

No.6. Satan's Defeat

In the very first of our studies on this subject of *Satan and His Angels* we considered something of his history, looking specifically at his creation and his fall. He fell from his original estate through his pride and his rebellion against God, and in his fall he brought down a segment of his fellow-angels, who are the demons of whom the Scripture speaks.

As a consequence of his fall, Satan became absolutely depraved. In his being he is utterly devoid of anything that he possessed in his unfallen state. In him there remains not even the slightest degree of the holiness that he had originally. Instead, he is completely possessed of a nature that is sinful beyond everything we could ever imagine. The vileness & malignancy of his being is given some expression in the names & titles that Scripture ascribes to him: *Abaddon/Apollyon*, Rev 9: 11; *Accuser*, Rev 12: 10; *Adversary*, 1 Pet 5: 8; *the Angel of the Bottomless pit*, Rev 9: 11; *Belial*, 2 Cor 6: 15; *Beelzebub*, Matt 12: 24; *the Devil*, Matt 4: 1; *the god of this world*, 2 Cor 4: 4; *the prince of the demons*, Matt 12: 24; *the prince of this world*, John 14: 30; *the tempter*, Matt 4: 3; *the unclean spirit*, Matt 12: 43; *the strong man*, Matt 12: 29; and *the wicked one*, Matt 13: 19. As would be obvious each of the devil's names reveals something about his character and the manner in which he works.

All of these names are a reflection & manifestation of the wicked nature of Satan. They demonstrate his agenda of opposition to the Lord & to His people. Note in Matt 13: 28 the words "*an enemy hath done this.*" The reference is of course to Satan as v.39 reveals – "*the enemy that sowed them is the devil.*" Christ identifies & reveals that all of Satan's wickedness of being is concentrated toward one chief goal – that of fighting against the Triune God and His people.

However, it must be kept in mind that Satan's enmity to God and to Christ is doomed to failure. Satan does not fight as a free agent but as one who is under divine restraint, subject to divine sovereignty, and destined to eternal punishment, Rev. 20: 10 – "*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone...and shall be tormented day & night forever.*" Moreover, Satan is fully aware of the terrible end to which he is destined, Rev 12: 12 – "*he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*" This same verse reveals to us that even though he is aware of his terrible end he pursues his wicked programme relentlessly. Note the words "*having great wrath.*" The sense is that the knowledge of his hopeless doom provokes his malignant mind to even greater heights of wicked opposition to Christ and the Church. But it is all hopeless for he will eventually be brought down to utter damnation and eternal punishment.

PROPHECY OF HIS DEFEAT

See Gen 3: 15 – the words were addressed to Satan, the old serpent who had entered into & employed the actual serpent in his attack on mankind. The heart of this prophecy is that the Lord declares war on the one who had introduced sin into the human race and into all creation. Moreover, this declaration of war involved the introduction of enmity between what we will call at this point – *good & evil*. There are **two personalities** in this verse – *the serpent and the woman*. There are also **two progenies** – *the serpent's seed and the woman's seed*. The serpent's seed can only be the non-elect among men, cf. Matt 13: 38; while the woman's seed are God's people with Christ as their Head. Indeed, in the ultimate sense the seed of the woman is Christ, a point that is especially seen in the reference in this verse to **two prospects**. Note the final words – "*It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" The imagery used here is that of the crushing of the serpent's head by the seed of the woman, the Lord Jesus Christ, which took place at Calvary in Christ's death, Heb 2: 14 – "*that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*" Gen 3: 15 in the reference to the bruising of Christ's heel points to the fact of His own suffering that He endured in His destruction of Satan & his works.

RESISTANCE TO THE PROPHECY OF HIS DEFEAT

As Gen 3: 15 teaches, Satan's death knell and doom were sounded in his own ears. However, due to his wicked & spiteful nature Satan resisted what had been revealed and constantly sought to stop the promise of the Redeemer from being fulfilled.

In the O.T. era Satan made various attempts to pollute the line from which Christ would come – Gen 6: 2, where "the sons of God" refer to the godly line of Seth, polluted through intermarriage with "the daughters of men" – the line of Cain. But God defeated the Satanic attempt to pollute the line from which Christ would come by sending judgment, yet at the same time preserving Noah & his sons, one of them – Shem – being the line from which Christ came. The same pattern is seen at subsequent times, but God always preserved the holy line from which the Saviour was to be born.

In N.T. times when Christ was born, Satan sought repeatedly to destroy Him, Matt 2: 16, Matt 4 (temptations), Luke 4: 28, 29; and in John's Gospel there is the record of various attempts to kill Christ.

SATAN'S RESISTANCE IN VAIN

But Satan's resistance was in vain and soon Christ accomplished redemption by which Satan was *cast out*. This obviously did not mean that Satan was immediately cast down into hell. But it means that his doom was sealed by Christ's death. Moreover, another chief result of Christ's victory over Satan is signalled in v.32 – the inability of Satan to prevent Christ from gathering His people. V.32 points to the gathering of a great multitude to Christ as the fruit of His death. Those of whom He speaks are to be drawn in time after Christ's death as the language shows. The reference cannot be to all men without exception for Christ does not save all members of the human race. Rather, the main reference is to all men given to Christ in the Gentile nations, along with the remnant of Jews whom the Lord continues to call in.

However, v.32 indicates that Satan's tyrannical power over the nations has been broken, and that Christ irresistibly applies redemption to those for whom it was purchased. This is not to say that Satan does not have great influence still. He does his worst to injure Christ's Church by persecution and by sowing false doctrine especially. But his power is broken, he cannot operate as he once did and eventually he will be completely cast down to utter destruction.

CONCLUSION

In the light of all noted the lesson for the believer is that victory over Satan resides in the victory of Calvary. This is the means of personal triumph over the daily battles of the Christian life, in whatever form they might be, Gal 2: 20. For the Church, the victory is of the same source – it is by praying in the victory of Christ and by preaching the triumph of the Cross that the Church overcomes.