

Satan and Devils

- A. Unlike God, Satan is not omnipresent. But he has conscripted a number of subordinate evil spirits (rebel angels) to duplicate omnipresence. **REV 12:4.**
1. Satan was an angel, now the Devil as a result of rebellion.
 2. Thus, we deduce by parallel that the devils are likely the rebel angels.
 3. These devils are also the *unclean spirits*. **MAR 3:26, 30; LUK 4:33-36.**
- B. The resurrection of Christ dealt a great blow to Satan and the devils, but they were still able to affect men. **MAR 16:17; ACT 16:16, 18; 19:15-16.**
- C. **LUK 11:24-26** highlights some things about the personality, individuality and ability of evil spirits (devils).
1. They can exist inside or outside of humans.
 - a. They may be restless outside of organic matter.
 - b. They prefer abiding in swine over nothingness. **LUK 8:31-32.**
 - c. When divinely forced out of a human host, they are traumatized. **ACT 8:7.**
 2. They are able to travel at will in and out of matter.
 3. They are able to communicate.
 - a. They can obviously communicate with each other.
 - b. They can also speak to humans through a human subject. **ACT 19:15.**
 - (1) This indicates a situation where a person's central nervous system has been taken over.
 - (2) To a lesser degree, the person who heeds and parrots doctrines of devils has become the voicebox of a devil. **1TI 4:1-3.**
 4. Each one has a separate identity.
 - a. Mark the use of personal pronouns: *I, himself, they*.
 - b. These are thinking personalities, not impersonal forces.
 5. They are able to remember and make plans.
 6. They are able to evaluate and make decisions.
 - a. The evil spirit found his human target "...empty, swept, and garnished..." (**MAT 12:44**) indicating that it could evaluate its intended victim.
 - b. That an *empty* house especially appeals to evil spirits should warn us against simply ceasing something wrong. Wrong conduct needs to be replaced with good conduct. **ROM 13:12; EPH 4:25, 28-32.**
 - c. This may have some bearing on somebody with too much of an open mind. **PRO 19:27 c/w ACT 17:21-22.**
 7. They are able to combine forces. c/w **LUK 8:30.**
 8. They vary in degrees of wickedness. c/w **MAR 9:29.**
- D. Some further observations about devils:
1. They can work miracles. **REV 16:14.**
 2. They can have strategic strongholds. **REV 2:13.**
 - a. *Babylon the great* would be especially inhabited of them. **REV 18:2.**
 - b. Apostate Israel of the apostolic era would be likewise. **MAT 12:45.**
 - c. Consider the darkness of the pre-Christian British Isles or the hellish Aztecs.
 3. They have distinctive doctrines. **1TI 4:1.**
 4. They are monotheistic. **JAM 2:19.**
 - a. That Islam, Judaism or Jehovah's Witnesses are monotheistic does not mean that their religion is of God, since they are antichrist. **1JO 2:23.**
 - b. Curiously, Charles Taze Russell of Jehovah's Witness fame was a big promoter of Zionism.

5. They know Christ is the Son of God. **LUK 4:41.**
 6. They can cause displays of incredible strength. **ACT 19:16; MAR 5:2-4.**
 7. They can cause self-punishment. **MAR 5:5.**
 - a. Devilish religion and self-mutilation go hand in hand. **LEV 19:28; 1KI 18:28.**
 - b. Ritual abuse or neglect is contrary to nature and God. **EPH 5:29; COL 2:23.**
 8. They have likewise been known to effect dumbness, blindness or deafness in men. **MAR 9:25; MAT 12:22.**
 9. They have been known to play a role in mental disorders. **LUK 8:35; MAT 17:15.**
 - a. Evil spirits apparently can affect the body or the mind negatively.
 - b. However, there are a host of organic reasons (genetics, injury, medications, psycho-active drugs, etc.) that can also affect the body or the mind.
 - c. A common way for brain-scrambling is by acceptance and rationalization of a lie, which process can mushroom into a reprobate mind. **ROM 1:25-28.**
 10. There is a connection between devils and nakedness. **LUK 8:27; EXO 32:25.**
 11. They can be affected by music. **1SAM 16:23.**
 - a. Holy Spirit-filled Christians are strengthened by joyous songs of praise. **EPH 5:18-19 c/w NEH 8:10.**
 - b. The flip-side of this coin is the powerfully negative effect that certain music can have on people. Some music doesn't drive away evil spirits, but invites them. Be not deceived on this point. **1CO 15:33.**
- E. Satan can affect the thoughts of a man's heart.
1. He can put thoughts *into* a heart. **1CH 21:1; MAT 16:23; JOH 13:2.**
 2. He can *fill* a heart. **ACT 5:3.**
 3. The heart of man by nature is a receptive vessel for Satan's ideas. **JER 17:9.**
 4. When we mentally embrace Satan's ideas and make them our thoughts, we will invariably act them out. **LUK 6:45; JAM 1:14-16.**
 5. This emphasizes the need for us to make our thoughts captive to Christ. **PRO 4:23; 2CO 10:5; PRO 16:3; PHIL 4:8.**
- F. Satan and the devils can not force their will upon men.
1. They can only entice men to yield to temptation. **JAM 1:14.**
 2. It is through yielding that men open doors to the devils' will. **ROM 6:16.**
 3. Those who suffer from Satanic oppression or delusion have at some place left a door open and given him an ingress.
 - a. Why is it that Catholics are most likely to see visions of Mary but biblically informed Christians do not see such?
 - b. Why is it that apparent "possessions" are more common around those who have an inordinate fascination with the miraculous?
 - c. Why is it that unscriptural prophetic visions are more likely to come to those who are captivated by the idea of secret knowledge beyond Scripture?
 4. Satan and the devils have always been on a leash. They can do nothing without God's permission. **JOB 1:11-12; 2:5-6.**
 - a. So much so are devils under the Divine government that God may even use them to accomplish His will against rebellious men. **1KI 22:21-22 c/w 1SAM 16:14.**
 - b. For various reasons, God may let Satan have his (limited) way with saints. **1CO 5:5; 1TI 1:20; 2CO 12:7.**
 - c. It should be emphasized that a devil cannot "possess" a saint in the sense of seizing complete ownership of his soul or even his body.
 - (1) Saints are eternally secure in Christ. **ROM 8:38-39; 1TH 5:23-24.**
 - (2) Satan may have license to trouble our flesh (**JOB 2:4-7**), but he can never

- claim ownership of the body of a blood-bought saint.
1CO 6:20; ACT 7:22 c/w JUDE 1:9 c/w JOH 6:39.
- (3) Satan may only “possess” a saint in a limited sense as a prisoner-of-war, but the saint's heavenly citizenship and power to repatriate himself remains.
2TI 2:26.
 - (4) The attacks of Satan upon the body and mind are really *oppression*.
ACT 10:38.
5. As powerful and deceptive as Satan and his devils may be, the saint has an even greater power to overcome them. **1JO 4:4.**
 - a. Death and the grave were no match for the Spirit Who raised Christ.
1PE 3:18 c/w ACT 2:24.
 - b. The same Spirit which overcame death and the grave abides in the saint.
ROM 8:11.
- G. The Christians' main concern relative to Satan's devices and power towards our persons is not the influence he may exert upon the body. It is the influence that he exerts upon our minds/hearts.
1. A survey of the post-Ascension books of the N.T. confirms that countering Satan's devices against our minds/hearts is paramount.
 2. Satan's entire operation is based upon one concept: the lie. **JOH 8:44.**
 3. His power is in the lie; therefore exposure by the truth foils him.
 4. Our battles against Satan, therefore, should not be *power* encounters (as the exorcists of **ACT 19:13-16**), but *truth* encounters.
 - a. The power encounter *was* Christ's in overcoming death. **HEB 2:14.**
 - b. The power encounter *is* Christ's in regeneration. **JOH 5:25; EPH 1:19-20.**
 - c. The power encounter *will be* Christ's on Resurrection Day. **JOH 5:28-29.**
 5. It is the truth that liberates us. **JOH 8:32.**
 6. Through the renewing of our minds to Christ's truth, we are transformed from bondage to Satan's will to the liberty of proving God's will. **ROM 12:2; 6:17-18.**
 - a. Consider Paul. Laboring under deception, his thoughts were the product of bondage to a lie. **ACT 26:9.**
 - b. Not only was he abusive to the saints, he was driving himself to the point of mental instability. **ACT 26:11.**
 - c. Once Christ debunked Satan's lies with the truth, Paul was liberated to proving God's will with soundness of mind.
 - d. Paul's conversion to a stable, godly mind via the truth was no less dramatic than the change wrought in the wild Gadarene by the sensational casting out of devils.
 - e. The same power resides in every saint if he would harness it. **2TI 1:7.**
- H. Satan's power through the lie is best realized by deception, not by plain declaration. **2CO 11:3.**
1. A summary of Satan's deception of Eve in **GEN 3:1-6** is that he basically conned her into thinking she could maximize her existence by acting independently of God and His truth.
 2. Jesus Christ's life on earth was the model of NOT acting independently of God.
JOH 5:30; 6:38, 57; 8:28, 42, 54; 14:10.
 3. There is no fulness acting independently of Christ. **COL 2:9-10.**
 4. There is only futility in so doing. **JOH 15:4-5.**
 5. This highlights the error of trying to establish one's own righteousness before God instead of leaving that up to Christ. It only breeds self-righteousness and bondage.
ROM 10:3 c/w LUK 18:9; GAL 5:1.
 6. There is no good thing that we can do independently of Christ. **2CO 3:5-6 c/w PHIL 4:13.**
 7. The person who seeks to achieve emotional, mental or spiritual fulness independently of Christ will never make it.

- a. The Book of Ecclesiastes stands as a witness to this fact.
 - b. Pay particular attention to Solomon's conclusion about finding true fulness. **ECC 12:13-14.**
 - c. Consider how much of modern day psychological and psychiatric counselling is based upon the fallacy of helping people find fulness without God.
 - d. "If we are trying to help people establish their identities, find meaning in their lives and seek to meet their needs without Christ, then we need to know that is precisely the agenda of Satan on planet earth. Sobering!"
(Neil T. Anderson, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ*, p. 39)
- I. Satan's deceptions may be doctrinal or moral in nature.
- 1. Doctrinal deceptions
 - a. can corrupt our perception of God, His love and will for us. Examples:
 - (1) "God is a tyrant if He overrules man's free will." **ROM 9:20.**
 - (2) "God cannot love me; I am too wicked." **ROM 5:8; 1TI 1:15.**
 - (3) "God will not save anyone without my participation." **MAR 10:26-27.**
 - b. can corrupt our perception of ourselves. Examples:
 - (1) "I'm not really all that bad." **ROM 3:12-18.**
 - (2) "There is a spark of divinity in all men." **ROM 3:10-11; 7:18.**
 - (3) "I am a hopeless wreck of a sinner; I'll never measure up to God's standards, so what's the point in trying?" **1JO 2:1-2.**
 - (4) "God cannot receive me; I am too unlearned." **MAT 19:13-14.**
 - c. lead us away from one truth, which starts a domino effect since all truth is interrelated.
 - (1) God has a doctrine composed of cohesive, harmonious bits and no portion of it is to be interpreted in contradiction to its internal teaching. **2PE 1:20-21.**
 - (2) Devils have doctrines (**1TI 4:1**). "Doctrines" in the Bible is always negative. **MAT 15:9; MAR 7:7; COL 2:22; 1TI 4:1; HEB 13:9.**
 - (3) Similar observations may be made of "truth" v. "truths." Many "truths" implies multiple gods, many devils. **1TI 4:1.**
 - d. lead us to blindly oppose those who stand for the truth. **JOH 16:2.**
 - e. can lead us to promote devilish doctrines like sacramentalism, prayers to dead saints, purgatory, prayers for the dead, candles for the dead, offerings for the dead, baptisms for the dead, evil generates good, grace excuses sin, marriage is forbidden, foods defile us, etc. **1TI 4:1-3.**
 - f. can open doors to moral corruption. **REV 2:14.**
 - g. can result in our loss of kingdom inheritance in this world. **ROM 16:17; TIT 3:10-11.**
 - h. are most likely to overtake:
 - (1) the worldly saint. **MAR 4:18-19.**
 - (2) the simple and unstable. **ROM 16:18; 2PE 2:14.**
 - i. are actually preferred by compromised saints. **ISA 30:9-10.**
 - 2. Moral deceptions
 - a. blind us to truth. **2TI 3:5-7; 1PE 2:1-3.**
 - b. compromise our individual testimony. **PSA 50:16-17; 1CO 9:27.**
 - c. scandalize the church's testimony. **1CO 5:1-5.**
 - d. are an affront to God's holiness, inviting wrath. **ROM 2:3-5.**
 - e. can cost us our kingdom inheritance in this world. **EPH 5:5.**
 - 3. Both doctrinal and moral deceptions are departures from truth and the liberty that only comes through truth.