

SATAN'S DEVICES:
EXAMINING THE METHODS USED BY THE TEMPTER TO ENTICE THE SAINTS

Jon Winkelman
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Introduction

In Sun Tzu's "Art Of War" he writes "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."¹ Victory in battle is achieved by knowing both yourself, and the enemy. This truth of physical warfare directly translates into the Spiritual realm. This paper will seek to examine and identify the tactics of Satan as laid out in God's revealed Word, the Bible.

In *2 Corinthians 2*, the apostle Paul is exhorting the church in Corinth to forgive and receive a repentant brother. In this context he warns the believers that refusal to forgive can be used by Satan to gain an advantage over believers. Consider his words in verses *10-11*. "*Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices*" (NKJV).² Paul explicitly states that it is possible to be aware of the devices (some translations have "schemes"³) used by Satan.

The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ desires that His children live in victory (*1 Cor. 15:57; 1 Jn. 5:4*). To that end, He has provided the discerning believer with details about the methods used by Satan to attack the saints. This author is confident that as believers come to understand the methods the enemy uses they will be better able to fight against him and gain the victory. However, it is well to be reminded that knowledge of the enemy alone will not produce victory. Knowledge must be accompanied by dependence upon the Holy Spirit. When the believer is armed with knowledge of Satan's devices and empowered by the Holy Spirit, victory is possible.

¹ Sun Tzu, "III. Attack by Stratagem, #18," in *The Art of War*, trans. Lionel Giles, Accessed September 11, 2017, <http://classics.mit.edu/Tzu/artwar.html>.

² All Scripture quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version* unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

³ NASB, NIV, CSB, NLT all have "schemes". ESV has "designs".

Satan's Devices Discovered Through His Fall

It is imperative to begin at the beginning. Satan was originally created as an angel of light. *Ezekiel 28:11-19* provides an astounding description of the original estate of this most infamous angel. Though various theories have been advanced as to the identity of the king of Tyre, the text makes it clear that “Ezekiel was not describing an ideal man or a false god in verses 11–26. But his switch from ‘ruler’ to ‘king’ and his allusions to the Garden of Eden do imply that the individual being described was more than human. The best explanation is that Ezekiel was describing Satan who was the true ‘king’ of Tyre, the one motivating the human ‘ruler’ of Tyre.”⁴ He is described here as “*Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty*” (v. 12), “*the anointed cherub who covers*” (v. 14), and “*perfect in your ways from the day you were created*” (v. 15). These are descriptions of Satan in his angelic state. What happened? How could this wise, beautiful creature have become the corrupt and twisted being revealed in the rest of Scripture? The answer to these questions begins to come in the end of verse 15. “*Iniquity was found in you.*”

Lewis Chafer believes that “trading” in verse 16 refers to going about gaining the support of other angels in his rebellion against God.⁵ Whatever the nature of this trading, the verse goes on to state that he “*sinned*” and was cast out. In *John 8:44* as Jesus is interacting with the people He states that the devil “*is a liar and the father of it*”. The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* lists “initiator” as one of the meanings for the Greek word translated “father” here.⁶ Satan first deceived himself as is evident from verse 17. Satan’s “*heart was lifted up*”, and he

⁴ Charles H. Dyer, “Ezekiel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1283.

⁵ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1993), 2:43

⁶ Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 805.

corrupted his wisdom. Satan deceived Himself into thinking he could attain a higher position. This self-deception then led to deceptive speech with the other angels.

There is one other passage dealing with Satan's fall and it displays further evidence of his self-deception. The passage in question is *Isaiah 14:12-15*. Recorded here are five "I will" statements made by Lucifer⁷. Each statement transcends the previous until the capstone of "*I will be like the Most High*". "This highest of God's angels tried to usurp the throne of God and capture for himself the worship that belongs only to God (*Matt. 4:8-10*)."⁸ This is the epitome of self-deception! Clearly revealed in these assertions is Satan's desire to set himself as the antithesis of God. Each statement demonstrates the setting of Lucifer's will against his creator. Herein lies the foundation of all sin. Chafer's treatment of these "*I will*" statements is superb and it would benefit the reader greatly to review said treatment.⁹ For sake of brevity, only Chafer's conclusion is reproduced here. "Satan's sin may thus be summarized as a purpose to secure (1) the highest heavenly position; (2) regal rights both in heaven and on earth; (3) Messianic recognition; (4) glory which belongs to God alone; and (5) a likeness to the Most High, the 'possessor of heaven and earth.'"¹⁰ It has often been stated and believed that Satan's sin was his pride. While this is an element of his sin, and an accusation directly leveled against him (*1 Tim. 3:6*), it seems best to consider the fall of Lucifer to be precipitated by a desire to rise higher than the position given him by God. Pride, self-deception, and other faults laid out in the Biblical record are merely effects of which his discontentment is the cause.

⁷ "Lucifer" is another name used for Satan. He is also called "the devil", "the god of this age", "the accuser of the brethren", "the wicked one", "the tempter", "the serpent",

⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Comforted*, "Be" Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 46.

⁹ Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 2:48-50

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 2:50

The device of Satan discovered in his fall is this: Satan uses deception to appeal to the believer's pride that he might awaken discontent and thereby ensnare the child of God. Oftentimes this deception takes the form of twisted and corrupted Scripture. This is vividly on display in his temptation of Eve in the Garden.

Satan's Devices Displayed In The Fall Of Man

From the very beginning, deception has been a major device of Satan. It is part of his fallen nature, his fallen DNA if you will. This device becomes increasingly visible as his deceptions are depicted throughout Scripture. If Chafer's belief is correct, then Satan first practiced his deception on the other angels. He drew away followers before they were all cast from heaven. Satan next appears in *Genesis 3* as he tempts Eve through the medium of a serpent. The serpent appears in *Genesis 3:1-7* and again in verses *14-15*. *Revelation 12:9* and *20:2* reveal this serpent to be Satan himself. *"So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* *"He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;"* As Satan tempts Eve in the guise of a serpent, what method does he use?

Verse *1* describes the serpent (Satan) as more cunning than any beast. Satan speaks through this serpent and calls God's Word into question. *"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"* All that is needed is for one to look back at chapter *2* verses *15-17* and it becomes apparent that Satan is misquoting God. God had told Adam that he could eat of all the trees but one. Satan rewords this restriction to make God sound harsh. Eve seems immediately affected as she adds to God's Word in verse *3*. *"but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" This is not what God said! There was no restriction on touching the tree! "Eve is duly*

drawn, and by adding *neither shall ye touch it* she over-corrects the error, magnifying God's strictness."¹¹ Satan's deception is already doing its work. Eve's view of God is being subtly altered. With the hook now baited and set, Satan engages in wholesale contradiction in verse 4 stating that death will not be the result of eating the fruit. "Instead", he claims, "you will be like God if you eat!"

Verse 6 is the hinge point. The crisis has been reached, a decision must be made. The pivotal moment has arrived! What this verse reveals is how Satan, having already used deception, then plays on human desires to bring about sin. Present in this verse is a description of Eve's descent that corresponds to what the Apostle John lays out in *1 John 2:16*. "*For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.*" Eve sees that the tree is good for food; this is the lust of the flesh. She sees that it is pleasant to the eyes; this is the lust of the eyes. She sees that it can make one wise; this is the pride of life. As these desires build in her heart, Eve takes the fruit and eats. She then gives it to Adam, and he also eats. The result of this is seen in verse 7 as their innocence is lost, they are aware of their nakedness, and they attempt their own covering.

Satan's devices are clearly on display here! He gets the believer to doubt the Word of God. To doubt God's goodness in His directing of their lives. This doubt opens the door to lust. These desires are birthed out of discontentment with God and so cannot be righteously fulfilled. As the lust of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life have their sway, the believer falls. Dr. Fruchtenbaum puts it this way "Satan's methodology was threefold: First, he raised doubts as to the wisdom, justice, and love of God; second, he made a direct contradiction of the Word of

¹¹ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 1, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 72.

God; and third, he claimed that disobedience to God will result in the highest good.”¹² The believer must be aware of Satan’s deception, his determination to cast doubt on God’s Word, and his appeal to human desire. Only as these devices are recognized, identified, and opposed can there be victory! Having identified some of Satan’s devices, it is imperative to learn how they are opposed. Christ powerfully displays this as He is tempted by Satan.

Satan’s Devices Defeated By Christ

In the fourth chapters of both Matthew and Luke, the temptation of Jesus is described immediately following His baptism. Incredibly, both authors reveal that it is the Holy Spirit who leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tested. Having fasted and faced unrecorded testing by Satan for forty days, Jesus faces an extremely targeted temptation. Two repeated themes are noteworthy here. 1 – Satan uses misquoted Scripture to tempt Jesus. 2 – Jesus uses accurate Scripture quotations to answer the temptations. Matthew’s account is found in 4:1-11 while Luke’s is in 4:1-13. While the order of the temptations differ, the accounts are otherwise virtually identical. For the purposes of this study, Luke’s account will be considered.

The First Temptation

In verse 3 the devil comes to Jesus (Matthew aptly calls him the tempter) and issues a challenge. It is important to note that this challenge only comes after Jesus has fasted for forty days, is in the wilderness, and is hungry (vv. 1-2). From this tactic, a valuable lesson is learned. The believer is most vulnerable to temptation, and therefore most likely to face it, when there is physical weakness and difficulty. When, tired, hungry, and deprived of basic necessity, Satan attacks. Knowledge of this device of Satan enables the discerning believer to be wary and on

¹² Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 95.

guard in the circumstances just described. As with Eve in the Garden, Satan uses doubt as a temptation technique. “*If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread*” (v. 3).

Satan is fully aware that the man he is speaking to is truly the Son of God. What he is doing is appealing to Jesus’ human pride. The response of Jesus teaches believers to respond to Satan’s attacks of doubt by using the truth of Scripture. “What does not agree with Scripture does not come from God.”¹³ In verse 4 Jesus quotes *Deuteronomy 8:3*. “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*” Satan appealed to Jesus with a temptation that played on pride as well as ability. Jesus had the ability to turn the stones to bread. Nevertheless, that would not have been in line with the Father’s will. Jesus’ response reveals that believers are not merely sustained by physical food, but by obedience to the Word of God. To turn back this attack of Satan, a believer must know the Word of God. One cannot use the truth of God’s Word to turn back temptation unless the Word of God has first been hidden in the heart (*Ps. 119:11*).

The Second Temptation

Satan takes Jesus to a high mountain and shows him all kingdoms (v. 5); he then offers their authority and glory to Jesus if Jesus will simply worship him (vv. 6-7). This offer appeals to the human desire for self-preservation. The devil is offering Christ an escape route. The implication is that He could have all that the Cross would earn Him without actually going to the Cross! In light of Jesus’ agony in the garden (*Lk. 22:44*), this would have been a great temptation indeed! Here another device of Satan is encountered. The devil offers counterfeits. He could give Jesus the authority and glory of these kingdoms. However, seeking this authority outside of God’s will would not result in fulfillment, peace, and happiness. Instead, it would have brought slavery. This reality is true for believers as well. Satan offers counterfeits and sells them as if

¹³ Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 121.

they are better than the real thing. When his cheap imitations are embraced, they are found to be empty. The believer must respond to these temptations as Christ does in verse 8.

Again quoting from Deuteronomy (this time 6:13), Jesus first issues a rebuke “*Get behind Me, Satan!*”, and a statement of truth “*You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*” Compromise cannot be entertained! The Lord God is to be worshiped and served alone; none other can share His glory! The counterfeits of Satan must be rejected out of hand. They cannot be contemplated lest the believer succumb to temptation. Though Satan tempts with shortcuts and counterfeits, those who have placed their faith in Christ must ever cling to truth of His Word. His way is always best and will inevitably lead to the most fulfillment, peace, and happiness.

The Third Temptation

Bringing Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple, Satan again uses doubt and an appeal to pride to tempt the Lord (v. 9). However, this time he also twists Scripture to increase the temptation (vv. 10-11). Misquoting *Psalms 91:11-12*, the devil challenges Jesus to leap from their position because the angels will guard and lift Him up. This tactic of Satan was also seen in the Garden and it is alive and well today. Using false teachers and even mislead believers, Satan propagates twisted interpretations of Scripture that lead the undiscerning, unwary, and immature into error. He is a master at making it seem as though not doing what he proposes would be a lack of faith and Biblical obedience! Though, as a fallen being, Satan cannot fully understand Scripture, He is nevertheless adept at taking it out of context and subverting it for his own purposes. The response of the believer must be as strong and unyielding as that of Christ.

Jesus quotes *Deuteronomy 6:16* as He declares, “*You shall not tempt the LORD your God.*” The response of our Lord to every attack is to quote the Word of God. It cannot be overemphasized that this is only possible as the believer faithfully and continually hides God’s

Word in his heart. It is only as a child of God embraces sound hermeneutic principles, applies them consistently, and is familiar with the whole council of God that error can be spotted. The best defense against error is knowing the sound principles and teaching of Scripture.

The temptations of Jesus and His method of defeating them is instructive to any believer who desires to walk in victory. Satan will twist Scripture. He will appeal to pride, make compromise sound good, and entice to the point that not surrendering sounds faithless and disobedient. Yet as the believer is strengthened by Scripture, escape from temptation is possible. The final verse in the account states that Satan departed from Christ “*until an opportune time.*” Victory over Satan will not be complete nor final in this life. Constant vigilance is required for temptation to be defeated. While much can be gleaned from Satan’s temptation of Eve and Jesus, many New Testament passages also aid in understanding the devices of Satan.

Satan’s Devices Described By New Testament Authors

One of the great benefits afforded believers is God’s completed revelation provided for us in the written Word of God. The New Testament Scriptures hold many brief, yet powerful descriptions of the devices of Satan. In desiring to gain as complete a picture as possible, their descriptions will now be considered.

Devices Described by the Apostle John

Alluded to previously, *John 8:44* presents a scathing denunciation by Jesus of those presently contending with Him. In this denunciation is found an enlightening description of Satan. “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*” Satan is a murderer, there is no truth in Him, and he is a liar. This teaches that nothing Satan says can be trusted. He always lies. It also reveals that the devil desires the death of all those with

whom he interacts. He is a murderer. This is a statement of being. This is who and what Satan is. To fight against this device of Satan the believer must always be armed with truth. The truth by which all things are measured is the changeless Word of God.

1 John 2:15-17 contains an indirect statement of Satan's tactics. *2 Corinthians 4:4* refers to Satan as "*the god of this age*", as such what is described in *1 John* is produced by him. Verse *15* exhorts believers not to love the world or the things in it. Verse *16* (as already cited above) states that everything in the world is not of the Father. Verse *17* declares that the world and its lusts are passing away. Satan, as the god of this world, uses lust and pride to lure, trap, and enslave the child of God. The believer's defense against this is to be reminded that the love of the Father and the love of the world cannot co-exist. Only through obedience to the Father's will can one live forever. Therefore, choose this day whom you will serve (*Jos. 24:15*).

Revelation 12:10 records a celebration because "*the accuser of our brethren... has been cast down.*" This name for Satan is more fully understood when considered in conjunction with *Job 1-2*. After Job is introduced in the beginning of the book (vv. *1-5*), the account moves to heaven where Satan has presented himself before the Lord (vv. *6-7*).¹⁴ The Lord directs Satan's attention to Job for his blameless and upright lifestyle (v. *8*). Satan contends that Job only fears the Lord because of God's protection (vv. *9-10*) stating that if God were to remove that protection and Job were to lose his possessions, he would curse God (v. *11*). God gives Satan permission to afflict Job but not harm him personally (v. *12*). The rest of chapter *1* records Satan's affliction and Job's response. As chapter *2* opens, Satan is again presenting himself before the Lord (vv. *1-2*). God again directs Satan's attention to Job, this time stating that he has

¹⁴ This is an extremely fascinating glimpse into the activities of angels. They are apparently required to report to God. This reporting seems to include Satan and by extension the other fallen angels. What a marvelous testimony to the sovereignty of God!

retained “*his integrity*” (v. 3). Satan now contends that Job would curse God if he were afflicted in his own body (vv. 4-5). God gives permission for Satan to afflict him but not kill him and this Satan does (vv. 6-7). Satan is seen here making the accusation that Job only fears the Lord because of God’s protection. This account also reveals that Satan has access to heaven and reports his activities there. This author believes that part of this report is Satan “accusing” believers. This is another of his devices. The believer’s defense against this device is twofold. First and foremost is the blood of Jesus Christ. This blood “*cleanses us from all sin*” (1 Jn. 1:7). Secondly, walking worthy of Christ defends the believer from Satan’s accusations (Col. 1:10).

Revelation 20:10 reinforces something already stated; Satan is a deceiver. In this context he is specifically said to have deceived the nations in the Millennium inciting them to rebel and do battle against the Lord. It cannot be stressed too often or too strongly that Satan deceives. He strives to use people as pawns to leverage them against the Lord. Those deceived by him are merely tools used to accomplish his purpose of rebellion against God. As previously noted, the best defense against Satan’s deception is a knowledge of, and adherence to, the truth.

Devices Described by the Apostle Paul

As the author of much of the New Testament, Paul reveals many devices of Satan in his epistles. In discussing marriage, Paul reveals a device of Satan in *1 Corinthians 7:5*. Paul advises married couples to engage in sexual intimacy only avoiding it for a pre-discussed period and only for the purpose of fasting and prayer. After a period of abstinence, the normal sexual relationship is to be resumed. Paul’s stated reason for this is “*so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*” Paul is stating that Satan uses a lack of physical intimacy as a means of tempting married couples to sin! Awareness of this tactic demands a healthy sexual relationship between husband and wife.

2 *Corinthians 4:4* was alluded to previously. In this passage, Paul states that Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers to prevent the penetration of the gospel. This is one of Satan's more nefarious devices. Yet the rest of the passage demonstrates that the gospel can penetrate the most blinded heart through the power of God! To defeat this device of Satan the believer must be a faithful witness and preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 *Tim. 4:2-5*).

In 2 *Corinthians 12* Paul is writing about the incredible revelations he had experienced. In verse 7 he states that “*a thorn in the flesh*” was given to him to keep him from being too exalted. This thorn is further described as “*a messenger of Satan to buffet*” Paul. Satan's goal in this thorn was to buffet. This is the Greek word *κολαφίζω* (*kolaphizō*) meaning, “beat; strike with the fist; to hurt.”¹⁵ This is a device of Satan. Though the exact nature of Paul's “thorn” is unknown, it is nevertheless identified as a “*messenger of Satan*”. God used this “thorn” to teach Paul humility, but it seems safe to say that humility was not the devil's goal. Therefore, the defense against this device is God using Satan's device for His purpose and glory!

Another device of Satan is revealed in *Ephesians 4:26-27*. Here Paul explains that allowing the sun to set on one's wrath can “*give place to the devil*.” “Place” is the Greek word *τόπος* (*topos*). The sense of the word is “an opportunity understood as if having the room or space to function or perform.”¹⁶ When anger is unresolved, it gives Satan an opportunity. It provides him with room to function in our lives. A platform from which to launch his attacks. Harold Hoehner writes that “the devil would like to intensify a Christian's righteous anger against sin, causing it to become sin itself. This then gives the devil a foothold (lit., “a place”), an opportunity for leading that Christian into further sin. Then anger begins to control the believer

¹⁵ Faithlife Corporation. “To Hurt ⇌ Clout.” Logos Bible Software, Computer software. *Logos Bible Software Bible Sense Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife Corporation, October 4, 2017. <https://ref.ly/logos4/Senses?KeyId=ws.hurt+to+clout.v.01>.

¹⁶ Ibid. “Occasion ⇌ Place.” <https://ref.ly/logos4/Senses?KeyId=ws.place+occasion.n.01>.

rather than the believer controlling his anger.”¹⁷ The defense against this device is explained in the text, “*do not let the sun go down on your wrath*”.

Ephesians 6:10-13 is where Paul introduces the armor of God. The express purpose of the armor is given in verse 11, “*that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*.” Paul then reminds the Ephesian church that believers wrestle against spiritual enemies, not physical ones. Later, in verse 16, Paul describes the purpose of the shield of faith as “*to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one*”. Satan wants believers to think that the battle is against flesh and blood. However, the armor is spiritual because the battle is spiritual. Human weapons will not avail to quench Satan’s arrows. Only faith and spiritual preparation can defeat him.

Paul had a strong desire to visit with the Thessalonians but he reveals in *1 Thessalonians 2:18* that “*Satan hindered*” him. Satan desires to keep believers separated from one another to prevent fellowship and encouragement from taking place. From Paul’s example it can be learned that when Satan hinders, find another way. Being hindered from time with them, Paul wrote a letter of encouragement and instruction. Later, in 3:5, Paul mentions the reality that Satan tempts believers. In this context, it seems that he tempts with a desire to escape trials and affliction. To escape this device of Satan, faithfulness is required regardless of circumstances (*Phil. 3:13-14*).

As Paul is listing the qualifications of an elder, he brings up the devil twice in consecutive verses. *1 Timothy 3:6-7* refer to the “*same condemnation as the devil*” and “*the snare of the devil*”. In the first instance, Paul is referencing the pride that led to Satan’s downfall. In the second, Paul warns against falling into the snare of the devil. As described earlier, Satan’s snare was a desire to be in a position other than that given him by God. Humility and contentment deliver the believer from these devices. *2 Timothy 2:24-26* instructs the behavior of

¹⁷ Harold W. Hoehner, “Ephesians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 637.

“*a servant of the Lord*” warning of the need to correct those in opposition that they might “*escape the snare of the devil*”. In context, the snare of the devil seems to be the false teaching and the opposition, quarrels and senselessness that result. Paul explicitly states that this snare is escaped through knowledge of the truth!

Devices Described by the Apostle James

Throughout Scripture, one of the major devices of Satan is revealed to be pride. In dealing with many other struggles of the believer, James takes time to single out pride. *James 4:6-10* gives blunt, powerful instruction to those struggling with pride. In the midst of this instruction James gives a command in verse 7. “*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*” James proclaims that the way to defeat Satan’s temptation of pride is to submit to God and resist him. When the believer submits to God the power and ability to resist Satan’s temptation is found. John MacArthur puts it well in his commentary. “The one who belongs to Christ is of Him and is a child of God. Salvation brings a change of masters, a change of allegiance, and a change of family. The believer’s life is turned from serving the devil to serving God, and from being a slave of sin and of Satan to being a slave of righteousness and of God (*Rom. 6:16–22*).”¹⁸

Devices Described by the Apostle Peter

The final device of Satan that will be considered here is found in *1 Peter 5:8-9*. It is declared by Peter that the devil is the adversary of all believers. He is like a roaring lion who stalks prey seeking only to devour it. This is the device of intimidation and fear. Scripture reveals that the believer is not given the spirit of fear (*2 Timothy 1:7*). Therefore, to live in fear is to fail to live in the victory purchased by the death of Christ on the Cross! This device of Satan is

¹⁸ John F. MacArthur Jr., *James*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 205.

overcome through faith-filled resistance. Believe what God has promised. Believe His power, love, and care. Stand firm on the promises revealed in God's Word and resist the devil!

Conclusion

Satan is said to have entered Judas to inspire his betrayal of Christ (*Jn. 13:27*). He filled Ananias' heart to lie to the Holy Spirit (*Ac. 5:3*). He tempted David with self-reliance and pride leading him to sinfully number Israel (*1 Chr. 21:1*). He desired to sift Peter like wheat (*Lk. 22:31*). He always opposes the righteous (*Zech. 3:1-2*). Scripture repeatedly depicts him as one from whom believers need to be delivered and guarded (*Mat. 6:13; Jn. 17:15; 2 Thes. 3:3*). He is one who must be overcome (*1 Jn. 2:13-14*).

The passages considered above reveal that Satan is brilliant, ancient, and organized. He is a master deceiver, a veritable artist at playing on human desires, and a tempter beyond compare. Yet for all his power, cunning, and deception, He is a defeated foe! *1 John 3:8* declares that "*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*" Christ has destroyed the works of the devil! There is no reason for the believer to fear! Yet the absence of fear must not beget in the child of God an absence of caution. "The issues at stake in the Garden of Eden were, in respect to Satan's career, such as would determine his realization of his whole undertaking. He must gain supremacy over man or fail completely. Little did Adam and Eve realize that, so far from attaining independence, they were becoming bondslaves to sin and Satan."¹⁹ This ever remains Satan's plan for those in a right relationship with the Father. He desires to ensnare and enslave them to sin and thus place them in his power. Revealed in the pages of Scripture are all

¹⁹ Chafer, 2:250

the necessary tools to defeat Satan's devices. Do not fall victim to his schemes! Be aware of His tactics and do battle through the power of the Holy Spirit!

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