" and the choice of the masses to reject God as Lord. The realm of "entertainment" is dominated by products directed at the passions of our flesh, the numbing of our minds and without regard to showing any reverence for God. Televisions and computers

bring these “entertainment” products into our homes where we are more easily seduced into making poor choices; after all, no one else is around to be influenced by our choices. Anyway, we reason, aren’t we free to operate in the grace of God? I can’t help but think of the Holy Spirit’s words given us through the Apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 6:12 & 19-20 “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any....What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

I can’t help but wonder how many harmful addictions practiced by so many people today have their roots in choices made at home regarding entertainment and relaxation.

Another “wile” of the devil is to present himself as an “angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:13–15 “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

I am convinced that this is one of the primary methods being used to destroy the “church” today. There are many in Christian leadership today that are focusing on works to benefit humanity and to better one’s self physically and financially. These are not necessarily wrong things in and of themselves; in fact, they are often good things. When, however, the church focuses on the works being done without an emphasis on bringing people to saving faith in Jesus Christ as the way, the truth and the life or bringing glory to God, they become the works of Satan.

The body of believers is to honor God first and foremost. Jesus was very clear in declaring that those who love Him will keep His commandments. What two commandments did He say embodied this truth?

Matthew 22:37–40 “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

To love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and mind is to make choices with the intent to serve Him in love and glorify Him—not self. Jesus gave some very important instructions to His disciples one day.

Matthew 7:21–23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name

have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Once again the context was regarding false prophets. The Lord is being very clear in declaring that motives are the determining factor, and that He is the only one qualified to judge our motives. He is saying that doing good works does not necessarily equal doing the will of God. Prophesying in the name of Jesus does not prove you are acting according to God's will. Casting out demons does not prove you are acting according to God's will. Performing wonderful works does not prove you are acting according to God's will. All of these actions can be performed with empowerment of evil spirits and /or with wrong motives.

More often than not these motives are related to personal profit. Peter was forthright in warning about these profiteers.

*2 Peter 2:1–3 "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And **through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...."***

I am truly amazed at the multitudes that support these false teachers often at great personal sacrifice. They are looking to these teachers in faith instead of to the Savior. They are placing their faith in "anointed objects" rather than the person of Jesus through whom true anointing comes in the person of the Holy Spirit. They are trusting in being able to "do" something that will result in their prayers being answered rather than trusting in what Christ has done for them on the cross and can /will do for them through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Manipulating the word of God to accomplish his own purposes is another of the "wiles" of the devil. It harkens back to the ploy he used with Eve—Did God really say? Don't you think He really means this? Surely He couldn't mean this!

The many versions of the scripture available today are a blessing and a curse. Though they can be used quite profitably in the study of scripture as led by the Holy Spirit, they also provide a wide open door through which heresy can sneak in or even very publicly splash right in to gain acceptance in the church.

It is amazing to me how so many who claim to be teachers of God's word, boldly refute the truth of the word of God. They use human reasoning to explain away the plain sense of the scripture to suit their own purposes. Others focus only on presenting the truths that they deem to be encouraging and comforting and never present the truth from scripture that identifies sin and declares man in need of a Savior. The Apostle Paul warned that this would happen in his letter to Timothy.

2 Timothy 4:2–4 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not

endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Note that Paul was clear in declaring the importance of using scripture to "reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." This is a clear instruction to identify sin and speak out against practicing sin. The clear implication is that this type of instruction will require patience and must continually be presented according to the truth of scripture.

Man has a strong propensity to accept as true that which least restricts him and provides him the freedom to fulfill the "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." Scripture is clear in identifying these appetites with the love of the world and the influence of the enemy.

1 John 2:15–16 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Ephesians 2:2–3 "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

The manipulation of scripture is one of the main ways that the enemy causes division in the "church" so that the effectiveness of its testimony to the world is diminished. The Lord was clear in declaring that the effectiveness of our witness is directly related to the love that we show one to another.

John 13:34–35 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

We have already addressed the truth that not everyone that professes Jesus as Lord actually possesses Jesus as Lord and Savior. These false professions are a result of the work of the enemy in getting them to embrace his lies.

John 8:44 "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

More often than not these lies are presented hand-in-hand with the scripture. They always "add to" or "take away" from the truth of the scripture as revealed through His Holy Spirit. It is this formula that has resulted in the establishment of religious cults. The Lord Jesus was clear in identifying the objective of these lies of the enemy, whom he referred to as a thief.

John 10:10 "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."

This is from the section of scripture in which the Lord Jesus refers to Himself as the Good Shepherd who is focused on taking care of His sheep vs. the thief, whose only purpose is to destroy the sheep.

My hope is that this study will serve to remind the believer of the importance of discernment based on the unadulterated truth of God's word and to place him/her on guard against the constant attack of the enemy. My heart connects with the words of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 11:2-4 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."