

SATAN – The MOST POWERFUL CREATED BEING

By G. D. Fulton

IT IS NOT without purpose that the Lord Jesus Christ refers to Satan as a “strong man” in Luke 11:20-22, and Paul speaks of him as “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2). Satan indeed is the strongest created being. His power and craftiness is so great that none but the Lord Himself exceeds him.

- ✓ Just how strong is the powerful created being we know as the Devil or Satan?

SO STRONG that he deceived *the first woman Eve* who lived in a perfect environment. If cleaning up society and the environment would suffice to deliver man from the onslaughts of Satan, and his own problems, then how did Satan manage to deceive Eve? Even in Eden he could cause her to violate God’s one great command—and this brought a curse upon her and all future generations of women. It was told Eve that she and her future daughters must bring forth their children in sorrow.

- ✓ Just how strong is this created spirit-being?

SO STRONG that he caused Adam to violate God’s command—*Adam, the first man*, who was created in the very image of God Himself—Adam who stood as the head of the entire human race. Adam lost that image of God and plunged his entire posterity into a state of sorrow and death, and in that fallen condition man freely does the works of Satan, with or without outside influences. Even the earth itself where Adam dwelt came under the curse. Oncoming generations would have to get their food out of that cursed earth—bringing forth its briars, thistles, weeds and all kinds of pestilence. Read Genesis chapter 3 for the story of this terrible fall of Adam.

Adam then fled from the presence of the Lord with whom he formerly enjoyed unbroken fellowship. Now fallen Adam loves darkness rather than light. And Adam didn’t seek to be restored to God’s fellowship. In his fallen condition Adam no longer desired God, so he ran and hid. Adam and all his descendents are in a condition whereby their only hope lies in God—and that God will take the initiative, seek them out and restore them to His loving fellowship. All of this was brought about by this terrible created being we know as Satan. But when God came and clothed Adam and Eve with skins, shedding the blood of innocent animals, it pointed to Christ the slain Lamb of God who would come in the fullness of time and take away the curse of sin.

- ✓ Just how strong is this strong created spirit-being?

SO STRONG that he caused *Cain, the first man born into the world*, to rise up in anger and jealousy and kill his brother Abel. He led Cain then to lie to God his Creator. All of Cain’s descendents after him were cursed not only by Grandpa Adam’s fall into sin, but also by the sin of Cain, and they became fugitives and vagabonds in the earth. The story closed with Cain going out from the face of the Lord, never to return. Read the sad story of Cain in Genesis chapter 4. If Satan could claim the first man born into this world, it would be wise to seek refuge in the LORD lest the old enemy get you also.

- ✓ How strong is this strong created being?

SO STRONG that he soon had deceived and corrupted *basically the entire human race* except Noah and his family. “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created

from the face of the earth ... BUT NOAH found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Gen. 6:5-8). How narrow the road is upon which those walk who are not deceived by Satan! For the vast majority are willingly the subjects of this fallen “prince of darkness.” The Lord Jesus warned that Satan would deceive the very elect if it were possible (Mat. 24:24). In all ages the way of truth and righteousness has been very narrow: “Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Mat. 7:13-14). Then the exhortation of the Lord Jesus Christ is, “Beware of false prophets” (vs. 15).

✓ Let’s continue to follow the trail of deceit left by Satan. How strong is he?

SO STRONG and so deceitful that he even caused *Noah, the one man who was serving God in the earth*, to get drunk and curse his grandson and descendants—“A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.” FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME! Friends, the terrible wrath of God is upon Satan and all his followers. Satan knows that his time is short and he is working overtime to lead astray every soul that he can. If he could deceive Noah after he had experienced the awful judgment and deliverance of the Flood, then who are we as a match for Satan? Flee to the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the only Shelter, the only place of safety from this great monster Satan.

✓ How strong is this strong created being?

SO STRONG that he soon could lead all of *Noah’s descendants* to disobey God and build the tower of Babel, endeavoring to reach into Heaven, to exalt themselves before God as Satan had done in the beginning. Instead of going out to replenish the earth as God had commanded after the Flood, they set about to build a city and tower so they would not be scattered. But God brought it to utter confusion as He divided their tongues or languages and then forced them to separate and repopulate the whole earth. Here we press upon you the fact that the Word of God is again showing us GOD HIMSELF as man’s only hope. To go against Him is to stand with Satan, God’s arch-enemy, and to stand with Satan is to face nothing but judgment and destruction. Satan, the powerful created spirit-being—Oh, what heartache, trouble, sorrow, destruction, misery and damnation he has brought upon mankind!* It makes you tremble to think that God created and turned loose in the earth such a powerful agent of darkness and evil as LUCIFER, SATAN, THE DEVIL! But he is alive and working in the world right now, and the issue is whether we are following the Lord or deceived by the devil. [* See note on the last page.]

✓ Continuing with the history of Satan’s deceptions, we find that Satan was SO STRONG that he caused *Abraham and Sarah* to doubt the promises of God and in their own schemes to bring forth Ishmael by the union of Abraham with Sarah’s handmaid.

But Ishmael was not to be the child of promise and so in God’s time Isaac was born to Sarah as the promised seed. A birthright war started in the tents of Abraham as soon as Isaac was born, and these two half-brothers started a conflict which has continued through all their descendants, even down to the Jews and Arabs of our day. Here is another compelling instance of Satan’s awful intrusion and its consequences. Satan will cause us to doubt the promises of God and use our own methods for their fulfillment. But this always leads to trouble—we must follow God’s Word, with complete trust in His promises, if we would succeed in the battle of truth and righteousness. We can only expect the realization of God’s promises in God’s way, and not in our own devious ideas or personal preferences.

✓ But there is more! How strong is the devil?

SATAN IS SO STRONG that he led all *the people of Sodom and Gomorrah* and other cities of the plains to corrupt themselves beyond hope. *Lot* alone was delivered from the base, inhuman corruption of

Sodom. But Lot himself, even though escaping death in the flames of judgment, lost all. He lost his wife, for she looked back in one fleeting glance and was transformed into a pillar of salt by the wayside. His daughters schemed and made him drunk and conceived children by their own father while living in a cave on the side of the mountain. Again two groups of people descended from this unholy affair, and have been enemies to truth and righteousness ever since. “Remember Lot’s wife” (Luke 17:32), and remember Lot’s failures by compromising and living with the world. That’s what Satan seeks to accomplish in Christians; he wants them to live as much in the world as possible, but God said if you love the world you are His enemy! “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17). It was in the love and compromise with the world that Lot lost out.

✓ Again, we ask, How strong is Satan?

SO STRONG that he caused *Joseph’s brothers* to hate him and sell him into slavery. The lies they told about the disappearance of their young brother caused Jacob to pass many years in excessive sorrow, even bringing his soul down to the borders of the grave. But even though Satan’s hatred was behind all of these things, God meant it for the ongoing of His redemptive purpose, as we read in Genesis chapter 50. God is sovereign and He can make the works of Satan and wicked men to ultimately achieve His purposes. An example of this—and the greatest example in all of history!—is the crucifixion of our Lord. Satan thought he had gained the victory when the Son of God died, but no, that was Satan’s utter defeat! In fact, Satan always loses in the final outcome, though he cause many sorrows, heartaches, war and death along his trail.

✓ Well, how strong is the powerful fallen angel?

SO STRONG that he caused Pharaoh *to enslave the children of Israel*, God’s chosen people above all the nations of the earth. If Satan through Pharaoh could completely enslave a whole nation, and that being God’s chosen nation, then what defense is there for you and me? Only ONE is known who can set the captives free, and we must look to the Lord Jesus alone for victory over the attacks and the bondage and the deception of the Evil One. As God sent His delivering prophet to Israel in slavery, so He sends His only-begotten Son to lost sinners today.

✓ How strong is this powerful adversary of God and men?

SO STRONG that he caused *God’s own people Israel* to doubt the Lord after He had delivered them from Pharaoh’s clutches, and brought them across the Red Sea on their way to the Promised Land. They murmured against God and against His appointed leader Moses. They even wanted to return to bondage. This led to 40 years of wanderings in the wilderness instead of crossing over immediately into the Promised Land. Remember this, even after God has delivered you and saved you, Satan will still haunt your trail! This shows the error of modern teaching which says that a person is saved and sanctified and beyond the temptations of the devil. No, the devil was even permitted to tempt our Lord and surely he is busy tempting and troubling all the Lord’s own people! Only in Heaven will we be completely free from attacks by the Evil One. But we ought to praise the Lord for His Word which instructs us and warns us about the wiles of the devil. Study and hide the Word in your heart, follow the Lord in obedience to His Word, and you can know and experience VICTORY OVER SATAN EVEN NOW.

✓ How strong is the devil? we ask.

SO STRONG that he deceived and led Samson, *the strongest man who ever lived*, into the lap of a wicked woman, who enticed him so much that he finally told her the secret of his strength. Then the enemies were able to slip in and shave him, robbing him of his strength and finally overcoming Samson, making him their slave. He died in the camp of the enemy. Listen: If the STRONGEST MAN who ever lived proved no match for Satan and was deceived and fell under his onslaughts, what hope is there for one as weak as you or I? This again ought to drive us to the LORD in prayer against the fiery darts that Satan is sure to hurl our way, even today. Only Jehovah God in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost can totally conquer Satan—one day that conquest will be complete, and the devil will be put in the bottomless pit. Read Revelation 20:10.

✓ Again we look into God's Word to find how strong Satan is and see that he is

SO STRONG that he led Saul, *the first king of Israel*, into a life of jealousy and hatred of the young shepherd boy David. Saul was *the tallest man* of his day, but the consuming passion to kill David eventually destroyed him. In his disobedience he sought out counsel of a wicked witch. Now if THE TALLEST MAN was no match for Satan, where does this leave the rest of us? The story of Saul is a sad one indeed. Early in his story, we find him as a humble child, anointed to be the first king over God's chosen nation, but he allowed power and passion to consume him. Then God left him to himself and judgment was the sure result.

✓ Again, look at our "strong man."

SO STRONG is Satan that he caused the great king David (*the man after God's own heart*) to sin in lust for a neighbor's wife and take her in violation of God's Holy Law. He committed adultery and then murder, trying to cover his sin. But sin cannot so easily be hid, for God will bring it out. David's sin—when he fell through the enticements of his own wicked heart, inflamed by lust and the whispers of the devil—brought the sword of judgment into his household never to depart. David saw his family ruined and gave occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. David, the best man we have any record of, the man after God's own heart, and composer of the sweetest Psalms in the Bible, was tricked by the devil. Now, think with me—if the BEST MAN could be deceived, how about you and me?

✓ There's more, much more. How strong is this strong created being?

SO STRONG that Solomon, *the wisest man* and perhaps greatest king who ever lived, the man who chose wisdom above all other gifts, finally married strange wives and set up heathen idols in the very shadow of the temple of God at Jerusalem. Solomon in great wisdom, power and wealth was blessed of God to build the holy temple, yet we see wine, women and heathen idols find their way into his heart and practice. For a time he laid aside the Law of God and in his shame served these things. Now if Satan could deceive THE WISEST MAN who ever lived, then you and I must cry night and day unto the Lord for victory over him. The only victory is through Christ.

✓ Again we ask, How strong is this created strong man?

SO STRONG that after the death of Solomon he deceived *all the kings of the Northern Kingdom* of Israel. These wicked kings gave the people a tangible but imitation religion, plenty of religion but it was empty ceremony. In fact, Jeroboam the first king in the north, after the division of the nation, decided to give the people more religion and more feast days than God's original law provided. That's the way of an empty show-off religion, where there is no substance and no power. The Pharisees were the same in Jesus' day. Plenty of outward religious activities to hold the people to their religious superstitions, but it included no heart-work, no inward purity, no true worship of Jehovah God. Christ said, "The hour cometh and now is,

when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24). Outward show and entertainment is the devil’s masterpiece of delusion—it was so in Israel; it was the same in the days of the Pharisees; and so it is today.

Thus the tribes of the Northern Kingdom became lost tribes so far as the true worship of God was concerned. They intermingled more and more with the world and lost their identity. What a lesson this is for all professing worshipers of God in our day! If the church and professing Christians become intermingled with the world, then Satan has won his point and the testimony of truth is silenced. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing” (2 Cor. 6:17). The world and its lusts will soon pass away (1 John 2:15-17), and where will we be if Satan has led us to stake our claim on these things?

Look at the Southern Kingdom (or Judah) which walked much closer to God’s pattern shown in the mount. But here also we see Satan SO STRONG that he was able to lead 13 of the 20 kings of Judah into idolatry and rebellion against their covenant God. They were finally led away captives, never to be a great nation for God again. How sad the wages of Satan’s course!

Yes, Satan, our Lord tells us, is a “strong man” (Luke 11:21), and he keeps “his palace” which is the heart of man. Satan is Dunghill Deity, but he reigns over the hearts and lives of most men of the world. He keeps his subjects in peace, for it is only through “trouble of soul” that men ever rightly and diligently seek the Lord. Examine yourself here. If you are at peace, examine that peace in the light of God’s Word—is it the peace of Satan’s deception, or do you have the “peace of God which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7)?

So as we conclude, I would caution one and all about this enemy called Satan or the Devil. May we lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, put on the whole armor of God that we might fight the good fight of faith, run the race, and lay hold on that eternal life which is in Christ the Lord. Keep your eyes, not on those things with which Satan would entice you or harass you, but on the Lord Jesus Christ who calls us to life and victory and the world to come. God is building for us a City on High. Trust Him. “Flee from Satan and he will flee from you” (See James 4:7).

— G. D. Fulton (1909 - 1995)

* **NOTE:** We are not unaware of Satan’s devices, and one of the tricks at his command is to get us to *deny* our own sinful natures and blame *everything* back on him, thus passing the buck and excusing ourselves. A comedian of old always brought a round of laughter when he would exclaim, “*The devil made me do it!*” That is not always the case! Old fallen sinful, depraved nature (apart from any current activity of Satan) is capable and willing to wallow in sin of the deepest dye. And so in this sermon, we are not saying that all these human failures were the results of *direct* temptations from the Devil. But we feel that — since Satan was the agent that tempted man to commit the first sin, and since Satan has been actively trying to trip up mankind ever since — surely it is proper, in a sense, as my Dad has done, to blame these sinful downfalls on the Prince of Darkness. May this message be used of God to cause many to become more conscious of the Evil One and his devices used upon the children of men! Our prayer is that the reader will be drawn into a closer relationship with the LORD, trusting His Word and claiming HIM as the Shield from Satan’s darts, temptations and snares. WWF