

BIBLE STUDY OF SATAN

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Warning - I Pet 5.8

1. What do we note about this passage ??
 - a. The devil is our personal adversary
 - b. He is constantly on the prowl in our life
 - c. He is seeking to "devour" us at any opportunity
 - d. We need to take this seriously

B. The importance of studying Satan

1. Past study - Learned God's attributes
 - a. His love for us => Salvation & provision
 - b. His patience & grace => Spiritual growth
 - c. His wisdom => Our effectiveness

2. Running parallel is "the other side" of the question
 - a. Salvation is needed from what ?
 - b. Growth is needed for what ?
 - c. Effectiveness against what ?

3. Satan's attributes must be seen as fueling "the other side"
 - a. He is the adversary of 1 Pet 5.8
 - b. (1 Thess 3.5) Our tempter
 - c. (2 Cor 11.3) Our deceiver
 - d. (1 Thess 2.18) Our hinderer

 - e. SUMMARY ==> OUR GOD'S ENEMY !! ... and therefore OURS !!

4. To be effective against the enemy, you must KNOW him
 - a. His character, & how he works
 - b. His strategies
 - c. Your own powers and defenses
 - d. Your Lord's strategies & commands

C. Command/Warning to be Defensive & Knowledgeable (2 Cor 2.10-11)

1. The danger of Satan's effectiveness
 - a. Today's view of Satan

J.I Packer

"The toothy red imp with tail and trident has become a secular figure of fun, and many theologians have banished a personal devil to the realm of myth "

- b. The danger is few believe in a personal Satan !
- c. The contrast is given by Owen Whitehouse, biblical critic

"That Satan exists as a personal center of evil influences, physical as well as moral (for the two are closely related), is the undoubted teaching of the Bible"

2. Where does the danger lie ?

- a. (Eph 6.12) It is dangerous to fail to see this as PERSONAL !

D. How does Satan Deceive us ?

1. Deceit by covering up

- a. His existence at all
- b. His personal attacks on us

2. What is his objective in this ?

- a. We don't resist or fight what we don't believe in
- b. If he can mask himself ...
 - We will fall into sin unnecessarily
 - We will accept primary guilt that isn't ours

E. Key objectives of this study

- 1. To alert you to your **personal** Satan
- 2. To teach you to recognize his work against you
- 3. To teach you of God's provisions for your successful fight against him

II. OVERVIEW OF SATAN

A. Origin

1. (Col 1.16) Created by Christ

"...For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible..."

2. (Ezek 28.12-15) His characteristics
 - a. (vs 12-15) A "perfect" creation
 - b. (vs 12) "...full of wisdom..."
 - Capable of choosing between good and evil
 - c. (vs 13) "created"
 - Not self-existent or self-sufficient
 - God is free to deal with him as He will
 - d. (vs 12) "perfect in beauty"
 - vs 13 gives some detail

3. His intended functions
 - a. Not documented in Scripture
 - b. Inferred by some scholars based on a few passages
(About six variations)
 - Highest authority among created beings
 - Assignment to produce race of citizens for heaven ?
 - .. Not clear where this was occurring

B. Satan's Fall

1. (Isa 14.12-14) The act recorded
 - a. Satan had everything but God's throne
 - b. AMBITION (self-promotion) was his sin
 - Five-fold assertion...
 - .. (vs 13) "...I will ascend", "..I will raise my throne",
"...I will sit "
 - .. (vs 14) "....I will ascend above", "... I will make myself like"
 - The choice to sin against God was his
 - .. Rebelled against His will and authority
 - c. (2 Thess 2.4) He will promote himself in the end
 - d. (Gen 3.4-5) Promotes the same self-ambition in men,
opposing God

2. The result (Ezek 28.16-17)
 - a. (28.15) God found sin in him
 - (Ezek 28.17a) Self-assertion => self deception
 - .. That he was like God
 - .. That he could ascend without penalty

 - b. He & his followers were expelled
 - Satan was no longer a part of God's government
 - But he still had access to God\

C. Satan's End

1. (Rev 12.7-9) Cast aways
 - a. He and his evil spirits
 - b. Cast out of heaven, forced to the earth
 - c. (Rev 20.1-3) Temporarily restrained during Millennium

2. (Rev 20.7-10) Satan permanently cast into lake of fire
 - a. No scriptural basis for Satan's statement in Milton's *Paradise Lost*

"Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell.
Better to reign in hell than to serve in Heaven"

III. UNDERSTANDING SATAN

A. Names & Nature

1. Importance of a name
 - a. In West, strictly sentimental
 - b. In East, descriptive, predictive, significant
 - Elijah - "Jehovah is my God" => Faith of his parents
 - Jacob - "cheat" to Israel "prince with God" => descriptive

2. At least 30 different names describe Satan >> his character
 - a. Satan**
 - "adversary", "opposer"
56 times in OT as God's specific adversary
 - (1 Thes 2.18) Hinderer

 - b. The Devil**
 - Hebrew word means "hairy"
 - .. Always used with an evil connotation
 - .. Used of goats and satyrs
 - + Satyr = demon spirit of the desert
 - + Goat = Image of Satan with horns & hoofs

 - Greek word is "diabolos"
 - .. "slanderer", "malignant accuser" .. 35 times in NT
 - .. A paid informer's label
 - .. (Job 1.8-11) Slandered Job
 - + His intent (vs 11) => Have Job slander God !
 - + Satan wants to reproduce his own character in the believer !

c. Beelzebub

- (2 Ki 1.2,16) Baal-zebub..."god" of the Philistines
- (Matt 12.24) Same Beelzebub
- "Lord of the flies"
 - .. A presider of corruption
 - .. Modern day Examples
 - + Personal life => "new morality"
 - + Social life => Drugs, drunkenness, adultery
 - + Political life => bribery
 - + Christian life => false doctrine

d. The Serpent

- (Rev 12.9), (Isa 27.1)
- (Gen 3.1) "crafty" => misused wisdom
 - .. (Matt 10.16) Jesus said to be as shrewd as serpents, so shrewdness is promoted by Christ
 - .. But Satan used shrewdness for an evil purpose

- Heb "nachash" => "enchanter", also "serpent"
 - .. He was not repulsive to Eve
 - .. Didn't arouse suspicion or fear in her

e. Murderer (Jn 8.44)

- (Jn 10.10) Satan's desire = to kill

f. (1 Pet 5.8) Roaring lion

- Lion is bent on DESTRUCTION
- Lions don't roar until after kill => confidence
 - .. Can terrify by roaring
 - .. (2 Cor 11.14) Can beguile by disguise
- End is the same...DESTRUCTION

g. (Jn 8.44) Liar

- He speaks according to his own nature = character
- He speaks the truth with a twist
 - .. Hypocrisy, exaggeration, deceit

h. (Matt 4.3) Tempter

- Used in two ways in Scripture
 - .. Neutrally = to test
 - .. Inciting to evil

- God often allows both to happen in same event
 - .. E.g. Joseph & Potphor's wife
 - + Satan was tempting to evil
 - + God was allowing this to tempt & refine Joseph

i. The Dragon

- Found only in Revelation
- (Gk) Any great monster
 - .. Ferocious and frightening
 - .. Malignant powers

j. (1 Jn 5.19) The Evil One

- Picture = whole world lies in his arms !

k. (Jn 14.30) "prince of this world" **(2 Cor 4.4) "god of this world"**

- The head of the world system (kosmos)
- (Jn 12.31) Jesus announced this is temporary
- Where did he get is from ? => Adam !

l. (Eph 2.2) Prince of the domain of the air

- Not of heaven or of hell
- He rules the middle ground between heaven and earth
 - ... for now

m. Summary of all these descriptive names

- Satan is a multi-talented tempter and destroyer
- Believers must be on their guard for his subtle and various approaches

B. His overall nature

1. An added title

- a. St Augustine called Satan "Simins Dei"
 - The ape (or imitator) of God
 - (2 Cor 11.13-14) directly supports this

2. Note how he directly opposes God's Trinity

- a. End times in Revelation (Rev 16.13)
 - God's Trinity = Father, Son, Holy Spirit
 - Satan's trinity = Devil (dragon), beast, false prophet

3. Thorough imitation of Christianity

- a. His own **church** (Rev 2.9)
- b. His own **ministers** (2 Cor 11.4-5)
- c. His own **theology** (1 Tim 4.1)
- d. His own **sacrifices** (1 Cor 10.20)
- e. His own **communion** (1 Cor 10.21)
- f. His own **gospel** (Gal 1.7-8)
- g. His own **throne** (Rev 13.2)
- h. His own **worshippers** (Rev 13.4)
- i. His own **teachers** (2 Pet 2.1)

4. A startling contrast: Holy Spirit vs. Satan

a. Holy Spirit's mission

- Regenerate & sanctify God's people
- Equip them for God's service

b. Satan's mission

- Draw men away from God & salvation
- Stop the progress of the Gospel

c. Points of contrast

-- Holy Spirit

- .. (1 Jn 4.6) Spirit of truth
- .. (Jn 14.17) Spirit of truth
- .. Life-giving
- .. (Rom 1.4) Spirit of Holiness
- .. (Rom 8.26) Helper
- .. Our Advocate
- .. Gives utterance

-- Satan

- .. Spirit of error
- .. Father of lies (Jn 8.44)
- .. Murderer
- .. Author of evil (Matt 6.13)
- .. Adversary (1 Pet 5.8)
- .. Slanderer
- .. Makes dumb

-- Both contend for CONTROL of YOU !

- .. YOUR **WILL** chooses which to follow
- .. (Eph 4.27) Ignoring the conflict **DEFAULTS** to Satan !

C. Satan's Current Status

1. Has set up a rival kingdom
 - a. (Lk 11.18) vs. (Jn 3.5)
 - b. (Jn 12.31) Note he is a "ruler" but not a "king"
 - c. His followers acknowledge him by NOT acknowledging God and Christ
 - d. (Acts 26.16,18) His kingdom CONTRASTS with God's

2. Kingdom has organized lines of power (Eph 6.12)
 - a. Very real meanings in Paul's day ...
 - "rulers" = authorities over specific regions & politics
 - "powers" = particular evil spirits of energy, violence
 - "darkness of this world" = Spirits who foster sorcery, astrology, superstition, spiritism, idolatry => Eastern religions

 - "spiritual wickedness" = spirits invading religious experience to deceive & lure men from the truth

3. Scripture consistently paints a costly war going on
 - a. (1 Jn 5.19) Satan & his evil demons
 - Objective: man's ruin, embarrassment of God

 - b. God & his angels
 - Objective:
 - .. Highest good for man
 - .. Man's salvation
 - .. God's glory

4. The battle front = heart of the believer
 - a. The world (Gk = "kosmos" = world system)
 - Society organized to exclude God
 - Master principles of the system (see his character ?)
 - .. Selfishness
 - .. Greed
 - .. Ambition
 - .. Pleasure
 - .. Force

 - Recognize its principles in operation today ?
 - .. Can you recognize its specific lure on YOU ?

5. Observation of Thomas Secker (English prelate of 1700's)

"A soul without watchfulness is, like a city without walls, exposed to the in-roads of all its enemies"

6. Our watchfulness warning ...

"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil,
prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"

IV. SATAN'S KEY STRATEGIES

A. Strategy with UNBELIEVERS

1. Main strategy (2 Cor 4.4)

- a. Main strategy => "blind the minds"
 - If you can't see, you can't recognize the truth
- b. Liberating truth = "...the light of the gospel..."

2. Methods of blinding (2 Cor 2.11) => "schemes"

a. Feeds the mind

- Wrong thoughts, impressions of God
- Prejudices
- Philosophies contrary to God's

b. Occupies the mind

- With interests in world's THINGS
AND/OR
- With concerns
- He will choose PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE

c. Tricks / Tools to do this

- Takes away effects of the Word
 - .. Parable of the Sower
 - + Birds picked up the sown seed
 - .. Satan does same by ...
 - + Causing distractions
 - + Shut down attention
 - + Give tired impression while witnessing, teaching,
preaching
- Takes away unbeliever's caution
 - .. Warning of strong man not guarding household goods
 - .. Turns aside conviction of sins, plants impression God
won't judge

- Tempts them in disguise
 - .. Covers his true purpose...
 - + Defeating man's salvation
 - + Embarrassing God
 - .. Masquerades as man's benefactor
 - + Humanism (man will succeed)
 - + One-world unity
 - + Self-rights
 - + Individualism, egalitarianism (impossible duality)
- Deceives concerning truth of the Word
 - .. Deceived Eve by planting doubt
 - + Grew situation by exploring possibilities
 - .. Mixes some truth with error
 - + Make the deceit possibly credible
 - + Misquotes Scripture
 - + Quotes Scripture out of context

3. Organizational pressures on unbelievers

- a. Cults to support non-existence of Satan
- b. Unbelieving churches
 - Highly organized
 - Ecclesiastical & authoritative in appearance
 - Give SEMBLANCE of Scripture as discussion's foundation
 - Never teach Satan as existing, let alone a personal adversary
- c. End results Satan wants
 - Comfortable culture making belief in Satan ...
 - .. immature
 - .. archaic
 - .. instable

4. Societal pressures on unbelievers

- a. (Rom 13.1-2) God's way ==> **Order** under Him
- b. Satan's way
 - Incite men to lawlessness
 - Grow permissiveness to grow sin's effects
 - .. Ever accelerating cycle ==> note today !
(2 Tim 3.1-5)
 - Sell each person on rights, independence
 - ==> drives them to DEPENDENCE on SIN

B. Strategy with BELIEVERS

1. Satan's objectives

- a. Christ now out of reach
- b. Attack His church !
 - Max - wipe it out
 - Min - neutralize its witness to Christ

2. Obstacles Satan has to overcome

a. The truth of the Word

- Suppress contact with it at all
- Suppress effective contact with it
 - .. Prayerful study & meditation
 - .. Sharing / discussing productively

b. The aid of the Holy Spirit

- Suppress belief in His existence
- Suppress effective dependence on Him
 - .. E.g. fear of charismatic movement
 - .. Feeling of "disloyalty" to Father, Son

c. Biblical attitudes of turning ALL over to ...

- Lordship of Christ
- Control of Holy Spirit

3. Key strategies

a. Intervention when we are ready to give Christ full control

- Intercede with ...
 - .. Relatives & friends
 - .. World's opinions
 - .. Our own doubts and fears

b. Put pressure on church from two directions

- Persecution
 - .. On whole church in some countries
 - .. On individuals strongly adhering to God's commands
- Popularity
 - .. Draw many different views into the organization
 - + Dilutes church strength by joining without conviction
 - + WCC, NCC => liberal directions

c. Discredit the church

-- Create discord and division

- .. Scripture warns of need for unity
- .. Church members appealed to via prejudices, ambitions, envy, intolerance, internal differences of opinion

- .. Zeal for truth increased to overzealousness

- .. Scripture's answer = BALANCE
 - + Satan will get believer off-balance in any direction and then shove hard !
 - + Dependence on Holy Spirit = our balance pole

-- Confuse & subvert through apostasy

- .. Promotion of false doctrines (1 Tim 4.1a)
- .. "doctrines of demons" = "doctrines taught by demons"
- .. Attacks on key doctrines ...
 - + Inerrancy of Scripture
 - + God's nature ("unisexual")
 - + Christ's divinity
 - + Christ's sacrifice as complete atonement
 - + Christ's resurrection
 - + Personality & work of Holy Spirit

- .. (2 Pet 2.1-3) Objectives => to exploit !

4. OVERVIEW: Believer's key strategy

- a. (1 Pet 5.8) Be AWARE
- b. (Jam 4.7)
 - SUBMIT to God's methods
 - RESIST Satan's strategy for victory