

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 5 (January 27-February 2, 2019)

Many in our generation have trouble believing in a literal devil who takes advantage of our individual sin natures and tempts us to sin against God. We will study the origin and work of Satan in the following four weeks of devotions.

Sunday, January 27 (read Isaiah 14:12-15)

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! (Isaiah 14:12a KJV)

The specific reference in Isaiah 14:12-15 is to the evil king of Babylon, but the obvious **bigger picture** is that of Satan (Lucifer) as he tries to overthrow God with his own agenda. We will look at a parallel text from Revelation 12 in a future devotion. Satan's downfall is caused by an attitude of "**I will**" (v. 13-14) instead of the acceptance of our Lord's words, "Yet not as **I will**, but as **you will**" (Matthew 26:39b, emphasis mine). The devil is determined to "make myself [himself] like the Most High" (v. 14b). Anytime we attempt to bring attention to ourselves and to our works instead of giving glory to God, we are doing the same thing. Spiritually, Satan has already been defeated on Calvary, but he is still alive and at work on the planet earth (see 1 Peter 5:8) until Jesus brings about his final judgment (see Revelation 20:10).

Monday, January 28 (read Ezekiel 28:11-19)

You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. (Ezekiel 28:15)

In today's text, you can see another Old Testament passage with a double meaning. The specific application is to the king of Tyre, but the obvious picture is of Satan himself. No human could be called the "model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (v. 12b). No human could have been "in Eden" adorned by "every precious stone" (v. 13). Humans are **born** into the world and not "**created**" (v. 15). Apparently, Satan was the most beautiful of God's created angels, but that beauty led to the pride that brought about his downfall (v. 17). As we saw yesterday, Satan's final defeat will take place when he is thrown into hell (Revelation 20:10). Until then, be aware of his presence and his attempts to lead you astray.

Tuesday, January 29 (read Genesis 3:1-15)

"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Genesis 3:1b)

Satan's first appearance in the Bible comes in today's text as he appears as a serpent in the Garden of Eden. It doesn't take him long to reveal his agenda since he has only one question: "Did God really say?" All he needs to do is to cast doubt on the reliability of God's Word and he has won the victory. The Bible is absolute truth (see John 17:17) so it stands to reason that those who doubt His Word will never know the truth that can set them free from Satan, sin and self (see John 8:31-32). The devil tells Eve that the wages of sin is **not** death (v. 4) in direct contradiction to Romans 6:23. Instead "your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (v. 5). This is the exact claim of today's New Agers, the **enlightened** crowd. It's a reminder of what Solomon tells you in Ecclesiastes, "there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). We will continue with this same text in tomorrow's devotion.

Wednesday, January 30 (reread Genesis 3:1-15)

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike at His heel.” (Genesis 3:15)

We will skip over the fall of man and his excuses (v. 6-14) and take a look at the first prophecy in the Word of God (v. 15). Today’s featured verse mentions only the **woman** because it is a prophecy of Mother Mary and her virgin born offspring, Jesus Christ (v. 15a). Satan’s head will be crushed on Calvary as he strikes at the heel of the One who is dying for the sins of the world (v. 15b). The serpent walked upright prior to allowing the devil to enter into him to tempt the first couple. Because of his curse, the snake must crawl on his belly throughout eternity, even in the earthly kingdom (Isaiah 65:25). The curses of the man and woman are temporary (v.16-19), but the curse of Satan is forever!

Thursday, January 31 (read Matthew 4:1-4)

The tempter came to Him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” (Matthew 4:3)

For the next three days, we will look at the temptations of Jesus during His 44 days of fasting in the desert. We learned on Tuesday that the devil has only one question: “Did God really say?” Likewise, **all** of his temptations can fit into one of three categories (**pleasure, popularity** and **power**). In today’s text, Satan tries to get Jesus to satisfy His physical hunger by performing a miracle for His own **pleasure**. This is a much larger trap than most people realize. The curse placed on man as a result of his sin is that “by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food” (Genesis 3:19). The word “food” is rendered “bread” in the King James Version. In other words, Satan is trying to get Jesus to **bypass the curse** by producing bread without labor. The devil knows that Jesus can lift the curse only by dying on the cross, spelling defeat for his evil agenda. The Lord sees through Satan’s tactic and refuses to shortcut the plan God has laid out for Him.

Friday, February 1 (read Matthew 4:5-7)

Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. (Matthew 4:5)

If Jesus would only make a public show of His powers, He would be instantly accepted by the masses. At least, that is Satan’s reasoning as he appeals to the Lord to take another shortcut, this one to **popularity**. The devil even quotes Scripture to make the temptation seem like a Biblical concept (v. 6). Jesus is not interested in turning His (or your) ministry into a public show. Many TV ministries are so hi-tech that the production gets more praise than God Himself. The Lord knows that hi-tech productions and counterfeit miracles attract huge crowds, but that has never been **His** agenda. Instead, He wants you to know the “also” verses that put His Father’s Words into the proper context (v. 7). Beware of a ministry that appeals only to sight and sound. The devil operates in these areas while God operates in the area of **faith**.

Saturday, February 2 (read Luke 4:5-8)

And he (Satan) said to Him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.” (Luke 4:6)

Few Christians seem to understand that Satan is the “god of this age.” (2 Corinthians 4:4). These believers wonder why there is so much evil in our world. They don’t understand why Jesus called the devil the “prince of this world” (see John 14:30). In this text, Satan is offering Jesus a crown without a cross and **power** without pain. The Lord has no interest in any offer that makes Him king while leaving mankind lost in their sins. From the very beginning, He is aware that His death, alone, can pay the horrible price for the sins of mankind. He rejects all of Satan’s shortcuts through **pleasure, popularity** and **power**. He willingly goes to the cross to pay a debt He did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay!