

Satan—the Adversary of God

Introduction

The Bible most certainly reveals the existence of Satan. Satan is the ruler of the kingdom of darkness. He is described in 2 Cor. 4:4 as “the god of this world” who blinds the eyes of those who do not believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. How dangerous it is to turn away from the simple gospel of Christ. In so doing the unbeliever opens his mind to the subtle, destructive spiritual influences of Satan.

The Bible describes Satan as “the great dragon, the old serpent, and the Devil who deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). The Bible describes Satan as a great adversary who goes to and fro like a lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8).

Sadly, those who never recover from the snare of Satan will perish with him. The Bible says, “*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone . . . and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire*” (Rev. 20:10a, 15).

My friend be of serious mind. Listen well. Watch for your soul lest you die without the Savior. Satan is real and he is active. His ultimate aim is to deceive you and lead you away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in my remaining time today let’s search the Scripture and allow the Bible to reveal the details surrounding the origin of Satan, his fall, and his activity in the Garden of Eden. As well, I would like to at least list a number of passages in the Old and New Testaments that reveal the core teaching of Scripture concerning Satan.

The Origin of Satan

An immediate question arises concerning Satan. Where did he come from? The Bible reveals that Satan was originally known as Lucifer. He held a prominent place among the angelic hosts of God. Interestingly, the Bible only mentions three angelic beings by name. They are: Michael, Gabriel, and Lucifer. Michael is the only one specifically mentioned in Scripture as an archangel. However, by virtue of Scripture naming these three angelic beings it is safe to conclude that each held a prominent place in God's hierarchy of order in heaven.

In his original state Lucifer was holy. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the "very good" creation described in Genesis chapter one Lucifer was still holy. All was very good. In fact, Lucifer would have shouted for joy as a part of the heavenly host who witnessed the creation of the material universe (Job 38:7). But shortly following the creation of the material universe he fell from his own state of purity and goodness when iniquity was found in him. Lucifer fell out of his own misguided desire to reign in God's stead. Driven by pride, he attempted to ascend to the place of God and be like the most high (Isaiah 14:12-14).

Thus, Lucifer (now more commonly known as Satan because he is the adversary of God) desired to usurp the authority of God. He was not contented to dwell in the order established by God. Instead, iniquity (self-will against God) was found in his heart (Ezekiel 28:11-19). At that point he "fell from heaven." He lost his place in heaven. Jesus said he saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Luke 10:18).

With a minimum of thought, it should be crystal clear that Jesus is not speaking of a mere *symbol* of evil, but of a real spiritual entity who is now the adversary of both God and mankind. Of course, history confirms this basic reality in many ways.

Satan Appears in the Garden of Eden

Quickly, let's move on and consider for a moment Satan's appearance in the Garden of Eden. As you know, Satan approached Eve in the garden. In hindsight we recognize his strategy was to leverage Adam into disobedience by deceiving Eve. Adam had no excuse for his behavior. He was not deceived. Adam had the authority to stop the progression of things. He could have corrected Eve and refused to disobey God. The Bible does not say sin came into the world when Eve took of the forbidden fruit, rather it very clearly states that sin came into the world when Adam disobeyed God (Romans 5).

From the moment of his fall from heaven Satan set out to oppose the rule of God. He immediately took aim at the crown of God's creative work. In as much as Satan knew Adam and Eve enjoyed a relationship with God he determined to ruin that relationship. The subsequent fall of Adam sold mankind into spiritual bondage to sin and death. Through the power of sin Satan now held mankind in the bondage of death. Perhaps the great adversary of God thought he had frustrated God's plan for the human race.

However, it is at this point the great purposes of God Almighty begin to unfold in history. In fact, God served notice on Satan that a special descendent of the woman would one day deal a death blow to his head. Spiritually, the work of this Redeemer would render Satan powerless to hold God's elect in bondage unto death.

Thankfully, in the fullness of time God sent forth the conquering Seed of the Woman, the Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem us from the power of sin and death. Thankfully, the work of his cross has once for all delivered all those who repent, renounce Satan, and turn from sin!

Now, proceeding from the early history of mankind, allow me to list a few OT and NT passages that further confirm the reality of Satan.

Old Testament and New Testament References to Satan

Job 1:1-2:10

In these two chapters the Bible quotes a conversation that occurred between God and Satan concerning Job. Two things become apparent from Job's experience: Satan cannot arbitrarily intrude into the life of God's people; and second, God does permit the trying of our faith.

1 Chronicles 21:1

In this verse the Bible says, "*And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*" It is no surprise that Satan is against Israel. He was against her then and he is still against her today. But please take note of this point: Satan stands *against* the purposes of God, be those purposes connected to Israel or the church or your personal life!

Matthew 4:1-11

Nothing confirms the reality of Satan more than the temptation of Christ recorded in the gospels. Jesus was specifically tempted of the devil in a wilderness area of the country side near to his baptism. He resisted the temptations of Satan as the perfect Spirit-filled Son of man. In light of our Lord's temptation we must be aware of the fact that Satan also approaches us with temptation. We must therefore take to ourselves the whole armor of God that we might be able to withstand in the hour of great spiritual attack.

(Note the following passages in which Jesus confirms the reality of Satan:
Matt. 12:26; 16:23; Mark 4:15; Luke 13:16; 22:3; 22:31; Revelation 2:9, 13, 24.)

(Note the following passages in which the apostles confirm that Satan is real and actively opposes the cause of Christ: Acts 5:3; 26:18; Romans 16:20; 1 Cor. 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; Ephesians 4:27; 6:11; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Peter 5:8)

Authority and Prayer

Now let me conclude with two important truths that will impact your walk with the Lord: we have authority over the power of the enemy and we have the privilege to stand against Satan in prayer.

Luke 10:17-20 . . . we have power . . . we have protection; Satan cannot arbitrarily walk into our life and do us harm.

Luke 22:31-34 . . . is there nothing for us to learn here? Stand against Satan in your prayer life; intercede boldly for others, especially for your children as they come of age!

Conclusion

One day a great many will hear these sad words fall from the lips of the Son of God: *“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . .”* Will you be one of them?