**The Reality of Satan**

*How real is Satan to you? – Revelation 12:7-12*

**Introduction**

1. Some believe in God, but not the Devil. Some don’t believe in either. Some believe in the Devil, but do not take him seriously, or do not know how he works, and therefore cannot combat him. How real is Satan to you?
2. Satan is real – **Revelation 12:7-12** (A scene of heavenly warfare – symbolic.)
   1. **V. 7-9** – The struggle between righteousness and evil points to the cross, and resurrection. (Jesus overcame death, thus defeating Satan.)
   2. **V. 10-11** – Those who struggled and suffered at the hands of Satan overcame by obeying the gospel, and accessing the grace of God, and living faithfully.
   3. **V. 12** – Those who remain on earth must understand Satan is fighting to overcome them. He is directing all his energy toward Christ’s church while he still has time.
   4. **This is symbolic. Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead, and thus prevailed against Satan. Those who obey Christ will as well, but Satan won’t stop attempting to deceive us, and cause us to follow him instead.** 
      1. **Devil – *diabolos* – accuser, slanderer**
      2. **Satan – *satanas* – adversary**
      3. **Serpent of old – reference to the garden of Eden. (Deceiver.)**
      4. Many other names: **Accuser** (Revelation 12:10); **Beelzebub** (Matthew 12:24); **the Enemy** (Matthew 13:39); **Evil One** (Matthew 13:19); **Belial** (2 Corinthians 6:15); **Father of lies** (John 8:44); **God of this world** (2 Corinthians 4:4); **Prince of the powers of the air** (Ephesians 2:2).
3. **1 Peter 5:8** – We are the prey the Devil stalks. He wants to rip us to shreds. We must watch for him.
4. **Satan is real. Until we understand that, he will continue to overcome us.**
5. Satan Hates God and Man
6. Satan Accuses God Before Man
   1. **Genesis 3:4-5** – He does not want God to bless us. He wants to destroy all goodness God bestows upon us.
      1. **Revelation 12:4** – He tries to stop God’s work (*by trying to kill Jesus – Herod’s order to kill male babies*). **Matthew 4:1-10** – He tried to get Jesus to sin.
      2. **He attempts to stop God’s blessings by trying to stop God’s will**.
   2. **He does not want God’s blessings to rain upon us**. **Therefore, he accuses God before us of not really wanting the best for us – deception.**
7. Satan Accuses Man Before God
   1. **He lies about our faith and lives.**
   2. **He wants us to fail, so as to be out of favor with God.**
      1. **Job 1:6-12** – accused Job of having superficial faith which would fail when adversity came.
      2. **Luke 22:31-32** – wished to cause Peter to deny his Lord.
8. Satan Works On Christians
   1. **Colossians 1:13** – Satan already has the world – ***“Power of darkness.”***
   2. **Ephesians 2:2; 6:12** – He is the prince, and rules the darkness. He wrestles against Christians – He wants us, and will work until he gets us.
   3. ***“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Revelation 12:17)**.
      1. **Colossians 3:8-9** – His power is so great that he is able to turn us against each other.
      2. **We must be aware of the reality of Satan, and understand he is consistently working on us.**
9. How does Satan work? ***“we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11).***
10. Through Enticements
    1. **James 1:14** – The Devil lures us away. (**entice – *deleazō* – to entrap, i.e. (figuratively) delude; to bait, to catch by bait**.)
    2. **Isaiah 5:20** – He makes us think evil is good, and good is evil.
    3. **John 8:44** – We must understand worldliness as his desire, and that he lies about its goodness. (**1 John 2:16** – *We must control our desires and avoid his enticements.)*
11. On Our Minds
    1. **Mark 7:18-23** – Satan plants thoughts in our minds that we might be defiled.
    2. **John 13:2** – This is how Satan worked on Judas. He worked on his mind.
    3. **Acts 5:3** – This is how Satan worked on Ananias and Sapphira.
    4. **Philippians 4:8** – When we dwell on the opposites of these virtues, Satan is working on our minds.
12. Through Other People
    1. **Matthew 16:21-23** – He used Peter to set an occasion of possible stumbling before Jesus.
    2. **1 Corinthians 15:33-34** – He uses men who are ignorant to spread false doctrine and corrupt the righteous.
       1. **1 John 4:1** – We must be objective, and test these spirits.
       2. **2 John 10-11** – If we do not, Satan wins.
       3. **2 Corinthians 11:3, 13-15** – These men may appear right, but we must have the wisdom to tell the difference.
       4. **Satan is the great deceiver. He is effective in working through friends, family, feelings, etc. BE VIGILANT!**
13. How can we defeat Satan?
14. Remember Satan is a Liar
    1. ***“When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).***
    2. **His kingdom is founded upon lies. He does not want us to know the truth about sinful pleasures.**
    3. ***“passing pleasures of sin” (Hebrews 11:25)***.
15. Know the Truth
    1. **John 8:31-32** – Truth sets us free from the bondage we are under by following Satan’s lies about sin.
    2. **2 Thessalonians 2:8-12** – We must embrace the truth, and live the truth. For the truth overcomes Satan.
    3. ***“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11)***. – It is necessary to be so involved with God’s word that it is hidden in our heart. When deception comes, we know it to be a lie, because we have the truth.
16. Resist Satan
    1. **James 4:7** – If we obey God, and resist Satan, he will flee.
    2. **Revelation 12:11** – We do this by loving God more than life, and obeying Him.
    3. **1 Peter 5:8-9** – We must be vigilant, and faithful, understanding the end of those who follow Satan, and the end of those who follow God.

**Conclusion**

1. Satan is as real as God. We must understand this.
2. He wants no good for us, but fully intends to sever our relationship with our Creator.
3. We must understand his devices and combat them.
4. We must have courage and faith, knowing that Jesus is greater than Satan – ***“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4)***.