

SATAN'S ACCUSERS

Satan is the best friend the Church as ever had. Without him, they would have been out of business a long time ago. Without a devil to point their fingers at, they would have nothing with which to threaten their followers. "Satan leads you to temptation"; Satan is the prince of evil"; Satan is vicious, brutal, cruel," they warn. "If you give into the temptations of the devil, you will surely suffer eternal damnation and roast in Hell".

The word "satan" originates in the Hebrew language, meaning to act as an opponent or adversary. The word "devil" comes from the Latinized Greek *diabolus*. Adversary gods were common in pagan literature: Horus vs. Set, Marduk vs. Chaos, Baal vs. Yam, to name a few. Satan is associated with darkness as was the Egyptian god *Set*. The word "sunset" is derived from *Set*.

The idea of Satan is based on the presumption that humans have no moral conscience of their own. In a sense, like gravity, evil spirits were thought to be lurking, causing humans to do misdeeds. This archaic way of thinking bespeaks of how much religion contributes to mass ignorance in the twenty first century.

Evil is blamed on Satan's power to get humans to disregard their faith in God and his laws. This accusation is tantamount to admitting God is impotent while absolving the all mighty for the state of evil in human society. And if, according to Satan's accusers, only a small minority is qualified get to heaven. What else could it mean except that Satan is more powerful than God.

This whole idea of sin is reminiscent of the early days in biblical history when God wanted perfect and clean animals for sacrifice. God's grace is contingent on accepting clean humans into heaven. Contrary to Christian propaganda, it bespeaks of an unforgiving God.

The worst charge brought against Satan is deception. It is not as if Satan appears incarnate with a red body, horns and a tail. Paul tells us Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light. From this perspective it means that Satan can disguise himself as God. A believer has no way of telling the difference. No matter how you look at it, Satan provides a handy scapegoat for every fault in Christian theology.

¹⁴And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14)

In the final analyses, it is God who plays the part of judge and executioner. When bad things happen to good people, believers don't blame Satan directly. Typically, they say it was God's will. What they are really saying, without realizing it, is Satan made him do it-Satan has the power to manipulate God.

The truth of the charges against Satan based on the presumption that his accusers are telling the truth. Well, examples can be found where his accusers lied. God lied to Adam when he told him he would die on the day he ate from the tree of good and evil. Jesus lied about his Second Coming. Even Paul was an admitted liar.

⁷But if through my falsehood God's truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? (Rom. 3:7)

It is well to remember, that Satan's accusers, by denouncing him are really glorifying him. They are admitting to all the things said above. Satan rules. God's vengeance is a mark of his hopeless inability to conquer Satan. It is not a human fault.

JESUS

1. Jesus called Satan "the god of this world" and "the ruler of this world".

⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. (John 12:31)

³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; (John 14:30)

¹⁰concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more

¹¹concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. (John 16:11)

2. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. There are two kingdoms. In the spring and summer months, it is God's kingdom. Fall and winter belong to Satan.

²⁵Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand;

²⁶and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? (Matt. 12:25-26; Mark 3:23-26; Luke 11:17-20)

3. To go from darkness to light is to go from the power of Satan to the power of God.

¹⁸to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' (Acts 26:18)

4. Satan has a throne where he dwells.

¹³"I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; you hold fast my name and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (Rev. 2:13)

MATTHEW

The devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world.

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them;

⁹and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:8-9)

LUKE

The devil is able to offer Jesus all the kingdoms of the world because it was delivered to him to give to whomever he will. Who would that be?

⁵And the devil took him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,

⁶and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. (Luke 4:5-6)

PAUL

Paul was obsessed with Satan. In the extreme, he blames Satan for anything that goes contrary to his expectations. In two passages, he had some victims delivered to Satan, which was his way of saying he had them executed.

1. Paul called Elymas the magician a son of the devil and an enemy of all righteousness.

⁸But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith.

⁹But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

¹⁰and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? (Acts 13:9-10)

2. God will soon crush Satan under your feet. (That day has yet to come.)

¹⁹For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I would have you wise as to what is good and guileless as to what is evil;

²⁰then the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (Rom. 16:19-20)

3. Satan tempts you through lack of self-control.

⁵Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control. (1 Cor. 7:5)

4. I, Paul, forgive you for your sake to keep Satan from gaining advantage on us.

¹⁰Any one whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ,
¹¹to keep Satan from gaining the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his designs. (2 Cor. 10-11)

5. Satan is the god of this world who has blinded the minds of unbelievers.

⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. (2 Cor. 4:4)

6. Beware of false apostles disguised as apostles of Christ. Even Satan can disguise himself as an angel. (Then how then how can any apostle be trusted?)

¹³For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

¹⁴And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14)

7. Satan sent a messenger to be a thorn in Paul's flesh.

⁷And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. (2 Cor. 12:7)

8. Give no opportunity to the devil.

²⁶Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

²⁷and give no opportunity to the devil. (Eph. 4:26-27)

9. The devil rules the darkness.

¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

¹²For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Eph 6:11-12)

10. To resist the devil, you must put on the whole armor of God.

¹³Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

¹⁵and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace;

¹⁶besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph. 4:13-16)

11. Satan prevented Paul from visiting the Thessalonians.

¹⁷But since we were bereft of you, brethren, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face;

¹⁸because we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, again and again--but Satan hindered us. (1 Thes. 2:17-18)

12. Paul knew the Thessalonians would suffer. So out of concern they were tempted, he wanted to be sure his labor was not in vain.

⁴For when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction; just as it has come to pass, and as you know.

⁵For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent that I might know your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor would be in vain. (1 Thess. 3:4-5)

13. Paul accuses Satan for deception while praising God for deception. In this sense, they are both conspirators.

⁹The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders,

¹⁰and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

¹¹Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false,

¹²so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thess. 2:9-12)

14. When the end of the world comes, Satan will be defeated in a great battle

⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming.

⁹The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders,

¹⁰and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (2 Thess. 2:9-10)

15. Paul has two men delivered to Satan. This might suggest that Paul was one of Satan's agents until we examine 1 Cor. 5:5 which explains what Paul means by "deliver to Satan". To have their flesh destroyed means to have them killed.

²⁰among them Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Tim. 1:20)

⁵you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. 5:5)

16. Recent converts cannot be trusted to keep away from the devil.

⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil;

⁷moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders, or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (1 Tim. 3:6-7)

17. Paul had strong ideas on widowhood. If they deviated from his strictures, they must have strayed after Satan.

¹⁴So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households, and give the enemy no occasion to revile us.

¹⁵For some have already strayed after Satan. (1 Tim. 5:14-15)

18. Hopefully, God will grant that they repent and escape the snare of the devil.

²⁴And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing,

²⁵correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth,

²⁶and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. (2 Tim. 2:24-26)

HEBREWS

The devil is said to have the power of death, though there is no biblical suggestion that he killed anybody. To the contrary, the Old Testament is filled with tales of God's murderous behavior.

¹⁴Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, (Heb. 2:14)

JAMES

If you submit to God and resist the devil, he, the devil, will flee from you.

⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

PETER

1. Is the Holy Spirit so naïve that he can be lied to?

³But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? (Acts 5:3)

2. Your adversary the devil prowls like a lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him and stay firm in your faith.

⁸Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour.

⁹Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. (1 Pet. 5:8-9)

JOHN

1. Sin comes from the devil who sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared to destroy his works. Whoever does not do right by God is a child of the devil.

⁸He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

⁹No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.

¹⁰By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:8-10)

2. The evil one rules the world, not God.

¹⁹We know that we are of God, and the whole world is in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19)

JUDE

1. God is keeping the fallen angels in chains until judgment day.

⁶And the angels that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day; (Jude 1:6)

2. The archangel Michael contends with the devil for the body of Moses.

⁹But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment upon him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." (Jude 1:9)

REVELATION

There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels defeated Satan and his angels. Satan was thrown down out of heaven. Satan deceives the whole world.

⁷Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

⁸but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.

⁹And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Rev. 12:9)