

## SATAN AND HIS DEVICES

Just as God is depicted from the beginning of the Bible as the source of all that is good, pure, and true, Satan is identified as a spirit-being who is the source of every malevolent principle, act, and consequence. Thus, it was Satan in the form of a serpent who sought and secured man's first evil act and consequence. It was Satan who sought the destruction of Job (Job 1:6–12; 2:2–7). It was Satan who sought to destroy God's Son, first through temptation, then by betrayal and crucifixion. He sought not only Judas, whom he got (Luke 22:3), but all of the apostles as well (as the plural pronoun in Luke 22:31 indicates).

His very names indicate the source of the on-going conflict between good and evil. "Satan," meaning ". . . the Adversary in a very special sense, the enemy of God and of all those who belong to God . . .," is found fifty-two times in the Bible. He is called "the devil," meaning "the slanderer" some thirty-five times in the New Testament. Additionally, he is called "the tempter" (Mat. 4:3), "the evil one" (13:19), "the enemy" (v. 39), "a murderer from the beginning, . . . a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8:44), the "adversary" (1 Pet. 5:8), "Abaddon" and "Apollyon" (meaning "destroyer") (Rev. 9:11), "the deceiver of the whole world" and "the accuser of our brethren" (12:9–10).

All of these designations clearly indicate that Satan is bent on never-ceasing conflict with God, His Son, and Their people. His ultimate aim is to drag all men down to spiritual defeat and eternal damnation with him. In keeping with the descriptions above, we correctly conclude that Satan's primary tactic is deception. Many Scriptures indicate the validity of this conclusion. We are warned of the "devices" of Satan (2 Cor. 2:11). He cleverly lays snares to bring men into captivity to his will (2 Tim. 2:26). He not only apparently fashioned himself into a serpent, but sometimes fashions himself into an "angel of light," even as his servants often appear to be servants of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:14–15). He blinds the minds of the unbelievers lest the light of the Gospel dawn upon them (4:2). To accomplish the ultimate amount of deception, he stalks his prey (1 Pet. 5:8) and attacks his intended victim at the weakest point (1 Cor. 7:5). Paul warned us of his "wiles" (i.e., "a deliberate planning or system") (Eph. 6:11).

As long as there is right, the devil will provide a strong voice for wrong. He will see that pure morals are subjected to pollution. Everywhere the Truth travels, the devil will multiply error. His mission is to obscure and confuse light with the darkness of Hell.

No wonder the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to warn: “Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand stedfast in your faith...” (1 Pet. 5:8–9). **Never underestimate Satan!**

—Dub McClish

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