



Living and Sharing the Gospel

Weekly bulletin
January 10, 2021

Worship services are being cancelled until further notice because of Covid-19. However, we will have worship services through the Internet Zoom platform every Sunday at 10:30 AM in NB, NS and PEI. The Zoom link for this service will be sent to you by email. The telephone numbers for Zoom always remains the same but the Meeting ID and password number change every week.. Please let Mr. Vautour know if you would like to be added to the weekly email list. See the bottom of the bulletin for the contact information

If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.

May you all have a blessed New Year 2021 as we are lead by Jesus!

Please note that audio and video sermons are available at www.gcine Brunswick.org .

On Christmas Day, those who desire can join the Montreal English church worship services at 11:30 a.m. Atlantic time. The Zoom link will be send to you prior. If you are reading this bulletin and you are not on the email list and you wish to attend, please feel free to contact Mr. Vautour at the email address below.

Bible Study: Our next Bible Study will be this coming Thursday, January 14, 2021 when we begin to study the Epistle of James.

The 9th session of the study of the book of Acts will be available today or tomorrow on our local website under "Members Only".

To see specific prayer requests from the church, please go to www.gcine Brunswick.org – under "Members Only" and type the password.

- Let us pray for the Church to put first things first which is **to love God with all of our heart, with all of our soul and with all of our mind.** The secondary commandment and flowing from the first is **to love our neighbour as ourselves.**
- Let us pray according to God's will as per his instructions: **"1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1Ti 2:1-4 ESV)**
- **Let us pray that God will strengthen his people with faith, perseverance and love during this difficult pandemic period and that the good news of the Gospel will be spread widely.**
- Covid-19 is causing more and more pain and ravages. It is affecting us locally, nationally and internationally. The illness isolates people. Let us remember that we all believers are united with and in Jesus Christ as member of his body his church. Let us persevere in Him and pray to walk in His will and love – a love that binds us together. **"Our Father n heaven, hallowed by your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"** as we read in Matthew 6.
- Let us pray that God will give us to wisdom to know how he is working and how he wants us to humbly participate in his work of salvation. **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."** (Eph 2:10 ESV)

- Let us pray to be active participants with Jesus as members of his body. Let us pray that God will call more and more people to himself during this time and that we will have the privilege of receiving and discipling some of them.

Offerings: (Paraphrase of some information given by Mr. Hall, GCI Canadian Director): Just a reminder that any donations we receive via either Credit Card or Canada Helps are subject to about a 3-3.5% fee which means any donations we receive for your congregation, are reduced by that amount. Direct Debit (Pre-authorized Payment) or E-Transfers have much lower transaction fees, that we don't back charge to the local congregation. (Cheques do not have a transaction fee). A person can send E-transfers to khorwood@gcicanada.ca if their bank uses INTERACT. In the subject or message line, write the name of your church and your member number. If your bank permits, you can also write your name and address. If you do not know your member number, please write to Mr. Vautour at the email address below. You can send your offering directly to the following address: **Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7SL 6W5.** If you prefer, you can also call **1-306-653-2705.** You can also donate via phone using a credit card, or via Canada Helps using **the donate button** on our website at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/7735> . We will credit all donations received via Canada Helps to a member's local congregation, if we can identify where they attend."

DISCIPLESHIP: SATAN: GOD'S DEFEATED ADVERSARY

(From www.gci.org)

There are two unfortunate trends in the Western world today regarding Satan the devil, who is mentioned in the New Testament as an unrelenting adversary and enemy of God and humanity. Most people are unaware or discount the devil's role in creating chaos, suffering and evil. For many people, the idea of a real devil is just a remnant of ancient superstition or, at best, a metaphor representing evil in the world.

On the other hand, some Christians have accepted superstitious beliefs about the devil under the guise of what is called "spiritual warfare." They are giving the devil undue recognition and are "warring" against him in ways not appropriate to the advice given in Scripture. In this article, we see what information the Bible gives us about Satan. Armed with this understanding, we can avoid the pitfalls of the extremes mentioned above.

Old Testament references

[Isaiah 14:3-23](#) and [Ezekiel 28:1-19](#) are sometimes said to contain descriptions of the devil's origin as a angel who sinned. Some of the details can be read as applying to the devil. However, the context of these passages indicates that much of the material is referring to the vanity and pride of human kings—the kings of Babylon and Tyre. Perhaps the point in both passages is that the human kings are being manipulated by the devil, and they are mirror images of his evil intents and his hatred of God. To speak of the spiritual leader, Satan, is to speak of his human agents, the kings, all in one breath. It would be a way of saying that the devil rules the world.

In the book of Job, a reference to angels says they were present at the creation of the world and were filled with wonder and joy ([Job 38:7](#)). On the other hand, the Satan of [Job 1-2](#) also appears as an angelic being, since he is said to be with the angelic "sons of God." But he is an adversary of God and his righteousness.

There are a few references to "fallen angels" in the Bible ([2 Peter 2:4](#), [Jude 6](#); [Job 4:18](#)), but nothing significant is mentioned as to how and why Satan became the enemy of God. Scripture doesn't give us any details about angel life, either about "good" angels or fallen angels (also called demons). The Bible, particularly the New Testament, is much more interested in showing Satan as someone who attempts to overthrow God's purpose. He is pictured as the supreme enemy of God's people, the church of Jesus Christ.

Satan or the devil is not prominently mentioned by name in the Old Testament. However, the conviction that cosmic forces were at war with God is clearly seen in the motifs found in its pages. Two Old Testament motifs depicting Satan or the devil are cosmic waters and monsters. They are metaphors representing the satanic evil that holds sway over the earth and does battle against God. In [Job 26:12-13](#), we see Job explaining that God has "churned up the sea" and "cut Rahab to pieces." Rahab is said to be "the gliding serpent" (**verse 13**).

In the few places that Satan as a personal being is mentioned in the Old Testament, Satan is shown to be an accuser who seeks to sow discord and condemn ([Zechariah 3:1-2](#)), incites people to sin against God ([1 Chronicles 21:1](#)), and uses human beings and the elements to cause great pain and suffering ([Job 1:6-19](#); [2:1-8](#)).

In Job, Satan is seen coming together with other angels to present himself to God, as though he had been called to a great heavenly council. There are a few other biblical references to a heavenly gathering of angelic beings that affect the affairs of humans. In one of these, a lying spirit entices a king to go to war ([1 Kings 22:19-22](#)).

God is pictured as one who “crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave him as food to the creatures of the desert” ([Psalm 74:14](#)). Who is Leviathan? He is the “monster of the sea”—the “gliding serpent” and “coiling serpent” whom the Lord will punish “in that day” when God banishes evil from the earth and brings in his kingdom ([Isaiah 27:1](#)).

The motif of Leviathan as a serpent harkens back to the Garden of Eden. Here the serpent—“more crafty than any of the wild animals”—deceives humans into sinning against God, which results in their fall ([Genesis 3:1-7](#)). This leads God to utter a prophecy of a future war between himself and the serpent, in which the devil appears to win a crucial battle (a strike at God’s feet) only to lose the war (having his head crushed). In this prophecy, God says to the serpent, **“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his feet”** ([Genesis 3:16](#)).

New Testament references

The cosmic significance of this statement is understood in the light of the Incarnation of the Son of God as Jesus of Nazareth ([John 1:1, 14](#)). We see in the Gospels that Satan attempts to destroy Jesus in one way or another from the day of his birth until his death by crucifixion. While Satan succeeds in having his human proxies kill Jesus, the devil loses the war when Jesus destroys Satan’s work through his death and resurrection.

After Jesus’ Ascension, the cosmic battle continues between the bride of Christ—the people of God—and the devil and his minions. But God’s purposes always prevail and stand. In the end, Jesus will return and crush the spiritual opposition against him ([1 Corinthians 15:24-28](#)).

The book of Revelation most notably depicts this war between the forces of evil in the world driven by Satan and the forces of good in the church led by God. In this highly symbolic book written in the genre of apocalypse, two bigger-than-life cities, Babylon the Great and the New Jerusalem, represent the two earthly groups at war.

When the war is over, the devil or Satan is chained in the Abyss, and is thus prevented from “leading the whole world astray” as he had previously ([Revelation 12:9](#)).

In the end, we are shown the kingdom of God victorious over all evil. It is depicted by an ideal city—the Holy City, the Jerusalem of God—where God and the Lamb dwell together with their people in eternal peace and joy, made possible by the reciprocal love they share ([21:15-27](#)). Satan and all the forces of evil are destroyed ([20:10](#)).

Jesus and Satan

In the New Testament, Satan is clearly identified as the adversary of God and humanity. In one way or another, the devil is responsible for suffering and evil in our world. In his healing ministry, Jesus pointed to fallen spirits and Satan as a cause even of disease and infirmity. Of course, we should be careful to not label every problem or illness as a direct hit from the devil. Nevertheless, it is instructive to note that the New Testament doesn’t shy away from naming the devil and his evil cohorts as being responsible for many calamities, including illnesses. Sickness is an evil, rather than being ordained by God.

Jesus spoke of Satan and the fallen spirits as **“the devil and his angels,”** who are bound for **“the eternal fire”** ([Matthew 25:41](#)). In the Gospels, demons are said to be the cause of a wide variety of physical illnesses and infirmities. In some cases, demons possessed people’s minds and/or bodies, resulting in such infirmities as convulsion, muteness, blindness, partial paralysis and forms of insanity.

Luke speaks of a woman Jesus encountered in a synagogue **“who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years”** ([Luke 13:10](#)). Jesus set her free from her infirmity and was criticized because he had healed on the Sabbath. In response, Jesus said, **“Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”** (verse 16).

In other cases, Jesus exposed demons as the cause of infirmity, as in the case of a boy who had suffered terrible convulsions from childhood ([Matthew 17:14-19](#); [Mark 9:14-29](#); [Luke 9:37-45](#)). Jesus could simply command demons to leave, and they did. In this, Jesus showed that he had complete authority over the world of Satan and the demons. Jesus gave the same authority over demons to his disciples ([Matthew 10:1](#)).

The apostle Peter spoke of Jesus’ healing ministry as one that delivered people from illnesses and infirmities in which Satan and his evil spirits were either the direct or indirect cause. **“You know what has happened throughout Judea...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil”** ([Acts 10:37-38](#)). This view of Jesus’ healing reflects the belief that Satan is the adversary of God and his creation, most especially the human race.

It places the ultimate blame for suffering and sin on the devil and characterizes him as the “first sinner.” **“The devil has been sinning from the beginning” (1 John 3:8)**. Jesus calls Satan **“the prince of demons”—the ruler of fallen angels (Matthew 25:41)**. But Jesus has broken the devil’s hold on the world through his redemptive work. Satan is the “strong man” whose house (the world) Jesus has entered (**Mark 3:27**). Jesus has “tied up” the strong man and has “carried off his possessions” (his kingdom).

This is why Jesus came in the flesh. John tells us, **“The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work” (1 John 3:8)**. Colossians speaks of this destroyed work in cosmic terms: **“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he [Jesus] made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” (Colossians 2:15)**.

Hebrews is more explicit as to how Jesus accomplished this: **“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Hebrews 2:14-15)**.

It’s not surprising, then, that Satan would seek to defeat God’s purpose in his Son, Jesus Christ. Satan’s goal was to kill the Incarnate Word, Jesus, when he was a baby (**Revelation 12:13** with **Matthew 2:1-18**), tempt him to sin during his life (**Luke 4:1-13**) and have him arrested and killed (**verse 13** with **22:3-6**).

Satan “succeeded” in the final plot on Jesus’ life, but Jesus’ death and subsequent resurrection exposed and condemned the devil. Jesus had made a “public spectacle” of the world’s way and the evil propounded and practiced by the devil and his followers. It became plain to all who were willing to hear that only God’s way of love is right.

Through Jesus’ Person and his redemptive work, the devil’s plans were turned back, and he was vanquished. Thus, Christ has already defeated Satan through his life, death and resurrection, exposing the shame of evil. Jesus told his disciples on the night of his betrayal, **“Because I am going to the Father...the prince of this world now stands condemned” (John 16:11)**.

After Christ’s return, the devil’s influence in the world will cease, and his complete defeat will be obvious. This victory will occur in a final and lasting change at the end of the age (**Matthew 13:37-42**).

Prince of power

During his earthly ministry, Jesus explained that **“the prince of this world will be driven out” (John 12:31)** and said that this prince has **“no hold” on him (John 14:30)**. Jesus has defeated Satan in that the devil could not bring him under his control. No temptation that was hurled at Jesus by Satan was powerful enough to entice him away from his love for and faith in God (**Matthew 4:1-11**). He has vanquished the devil and taken “the strong man’s” possessions (**Matthew 12:24-29**), which was the world he held captive. As Christians, we can rest in faith in Jesus’ victory over all the enemies of God (and our enemies), including the devil.

However, the church exists in the tension of the “already-not yet” time, in which God continues to allow Satan to deceive the world and spread destruction and death. Christians live between the “It is finished” of Jesus’ death (**John 19:30**) and the “It is done” of the ultimate destruction of evil and the coming of God’s kingdom to earth in the future (**Revelation 21:6**). Satan is still allowed to strive against the power of the gospel. The devil is still the unseen Prince of Darkness, and he is allowed to have power by God to fulfill God’s purposes.

The New Testament tells us that Satan is the controlling power of the present evil world, and that people unknowingly follow him in his opposition to God. (In Greek, the word “prince” or “ruler” [as in **John 12:31**] is a translation of the Greek *archon*, which referred to the highest ranking official of a political area or city.)

The apostle Paul explains that Satan or the devil is **“the god of this age”** who has **“blinded the minds of unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 4:4)**. Paul understood that Satan can even hinder the work of the church (**1 Thessalonians 2:17-19**).

Today, much of the Western world pays scant attention to a reality that fundamentally affects their lives and future—the fact that the devil is a real spiritual being who attempts at every turn to harm them and thwart the loving purpose of God. Christians are admonished to be aware of Satan’s schemes so they can refute them through the guidance and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Unfortunately, a few Christians have gone to a misguided extreme in a “hunt” for Satan, and they have unwittingly created additional fodder for those who ridicule the idea that the devil is a real and evil being.)

The church is warned to be vigilant of Satan’s devices. Christian leaders, says Paul, must lead lives worthy of God’s calling so that they **“will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap” (1 Timothy 3:7)**. Christians must be aware of the devil’s schemes and must put on the armor of God **“against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:10-12)**. They are to do this **“in order that Satan might not outwit us” (2 Corinthians 2:11)**.

The evil work of the devil

The devil creates spiritual blindness to the truth of God in Christ in various ways. False doctrines and ideas of various kinds “taught by demons” cause people to “follow deceiving spirits,” though they may be unaware of the ultimate source of the deception ([1 Timothy 4:1-5](#)). When blinded, people are unable to understand the light of the gospel, which is the good news that Christ saves us from sin and death ([1 John 4:1-2](#); [2 John 7](#)). Satan is the chief enemy of the gospel, “the evil one” who attempts to deceive people into rejecting its message ([Matthew 13:18-23](#)).

Satan need not *personally* attempt to deceive. He can work through humans who spread false philosophical and theological ideas. Humans can also be enslaved by structural evil and deception embedded in human society. The devil can also use our own fallen nature against us, making people think that they have “the truth,” when they have really given up that which is of God for that which is of the world and the devil. Such people believe that their misguided belief system will save them ([2 Thessalonians 2:9-10](#)), but what they have really done is “exchanged the truth of God for a lie” ([Romans 1:25](#)). “The lie” appears to be good and true because Satan presents himself and his belief system in such a way so as to make it appear that his teaching is truth from an “angel of light” ([2 Corinthians 11:14](#)).

In an overall sense, Satan is behind the temptation and desire of our fallen natures to sin, and for this reason he is called “**the tempter**” ([1 Thessalonians 3:5](#); [1 Corinthians 6:5](#); [Acts 5:3](#)). Paul takes the Corinthian church back to Genesis 3 and the Garden of Eden story to admonish them to not be led away from Christ, something the devil seeks to do. “**I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning,**” says Paul, “**your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ**” ([2 Corinthians 11:3](#)).

This is not to say that Paul believed that Satan personally tempted and deceived every person directly. People who think “the devil made me do it” every time they sin do not realize that he uses the Satan-created system of evil in the world and our fallen nature against us. In the case of the Thessalonian Christians mentioned above, this deception could have been accomplished by teachers sowing seeds of hate against Paul, causing people to think he was trying to trick them or cover up greed or another impure motive ([1 Thessalonians 2:3-12](#)). Nevertheless, since the devil encourages discord and manipulates the world, ultimately behind any humans sowing discord and hate would be the Tempter himself. According to Paul, Christians who are separated from the fellowship of the church because of sinfulness are, in effect, “**handed over to Satan**” ([1 Corinthians 5:5](#); [1 Timothy 1:20](#)) or have “**turned away to follow Satan**” ([1 Timothy 5:15](#)).

Peter admonishes his flock, “**Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour**” ([1 Peter 5:8](#)). The way to defeat the devil, says Peter, is to “**resist him**” (verse 9).

How do people resist? James explains: “**Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you**” ([4:7-8](#)). We are near to God when our hearts have a prayerful attitude of joy, peace and gratitude toward him, which is nurtured by his indwelling Spirit of love and faith.

People who do not know Christ and are not led by his Spirit ([Romans 8:5-17](#)) “**live according to the sinful nature**” (verse 5). They are in tune with and follow “**the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient**” ([Ephesians 2:2](#)). This spirit, elsewhere identified as the devil or Satan, manipulates human beings so that they find themselves intent on “**gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature**” (verse 3). But through God’s grace we can see the light of the truth that is in Christ, and follow him by the Spirit of God rather than unwittingly coming under the influence of the devil, the fallen world and our spiritually weak and sinful human nature.

Satan’s warfare and ultimate defeat

“**The whole world is under the control of the evil one,**” the apostle John writes ([1 John 5:19](#)). But those who are the children of God and followers of Christ have been given understanding “**so that we may know him who is true**” ([5:20](#)). On this point, [Revelation 12:7-9](#) is most dramatic. In the warfare motif of Revelation, the book pictures a cosmic battle between Michael and his angels and the dragon (Satan) and his fallen angels. The devil and his minions were defeated and “**lost their place in heaven**” (verse 8). The result? “**The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray**” (verse 9). The idea is that Satan continues his warfare against God by going after God’s people on earth.

The battleground between evil (manipulated by Satan) and good (led by God) results in warfare between Babylon the Great (the world under the control of the devil) and the New Jerusalem (the people of God who follow God and the Lamb, Jesus Christ). It is a war that is destined to be won by God, because nothing can defeat his purposes. In the end, all the enemies of God, Satan included, are defeated. The kingdom of God—a new world order—comes to earth, pictured by the New Jerusalem in the book of Revelation. The devil is destroyed from the presence of God, and his kingdom is obliterated with him ([Revelation 20:10](#)), replaced by God’s eternal reign of love.

We read these encouraging words about “the end” of all things: “**And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’”** ([Revelation 21:3-5](#)).

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