

Doctrine of Demons

There are many in the world who believe Satan is just a figure of evil and that he is not a real and living entity that exists as a literal singular individual. The word of God clearly states Satan is very real. We are familiar with the account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness after He was baptized by John the Baptist. In Luke 4:2-3 we read Jesus was, "for forty days, being tempted by the devil." Here we see a singular individual referred to as the "Devil" speaking to Jesus. In Jesus' rebuke of Satan's request for worship, Jesus specifically referred to the devil as Satan (Matthew 4:10). Jesus was not visited and tempted by a figure of evil. He was visited and tempted by "Satan." Satan is defined in the word of God as "the adversary" (1 Peter 5:8).

Was Satan created good or evil? Turning to Genesis 1:31, we read, "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good." Paul wrote, "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him" (Col. 1:16). From these scriptures we learn even the angels were created by God and were given the freedom to make the choice to obey God. As the creator of all things, God has the right to expect the obedience of those who He created. Satan chose to reject obedience to his Creator, thereby choosing evil.

The apostle John, the writer of Revelation, made a reference to Satan's angels. Satan was not just a deceiver of mankind, but he also deceived some of the heavenly host and they unwisely chose to follow Satan in opposition to the will of God. This rebellion caused Satan and his disobedient angels [demons] to be cast out of heaven (Jude 6). "And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon [Satan]. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer found a place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels [demons] were thrown down with him" (Rev. 12:7-9).

Satan and his demons continue to suffer defeat at the hands of righteousness. In addition to the war in heaven and the casting out of the demons and their public humiliation, Satan suffered defeat by Jesus in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11). He was defeated when Christ was resurrected from the dead (Col 2:14-15; Heb 2:14-16; 1 John 3:8).

God does not give help to the angels that sinned. They have no hope. They have no chance for forgiveness. Jesus died for us; but He did not die for them. "For He did not subject to angels the world to come...For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham [mankind]" (Heb. 2:5,16). Jesus died on the cross for mankind but did nothing for Satan and his angels. They rebelled and were cast out of heaven with no hope of reconciliation. They know mankind has a chance to escape the fate given to Satan and his angels which are "things into which angels long to look" (1 Peter 1:12). Satan and his angels cannot defeat God or overcome Him so they deceive mankind with various temptations (Eph 5:12). Satan understands he has been "released for a short time...and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" (Rev 20:3, 8).

One of the ways Satan deceives mankind is to teach false doctrine through men who are unwilling to teach the apostle's doctrine (Phil. 3:17; 2 Timothy 1:13). The apostle Paul wrote when referring to false teachers, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their

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

In the epistle to Timothy, Paul wrote, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron" (1 Tim. 4:1-2). Paul told the evangelist Timothy that by pointing out the doctrines of demons to the brethren, "you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following" (1 Tim. 4:6). Paul told Timothy that "if anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing, but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words..." (1 Tim. 6:3-4).

A false teacher who Satan has deceived was defined by Paul as the "man of lawlessness who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God" (2 Thess. 2:3-4). Paul defined the man of lawlessness as "the one [all false teachers] whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan...and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness" (2 Thess. 2:9-12).

One of the most effective tools Satan and the demons use to deceive mankind is to confuse the pure doctrine of God's word! Peter referred to this when he wrote "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:17-18). This is how we defeat the doctrine of demons!