

LESSON TWO

THE DEVIL

A. THERE IS A PERSONAL DEVIL:

The Bible teaches that there is a personal devil. Many would teach that the devil is just an impersonal force or influence, the tendency to do evil. However, this is not the case. There is a living personal devil that is our greatest adversary.

His power and influence should never be underestimated. Although we have no desire to become acquainted with him we should learn to know our enemy. Knowledge of his motives and his tactics will aid us in our battle against sin and help to give us the victory.

He apparently was created an archangel of great beauty, wisdom, and power. He undoubtedly was given great authority and possibly was made ruler over part of God's universe. Some believe that he was the ruler of this world before creation as recorded in Genesis. He was lifted up with pride and reached for equality with God (Isaiah 14:12-15). Through this pride and rebellion sin came into being and the devil fell, taking a host of angels with him. He struck at God by causing man to fall and has used man as a pawn ever since in his battle and rebellion against God. He still has access to the presence of God where he accuses the brethren.

The devil is not omnipresent but his presence is localized. However, he may appear anywhere at any time and in his absence he has a host of demons and fallen angels to do his evil work under his direction.

B. THE DEVIL IS A MURDERER, A LIAR AND A THIEF.

In the character of the devil is seen a personality that is wicked and perverted, while at the same time extremely clever and subtle. His true character may be seen in the following Scriptures:

1. Thief, one who catches away - Matthew 13:19.
2. Murderer - John 8:44.
3. Liar - John 8:44.
4. Subtle - II Corinthians 11:3.

C. THE DEVIL HAS MANY TITLES THAT DESCRIBE HIS CHARACTER.

1. Angel of light - II Corinthians 11:14.
2. Roaring lion - I Peter 5:8.
3. Prince of the power of the air - Ephesians 2:2.
4. Power of darkness - Colossians 1:13.
5. Prince of this world - John 14:30.
6. Great Dragon (cruelty) - Revelation 12:9.
7. Serpent (seducer) - Revelation 12:9.
8. Satan (adversary) - Revelation 12:9.
9. Devil (tempter) - Revelation 12:9.
10. Apollyon (destroyer) - Revelation 9:11.
11. King of the bottomless pit - Revelation 9:11.
12. God of this world (head of its religion) - II Corinthians 4:4.

A detailed study of the above titles and Scriptures will help one to understand the true character and nature of the devil.

D. THE DEVIL FELL THROUGH PRIDE AND REBELLION:

Scriptural Reference:

"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. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit" (Isaiah 14:12-15).

Here in Isaiah's prophecy is seen clearly just how the devil fell. He undoubtedly was an archangel of great power and glory. However, he was not content with this God-ordained state. He became exalted and reached for equality with God.

Five times he states his determination to be equal with His Creator:

1. I will ascend into heaven;
2. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
3. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation;
4. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
5. I will be like the most High.

It should be noted that it is this same sin of pride and rebellion that caused Adam to fall and has constantly been the main sin of the human family. The Apostle Paul calls this sin "the mystery of iniquity" (II Thessalonians 2:7). It is the sin of the creature rising up to deify itself. It is the sin of declaring "Not Thy will but my own will be done." It is this pride and rebellion, which caused the fall of the devil and his angels.

E. THE DEVIL IS VERY POWERFUL BUT NOT OMNIPOTENT.

Scriptural Reference:

"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" (Ephesians 6:11-12).

A person must never underestimate the power of the devil. However, he is not omnipotent. All power is given only to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18). Jesus is more powerful and will conquer the devil in the end. The devil is a defeated foe; Jesus is the conquering King.

He has many subordinates to do his will. A host of fallen angels and demons are subject to his will. We see under his power, principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places. The forces assailed against the church are tremendous. In Jesus there is glorious victory; apart from Jesus there is only defeat.

A person should also remember that the devil may appear anywhere at any time but he is not omnipresent. As a rule the battle of the true child of God is with some demon power which is doing the will of the devil.

F. THE WORK OF THE DEVIL IS TO CONSTANTLY ATTACK THE PURPOSES OF GOD.

A careful study of the following Scriptures will reveal the work of the devil in constantly attacking the purposes of God and trying to keep the will of God from being accomplished:

1. Seeking whom he may devour - I Peter 5:8.
2. Sowing tares (evil doctrine, leaven, etc.) - Matthew 13:25-39.
3. Blinding minds - II Corinthians 4:4.
4. Sifting as wheat - Luke 22:31.
5. Destroying the flesh - I Corinthians 5:5.
6. Accusing the brethren - Revelation 12:10.

G. THE DEVIL WILL BE JUDGED AND WILL BE CAST ALIVE INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE.

The devil is a conquered enemy. His judgment is certain and will be final. There is no redemption for the devil.

At the present time the devil still has access to the throne of God where he accuses the brethren. Jesus saw him cast out and fall from heaven like lightening (Luke 10:18). Undoubtedly, Jesus was speaking prophetically. As the Great I Am He could speak of the future as being already fulfilled.

The final steps in the judgment of the devil can be seen in a careful study of the following Scriptures:

1. Revelation 12:7-9 - He is cast out of Heaven to the earth.
2. Revelation 12:12 - He stirs up man against God knowing that his time is short.
3. Revelation 20:1-3 - He is chained by an angel and cast into the bottomless pit during Christ's reign upon earth.
4. Revelation 20:7-10 - After being loosed a little season, he is cast into the lake of fire forever.

LESSON TWO

SELF HELP TEST

Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

1. The devil is not _____.
2. The devil is a conquered _____.
3. The Bible teaches that there is a _____ devil.
4. The devil has man _____ to do his will.
5. Jesus saw the devil cast from heaven like _____.
6. He was an _____ of great power and glory.
7. The devil fell through _____.
8. The devil is a _____.
9. The meaning of the title serpent is _____.
10. _____ times he declared his will against God.
11. The devil is constantly _____ the brethren.
12. He is cast into the _____ pit during Christ's reign on earth.

List of words to choose from:

pride
omnipresent
subordinates
bottomless

seducer
lightening
archangel
accusing

liar
personal
five
enemy