

Works of Satan: (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)

The world-wide and age-long works of Satan are to be traced to one predominant motive. He hates both God and man and does all that in him lies to defeat God's plan of grace and to establish and maintain a kingdom of evil, in the seduction and ruin of mankind. The balance and sanity of the Bible is nowhere more strikingly exhibited than in its treatment of the work of Satan. Not only is the Bible entirely free from the extravagances of popular Satanology, which is full of absurd stories concerning the appearances, tricks, and transformations of Satan among men, but it exhibits a dependable accuracy and consistency, of statement which is most reassuring. Almost nothing is said concerning Satanic agency other than wicked men who mislead other men. In the controversy with His opponents concerning exorcism (Mark 3:22f and parallel's) our Lord rebuts their slanderous assertion that He is in league with Satan by the simple proposition that Satan does not work against himself. But in so saying He does far more than refute this slander. He definitely aligns the Bible against the popular idea that a man may make a definite and conscious personal alliance with Satan for any purpose whatever. The agent of Satan is always a victim. Also the hint contained in this discussion that Satan has a kingdom, together with a few other not very definite allusions, are all that we have to go upon in this direction. Nor are we taught anywhere that Satan is able to any extent to introduce disorder into the physical universe or directly operate in the lives of men. It is true that in Luke 13:16 our Lord speaks of the woman who was bowed over as one "whom Satan has bound, lo, these eighteen years," and that in 2 Cor. 12:7 Paul speaks of his infirmity as a "messenger of Satan sent to buffet him." Paul also speaks (1 Thes. 2:18) of Satan's hindering him from visiting the church at Thessalonica. A careful study of these related passages (together with the prologue of Job) will reveal the fact that Satan's direct agency in the physical world is very limited. Satan may be said to be implicated in all the disasters and woes of human life, in so far as they are more or less directly contingent upon sin (see particularly Hebrews 2:14) On the contrary, it is perfectly evident that Satan's power consists principally in his ability to deceive. It is interesting and characteristic that according to the Bible Satan is fundamentally a liar and his kingdom is a kingdom founded upon lies and deceit. The doctrine of Satan therefore corresponds in every important particular to the general Biblical emphasis upon truth. "The truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)—this is the way of deliverance from the power of Satan.

Now it would seem that to make Satan pre-eminently the deceiver would make man an innocent victim and thus relax the moral issue. But according to the Bible man is particeps criminis in the process of his own deception. He is deceived only because he ceases to love the truth and comes first to love and then to believe a lie (2 Cor. 1:10). This really goes to the very bottom of the problem of temptation. Men are not tempted by evil, per se, but by a good which can be obtained only at the cost of doing wrong. The whole power of sin, at least in its beginnings, consists in the sway of the fundamental falsehood that any good is really attainable by wrongdoing. Since temptation consists in this attack upon the moral sense, man is constitutionally guarded against deceit, and is morally culpable in allowing himself to be deceived. The temptation of our Lord Himself throws the clearest possible light upon the methods ascribed to Satan and The temptation was addressed to Christ's consciousness of divine sonship; it was a deceitful attack emphasizing the good, minimizing or covering up the evil; indeed, twisting evil into good. It was a deliberate, malignant attempt to obscure the truth and induce to evil through the acceptance of falsehood. The attack broke against a loyalty to truth which made self-deceit, and consequently deceit from without, impossible. The lie was punctured by the truth and the temptation lost its power (see TEMPTATION OF CHRIST). This incident reveals one of the methods of Satan—by immediate suggestion as in the case of Judas (Luke 22:3; John 13:2, 27). Sometimes, however, and, perhaps, most frequently, Satan's devices (2 Cor. 2:11) include human agents. Those who are given over to evil and who persuade others to evil are children and servants of Satan (See Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33; Luke 4:8; John 6:70; John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 John 3:8). Satan also works through persons and institutions supposed to be on the side of right but really evil. Here the same ever-present and active falseness and deceit are exhibited. When he is called "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4) it would seem to be intimated that he has the power to clothe

himself in apparently divine attributes. He also makes himself an angel of light by presenting advocates of falsehood in the guise of apostles of truth (2 Cor. 11:13, 15; 1 John 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:9; Rev. 12:9; Rev. 19:20). In the combination of passages here brought together, it is clearly indicated that Satan is the instigator and fomenter of that spirit of lawlessness which exhibits itself as hatred both of truth and right, and which has operated so widely and so disastrously in human life.

Matthew 16:23 (NIV)

²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Mark 8:33 (NIV)

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Luke 4:8 (NIV)

⁸ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

Luke 22:3 (NIV)

³ Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

John 6:70 (NIV)

⁷⁰ Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!"

John 8:44 (NIV)

⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 13:2 (NIV)

² The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus.

John 13:27 (NIV)

²⁷ As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him,

Acts 13:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?"

2 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)

¹¹ in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV)

⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 11:13 (NIV)

¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

2 Thessalonians 2:9 (NIV)

⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,

1 John 3:8 (NIV)

⁸ He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

1 John 4:1 (NIV)

¹ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Revelation 12:9 (NIV)

⁹ The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Revelation 19:20 (NIV)

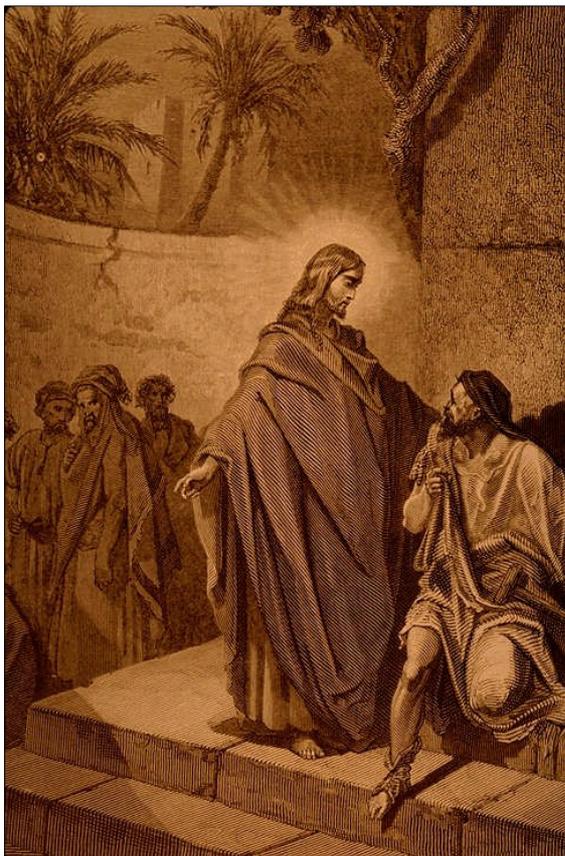
²⁰ But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Satan

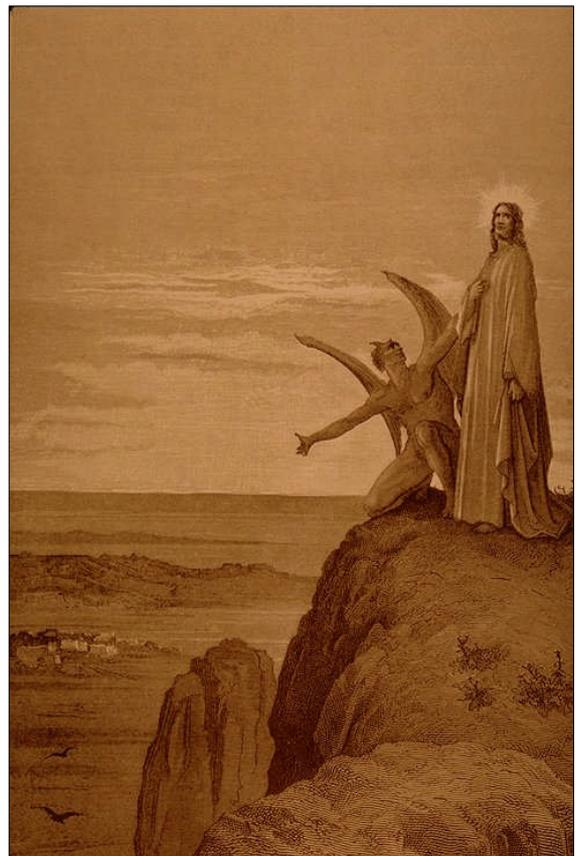
Adversary; accuser. When used as a proper name, the Hebrew word so rendered has the article "the adversary" (Job 1:6-12; Job 2:1-7). In the New Testament it is used as interchangeable with Diabolos, or the devil, and is so used more than thirty times.

He is also called "the dragon," "the old serpent" (Rev 12:9; Rev 20:2); "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; John 14:30); "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2); "the god of this world" (2Co 4:4); "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2). The distinct personality of Satan and his activity among men are thus obviously recognized. He tempted our Lord in the wilderness (Mat 4:1-11). He is "Beelzebub, the prince of the devils" (Mat 12:24). He is "the constant enemy of God, of Christ, of the divine kingdom, of the followers of Christ, and of all truth; full of falsehood and all malice, and exciting and seducing to evil in every possible way." His power is very great in the world. He is a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1Pe 5:8). Men are said to be "taken captive by him" (2Ti 2:26). Christians are warned against his "devices" (2Co 2:11), and called on to "resist" him (Jas 4:7). Christ redeems his people from "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14). Satan has the "power of death," not as lord, but simply as executioner.

—Easton's Illustrated Dictionary



The dumb man possessed
Matthew 9:32-33



The temptation of Christ
Matthew 4:1-11