

Satan
and
how
he works

by R. K. Campbell

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• INTRODUCTION

Make no mistake about it—Satan is a real personality. He is also a positive enemy against God, all His purposes, His activities and His people. The name Satan means “adversary,” and Devil means “accuser.” He is called “the prince of demons” in Mt. 12:24.

In Revelation 12:9-10 our adversary is labeled “the great dragon,” “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.” He is also designated there as “the accuser of our brethren,” accusing them before God day and night. The name “great dragon” would speak of his power politically as world ruler and “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2). “That old serpent” speaks of his power spiritually as the deceiver of the whole world and “god of this age who blinds the minds of those who believe not” (2 Cor. 4:4).

Satan is the same old serpent who came in the Garden of Eden and deceived Eve and led her and Adam into disobedience and sin against God. Eve had to afterwards say, “The serpent beguiled (or deceived) me” (Gen. 3:13).

• HIS ORIGINAL PLACE AND FALL

In Isaiah 14:12-15 and in Ezekiel 28:12-19 we have a remarkable account of the original place which Satan once had as “Lucifer, son of the

morning.” His fall from this original, exalted place, of perhaps the greatest of created angelic beings, is given in these Scriptures. Pride, self-will, iniquity, rebellion and violence are the reasons given for his fall.

Under the figure of “King of Tyrus,” Ezekiel declares that this great created being “had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” He was on the holy mountain of God and every precious stone was his covering. He was set there as “the anointed covering cherub”

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by God and walked up and down in the midst of stones of fire. He was perhaps the appointed guardian of the holiness of God, probably over this original planet earth. The inspired record says, “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee” (Eze. 28:12-15).

The prophet Isaiah says (ch 14): “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning.” The name “Lucifer” comes from a Hebrew word that means “bright or shining one.” The title “son of the morning” is a poetic expression for “the morning star.” Lucifer, the bright morning star, is the first name given this

great angelic being as he came from the creative hand of God. Great as he was, he was only a creature of God, responsible to obey his Creator.

Five times we have the expression, "I will" and the fifth one is "I will be like the most High." Lucifer was not satisfied with the exalted place he had in the creation of God. Ezekiel says, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness" (Eze. 28:17). So he purposed to exalt himself and his throne and aimed to be like God Himself. In particular, he was probably envious of the place of the Son of God and wanted to be as high as He. His ambition and aim was to be worshipped as God, and he has never given up this ambition. The "I wills" expressed by Satan manifest the very essence of sin: it is the will of the creature set against the will and appointment of the Creator. So sin came into the universe by Lucifer's self-will before man was ever created.

Furthermore, we learn from Ezekiel 28 that Lucifer engaged in a multitude of traffic, which means "going about." He filled heaven with violence and sinned. The Word says, "Thou has defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic" (vv. 16, 18). We believe this indicates some unholy traffic or going about of Lucifer, whereby other angelic creatures were seduced from their alle-

giance to their Creator and gave their loyalty and devotion to him.

Thus Lucifer instigated violence and rebellion among the heavenly hosts before man was created, and those who followed him became his angels or demons. Divine sentence of expulsion from his exalted place as “the anointed covering cherub” was pronounced, though not yet fully executed. This will take place at a future time according to Revelation 12:7-17. As fallen from this heavenly place in the government of God, he is afterwards called Satan, the adversary, and in the New Testament he is named the Devil (Job 1:6-12; Mt. 4:1-11).

• SATAN AND JOB

The book of Job (ch. 1:8-19; 2:1-8) gives us an early illustration of the hatred and malice of Satan against God’s people. God said of Job that he was His servant of whom there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man that feared God and abstained from evil. Then we read that Satan answered Jehovah and insinuated that Job wasn’t fearing God for nothing, and that if He (God) would put forth His hand and touch all Job had, Job would curse Him to His face. Here Satan revealed his accusing character and maliciousness.

When God allowed Satan to touch all that Job had, but told him not to put his hand upon Job

himself, Satan went forth from the presence of God and terrible things began to happen to his children and to his possessions.

It was Satan who stirred up the Sabeans and the Chaldeans to plunder Job's animal possessions and to slay his servants. He was the one who made fire to come down from heaven and burn up the sheep, and the great wind to arise and blow down the house where Job's seven sons and three daughters were, killing them all. This shows something of the great power of Satan and his wicked enmity against God's servants. But it also reveals that Satan can only go as far as God allows.

When Job held fast his integrity and did not curse God or make charges against Him, but fell to the ground and worshipped after all these calamities, God again held up Job to Satan as one who stood steadfast and faithful to Him.

Satan then responded with renewed accusation and charges against Job, saying that if Job's bones and his flesh were touched, he would curse God to His face. When God told Satan Job was in his hand to do what he would, with the restriction of sparing his life, it is recorded that Satan went forth and smote Job with boils from the sole of his foot to the top of his head.

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The Lord allowed Satan to severely try Job and cause him intense suffering and anguish for his ultimate good. The patriarch never cursed God, and Satan was defeated. The end of Job was that he had a greater realization of God and of his own sinfulness, and his possessions were doubled from what he had before. He was also given seven more sons and three daughters who were the fairest women in all the land.

• PARABLES OF MATTHEW 13

In the New Testament we have the activity of Satan indicated in several of the parables which the Lord gave as to the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 13.

In the first parable of the sower of the good seed, the Lord said that "some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up" (v. 4). In explaining the parable, the Savior said that "the seed is the Word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (v. 19, also Luke 8:11-12).

Here we see the activity of Satan in hindering the Word of God from lodging in the heart and in preventing souls from believing the gospel and being saved. Of course, it is wayside ground that is hardened by the traffic of the world, and the seed of the Word of God only lies on the surface. So the Devil can easily

snatch it away by getting one occupied with other things, causing the Word of God to be forgotten.

In the second parable, good seed is sown in a field, and "while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares (or darnel) among the wheat and went his way" (v. 25). Darnel is a noxious weed that resembles wheat. In the explanation of this parable, the Lord said, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil" (v. 37-39). The Lord set forth in this parable the activity of Satan as an enemy in spiteful opposition to the sowing of the good seed of the pure Word of God.

Satan has ever been busy in the sowing of his deceptive and false teachings which are represented by the tares, or darnel. Imitation, deception, and corruption are manifest in the figure of darnel. The Devil sows deceptive and imitation seed that poisons and corrupts the minds and hearts of mankind. He has an imitation, modernistic gospel; an imitation, false Christ; and an imitation, false church. In this way Satan seeks to destroy God's work of true Christianity by introducing a clever imitation of the real thing. Those who accept Satan's evil teachings become spiritually related to him. They become "children of the wicked one" as the Lord

said. Their character is molded by his promptings and influenced by his subtle teachings.

• AN ANGEL OF LIGHT

The apostle Paul met in his day those who were doing the deceptive work of Satan. They sowed his poisonous darnel and demonstrated that they were children of the wicked one. Notice how he wrote about them to the

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Corinthians: "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" (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

When it suits his purposes, he comes as an angel of light and as a minister of righteousness. He has his ministers who quote from the Bible as he himself did when he tempted the Lord Jesus. But they twist and distort the Scriptures as the apostle Peter stated in his second epistle (2 Pet. 3:17). So also the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatian believers about those who troubled them and perverted (distorted) the gospel of

Christ (Gal. 1:7). The Devil is the great deceiver who works through his servants who have been deceived by him and seek to deceive and lead others astray.

Paul wrote to Timothy that “in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy” (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

Doctrines of demons from seducing, lying spirits are boldly proclaimed in many places today under the name of Christianity. The apostle John exhorts us to “try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jn. 4:1). We must test everything by all the Word of God and not just take isolated texts and give them our own interpretation. The prophet Isaiah declared long ago: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isa. 8:19-20).

• A ROARING LION

Satan is also mentioned in quite an opposite character in the Bible. The apostle Peter wrote the Christians in his day that they should “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren” (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

The figure of a roaring lion presents Satan as the persecutor of God's people. The early Christians suffered much in this way from the hatred and efforts of Satan to wipe out the Christian testimony by cruel treatment and death. The word to the assembly at Smyrna was: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ... be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Our great adversary has continued his unrelenting opposition to the Church of God throughout the centuries, even to this present time. Cruel men who inflict suffering and persecution upon God's servants are but tools in the devil's hands.

• A DEFEATED FOE

For the Christian, Satan is a defeated foe! Jesus Christ took part of flesh and blood "that through death he might annul him who has the might of death, that is the devil; and might set free all those who through fear of death through the whole of their life were subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15 JND).

As the resurrected Lord, Jesus declared: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and have the keys of hell and death" (Rev. 1:18). As the one who has gained the victory over Satan, death

and the grave, He will one day bind up the devil and seal him in a bottomless pit during the thousand year kingdom reign.

Finally He will cast Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone where he will be tormented for ever and ever (Rev. 20:1-3, 10). So James tells us: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7).

• THE FATHER OF LIES

Though Satan has been defeated by Jesus Christ, he continues as an unrelenting foe in his warfare against God and His people. So it is important that we be aware of the tactics and ways of our great adversary. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “Lest Satan should get advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11).

He also exhorted the Ephesian believers not to “be carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14, NASB). Such things are undoubtedly inspired by Satan, the father of lies.

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The Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees who hated Him: "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. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not" (Jn. 8:44-45).

• SATAN'S SIEVE

An example of the work of Satan against believers in Jesus is given by the Lord Himself in His words to Peter. Luke 22:31-32 (NASB) records: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

Satan demanded to have Peter, the chief of the apostles, to sift him as wheat. Perhaps he observed some self-confidence in Peter and demanded to test him and shake him up badly in his sieve, as he had done with Job centuries before. He probably thought he could bring Peter to disgrace and ruin him as an apostle and witness for Christ. At any rate, Satan's demand as to Peter manifests his enmity and purposes to do evil against the followers of Christ.

However, it is so good to observe that the Lord, whom Peter loved and followed, knew all Satan's purposes and allowed Peter to fall into

the enemy's sieve. But first He warned Peter about it and assured him that He had already prayed for him that his faith would not fail.

The Lord in His love saw that it was necessary for Simon Peter to be sifted to bring out all the chaff of self-confidence that was there: for all that is left in a sieve is the worthless chaff. The genuine wheat falls through, so Satan only has the chaff left in his sieve.

Both Peter and the Lord were gainers through the sifting experience the devil demanded. Peter failed sadly by denying the Lord three times, but wept bitterly in repentance when the cock crowed and the Lord looked upon him. He was made to realize how weak he was in himself.

The Lord's prayer for him sustained his faith and he was recovered and restored to the Lord thereby. He was then better fitted to confirm and strengthen his brethren afterwards, which he did in the strength of the Lord. Satan can only touch a child of God as the Lord allows him, and never without the Lord's intercession for us.

• JUDAS AND SATAN

A quite different illustration of the way and victory of Satan in his work as an adversary of Christ is seen in Judas Iscariot. He was chosen as the twelfth apostle by the Lord, who knew all along his real character. Jesus once said to the twelve: "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one

of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray him" (Jn. 6:70-71).

We will see that Satan later took possession of Judas and used him as his instrument in the betrayal of Christ to the multitude that arrested him and brought him to the high priest and elders. But before this happened, Judas was a thief, stealing out of the treasury bag of the apostolic band as John 12:6 tells us. He was covetous and loved money. So we find him going to the chief priests of the Jews and saying to them: "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him" (Mt. 26:14-16).

The next thing we read of Judas is that when the passover supper was ended, the devil "now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son to betray him" (Jn. 13:2). Though Judas accompanied the Lord in His marvelous ministry of three and one-half years, heard all His wonderful words, and witnessed His gracious acts of mercy and miracles, his heart was untouched by it all. He carried on his thievery and covetousness which opened his heart to carry out Satan's evil design.

At the last supper, the Lord dipped a morsel of bread in sauce and gave it to Judas. This was a custom of the host to honor a guest and it

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indicated a pledge of love. We read that “after the sop Satan entered into him (Judas). He then having received the sop went immediately out; and it was night” (Jn. 13:15-30). Judas turned his back upon this last appeal of love from the Lord and Satan possessed him to do his work of betraying the Savior to His enemies with an insincere kiss.

When Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, “He felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders saying ‘I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’ But they said, ‘What is that to us? See to that yourself!’ And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hung himself” (Mt. 27:3-5, NASB).

**Christian,
defeated foe.**

Such was the tragic end of one who was so close to the Savior, yet never yielded his heart and soul to Christ. Instead, he listened to Satan and was possessed by him to betray the loving Master to those who were the devil’s servants clamoring for Jesus’ death.

Though Judas had remorse for what he did—a deep torturing sense of guilt—he did not truly repent or turn to the Lord whom he had sinned against. (“Repent” in Mt. 27:3 KJV is not a correct translation). Instead of repenting to God, he went out and committed suicide. So Peter later said: “Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place” (Acts 1:25). He did

not go to paradise as the repentant, dying thief did. How sad is the history of Judas who sold his soul to Satan for money. It was truly as the Lord said, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born" (Mt. 26:24).

What a warning lesson Judas is for any mere religious professors. He was so privileged to be so close to the Lord, and yet there was never a vital link of faith with Christ or any heart surrender to Him. What a contrast Judas is to the apostle Peter who failed, but loved the Lord, truly repented and was restored and greatly used in His service.

• SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS

In studying how Satan approached Eve in the garden of Eden and tempted her to transgress

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against God's one commandment, we find he used a three-fold appeal. In the temptations which Satan set

before the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness, the same three-fold appeal is seen.

The apostle John tells us in 1 John 2:16 about these three gates through which Satan seeks to enter by his attacks and temptations to individuals. He tells us what is in the world system of which Satan is the god. It is called "this present

evil world" from which Christ died to deliver us (Gal. 1:4).

Lust of the Flesh. Man is possessed by a nature that is characterized by its fleshliness: its appetite, desires, cravings and passions. Satan appeals to these desires of the flesh. With Eve, she saw that the forbidden fruit was good for food. When Satan tempted the Lord Jesus, his first proposal was that He make stones into bread to satisfy His hunger.

Lust of the Eye. The second sphere which characterizes the nature of man is indicated by the phrase "the lust of the eye." Satan appeals to the sense of seeing and awakens desires through the eye. What we see we desire and covet, and then we attempt to obtain it for ourselves. Man is basically covetous or selfish by nature and Satan seeks to lead one away in temptations through the lust of the eye. In the case of Eve, she saw that the forbidden tree and fruit was pleasant to the eyes.

The second temptation which the devil brought before the Lord, as given in the moral order presented in Luke's Gospel, appealed to the eye. Satan took Jesus up into a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and offered the power and glory of them to Him if He would worship him.

Lust of the Pride of Life. The third gate through which Satan seeks to enter into the life of an individual is the realm designated as "the

pride of life." Pride is characteristic of human nature. Man is basically proud and there are sins that appeal to pride. The fallen nature loves and strives for that which promotes, elevates and pleases the individual. Eve in the garden saw that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which they were forbidden to eat, was "a tree to be desired to make one wise." The appeal of Satan was to all three lusts and then she took and ate of the forbidden fruit in transgression against the commandment of God (Gen. 3:6).

In the case of the Lord, the third temptation of Satan was that Jesus should cast Himself down from a pinnacle, or high peak, of the temple to show that He was the Messiah and that nothing would happen to Him (Lk. 4:2-12). This would appeal to any pride of life, but there was no indwelling lust or sin in the Lord to respond to the temptations of the devil. He met all the appeals of Satan by quoting the Word of God and acting in obedience to the will of God. Jesus defeated Satan and all his temptations by submission to the holy Scriptures in dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit. So Satan departed from the Lord in defeat.

Victory Over Temptation. We can get victory over Satan and his temptations in the same way that the Lord did: by using the Word of God and acting upon it. To the young men in the family of God, the apostle John wrote: "Ye are

strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 Jn. 2:14).

The Word of God dwelling in our souls as a controlling principle of our lives will make us strong and enable us to overcome the temptations of our wicked adversary. The psalmist David could say: "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer" and "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 17:4; 119:11). The Lord Jesus used specific and appropriate Scripture to resist each particular temptation of Satan.

It is not just the Word of God in general, but specific Scriptures that meet the enticement of the tempter. So as part of the armor of God, we are exhorted to take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). It is the particular Scripture which the Spirit of God brings before us that we are to use against Satan and his temptations.

• HOW SATAN OPERATES BY DEMONS

We previously noted that Satan is spoken of as "the prince of this world" on three occasions (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The word "prince" here means "ruler." A prince is head of a principality and has a kingdom. So we are told that our warfare is "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high

places" (Eph. 6:12). Satan thus heads up a great kingdom of evil. He has a great host of demons that are evil spirits in his kingdom.

In the book of Revelation we read about a future time when there will be war in heaven between Michael and his angels, and the dragon, "called the Devil, and Satan," and his angels. Then Satan and his angels will be cast out of heaven onto the earth (Rev. 12:7-9). Also in Revelation 9:1-11 we have a prophetic scene in symbolical language; locusts torment men upon the earth. It is stated that they have a king over them who is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon, which mean "destroyer" in Hebrew and Greek respectively. This represents the Devil and his demons, whose purpose in the future day will be to torment and destroy mankind.

These Scriptures tell us clearly that Satan has a great host of fallen angels who are under his rule and control, and that he carries on his diabolic work through these spirit beings who are lying and seducing spirits (see 1 Ki. 22:22; 1 Tim. 4:1).

God of this world. Furthermore, as the god of this world system, Satan has authority over a federation that also includes all of the unsaved and fallen humanity whom he takes captive and uses at his will (2 Tim. 2:26). The apostle John wrote: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one"

(1 Jn. 5:19 NASB). We are also told that “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not” (2 Cor. 4:4).

How blessed that the believer in Jesus Christ can say: “Giving thanks unto the Father ... who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son” (Col. 1:12-13).

Satan's System of Idolatry. In dealing with the pagan system of idolatry, the apostle Paul declared by inspiration of God that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice to idols “they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons” (1 Cor. 10:10-21, NASB).

Trafficking with demons goes on openly ... in many countries at a rapidly increasing rate.

The Bible thus clearly reveals that behind every pagan idol there is a demon and that the sacrifices offered to such idols are offered to demons and not to the one and only true God. There was the table of demons and the table of the Lord, and expressed fellowship with one or the other.

Associated with the whole satanic, pagan system of idolatry were many other demon activities about which Moses of old warned the children of Israel. In the book of Deuteronomy we read: "When thou art come in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all who do such things are an abomination unto the Lord" (Dt. 18:9-12).

Divination is foretelling of future events by supernatural means—fortune tellers. An *observer of times* was a soothsayer who professed to foretell events. Nebuchadnezzar, the king, had such in his court, as well as *astrologers* who directed the course of individual lives by observing the course of the stars. Astrology professes to interpret the influences of the heavenly bodies on human affairs, using the signs of the Zodiac. An *enchanter* was one who would cast a spell upon another by magical influences. Such an one was under control of a demon and brought another under demonic control with his enchantments.

A *witch* means "one who knows, one who prognosticates, one who foretells the future."

Witchcraft in the Old Testament was a demonic means by which future events were revealed to an individual who submitted himself or herself to control by demons. A *wizard* is the masculine form of witch, or a man who foretells.

The *charmer* was one who used magic and worked miracles by demon power as the magicians did in Egypt in Moses' day. The *consulter with familiar spirits* was one who was on personal terms with and under the control of a demon by voluntary submission to the evil spirit. Such consulters are known today as spirit mediums. A *necromancer* was one who claimed to foretell the future by alleged communication with the dead. This was accomplished by a demon who was the contact between the living world and the world of departed spirits, who often impersonated a departed person.

In these various ways Satan carried on his work of deception among mankind by his demons in days past. God plainly declares in many places in the Bible that all who practice such things are an abomination to Him.

Occultism Today. *Occult* means "concealed, hidden, secret, certain alleged mysteries." We hear much about occultism in our day. Many of the abominations God condemned in Deuteronomy 18 are practiced in so-called Christian lands. The modern day fortune teller, medium, astrologer, clairvoyant, hypnotist, magician, ventriloquist, occult and magic

healer, sorcerer, psychic and all other forms of occultism have had their ancient heathen counterpart in the practice of paganism and are condemned by God.

This trafficking with demons goes on openly in many forms and in many countries at a rapidly increasing rate. Reputable magazines and daily newspapers contain regular horoscope-astrology columns. One is written by a self-admitted sorceress who presents herself as “the most famous witch in the world.”

Universities and colleges in the U.S. and elsewhere have begun offering courses with such titles as “Witchcraft, Magic and Sorcery” because of the growing interest in the occult. Numerous churches of Satan have been founded and devil worship is actually practiced throughout the world today. Satan’s greatest ambition is to be worshipped as God and to control the mind of mankind. How sad that

**True believers
in Jesus Christ
... can never
be possessed
by a demon.**

Satan continues to successfully work by demons after nearly 2000 years of the light of Christ, the Bible and the gospel of the grace of God!

• DEMON POSSESSION

The Gospel’s contain many references to demon activity and cases of people indwelt by

demons. This demonic activity was so prevalent because the Son of God was personally present among men. When He was offering Himself as Savior and Sovereign, Satan and his hosts were stirred up into a fury of activity to oppose and defeat Christ.

To Oppose Christ. An example of this opposition is seen in Mark 1:21-27. When Christ was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum and people were astonished at His doctrine, a man with an unclean spirit (a demon) cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed" as they realized Jesus with authority commanded even unclean spirits and they obeyed Him.

When Jesus presented Himself as the Savior and taught the Word of God with power, He was immediately met with this outburst of violence as the demon-possessed man sought to oppose Christ and hush His voice and prevent Him from being received by the nation of Israel.

Demons are spirit beings who do not have a body of flesh and blood. They are dwellers in an unseen world. To manifest themselves among men, they must possess or control a physical body of a person or an animal. As they pos-

essed people, their influence had its effect in several different areas.

Of the Body. In Matthew 9:32-33 we see a dumb man who was brought to Jesus, possessed by a demon. When He cast out the demon, the dumb man spoke. It would seem that the deafness and dumbness was produced by the indwelling of the demon. Christ delivered the man from control by the demon and then healed the physical effects of the demon's presence in his life. From many other illustrations in the Gospels, it is manifest that demons could produce physical effects.

Of the Mind. Demons also affected men in the mental realm. Matthew 17:15 records the account of a man who came to Christ and said: "Lord have mercy on my son; for he is a lunatic" or insane. This had to do with mental derangement. The presence of the demon robbed the son of his reasoning so that his thought process was controlled by the demon instead of by the person.

Of the Emotions. It is manifest by cases in the Gospels that demons also have influence upon individuals in the emotional realm as well. In the above case from Matthew 17:15, the father also said, "my son is sore vexed" or agitated and upset. In the same incident recorded in Mark 9:18, the father said his son "pineth away," or was growing weak from distress.

The demon-possessed individual, known as

the Gadarene demoniac, described in Mark 5:1-20, is a striking and vivid example of what demons can do to a person. In this case he was indwelt by a legion of demons, enough to afterwards enter into 2000 swine and control them. They affected his body so he left his place of residence. It affected his emotions for he dwelt among the tombs because he felt unclean and had a guilt complex. He was in such mental depression that he was always cutting himself with stones and crying night and day. He was brought to this hopeless and utterly helpless condition by the demons under the direction of Satan. But the Lord Jesus completely delivered him from the power of Satan and all his demons, and was found with Jesus, "sitting and clothed, and in his right mind" (Mark 5:15).

• THREE ACTIVITIES OF SATAN

Satan, the Prince of Demons, seems to use three different activities or approaches in his attacks by demons. In Acts 10:38 we read that Jesus went about "healing all that were *oppressed* of the devil; for God was with him." This would be attack by **oppression**. The original word means "to exercise dominion against one, to be overpowered." The demons put pressure upon and exercise harsh control over one who is oppressed.

Secondly, we read of people who were "*vexed* with unclean spirits" and were healed (Lk. 6:18,

Acts 5:16). The Greek word has the meaning of “being tormented, harassed, troubled and disturbed.” This may be called **obsession**, which Webster’s dictionary defines as “to haunt or be troubled in mind to an abnormal degree; the state of being obsessed with an idea, desire, emotion—one that cannot be got rid of by reasoning.”

Thirdly, Scripture speaks of some “*possessed of demons*” and indwelt by them (Lk 8:36; Acts 8:7; 16:16). **Possession** means to be completely under the control of a demon. Those thus afflicted in the time of the Lord expressed the mind and consciousness of the demon or demons indwelling them.

Undoubtedly demons carry on their diabolical three-fold activities among people today as they did in Bible times. But because true believers in Jesus Christ are indwelt by the Spirit of God, they can never be possessed by a demon. 1 John 4:4 assures us: “Ye are of God, children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

However, it is possible that a child of God may be oppressed and vexed by demons and come under some obsession and disturbance of mind, even doubting his salvation for awhile. But deliverance is soon experienced by the believer if he sets his mind on things above and considers himself dead to the things of Satan (Col. 3:1-5).

• CONCLUSION

There is only one who can deliver souls from Satan and his demons. That One is Jesus of Nazareth who cast out demons when He was here on earth. He has defeated Satan by dying for sinners and rising from among the dead. He is the victorious One who will end all of Satan's power one day. We are told to resist the devil and be steadfast in the faith (1 Pet. 5:8,9). The apostle Paul could write: "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Great Savior. Victory over Satan is by the blood of the Lamb of God. The apostle John tells us: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn. 3:8). Again we are told in Hebrews

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2:14, Christ took part in flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." As the glorified Son of Man He says: "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hades and of death" (Rev. 1:17,18).

It has been well said that death is the boundary line of Satan's power, but where he leaves off, the God of resurrection begins. Thus in the great resurrection chapter, 1 Corinthians 15, the apostle Paul gives thanks for victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has defeated Satan in His death and resurrection, so there is victory by the blood of the Lamb of God and salvation, strength and power. Those exercising saving faith for salvation in the blood of the Lamb are on the victorious side in the battle of the ages against Satan.

The Great Question. Reader, whose side are you on? Have you given your heart and soul to Jesus Christ the victorious Savior? If not, you are under the power of Satan, the great adversary and deceiver who will one day be bound up for a thousand years by Jesus Christ and finally be cast into the lake of fire forever (Rev. 20:1-3, 10). He is already a defeated foe. And if you listen to Satan and reject or neglect the claims of Jesus Christ upon you and do not yield your heart and life to Him, your eternal destiny will also be that of "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41). We plead with you now to take Christ, the victorious one, as your Savior and be eternally saved.

Grace & Truth

210 Chestnut Street, Danville, IL 61832

or • P.O. Box 4902, Kaduna Junction P.O., Kaduna, Nigeria

Email: tracts@gtpress.org / Web: www.gtpress.org