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### The New Testament Concept of the Personal Devil

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THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPT  
OF THE PERSONAL DEVIL

A Thesis presented to the  
Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Divinity

by

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May, 1949

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the writer's intention to show on the basis of the New Testament that our Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles and evangelists of the New Testament conceived the devil to be a very personal enemy of our Lord Himself and of the communion of saints, His Church.

The person and work of the devil, therefore, will be treated on the basis of New Testament passages. Because of the numerous New Testament references to the person and work of the devil, the scope of this paper is necessarily limited. The passages chosen are intended to cover as briefly and yet as completely as possible the activities of the devil in the world and in the Church, and through a study of these activities, the person of the devil himself.

A study of names given to the devil in the New Testament will introduce the subject, and will be followed by a study of passages on the devil's activity in general, his relation to Christ, and his relation to the Church.

It is to be noted that the subject of demoniac possession will be treated only insofar as it may add to a better understanding of the devil or his work.



## I. The Devil's Names

The word, devil, itself is one of the most commonly used words applied to Satan in the New Testament. In the original Greek ὁ διάβολος was used to denote a traducer, an accuser, or a slanderer. The New Testament thus makes use of it in I Tim. 3: 11; II Tim. 3:3; Tit. 2:3. ὁ διάβολος thus becomes the devil, the accuser, Satan - prince of the fallen angels (Matt. 9: 34).<sup>1</sup>

According to the later Hebrews, he acts as the accuser and slanderer of men before God (Job 1: 7, 12); seduces them to sin (I Chr. 21:1); and is the author of evil, both physical and moral, with which the human race is afflicted.<sup>2</sup>

In the New Testament ὁ διάβολος appears as the constant enemy of God, of Christ, of the divine kingdom, of the followers of Christ, and of all truth. He is full of falsehood and malice, and seduces to evil in all possible ways: Matt. 4: 1, 5, 8; Luke 4: 2, 3; John 13: 2; Acts 10: 38; etc. .<sup>3</sup>

Hence in I John 3: 8, ἐκ τοῦ ὁ ἐστίν means he is of the devil, is

1. Robinson's Lexicon - Greek-English, p. 168 ff.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.



like him, belongs to him. Thus οἱ ἐκ διαβόλου in Acts 13: 10 refers to the children of the devil, i.e. those who are like him, doing his commands.<sup>4</sup> The name διάβολος then may be figuratively applied to a man who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil, or to side with him.

Another of the more common names applied to the devil in the New Testament is Satan. ὁ σατάν or σατανας is an indeclinable noun taken over into the Greek from Hebrew terminology, where it meant an adversary or opponent. It is interesting to note that the LXX translates the word by using ὁ διάβολος in Job 1: 6 f.<sup>5</sup>

In the New Testament it is used most frequently with the article denoting the adversary.<sup>6</sup> He is the prince of the evil spirits, the inveterate adversary of God and of Christ. He incites to apostasy from God and to sin (Matt. 10: 10; Mark 1: 13;), circumventing men by stratagems (II Cor. 11: 14). The worshippers of idols are said to be under his control (Acts 26: 18; Rev. 12: 9). He is said both himself εἰσερχομαι εἰς τίνα in order to act through that person (Luke 22: 3), or by his demons to take possession of the bodies of men and to afflict them with diseases (Luke 13: 16; cfr. Matt. 12: 26; II Cor. 12: 7). By God's assistance he is overcome (Rom. 16: 20).<sup>7</sup>

The devil is also frequently called the Evil One, ὁ πονηρός. The Greeks used πονηρός to denote something toilsome, painful, or

4. Ibid.

5. Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, vol. II, p. 1585.

6. Robinson's Lexicon - Greek-English, p. 657.

7. Joseph Henry Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 572.



grievous. It came to be used as descriptive of those who were "in sorry plight", useless or good-for-nothing. In the moral sense it meant worthless, knavish, malicious.<sup>8</sup>

The New Testament uses the word to denote something which causes labor, sorrow, or pain; hence it is evil, both in the active or the passive sense. Rev. 16: 2 uses it to express physical evil, ἔλκος κακόν καὶ πορνεία. Matt. 6: 13 and Luke 11: 4 use τὸ πορνείον to express evil which has been inflicted on someone or may come to someone, indicative of affliction or calamity. In the moral sense of being malevolent, malignant, evil-disposed or wicked the New Testament uses it of persons (Matt. 5: 45 ἐπὶ πορνέουσι καὶ ἀγαθοῖς; and Matt. 7: 11 εἰ ὑμεῖς, πορνεοὶ ὄντες κ.τ.λ.), or of the evil spirits (Luke 7: 21; 8: 2; and Acts 19: 12, 13, 15, 16.) Thus it denotes also the Evil One, κατ' ἐξουσίαν, i.e. Satan (Matt. 13: 19; Eph. 6:16; I John 2: 13,14 and 3:12.)<sup>9</sup>

The New Testament depicts the devil also as ὁ ἐχθρός. The Greeks used the term to denote some person or thing that was hateful or hated. Homer uses it only in this passive sense. It came to mean something actively hostile or hating in later use. As a substantive ὁ ἐχθρός is the enemy, and in such use the active and the passive senses frequently coincide. Later usage applied it to someone who had been φίλος but at the present time was alienated and refuses to be reconciled.<sup>10</sup>

The New Testament uses it to denote an object of enmity, thus in Romans 11: 28 - ἐχθροὶ δι' ὑμᾶς, where it is used in antithesis to

8. Liddell and Scott, op. cit. p. 1447.  
9. Robinson's Lexicon, op. cit. p. 607.  
10. Liddell and Scott, op. cit. vol. I, p. 749.



ἄχαρητοι. In the active sense of something hostile it is used as an adjective in Matt. 13: 28, ἐχθρὸς ἄρθρωπος, i.e. an enemy, and in Romans 5: 10, ἐχθροὶ ὄντες. It is generally used as a substantive to denote an enemy, an adversary, and is used with the genitive of person (Matt. 5: 43, 44; 10: 36; 13: 25; Romans 12: 20; Gal. 4: 16; II Thess. 3: 15; Rev. 11: 5, 12); with the genitive of thing, cf. Acts 13: 10.

Used to depict the adversaries of the Messiah it is also used with the genitive, Matt. 22: 44 ἕως ἄν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον κ.τ.λ.; Mark 12: 36; Luke 20: 43; Acts 2: 35; I Cor. 15: 25; Hebrew 1: 13 and 10: 13; also in I Cor. 15: 26 and Phil. 3: 18 τοῦ σταυροῦ. It is used especially to depict Satan, the enemy, the adversary (Matt. 13: 39; Luke 10: 19 - ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύραμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ).<sup>11</sup>

Thus far the words we have examined have shown Satan to have the characteristic of a hated or hating enemy and adversary. The next words we shall take up, which are associated with or applied to the devil, describe the sphere of his active power. These words are ὁ ἄρχων and ὁ Θεός.

ὁ ἄρχων was used by the Greek as ruler or commander, chief or king. It was used as an official title to denote a chief magistrate or governor in the Athenian Empire. It was used synonymously with praefectus to denote a Roman governor.<sup>12</sup>

The New Testament makes use of this word to depict one first in authority, hence a ruler, lord, chief person, magistrate (Matt. 20: 25; Acts 4: 26; 7: 27, 35; Rom. 13: 3; of a judge, ὁ κριτῆς (Luke 12: 58);

11. Robinson's's, op. cit. p. 311.

12. Liddell and Scott, op. cit. vol. I, p. 254.



to depict Moses as the leader of Israel (Acts 7: 35); and Christ as King of Kings (Rev. 1:5); elsewhere in a Jewish usage, e.g. a ruler of a synagogue (Luke 8: 41; Matt. 9: 18,23); thus of persons of weight among the Pharisees and other sects, who were members of the Sanhedrin (Luke 11: 1; 18: 18; 24: 20; John 3: 1; 7: 20, 48; 12: 42; Acts 3: 17; 4: 5,8; 14: 5).<sup>13</sup>

It is used to depict Satan as the prince of the fallen angels, ἄρχων τῶν δαιμονίων, Matt. 9: 34; etc. (ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, John 12: 31; 14: 30; 16: 11; ἄρχων τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, Eph. 2: 2.)<sup>14</sup>

ὁ Θεός generally means God, the supreme Lord and Father of all, Jehovah (Matt. 1: 23). It refers also to the Logos, Christ, who is declared to be ὁ Θεός (John 1: 1). It may be used in the Hebrew sense, when spoken of kings or chief magistrates, as the representatives of God in the Jewish theocracy (John 10: 34, 35). In the Greek sense ὁ Θεός is a god or the deity; οἱ θεοί are the gods, i.e. the heathen gods, cf. Acts 7: 43, ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Ῥεμφάρ. Satan too is called ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, the god of this world; its leader, ruler, instigator (II Cor. 4: 4). The Jews regarded all the heathen gods as evil spirits.<sup>15</sup>

One of the chief activities of Satan, as described in the New Testament is that of an accuser, ὁ κατηγορῶν. The Greeks used the word to denote one who accused or one who was a public prosecutor.<sup>16</sup> The New Testament uses it to denote Satan as an accuser (John 8: 10; Acts 23: 30, 35; 24: 8; 25: 16,18); to denote Satan as the accuser (Rev. 12: 10).<sup>17</sup>

13. Robinson's, op. cit. p. 100.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., p. 334

16. Liddell and Scott, op. cit. vol. I, p. 927.

17. Robinson's, op. cit. p. 393.



Other terms used to depict the devil or some characteristic of his are ὁ ὄφις, and ὁ δράκων.

ὁ ὄφις was used by the Greeks as a term for snake or serpent. The New Testament uses it in the same way, usually to signify cunning. Christ uses it in one of His cogent discussions in Matt. 7: 10 in depicting fatherhood, μὴ ὄφιν ἐπιδώσει αὐτῷ, cf. Mark 16: 18 et Luke 10: 19. It is used of the brazen serpent in John 3: 14; in a good sense as the emblem of wisdom or cunning, Matt. 10: 16; in a bad sense Matt. 23: 33. Thus it was also used symbolically for Satan, II Cor. 11: 3.<sup>18</sup> Thayer points out that crafty hypocrites are frequently called ὄφεις. The serpent that deceived Eve ( see Gen. 3: 1) was regarded by the later Jews as the devil ( 4 Macc. 18: 8); hence he is called ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος.<sup>19</sup> ὁ Σατανᾶς (Rev. 12: 9, 14, 15; 20: 2).

ὁ δράκων, a dragon, serpent was used interchangeably by the Greeks with ὄφις.<sup>20</sup> In the New Testament it is used in a specific sense, symbolically for ὁ Σατᾶρ (Rev. 12: 3, 4, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17; 13: 2, 4, 11; 16: 13; 20: 2).<sup>21</sup>

ὁ βελιάλ, an indeclinable noun is used also as a synonym for Satan, i.e. ὁ πορπαός, II Cor. 6: 15; cf. I Sam. 25: 25.<sup>22</sup>

ὁ βελίας, also indeclinable, meaning Beliar, is a name of Satan used in some manuscripts for Belial in II Cor. 6: 15. This form is either to be ascribed ( as most suppose) to the harsh Syriac pronunciation of the

18. Ibid., p. 537.

19. Thayer, op. cit., p. 470.

20. Liddell and Scott, op. cit. vol. I, p. 448.

21. Robinson's, op. cit. p. 193.

22. Ibid., p. 125.



word Belial, or must be derived from Bel Jaar, lord of the forest, i.e., who rules over forests and deserts, (cf. Is. 13: 21; Matt. 12: 43).<sup>23</sup>

We must conclude that the very names given the devil in the New Testament show him to be not only a mere influence, but a very personal being.

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23. Thayer, op. cit. p. 100.



## II. General Activity

In this chapter we shall examine New Testament references to the general activity of Satan.

We shall examine first a passage which gives us the startling information that the devil in his attempts to seduce and mislead presents himself as an angel of light.

Thus in II Cor. 11: 14 we read: καὶ οὐ θαῦμα . αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ σαταράς μετασχηματίζεται εἰς ἄγγελον φωτός; and no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light.

Light is the symbol of God and His messengers,<sup>1</sup> as darkness is the symbol of Satan.<sup>2</sup> In this passage Paul is referring to one of the most startling transformations Satan undertakes in order to deceive and seduce.

The present form, μετασχηματίζεται, points to what the devil habitually does, rather than to any particular occasion.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, there is no necessity to suppose that St. Paul is here referring to some

1. Cf. I John 1: 5; I Tim. 6: 16; Matt. 28: 3; Acts 12: 7.

2. Cf. Luke 22: 53; Eph. 6: 12; Col. 1: 13.

3. A. Plummer, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," International Critical Commentary, p. 309.



historical act or alluding to some Rabinnical legend. He may have known the story of our Lord's temptation in a form which might suggest this comparison, but there is no clear trace of it in any of his epistles.<sup>4</sup>

Paul's own experience must have taught him how specious and plausible temptations to what is known to be evil can be made to look, so that sin may at last look meritorious. The experience of the Corinthians would be much the same as Paul's own in regard to the subtlety of temptations.

"It is a truism to say that, in order to tempt us, evil must be made to look attractive. The point here is that it can be made to look like innocence or like virtue."<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore in the realm of the general activity of Satan we find him taking personal interest in nullifying the effect of the Word of God upon those who have not as yet come directly under its influence; cf. Luke 8: 12: οἱ δὲ πρὸς τῆς ὁδοῦ εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες, εἶτα ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος καὶ αἶρει τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν; Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

οἱ ἀκούσαντες is not a sufficient definition of the wayside hearers. The next clause, beginning with εἶτα, must be included in the definition.<sup>6</sup> The wayside hearers thus are those, who as soon as

4. J.H. Bernard, a critical and exegetical commentary on "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. III, p. 103.

5. A. Plummer, a critical and exegetical interpretation of the "Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians", International Critical Commentary, p. 310.

6. A.B. Bruce, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Synoptic Gospels", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. I, p. 519.



they have heard, comes the devil etc.

ἔϊτα ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος is a much more vivid description than "the fowls of the air". This is Christ's own interpretation of the birds, and is strong evidence for the existence of a personal devil. The Lord pointedly insists upon a personal adversary. As Luke uses ὁ διάβολος so Matthew has ὁ πονηρός and Mark, ὁ σαταράς to designate Satan as a person. 728

The devil, however, is not content merely to take the Word out of peoples' hearts, but directly attempts to counteract the sowing of the Word by sowing his own tares. Thus we read in Matthew 13: 25: ἔν δὲ τῷ καθεύδειν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἦλθεν αὐτοῦ ὁ ἐχθρὸς καὶ ἐπέσπειρεν ἕλ'άρια ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σίτου, καὶ ἀπῆλθεν But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

ἔν τῷ καθεύδειν is equivalent to "during the night". Then came the enemy. "Weiss (Matt. - Evang., 347) thinks this feature no part of the original parable, but introduced to correspond with the interpretation (v. 39), no enemy being needed to account for the appearance of the "tares", which might grow then as now from seed lying dormant in the ground. . ." 9

7. Plummer, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Gospel According to Saint Luke," International Critical Commentary, p. 221.

8. Luke is the only one who uses the concluding words: "in order that they may not by believing be saved." It may be a sign of Pauline influence. ( Bruce, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Synoptic Gospels", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. I, p. 519.)

9. Ibid., p. 199



ἐπέσπειρεν, deliberately sowed over the wheat seed as though no other seed were there. What the devil sowed is called ἡ βίβλια. This is bastard wheat, darnel, lolium temulentum, a vegetation common in Palestine. It may be a Semitic word. Another name for the plant in Greek is ἀίρα.<sup>10</sup>

Satan, therefore, hinders the influence of the Word by sowing tares which choke off the good seed which has been sown by the Lord. In hindering the Word's influence the devil takes a decidedly personal interest in hindering the preaching of the Word as is evident in I Thess. 2: 18: διότι ἠθελήσαμεν εἰσεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἐγὼ μὲν Παῦλος καὶ ἄποστολος καὶ δῖς, καὶ ἐνέκοψεν ἡμᾶς ὁ σατανᾶς; Wherefore we should have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us.

Paul and his associates, ἡμᾶς, were anxious to see the flock at Thessalonica, but Satan hindered them, καὶ ἐνέκοψεν ἡμᾶς ὁ σατανᾶς. The context gives an adversative turn to the copula (Vulg. sed).<sup>11</sup> What particular obstacle Satan put in the way of their return, Paul does not tell us. Satan, however, did not thwart all of them permanently; they are able to send one of their number, Timothy, and are confident that God and Christ, to whom they pray will direct their way to Thessalonica.

(Cf. 3)

The means which Satan uses to thwart the worker's activity in preaching may be many. We shall here examine one specific instance, that which

10. Ibid.

11. J. E. Frame, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians", International Critical Commentary, p. 121.



has reference to St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh", on the basis of II Cor.

12: 7 b: ἔδόθη μοι σκόλον τῆ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ ἵνα με κολαφίσῃ,  
ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι; there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, a messenger of Satan or an angel of Satan was given to Paul. Paul's thorn in the flesh is here personified. It is a messenger of Satan. That Satan has angels or messengers was a common belief among the Jews, <sup>12</sup> and it is not disturbed by Christ. <sup>13</sup> That what was the will of God for good purposes might be done by Satan for evil purposes is also found among the Jews; <sup>14</sup> and that Satan may be the cause of physical suffering is a belief which is not disturbed by Christ. <sup>15</sup>

Though the original text gives us thereading Σατανᾶ, which is indeclinable and may be nominative or genitive, some would translate this term 'the angel Satan', but this translation would require ὁ ἄγγελος Σατανᾶ. Others would translate 'a hostile angel', which is grammatically possible, but not probable. In the New Testament Satan is always a proper name. <sup>16</sup>

ἵνα με κολαφίσῃ, in order that he (the messenger) may buffet me - the present tense implies frequent attacks. Because ἄγγελος immediately precedes this clause we are saved from a mixture of metaphors. A stake or a thorn cannot hit with a fist as the verb κολαφίσῃ implies, but a messenger can.

12. Cf. Matthew 9: 34 and 12: 24.

13. Cf. Matthew 25: 41.

14. Cf. Job 1: 12 and 2: 6.

15. Cf. Luke 13: 11, 16.

16. A. Plummer, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," International Critical Commentary, p. 352.



"κόλαφος is said to be the Doric equivalent of the Attic κόρυμβος. The verb is late Greek and perhaps colloquial." 17

ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι is an emphatic repetition of the purpose of the σκόλοψ, which must be remembered side by side with Satan's share in the matter. "In both cases we have present subjunctive of what was continually going on: there was frequent buffeting to counteract frequent temptation. . . ἵνα μὴ is specially frequent in I and II Corinthians." 18

The next passage which we shall consider is one in which a person is delivered to Satan for the destruction of his flesh. The passage is I Cor. 5: 5, where we read: παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ; to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

τὸν τοιοῦτον, him that is such, refers back to v. 1 - 4 where this man is described as one who had committed fornication by taking his father's wife. Concerning this one Paul says παραδοῦναι . . . τῷ σατανᾷ. This "in the view of many is a synonym for excommunication, - a thrusting out of the condemned into the 'kingdom of darkness', where 'the god of this world' holds sway . . . the added words, εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός κ.τ.λ. point to some physically punitive and spiritually remedial visitation of the sinner." 19 The adversary, ὁ σατανᾶς, of God and man welcomes every such opportunity to drag someone into the "kingdom of darkness" (I Peter 5: 8).

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. G.G. Findlay, a critical and exegetical commentary on "St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. II, p. 808.



In the New Testament we find a few instances of such cases where persons have been possessed by the devil or by demons. We shall consider one of these instances here as it is recorded in Luke 8: 29: παρήγγελλεν γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις συνηρπάζει αὐτόν, καὶ ἐδεσμεύετο ἀλύσειν καὶ πέδαις φυλασσόμενος, καὶ διαρήσσωρ τὰ δεσμὰ ἠλαίνετο ἀπὸ τοῦ δαιμονίου εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους; for he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For often-times it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.

παρήγγελλεν γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι - authorities are very evenly divided between the imperfect and the aorist. If παρήγγειλεν be right, it almost means, "he had ordered once". The command caused the cry of fear when the man saw Jesus (v. 28), and the fear is explained in the clause following, introduced by a second γὰρ.

One would expect τοῖς πνεύματιν for τῷ πνεύματι, for both in verse 27 and verse 30 we have δαιμόνια. Plummer says that "the interchange of personality between the man and the demons is so rapid, that it becomes natural to speak of the demons in the singular." 20

πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις συνηρπάζει αὐτόν - many times, i.e. on many occasions, it had seized him, or carried him away.

ἀλύσειν καὶ πέδαις. Both Luke and Mark use these two words to distinguish the handcuffs and fetters with which he was bound. "The former is used of the chain by which the hand of the prisoner was fastened to the

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20. A critical and exegetical commentary on the "Gospel According to St. Luke", by Plummer, International Critical Commentary, p. 230.



soldier who had charge of him. Like chains, ἀλώσεις are of metal, whereas πέδαι might be rope or withes. Both are included in τὰ δεσμά." 21

The imperfects tell of what usually took place during the attacks. There were moments of acute mania and intervals of comparative quiet and rationality. When the paroxysms came on the demon seized him (συνηπάκει). Then the man had to be bound in chains and fetters. These precautions were taken to prevent the demons from carrying him off into the wilderness, but they always proved futile. He was driven εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους, "in order to take him away from humane influences." 22 The wilderness is regarded as the home of the evil spirits (cf. Luke 11: 24 - δι' ἀνύδρον τόπων, "through waterless places.")

It is hoped that by the study of these passages we have shown that even in the wide sphere of the devil's general activity the New Testament treats him as a very personal enemy, who is concerned with the seduction and misleading of persons to negate the influence of Christ and the Gospel.

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21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.



### III. The Devil and Christ

Because of the wealth of material in the New Testament describing the relationship between the devil and his cohorts with the Lord, and the necessarily limited scope of this paper, we shall concern ourselves in this chapter with an examination of the devil's personal attacks on the Lord by a study of the introductory verse to the temptations of our Lord, shall see that the devil was a constant enemy of Christ, and take note how Satan subtly attacked Jesus through two of His disciples.

As the introductory verse to the temptations of the Lord, we refer to Matthew 4: 1: τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἐρήμον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος πειρασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου; Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

τότε, then, he was led up into the wilderness. The τότε implies close connection with the events recorded in the previous chapter, especially the descent of the Spirit. He was led up, ἀνήχθη, into the higher, more solitary region of the wilderness, the haunt of wild beasts (Mark 1: 13) rather than of men. "He was driven to the wilderness for the enacting of a drama which no eye might see save Heaven's. The theater of this temptation must be solitude." <sup>1</sup>

ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος, by the Spirit. The impulse came from the

1. A. Morris Stewart, The Temptation of Jesus, p. 19.



Spirit who had descended on Him (John 1: 33), as is evident also in the vivid language of St. Mark 1: 12: Straightway the Spirit driveth Him forth. It was the Spirit who led Him, for "the divine Spirit has to do with our darker experiences as well as with our bright, joyous ones." 2

πειρασθῆναι - to be tempted. This does not necessarily cover the whole experience of those days in the wilderness but notes a specially important phase. πειράζω is a later form for περάω in classic Greek. It's primary meaning is to attempt, to try to do a thing. It is used "in an ethical sense common to the Old Testament and the New Testament, to try or tempt either with good or with bad intent, associated in some texts (e.g. II Cor. 13: 5) with δοκιμάζω, kindred in meaning." 3

ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου. In later Jewish theology the devil is the agent in all temptations, the purpose of which is always evil. Bruce says that in the early period the line of separation between the temptations coming from God and those coming from the devil was not so carefully defined, and uses as examples II Sam. 24: 11 (where God tempts David to number the people) and I Chron. 21: 1 (where Satan is doing the tempting.) 4

It will be well to note here how the devil's temptations of Jesus were subtly persistent and repetitious. Scherer notes how the gospel repeats the constant refrain in verse three: "When the tempter came . . .", verse five: "Then the devil . . .", and again in the eighth verse where you have another mighty stroke "as if some giant's sword were

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2. A. B. Bruce, a critical and exegetical commentary on the "Synoptic Gospels", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. I, p. 91.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.



flashing": "Again the devil . . ." 5

Although the devil's personal attacks on Christ in the wilderness were not successful he came again and again to tempt the Lord. We shall now direct our attention to such passages.

The first passage which we shall examine occurs at the conclusion of this account of the temptation in the wilderness. According to the Gospel of St. Luke, 4: 13, we read: καὶ συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμὸν ὁ διάβολος ἀπέστη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἄχρι καιροῦ; And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

πάντα πειρασμά, every temptation, he had no further temptations at all. "He exhausted all his darts." 6

ἄχρι καιροῦ, until a fitting season, i.e., he would appear anew to tempt Him. "It is to be taken subjectively of the purpose and idea of the devil; he thought at some later time, at some more fortunate hour, to be able with better success to approach Him." 7 Historically, according to the Gospel records, Satan did not undertake this again directly, but indirectly, as it repeatedly occurred by means of the Pharisees (John 8: 40 ff), through Peter, and at last through Judas.

Next we shall consider the temptation which came to Jesus through Peter. Matthew tells us in Chapter 16: 21 and 22: From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him,

5. Paul Scherer, The Flight of Freedom, p. 35.

6. Bengel as quoted in H.A.W. Meyer, A Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospels of Mark and Luke, p. 307.

7. Ibid.



and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.

ὁ δὲ στραφεὶς εἶπεν τῷ πέτρῳ· ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ· σκάνδαλον εἶ ἐμοῦ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων: But He turned and said to Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan:

thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but these that be of men.

"Get thee behind Me, Satan" is identical with the phrase which Jesus used to order the devil out of His sight after the third temptation in the wilderness. So here, too, Satan is the archfiend.

The imperative "Get thee behind me, Satan" is an exact repetition of Chapter 4: 10. Both commands came from Jesus' lips, and both were spoken during temptations. "Satan" has the same force, but in this case Jesus directly calls Peter "Satan".

"Romanists are concerned to remove the name 'Satan' from Peter and let it mean only 'adversary', or call it an address, not to Peter, but only to the devil. Others follow with the claim that in the East 'Satan' is commonly used to designate any bold, powerful enemy. But there is no evidence for such common usage." <sup>8</sup>

σκάνδαλον - "The word always means the crooked stick to which the bait in a trap is affixed. Thus we translate 'trap', which conveys the idea of an enticement that, if it be entertained, means destruction." <sup>9</sup>  
No wonder Jesus turned so sharply against Peter, seeing the satanic trap set for Him in Peter's words.

<sup>8</sup>. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 640 f.

<sup>9</sup>. Ibid., p. 641.



"The things of God" and "the things of men" are opposites; the former are the blessed and saving purposes of God, the latter are the blind, sinful purposes and ways of men. Peter had in mind only the latter. His thinking was centered around these and not the former. "To the world the cross was offensive, to Christ whatever opposed the cross." 10

In contrast to the case of Peter, Judas was a disciple in whom the devil successfully worked, and of whom he took complete charge, John 13:27 tells us: καὶ μετὰ τὸ ψωμίον τότε εἰσῆλθεν εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὁ σατανᾶς. λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς, ὃ ποιεῖς ποιήσον τάχιον; And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

That Satan had already started a beach-head in Judas we see from John 13: 2 where we read that the supper being ended, the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him.

In John 13: 27 we read that καὶ μετὰ τὸ ψωμίον, and after the morsel, i.e. after Jesus had given him the morsel (v. 26), then Satan entered into him. Dods says that it was an ordinary custom for the host to offer such a tid-bit to any favored guest. He also remarks that some say that this morsel was made up of a morsel of lamb, a small piece of unleavened bread, and dipped in the bitter sauce, which was given by the head of the house to each guest as a regular part of the Passover. At any rate, Dods sees in the fact that the morsel was offered to Judas first, that this was the "last" appeal of Jesus to Judas, since the very mark with which Jesus chooses to single him out is a mark of distinctive favor. 11

10. Bengel as quoted *ibid.*, p. 642.

11. In a critical and exegetical commentary on "The Gospel of St. John", *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. I, p. 819.



The single word ψώμιον represents an entire forgoing act. Meyer notes that frequently also in the classics a single word only is used with μετά, which thus in the context represents an entire clause. <sup>12</sup>

And after the morsel, τότε, then, at that moment Satan entered into him. The τότε intentionally brings into relief the horrible tragic moment.

εἰσῆλθεν, κ. τ. λ., so that he was thus from henceforward a man possessed by the devil. The expression (cf. Luke 22: 3 - εἰσῆλθεν δὲ σατ-  
ανᾶς εἰς Ἰούδαν . . . ) very definitely states that Judas was now laid open to the unhindered entrance of the devil, having taken the sop without any apparent inward compunction.

ὁ ποιεῖς, ποιήσον τάχιον - What thou purporest to do, do more quickly. In the comparative lies the notion "with augmented speed", hasten it. "The imperative, however, is not permissive . . . but Jesus actually wishes to surmount as soon as possible the last crisis (His ὥρα) now determined for Him in the divine destiny." <sup>13</sup>

Thus we have shown that the New Testament treats the temptations of our Lord and the constant attacks upon His person and work as being conducted and instigated by a very personal enemy, the devil.

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12. Meyer, A Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Gospel of John, p. 397.

13. Ibid.



#### IV. The Devil and the Church

The devil's activity in the New Testament period, in which we are also a part, is not confined merely to being the prince of this world. Having failed in his attacks on the Lord and Master of the Church, he seeks to attack the Church itself, centering his attentions on the communion of saints and the individual Christian. It is this phase of his activity which we shall now consider.

Satan's chief desire is to undermine the Christian and to make him a subject, not of Christ, but of his own rule. Our Lord gives us an example of this in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 22, v. 31: Σίμων Σίμων, ἰδοὺ ὁ σατανᾶς ἐβλήσарто ὑμᾶς τοῦ σιτιᾶσαι ἡμᾶς τὸν σῆτον; Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat.

Referring to Simon Peter, Christ says that ὁ σατανᾶς desired him. Bruce says that the reference to Satan naturally reminds us of the trial of Job, and that most commentators assume that Jesus or the evangelist have the case of Job in view.<sup>1</sup> The coming fall of Peter (his denial of the Lord in the judgment hall) could not be set in a more advantageous light than by being paralleled with the experience of the man of Ua.

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1. Bruce, A critical and exegetical commentary on the "Synoptic Gospels", The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. I, p. 627.



Job also had had a good record behind him and fame before him, and the two were connected by a dark, but profitable time of trial. <sup>2</sup>

ἔξηγησάτο is not merely 'desired to have', but 'obtained by asking'. "Careful Greek writers used ἔξαιτείν for 'to demand for punishment' and ἔξαιτεῖσθαι for 'to beg off'. Later writers somewhat disregarded this distinction. The aorist implies success in the demand. It is an instance of the 'Resultative Aorist'." <sup>3</sup>

ὑμᾶς, you, the whole of you. Satan's object was the entire person of Peter. This lays stress on the fact that in the next verse Christ tells Peter that He has prayed for him that his faith does not fail (v. 32).

". . . that he may sift you as wheat": σινιάσαι is a ἄπας λεγόμενον in the New Testament, but has a definite meaning. Sifting points to the result of the process anticipated by Jesus. <sup>4</sup> Satan aimed at complete and lasting ruin.

The fact that Satan seeks to wean Christians from Christ by personal attacks is brought out quite forcibly by Paul's admonition in Ephesians 6:

11: ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὸ δῦρασθαι ὑμᾶς στήναι πρὸς τὰς μεθοδείας τοῦ διαβόλου; Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ - the panoply is the whole armor of God (τοῦ θεοῦ). God Himself supplies the armor for his army the Church. This is implied in the phrase τοῦ θεοῦ for this is a genitive auctoris." <sup>5</sup>

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Phillippians, p. 657.



πρός with the articulated infinitive (δύρασθαι) denotes subjective purpose. There are twelve instances of this type of infinitive in the New Testament and all express purpose and not result. The infinitive is used in the present sense to denote constant ability and matches the present imperative in verse 10 (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε).<sup>6</sup>

The second complementary infinitive (στῆναι) is an effective aorist: 'to stand' successfully, invincibly. The implied opposite is not flight from the enemy, but rather defeat of the enemy: 'to stand' as victor, unvanquished.<sup>7</sup>

Paul does not merely say 'to stand against the devil'; he says more: 'against the μεθοδείας, the expert methods of the devil'. Paul's emphasis on expert skill should not be over-looked. "The devil leads the opposing army, and he is no mean commander; he knows his game."<sup>8</sup>

The μεθοδείας in the plural denotes the various forms the craftiness takes, and is "fitly rendered either stratagems (which brings out the fundamental idea of method or plan in the deceit) or wiles."<sup>9</sup>

That attacking Christians is one of the chief personal activities of the devil is further developed in I Peter 5: 8b: ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος ὡς λέων ὠρομήντος περιπατεῖ ἰητῶν τινα καταπιεῖν; Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος, your adversary, Satan. The word 'Satan' (properly the adversary in a law suit) is used in the general sense of

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. S.D.F. Salmond, a critical and exegetical commentary on "The Epistle to the Ephesians", The Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. III. p. 382.



enemy in the LXX. The description of Satan, as a roaring lion, comes from Ps. 22: 14 - ὡς λέων ὁ ἀρπάξαι καὶ ἄρνούμενος. The 'walketh about' may come from Job 1: 7, where Satan (ὁ διάβολος LXX) περιεθῶν τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσας τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν πάρειμι. 'Seeking to devour' identifies him with "Hades" the land of death (cf. Prov. 1: 12) where the wicked say of the righteous man, κατακίωμεν αὐτὸν ὡς περ ἄδης ἰώντα. The present sufferings of the Christians are his handiwork as much as the sufferings of Jesus and the sufferings of Job. 10

These personal attacks of Satan upon the Christian are sometimes successful as is shown in I Timothy 5: 15: ἤδη γάρ τινες ἐξετραπήσαν ὀπίσω τοῦ σατανᾶ; for some are already turned aside after Satan.

Paul is not speaking theoretically or abstractly, but on the basis of sad experience. γάρ signifies this fact, and ἐξετραπήσαν should here be taken in the perfect sense, thus 'already some had turned off after Satan'.

Lenski points out that Paul uses various forms of expression to show lack of spiritual life. In this same chapter in verse 6 Paul uses the negative approach in these words "while living she is dead". In this verse the "turning off after Satan" is positive; godless life has already set in. 11

The word "Satan" in I Timothy v. 15 is placed in opposition to "Christ"

10. J.H.A.Hart, a critical and exegetical commentary on "The First Epistle General of Peter," The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. V, p. 78.

11. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, p. 687.



in verse 11 (ὅταν γὰρ καταστρηνιάσῃ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). All restraint of Christ is cast off willfully to gain new liberty and this means following Satan in a liberty that in reality is slavery. <sup>12</sup>

The reason Satan personally attempts to mislead and undermine the Christians by his own efforts or through the efforts of his cohorts is because he is an enemy of righteousness.

This is presented in Acts 13: 10: εἶπεν . Ὁ πλήρης πάντος δόλου καὶ πάσης ῥαδιουργίας , υἱὲ διαβόλου , ἐχθρὲ πάσης δικαιοσύνης , οὐ πάντη διαστρέφον τὰς ὁδοὺς τοῦ κυρίου τὰς εὐθείας ; And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Ὁ πλήρης πάντος δόλου καὶ πάσης ῥαδιουργίας, 'full of all guile and all villainy', these were the motives back of Elyman the sorcerer who tried to keep the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, from faith in Christ (Cf. vs. 6 - 8).

Δόλος is bait. The devil's victim, Sergius Paulus, was to snatch at the bait Elymas was offering by his arguments against the faith.

Ῥαδιουργία is 'the ability to do a thing easily'. <sup>13</sup> Thus Paul calls Elymas 'a devil's son', because he had no compunctions in misleading people so they would not come to faith in Christ.

Υἱός is to be taken in the ethical sense. A devil's son is not only offspring, but shows as well the characteristics of his father. <sup>14</sup>

Διαβόλου, no stress necessarily need be laid on the etymology of

12. Ibid.

13. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, p. 504 f.

14. Ibid.



of the word (slanderer), for a description follows in ἐχθρὸς πάσης δικαιοσύνης - personal enemy who hates all righteousness, "righteousness in the forensic sense as meeting the approval of the righteous divine Judge." 15

Further detail is given in the verse under consideration showing that this ὁ ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου never ceases turning this way and that, twisting and perverting truth so that men do not come to faith. In the rhetorical question οὐ is followed by the subjunctive as though the answer is to be 'yes' while the sense is: 'No, thou wilt not cease doing this.' 16

Satan promotes deception not only to keep the non-Christian from coming to faith in Christ, but to rob the Christian of his faith. An example of this type of activity is found in Acts 5: 3: εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Πέτρος, Ἀνανία, διὰ τί ἐπλήρωσεν ὁ σατανᾶς τὴν καρδίαν σου, ψεύσασθαί σε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον καὶ νοσφίσασθαι ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς τοῦ κυρίου; But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Διὰ τί ἐπλήρωσεν ὁ σατανᾶς τὴν καρδίαν σου refers the guilt back to the real source, Satan, and implies that Ananias could have resisted Satan's temptation.

καρδίας is the center of the personality. Satan had entered there once again after having been cast out by the Holy Spirit in Ananias' conversion. 17

There is a double emphasis in the two aorist infinitives, ψεύσασθαι

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 197.



and υποφίσασθαι. This is seen in the fact that the devil had beguiled Ananias to offer his (the devil's) doing as a work of the Holy Spirit, offer it as a divine work and bring it to God as a holy offering. <sup>18</sup>

Furthermore Satan uses his wiles to destroy a Christian's reputation, even that of a Christian minister. This is shown in I Timothy 3: 7: δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ἀνειδί- σμῳ ἐμπίσῃ καὶ παχίδα τοῦ διαβόλου; Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

'To fall into the devil's snare', into his deadly power like an animal that is caught and killed, is Paul's warning here. The reputation of the bishop should be blameless as far as all are concerned. The reproach of the world, bad as that is, is not the worst. The reproach of fellow Christians, because the man permitted himself to slip into the reproach of the world, might set him apart from the fellow Christians. For "the reproach, especially of the Christians, let alone the usual reproach, sets him apart, and thus gives the devil a chance to set his trap." <sup>19</sup>

Another of the devil's deceptions which he uses in his personal attacks is the unforgiving attitude he fosters in Christians toward one another. This is exemplified in II Cor. 2: 10, 11.

In verse ten Paul exhorts and urges joint forgiveness of one who has grievously sinned against the sixth commandment. Then in verse eleven he elaborates on this, showing why such forgiveness is necessary:

18. Ibid. p. 197.

19. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, p. 600 ff.



ἵνα μὴ πλεονεκτηθῶμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ, οὐ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὰ νοήματα ἀγνοοῦμεν; lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.

ἵνα μὴ πλεονεκτηθῶμεν κ. τ. λ. : lest we, sc., you and I together be robbed by Satan; i.e., lest we drive sinners to despair and so let Satan snatch them from us. <sup>20</sup> "The offender was to be delivered over τῷ Σατανᾶ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς (I Cor. 5: 5) and thus care must be taken lest we πλεονεκτηθῶμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ, and his soul perish likewise." <sup>21</sup>

οὐ γὰρ αὐτοῦ κ. τ. λ. : for we are not ignorant of his devices. "νόημα is generally (always in this epistle) used in a bad sense, of the thoughts of man's unregenerate heart. Here τὰ νοήματα are the designs of the adversary of souls." <sup>22</sup>

Satan also uses miraculous signs and wonders in his deception of people. This is brought out in II Thess. 2: 9: οὗ ἔστιν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους; whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

"Satan's doom will be sealed by the coming of Christ. Satan's ἐνέργεια is the process of activity whose product is ἔργον. The impulse to ἐνέργεια is δύναμις. The δύναμις of this supernatural delusion is specially manifested in signs and wonders." <sup>23</sup>

"The power of working miracles in order to deceive people . . .

20. J.H. Bernard, a critical and exegetical commentary on "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. III, p. 49.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. James Moffatt, a critical and exegetical commentary on "The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. IV, p. 49.



was an accepted trait in the Jewish and early Christian ideas of such eschatological opponents of God . . ." 24

Oppressing men both spiritually and physically is also in the realm of the devil's personal activity as exemplified in Acts 10: 38: Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, ὡς ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ δυνάμει, ὃς διήλθεν ἐνεργετῶν καὶ ἰώμενος πάντας τοὺς καταδυναστευομένους ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ;  
 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him.

ὃς διήλθεν; here we have the use of the relative pronoun in an emphatic manner where in reality a new sentence should begin. ὃς here means 'he who'. Christ was the one who went from place to place (διά in the verb). He was anointed by God Himself with the Holy Ghost and with power, and went about 'doing good and (to be specific) healing all those tyrannized by the devil'. Thus this Jesus of Nazareth healed "even the worst imaginable ailment . . . "In this graphic way the demoniacs are described. It is the physician Luke who records these words . . . Peter ascribes demoniacal possession to the devil (διάβολος, slanderer), the head of the hellish kingdom who acts through his spirit subjects." 25

The New Testament passages we have referred to in this chapter without a doubt portray the devil as a very personal enemy of every Christian and of the entire Church, the communion of saints. The passages show that having failed in conquering Christ the devil now engages very personally in

24. Ibid.

25. Ienski, "The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles," p. 423.



a frontal attack on those who have become saints and fellow citizens in the kingdom of God and of Christ.

The New Testament was to describe the death, in the light of the New Testament we have also studied the devil's general attitude, his relation to Christ and his relation to the Church and thus to the individual Christian.

We have seen that the name the New Testament gave to refer to the Law gave the characteristics of an individual being and not of an arbitrary influence only.

There is a danger of the general attitude of the devil to see that as a whole it will be taken as a very personal interest in holding those that are in, and using them to interfere with the preaching of the Word to those who have not as yet come to faith. It also includes some with highly efficient and powerful others to their harm.

In his relation to Christ we saw that even the beginning he thought he might be successful in attacking the person of Christ and the message that was sent was a constant and personal enemy of the Lord. Having failed in attacking Christ personally he attacked the Church through the world and through the devil's own disciples.

The temptations and attacks being failed, we showed that the devil was behind the spiritual and personal enemy of Christ's Church, and was using the rule of unity and power by attacking the individual Christian in every opportunity.

From the passages studied it is our conviction that the New Testament's



## Conclusion

In this thesis we have examined New Testament passages to see what terms the New Testament uses to describe the devil. On the basis of the New Testament we have also studied the devil's general activity, his relation to Christ and his relation to the Church and thus to the individual Christian.

We have seen that the names the New Testament uses to refer to Satan give him the characteristics of an individual being and not of an imaginary influence only.

Under the topic of the general activity of the devil we saw that as prince of this world he takes a very personal interest in holding those that are his and using them to interfere with the preaching of the Word to those who have not as yet come to faith. He also afflicts some with bodily ailments and possesses others to their harm.

In his relation to Christ we saw that from the beginning he thought he might be successful in attacking the person of Christ and His redemptive work and was a constant and personal enemy of the Lord. Having failed in tempting Christ personally he attacked Him through His enemies and through the Lord's own disciples.

The temptations and attacks having failed, we showed that the devil now became the constant and personal enemy of Christ's Church, and continues the role of enemy and accuser by attacking the individual Christian at every opportunity.

From the passages examined it is our conclusion that the New Testament's



interest in the devil lies in his activity here and now. The New Testament shows quite plainly that he was and is a personal enemy of Christ and of every Christian.

So far as the devil is concerned in the New Testament, Christians are not to waste time and opportunity on idle speculation, but to keep their eyes fixed firmly on the Word<sup>1</sup> and to be careful how they walk.<sup>2</sup>

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1. I Peter 5: 8, 9a.  
2. Ephesians 5: 15ff.



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