

## SATAN THE DESTROYER

### INTRODUCTION:

1. *I Peter 5:8*
2. *Luke 22:31*
3. *Revelation 9:11* Abaddon = Destruction; Apollyon = Destroyer
4. *Matthew 12:22*
5. *Job 2:6*

### I. SATAN'S TARGET -- YOUR BODY

- A. **If Satan Cannot Defeat You By Deceiving Your Mind, He Will Then Try To Destroy Your Body.** As the serpent, he deceives; as a lion, he devours. If we believe his lies, then we will destroy ourselves.
- B. **But If We Resist His Deceit, Then He Will Attack Our Bodies.**
  1. Job is the prime illustration of this kind of attack.
    - a. Lost the fruit of his body -- his children.
    - b. Lost the means of sustaining his body -- his flock and herds and wealth.
    - c. Lost the health of his body when he contacted a terrible disease.
    - d. Friends sat in silence for a week, because Job was in great agony.
    - e. Job's wife suggested, "*Curse God and die!*" Satan did a thorough job of attacking Job's body and all that related to it.
  2. When you read the Gospels you learn that Satan, through his demonic helpers attacked and sought to destroy the bodies of various people.
    - a. One man to be dumb – *Matthew 9:32,33*.
    - b. A woman to be bent over and disabled - *Luke 13:11-17*.
    - c. Even attacked a child and tried to get him to destroy himself in the water or the fire - *Matthew 17:14-18*.
    - d. There is no escaping the awesome fact that Satan wants to attack and destroy your body.
- C. **Why Does He Want To Do This? For Several Reasons:**
  1. To begin with, your body is God's temple - *I Corinthians 6:19- 20; Philippians 1:20*.
    - a. God is invisible; the world cannot see Him. Jesus Christ has returned to heaven and cannot be seen. But, we Christians can be seen, and it is our conduct in the body that glorifies and exalts the Lord – *Matthew 5:16*
    - b. God wants to use your body as a means for revealing Him to a lost world. Unconverted people are not likely to read the Bible to learn about God, nor books of Christian theology, but they will read lives - *I Peter 2:9; II Corinthians 3:2-3*.
    - c. This means that when Satan attacks your body, he is attacking the one means that God has of revealing His grace and love to a lost world.

- d. Creation reveals the power, wisdom, and glory of God; but Christians reveal the grace and love of God.
2. Not only is your body God's temple, but it is also God's tool - *Romans 6:12-13*.
- a. Note:
- (1) When God wanted an ark constructed, He used the skill of Noah and his family - *Genesis 6:14*.
  - (2) When He wanted the temple built, He used the hands and minds of Bezalel and Aholiab and their helpers, *Exodus 36:1-ff*.
  - (3) Jesus used the hands of His disciples for the distributing of the bread and fish.
  - (4) He used their lips and tongues for the preaching of the gospel.
- b. If God is going to get His work done in this world, He must use the various members of our bodies, empowered by the Spirit of God.
- c. Satan can hinder God's work by attacking God's worker and putting "tools" out of commission - *Romans 6:13* ("*instruments*" = tools). Jesus Christ took a body to do His work, so the Holy Spirit needs our bodies.
- (1) Our bodies are tools in the Spirit's hands to carry out the Lord's work.
  - (2) Never underestimate the importance of your body.
  - (3) Never underestimate the care of the body. Any Christian who is careless about his health or safety is playing right into the hands of the destroyer.
3. The third reason Satan attacks your body is because your body is God's treasury - *II Corinthians 4:7*.
- a. When God saved you, He put the treasure of eternal life within your body. You have the very life of God within you!
- (1) God did not give you this great treasure simply to protect it - an earthen vessel is not the safest place for a treasure!
  - (2) He gave you this treasure that He might invest it through you in the lives of others.
- b. For example: God deposited the spiritual wealth in the Apostle Paul.
- (1) *"According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." I Timothy 1:11.*
  - (2) Paul invested this treasure in Timothy.
    - (a) *I Timothy 6:20* - *"Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust'.*
    - (b) *II Timothy 1:11-14* - Read
  - (3) Timothy, in turn, was to invest this treasure in the lives of others - *"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" - II Timothy 2:2.*
- c. In other words, the safety and success of this spiritual investment is in the hands of weak human beings!

- (1) The treasure is in an earthen vessel!
  - (2) Satan can rob the world of spiritual wealth by attacking the bodies of believers.
4. Finally, Satan attacks your body because it is God's testing ground – *I Corinthians 9:27*.
- a. The image here is that of the Greek games. Each participant had to qualify and keep the rules, or he was not allowed to complete. If, after he won a prize he was found guilty of breaking the rules, his prize was taken away.
  - b. Satan can rob you of your rewards by attacking your body and getting you to break the rules. It is not a matter of salvation, but of rewards for faithful service. The athlete did not lose his citizenship if he broke the rules; he only forfeited his reward, a shameful experience indeed - *I John 2:28*.
  - c. Your body is important to God. We must care for our bodies and use time for God's glory. Anything in our lives that keeps us from doing our best must be abandoned. Just as the mechanic takes good care of his tools, so the believer takes good care of the tools of his body - *Romans 12:1*.

## II. SATAN'S WEAPON - - SUFFERING

- A. Satan Wants To Control The Circumstances Around The Body So That The Believer Will Suffer.
1. He wants to touch the body and create suffering.
  2. All of this is illustrated in the story of Job.
    - a. First, attacked Job's body through circumstances around him, lost his children, wealth, favor of his wife, friends, and neighbors.
    - b. Second, attacked Job's person with a horrible disease. When Job looked around, his situation was painful. Looked within, it was even more painful. Looked up, it seemed that God had forsaken him, although Job maintained his faith in God and was honored at the end.
- B. It Is Important To Note That God Was Always In Control. Satan Could Not Go Any Further Than God Permitted.
- C. Satan Cannot Touch The Child Of God Without The Heavenly Father's Permission.
1. Great encouragement to us, we know that whatever suffering may come in our lives, God has ordained it and is in complete control.
  2. The one thing God will not control is how we respond to this suffering, and it is here that Satan can gain his purpose.

D. Note, Too, That There Is More Than One Kind Of Suffering In The Life Of The Christian.

1. Natural suffering we experience simply because we are human. We cannot prevent the gradual breakdown of the body as we grow old, though we can seek to delay it.
2. God sometimes sends (or permits) His children to suffer that He might discipline them. Our Heavenly Father loves us too much to permit us to be rebels, so he chastens us that we might conform to His will – *Hebrews 12:5-6*.
  - a. "discipline" in - *Hebrews 12* simply means "child-training". The purpose of discipline is the maturity of the son. God's purpose is not to persecute us, but to perfect us.
  - b. Chastening is not the work of an angry judge as he punishes a criminal. It is the work of a loving Father as He perfects a child.
3. Troubles and trials are not always because of sin or that God is chastening us. Let's notice a couple of storms in the Bible on two different occasions:
  - a. Jonah: refused to go to Nineveh, God sent a storm, a fish to teach Jonah a lesson and bring him back into the will of God. What a storm it was.
  - b. There are storms that come because we are obedient - *Matthew 14:22-33*. Jesus had fed more than 5,000 people – *Matthew 14:15-21* - wanted to make Him king. Sent the crowd away, also sent the disciples across the Sea of Galilee in their boat.
    - (1) He went up to the mountaintop to pray.
    - (2) When the disciples got away from the land, a fierce storm arose and almost sank the ship.
    - (3) Please note: they were not in the storm because they disobeyed the Lord, but because they obeyed Him.
    - (4) He was testing and perfecting their faith. Later, He came to them and stilled the storm, but the entire experience revealed to the men how weak their faith really was.

E. So Sometimes We Suffer Simply Because We Are Human.

1. We suffer because we disobey the Lord and need to be chastened.
2. We suffer that God might perfect our faith and help us mature.
3. Not all suffering is Satanic in origin.
4. But there is a kind of suffering that is Satan's weapon and that is what Job experienced.
5. Everything that Job experienced, Satan was behind it.

F. **As Believers, We Have This Confidence: God Is Always In Complete Control.**

1. When God permits Satan to light the furnace, He always keeps his own hand on the thermostat.
2. Job did not know what was going on behind the scenes. He had no idea that God was permitting him to suffer so that Satan might be silenced.

G. **When You Find Yourself In Difficult Circumstances, Seek To Know Through The Word Of God And Prayer Whether Your Suffering Is From Nature, From God, Or From Satan.**

1. Is God perfecting you? Is He disciplining you?
2. Is Satan seeking to hinder your work or even trying to destroying you? You cannot control the origin of your suffering, but you can control the outcome.

**III. SATAN'S PURPOSE - - TO MAKE YOU IMPATIENT WITH GOD'S WILL**

A. **Only Place In New Testament Where Job Is Named Is - *James 5:11*.**

1. This verse indicates that Satan's purpose was to try to get Job to be impatient and give up.
2. Job did become impatient with himself and his critical friends, but he never lost his faith in God.
3. Though he did not understand what God was doing, Job knew that he could trust God and that God would vindicate him in the end.

B. **Patience Is An Important Christian Virtue.** Unless we have patience, we can never learn many of the truths that God wants us to learn, truths that will lead us into a deeper life and a more fruitful ministry.

1. *James 1:2-4*
2. Children are usually impatient; they just can't sit still. "How long do we have to wait" is the normal question? Impatience is a mark of immaturity.
3. But impatience is also a mark of unbelief. *"...he that believeth shall not make haste."* In other words - "He who believes will not be in a hurry" - *Isaiah 28:16*.
  - a. When you find yourself restless and nervous, anxious to "do something", you can be sure you are not trusting God to work.
  - b. You and I need to be - *"followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises"* - *Hebrews. 6:12*.
4. Faith and patience go together. If we really trust God, then we will wait on him to accomplish what He has promised.

5. Impatience is not only a mark of immaturity and unbelief, but is a mark of fleshly living.
    - a. The flesh (the old nature) is always impatient, but the fruit of the spirit is – *"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"*, -Galatians 5:22-23.
- C. **By Nature, We Are Impatient, But The New Nature Within Can Produce Patience As We Yield To The Holy Spirit.**
- D. **Impatience Always Leads To Costly Mistakes.**
1. Abraham became impatient with God and had a child by Hagar, his wife's handmaid, in order to bring a son into the world and fulfill God's promise. A son was born, but he caused nothing but trouble. Abraham had to wait 14 more years for Isaac to be born, and Isaac brought joy and blessing to the home.
  2. Peter became impatient in the Garden of Gethsemane and tried to kill a man with his sword! Instead of cutting the man's throat, Peter only cut off his ear, and to save Peter's life Jesus healed the wound. Peter's impatience almost cost him his life.
  3. Satan knows that if he can make us impatient, he can lead us to do something stupid and get ourselves and others into trouble.
- E. **But Patient Enduring Is Enriching.** Satan tempts us that he might bring out the worst in us, but God permits it that He might bring out the best in us. Job knew this; therefore, he said, - *"I shall come forth as gold"* - Job 23:10.
1. God will never permit the enemy to put us through the fire without His having a definite purpose in mind. God wants to make you patient.
  2. We cannot learn patience by reading a book or hearing a lecture. The only way to learn patience is by going through the trials that God assigns to us. The trials of life are the tools God uses to mature us, to build our faith, and to get us to trust the Spirit and not the flesh.
- F. **When You Find Yourself Impatient, You Can Be Sure That Satan And The Flesh Are At Work, And That You Are In Danger Of Making A Wrong Decision.**
1. When the circumstances of life are irritating, that is the time to beware!
  2. When family problems, friends, finances, or feelings are making life uncomfortable, then you can be sure that Satan is near, waiting for an opportunity to attack.

#### **IV. YOUR DEFENSE - - THE IMPARTED GRACE OF GOD**

- A. **Job Is Not The Only Saint Who Felt Satan's Attack Against The Body, For The Great Apostle Paul Had A Similar Experience - *II Corinthians 12:7-10.***

1. We don't know Paul's thorn in the flesh, but whatever it was it was enough to make him pray three times. There is nothing wrong with praying when difficulties come.
  2. God did not answer Paul's prayer, but God did meet the need. "My grace is sufficient for you." – *II Corinthians 12:9*.
    - a. It is the imparted grace of God that gives us victory when Satan attacks the body with suffering.
    - b. Only by the grace of God can we have the patience that we need as we go through the furnace – *I Peter 5:10*.
- B. God's Grace Is God's Provision For Our Every Need. God Is Able To Give Grace For Suffering To Us As He Did With Paul And Job.
- C. Then What Steps Should You Take When Satan Attacks Your Body With Suffering And Tries To Make You Impatient With God's Will?
1. Immediately submit yourself to God. If you rebel, you will give Satan another foothold in your life. Tell God exactly how you feel, but also tell Him that you love Him and trust Him, come what may. – "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him*" – *Job 13:15*.
  2. Thank God for the trials – *Ephesians 5:20; I Thessalonians 5:18*.
    - a. This does not mean you enjoy the suffering, but only that you rejoice because you are suffering in the will of God, and you know that He is in control.
    - b. Satan hates it when believers thank God in the trials.
    - c. When Paul and Silas sang and praised God in the Philippian jail, they completely ruined all of Satan's plans! – *Acts 16:14-ff*.
  3. Spend much time in the word of God. It is the "word of His grace" – *Acts 20:32*. The gracious promises of God will strengthen you.
    - a. REMEMBER: we do not live on explanations, we live on promises.
    - b. God did not explain to Abraham all the promises he needed to keep going – *Psalms 119:67, 71*.
    - c. You will discover in God's Word the promises and encouragements that you need for each day – *Romans 5:4*.
  4. Look for ways to glorify Christ. Remember, God wants to use your body to glorify Him; Satan wants to use your body to disgrace the Lord.
    - a. Patience in suffering always glorifies God.
    - b. Unconverted people cannot understand how Christians can suffer and not complain or rebel – *I Peter 2:20; 4:16*.

In the midst of shame and suffering, Paul and Silas glorified God by singing and praising His name. While he was being stoned to death, Stephen glorified God by praying for his murderers. Many of David's psalms record the fact that he could praise God even when persecuted and rejected. Paul's most joyful letter, *Philippians*, was written from Roman imprisonment when he didn't know if he would be alive or dead the next day.

**CONCLUSION:**

As you follow these instructions, you will discover the Spirit of grace working in your life and imparting to you the grace of God. You will grow in patience. You will experience God's love and grace within. God may not change the circumstances, but He will change you so that the circumstances will work for you, and not against you. As I said before, you and I cannot control the origin or the operation of suffering, but we can (with God's help) control the outcome. READ: *II Corinthians 12:9*.

If you live to please yourself, then Satan will win, but if you live to glorify God, Satan will lose. The imparted grace of God is the only weapon that can defeat him, and that grace can be found only in "the God of all grace."