

THE DEVIL – THE UNHOLY GOD – Part 2

II Corinthians 4:4

“The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

In our first study we covered the following: **The Devil’s Origin, The Devil’s Original State** and **The Devil, An Outcast** – that is, his expulsion from Heaven, when it occurred and why.

In this 2nd study we will consider **The Devil’s Nature** and **The Devil’s Names**.

THE DEVIL’S NATURE.

In order to understand the Devil’s person, purposes and plans we must understand his nature. There are many who think of the Devil as the antithesis of God – the opposite of God in every sense - and therefore, they conclude, that what God is in the sphere of the “Good,” the Devil is equal to Him in the sphere of the “Evil.”

For instance, in Chinese philosophy there is the concept of Yin and Yang. There is the perception that Yin and Yang correspond to Evil and Good. “Yin and Yang are opposing forces” they say.

There are those, although not committed to Chinese philosophy but to “Christian philosophy,” who conceive of God and the Devil wrestling on equal footing and they speak of “Good” eventually overcoming “Evil.” Nothing could be further from the truth!

When we understand the nature of God and the nature of the Devil we see the impossibility of such a philosophy being truth. A scriptural knowledge of the nature of the Devil will save us from such error. So, what is the nature of the Devil? We can comprehend his nature when we understand what he is not as well as what he is.

What the Devil is not.

1. He is not all-knowing, i.e. omniscient. He knows much but he is not all-wise as is God. He has supernatural wisdom. His subtleties, schemes and trickeries are honed to sharpness by much use. But there is much that he does not know. He does not know when Jesus Christ is coming again for Jesus said only the Father in Heaven knows.

2. He is not all-powerful – i.e. omnipotent. He is powerful but not all powerful. God permitted him to afflict Job but God set limits upon what he could do to Job. In Job 2:6 we read, *“the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.”* God set limits upon what the Devil could do to Job.

3. He is not all-present – i.e. omnipresent. He is not everywhere at the same time. Job 1:7 says that he is *“running to and fro in the earth.”* First Peter 5:8 says, *“the devil as a roaring lion walks about....”*

- Evidently at times he can move from place to place with great speed but he can be in only one place at a time.
- His domain is restricted by God.
- He operates only by God's permission.
- He is a defeated foe awaiting his sentence to be carried out by God.

God and the Devil are not in an age-long struggle for supremacy! God alone is sovereign! Do not forget that God cast the Devil out of heaven!

What the Devil is.

The fundamental moral description of the Devil or Satan, is given by our Lord Jesus when He described him as the *"evil one."* In Matthew 13 in the parable of the Sower, the Seed and the Soil, Jesus said, *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart."* (Matt. 13:19)

Also, Matthew 13:38 identifies the *"evil one"* as the Devil: *"The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil."*

Compare the *"evil one"* with the *"Holy One"* and the nature of the Devil is obvious. Repeatedly God is called *"The Holy One"* or *"the Holy One of Israel"* as in Psalm 71:22 - *"I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel."*

THE DEVIL'S NAMES AND TITLES.

The Devil is called by many names and titles. His various names and titles should help us to understand better his sinister ways and workings.

A. His Names.

- **Lucifer.** His original name was Lucifer: *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"* (Isaiah 14:12) "Lucifer" in the Hebrew means "Day Star."
- **Devil.** The name occurs 61 times in the Bible. The name "Devil" means "slanderer" or "false accuser." He slandered God to Adam and Eve in Eden; he slandered Job before God. Slander is still one of his most potent and universal weapons and he is never more pleased than when he can encourage Christians to use slander against other Christians!
- **Satan.** The name "Satan" occurs 56 times in the Bible. "Satan" means "adversary" or "opposer." He not only opposes God but he opposes all who are God's children.

B. His Titles.

Other terms for the same being are descriptive titles. He is described by at least 40 different titles in the Bible. He also has many aliases. These reveal his character as the most corrupt and corrupting person in the universe. Principal among them are:

- **Abaddon and Apollyon.**
Rev. 9:11 – *“And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.”*
- **Accuser.**
Rev. 12:10 – *“Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.”* Jesus Christ is advocating for us before God; the Devil is accusing us before God.
- **Adversary.**
1 Pet 5:8 – *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*
- **Angel of light.**
II Cor. 11:14 – *“Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”*
- **Antichrist.**
I John 2:18 – *“Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the^[c] Antichrist is coming....”*
- **Beast.**
Rev. 13:1, 4 – *“And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name..... and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”*
- **Beelzebub.**
Matt. 12:24 – *“Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, “This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”* The Pharisees attributed Jesus’ power over demons to His being in co-hoots with the Ruler of Demons.
- **Belial.**
2 Cor. 6:15 – *“And what accord has Christ with Belial?”* Belial means “worthlessness, unprofitableness, wickedness.”
- **Dragon.**
Rev 12:7-9 – *“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 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.”*
- **Enemy.**
Matt.13:39 – *“The enemy who sowed them is the devil....”*

- **Evil One.**
Matthew 13:38 identifies the “*evil one*” as the Devil. (Also Matt. 13:19,38; 1 Jn 2:13,14; 3:12, and particularly 5:18);
- **Liar and Father of Lies.**
John 8:44b – Jesus said, “*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.*” He hates truth, he misrepresents truth, falsifies truth, distorts truth, denies truth and seeks to destroy truth in every place and way that it is possible to do so.
- **Murderer.**
John 8:44a – “*He was a murderer from the beginning.....*” His murderous attacks upon the human family began with the first family when he aroused Cain to kill Abel. He has perpetuated and perpetrated murder ever since. He hates the image of God in mankind and by striking out at humans he, in his warped thinking, is striking out at God.
- **Prince of the power of the air.** Eph. 2:2 – “*.....the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.....*”
- **Roaring lion.** I Peter 5:8 – “*Be sober, be vigilant; because^[c] your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion....*”
- **Ruler of this world.**
John 12:31 – “*Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*” In II Cor. 4:4 he is called “*the god of this world.*” This title indicates his domination of the world’s system. He is determined to prevent the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom on the earth. To this end he uses every evil method he can manufacture.
- **Serpent.**
Rev. 20:2 – “*He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years....*”
- **Sinner.**
1 John 3:8 – “*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.*”
- **Tempter.**
Matt. 4:1-3 - “*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”*

1 Thess. 3:5 – “*For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.*”
- **Wicked one.**

I John 5:19 - *“the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”*

With names and titles like these, we get the very distinct impression that the Devil does not have either God’s or mankind’s best interest in mind! It is no wonder that Paul counseled the Christians in the church in the city of Ephesus, and, he counsels us today, in these words *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”*

Eugene Peterson’s modern paraphrase translates the paragraph as follows:

“God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we’ll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels. Be prepared. You’re up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it’s all over but the shouting you’ll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You’ll need them throughout your life.”

(Ephesians 6:10-18)

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