

## The Cunning Of Satan

**God Is Preparing Us Against Satan**

**Kim Myers**

**Given 13-Jun-15; Sermon #1272A**

You and I are in a lifetime-long battle or war. This war we are involved in started out at our baptism, and will not end until we die, or we caught up in the air at Christ's return; or if we are overcome by Satan and return to living by his way. This war we are involved in goes on every minute, of every hour, of every day, of every week, of every month, of every year for as long as we live until either Christ returns, or we are overcome by Satan.

I have several questions for us to consider:

- Do angels really exist?
- Is there really a Satan the Devil?
- Does Satan really influence us?

You see, all the troubles and evils of our world are caused by human minds clashing with other human minds. All of the world's problems begin in man's mind.

Another question to consider: Is there a connection between wrong attitudes and the unseen spirit world?

God's Word tells us that there is. This unseen spirit world exists along with our physical world, and this spiritual world is absolutely indiscernible to us and our five senses. This is why men's minds clash with one another, because you cannot see what is going on.

Turn to Hebrews 1.

**Hebrews 1:4-7 (RSV)** Having become as much superior to angels, as the name He has obtained is more excellent than theirs. For to

what angel did God ever say, “You are my son, today I have begotten you.” Or again, “I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son?” And again, when He brings the Firstborn into the world, He says, “Let all of God's angels worship Him.” Of the angels, He says, “Who makes His angels winds, and His servants flames of fire.”

God is telling us, here, that angels do exist, and that they are God's servants and secret messengers, sent from Him to minister to those He has called to salvation and to eternal life. That is us—you and me!

But, there is a lot more to the story.

The angels, then, are the servants of God who do minister to God's chosen and called ones—you and me. There are also other angels that God calls demons, who rebelled against God and His government, who follow their god—Satan the Devil. His name, we know, means “adversary.” God calls things what they are. Satan is our adversary.

Turn to I Peter 5. Here is a warning to us that we need to take seriously.

**I Peter 5:8** (Amplified) Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger]. seeking someone to seize upon and devour [or kill].

So, God is telling us in this passage that there is really a spirit world. He is telling us that part of the spirit world is our enemy, and that we should take this warning very seriously, because Satan and his demons want to kill us, both spiritually and physically. God tells us to be vigilant and cautious because what we are involved in is really very serious business.

Turn to Jude 6 in the Living New Testament. This is another warning for us. He gives us plenty of warnings. He says:

**Jude 6** (Living New Testament) And I remind you of those angels who were once pure and holy but [willingly] turned to a life of sin. Now God has chained them up in prisons of darkness, waiting for the judgment day.

A very long time ago, God's angels were all pure and holy. But what happened? Who, and how were they deceived? Do you think that one day these angels said, "Hey, we've had enough of God and His Son. We want to be the boss. We want to be in charge."

Do you think that is what happened? Do you think that they said that they wanted things to be their way? So their rebellion started, and then these angels said, "Hey, let's make Lucifer our boss; let's put this great archangel Lucifer in charge, and we'll follow him." Is that how you think it happened?

No! That is not how it happened. That is not even close. It may have taken a very long time to develop. But, how did it start?

It started with words. It is something we hear and use every day. Turn to Isaiah 14.

**Isaiah 14:12-13** How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in our heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, on the farthest sides of the north.'

God tells us this rebellion started with one archangel, Lucifer; one being.

Then, over a very long time, Lucifer corrupted other angels by using words! Just words. Nothing more than words! We know Satan is very subtle. He is very smooth, and extremely cunning. This rebellion started with Satan talking to other angels, and slowly working on them, until he found one who would listen to him and believe him. That is how it started.

Once this one angel turned from God, Satan had an ally. Now, there were two working through words on the rest of the angels. In time, and through many words, there were three, then six, then 10, then 50, and on it went until the rebellion became full blown.

Satan has not changed his tactics at all since the rebellion started. He still uses words. What did Satan do to deceive Eve? Did he put her in a headlock? Or punch her? Or choke her until she would eat of the forbidden fruit? Did he use Adam as a hostage, and tell her, “If you don’t do what I want, I’ll kill Adam!”? Did he tell Eve that he would kill her if she did not eat of that tree?

No. Satan used words. Just like the leader of our former association uses. All he had to do was talk to her. The whole account of this sin is only six verses, but I am sure that this sin, to become full blown, took a lot more time than that. It could have taken a few weeks or even years before Eve became deceived.

Turn to Genesis 3. This is the account as recorded there.

**Genesis 3:1** Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”

Do you see in this verse what Satan does? He speaks the truth, but puts doubt in Eve’s mind. He asks, “Has God really said. . . did He really say that?” And then in verse 2:

**Genesis 3:2-4** And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” And the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.”

Here again is a question designed to produce doubt in Eve’s mind. He says, “You will not surely die.” See? He is messing with her mind, is what he is doing. And then we have verse 5:

**Genesis 3:5** “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you shall be like God, knowing good and evil.”

In this verse, Satan mixes a complete lie with some truth. Here, Satan was telling Eve that by eating of the Tree of Good and Evil, she would become wise and powerful like God, because knowledge is power. And she would then be able to exist forever independently from God. That is what he was telling her. Then in verse 6:

**Genesis 3:6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

In this verse, Eve justifies herself as to why she is going to eat of the forbidden fruit. She justifies why she has to do this. It was pleasant to the eyes, it was desirable to make her wise, and it looked like it would be good for food. Why not eat it? It all sounds and appears so good, did it not?

You see, sin starts with words. And then it becomes a thought and a justification in our minds. Then it becomes an action, which produces sin. I think each one of these above verses took time. How much time? I do not know, but many months or years, and many, many words being spoken.

We have to guard our minds from what we hear and what we read, and what we hear spoken to us. The question is: How do we do that? You see, God is not going to protect us from Satan unless we do our part.

Turn to Matthew 4. We all have a part in this. And, God will protect us, but we have to do our part. Christ shows us here, what we need to do.

**Matthew 4:1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

This temptation by the devil happened right after Christ's baptism, His anointing as Messiah. He is the second man, or the last Adam. This is why Satan comes after Christ right after His baptism.

Before we move on, let us jump over to I Corinthians 15:

**I Corinthians 15:45** And so it is written, “The first man Adam was made a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Christ had to be tempted just like the first Adam had been. He was tempted by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life just like Adam and Eve were.

**I John 2:16** For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

We will be tempted and tried by words, just as Christ was. Christ's example of how to handle this is in the next 10 verses of Matthew 4. This example is showing us how we must fight back, how we fight against the words which become thoughts, which becomes actions, and then becomes sin. Christ shows us what the armor of God is. It is not a mystery; it is right here.

**Matthew 4:2** And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Do you think He was hungry?! He was in a weakened and vulnerable position. He was much more than just hungry. I doubt that any of us could fast for 40 days. I doubt I could make three. A lot of us are wrecked after the Day of Atonement. Think about that. We are in a pretty weakened state after the Day of Atonement.

God is showing us in this verse that Satan attacks us when we are in a weakened state. He comes after us when he thinks he has his best chance of success. We can be weakened by a lot of things. We can be weakened by our attitudes, sickness, loss of job, financial problems, marital problems, and many other kinds besides. And this is when Satan attacks.

Let us continue in Matthew 4:

**Matthew 4:3-4** Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

Christ had an answer for Satan. This passage is showing us how the armor of God works. The armor of God is nothing more than prayer and Bible study. The armor of God is words. That is all it is. But, you and I have to know those words. The words are in the Book, the Bible. You see, the more we pray, the more God gives us the words; as we study the Bible, we learn and keep God's words, not our words.

Let me ask: If you were a soldier and in a battle every minute of every hour of every day all your life, would you get up in the morning and go to war with no ammunition? You would be a fool if you did that.

Well, if you do not pray and study every day, that is exactly what you are doing. If you do not pray and study, you will not know the words to defeat Satan with.

Peter knew and understood this verse, and knew the exact words to say concerning Judas and his betrayal of Christ. Turn to Acts 1.

**Acts 1:16** (Amplified Bible) Brethren, he said, it was necessary that the Scripture be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit foretold by the lips of David, about Judas who acted as guide to those who arrested Christ.

Here Peter was telling the disciples why Judas did what he did, because they might have been bickering with one another. Some of them were probably saying, “Well, Judas wasn’t that bad of a guy.” That is how things go. And Peter brought them back to reality and back to the Bible. Peter had the armor of God; he knew the Scriptures, and the right words to say. Peter said it was necessary that the Scripture be fulfilled. Peter knew exactly what to say because he knew the Scriptures.

You see, the disciples were likely asking each other, and taking sides about what Judas did. And he called them down with the words of the Bible.

**Matthew 4:5-6** Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’”

Satan also knows what is written in Scripture, and he will try to twist the Scriptures to deceive you. That is why we need to know the words. And the way we learn the words is through prayer and Bible study every day, no matter what.

What Satan says in this verse is true. But we all know that we should not tempt God, which is what Christ says in the very next verse.

**Matthew 4:7** Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shalt not tempt the Lord your God.’”

And then again:

**Matthew 4:8-11** Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And said to Him, “All these things will I give You if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Then said Jesus to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.’” Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

God's loyal angels came and took care of Christ just they do for all of us. We can see by these verses that Satan does not give up easily. He continues the attack until he is soundly defeated.

So we can see that Satan, in his attack on Christ, is very patient. As I mentioned earlier, it may have taken him several thousands or millions of



years to convert part of the angels to the dark side. And he did it all with words. That is all he used.

We also see that Satan puts doubt in our minds just like he did to Adam and Eve.

What did Satan say to Eve? “Did God really say that you can’t eat of the Tree of Good and Evil? Really?” That puts doubt in your mind. “Why would God say this? He knows that if you eat it you will be as God knowing good and evil.”

He certainly lied to Eve, saying, “You shall not surely die.” Again, words that trigger thoughts trigger actions, which trigger sin.

We also see in Satan’s attacks on Christ how he does not give up. He is coming after us. He tells some truth, but not all of it. Satan tempts us with lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. So we know that Satan attacks us through words.

The question is: From what quarter do these attacks come upon you and me? Where is this going to come from?

Turn to Matthew 13. These verses will give us a clue as to where the attacks will come from.

**Matthew 13:38-39** (Amplified Bible) The field is the world, the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are the angels.

The words and the attacks come from within the church—from wolves in sheep’s clothing, from people who have been in the church of God—and it is going on right now.

**Matthew 13:29-30** (Amplified Bible) But he said, No, lest in gathering the wild wheat, you root up the [true] wheat with it. Let

them grow together until the harvest; then at the harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather the wild wheat first, and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the true wheat into my granary.

Most of us have been in God's church for many, many years. Sometimes it feels like 'forever,' and for some of us, it *has been* forever because we were born in the church. Since we have been in God's church for so long, it would be really hard for our neighbors, our co-workers, our friends who are not part of God's church, and unconverted family members to deceive us, or to get us to start thinking their way. It would truly be hard. I have had all kinds of people in the world tell me all kinds of things, and I think, "putz," and go on with my life.

But, there are a couple of unconverted people that will deceive many—the whole world—and probably some of God's people too. Turn to Revelation 19.

**Revelation 19:20** Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

In the case of the false prophet, he uses the words, but he can also work miracles. And because he can work miracles, mixed with words, he will deceive many. That is what makes him so dangerous. I am sure that some of God's people will be deceived by these two people when the time comes.

But the biggest threat to us—God's called, the elect—comes from within the greater churches of God. That is where the real danger lies. We are not extremely vulnerable to deception from friends and acquaintances, but we are very vulnerable to deception from brethren and ministry. We have all witnessed this by the Tkach deception and the subsequent breakup of the Worldwide Church of God, and by how many of our family and friends were spiritually killed during that attack. That came through nothing more than words—just spoken words. Those words killed a lot of people who had been called by God.

Let me give you an example of how words deceive us.

It is like a little leaven. It starts small. But before you know it, the whole lump is leavened. It starts with something that appears insignificant at first. One family that I have known for a very long time, just a man and a woman, decided they needed to start wearing tassels. So, they started wearing tassels to church, and talking to other brethren about why they felt they needed to wear tassels.

Well, do you know what has happened in that group of God's church? About half of that congregation now wears tassels. I do not know where this will go, or what it will lead to, but I do know that it is not part of the faith once delivered. One thing usually leads to another. That is how it works.

Do you see? The deception starts with words. It starts small with something that we would think as insignificant. Once Satan gets a toe in the door, he exploits the situation until it becomes sin, and it starts killing us spiritually. That is his goal—to kill us spiritually. Then he knows our spiritual death will be certain, because this is our time to qualify for the Kingdom of God.

This is how and what Satan does every hour of every month of every year all of our lives. He roams around seeking whom he can deceive and kill—spiritually and physically.

Turn to II Corinthians 2. God is telling us in this verse not to be stupid because we are not ignorant.

**II Corinthians 2:11** Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

I want the last portion of this verse, about the ignorant of his devices, because we have heard countless sermons and sermonettes over the years on how Satan works, and how we need the full armor of God to protect ourselves.

Joshua Montgomery spoke on being deceived back in January of this year (2015). Mr. Ritenbaugh in his commentary about the conspiracy theories talked about deception and how the Western world is being deceived by the

powers-that-be through words. And it has been going on very subtly for years.

Words, brethren! That is all.

We all know what is coming upon the Western world because of our sins, and because of the deception which Satan has so masterfully used against us all.

Paul talks about God's people being deceived by words and thoughts in II Corinthians 11:

**II Corinthians 11:3** But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

How? They are corrupted by words.

**II Corinthians 11:14-15** And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves as the ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Brethren, what did these ministers do? They, and all other men who speak, use words to convey a message. That is why it is just an important decision to all of us as to where we attend church, and what we will allow ourselves to be taught.

It all has to do with words, which become thoughts, which become actions, which become sin.

God gives us ample warnings in the Book—the Bible—of what to look out for, and how to defeat Satan. Turn to II Timothy 3.

**II Timothy 3:13-14** (Amplified Bible) But wicked men and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and leading astray others and being deceived and led astray themselves. But as

for you, continue to hold to the things that you have learned and of which you are convinced, knowing from whom you have learned [them], or were taught.

God is telling us in verse 14 to keep the faith once delivered. He is telling us, “Do not add to it, and do not take away from it.”

We have seen terrible heresies sweep through the church of God. And Satan’s attacks are not over. We must ask ourselves, trying to see from God’s point of view, what is the primary purpose that we go to church services? Why do we do this? Do you go to church to receive the hug you need to feel good? Is that why you go to church? Do you go to church because you want to be a speaker, or a deacon, or to be in charge of some activity? Do you go to a big church so that your children will find a mate?

We should go to church services for the reasons God has told us. You will find part of that in Hebrews 10.

**Hebrews 10:25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

That Day is approaching rapidly. We are living at the end of the age. This verse instructs us to exhort one another more and more as we see the end approaching. How do we do that? With words—God’s words. We go to church services to be taught God’s way of life. And how do God’s true ministers do that? They do it with words. They exhort us with words. Words right out of the Bible. That is why it is important to us *where* we go to church, and what is being said there.

This word “exhort” means, “imploring; provoking; interacting with; or entreating one another.”

**Hebrews 10:24** And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.

This is what we are to do when we assemble ourselves together at church services. This is not talking about relationships that are of a superficial

nature. This is talking about the opposite—getting close; spurring one another onward; and interacting with each other on a warm, friendly, and personal, intimate level.

How do we do this? How do we defeat Satan?

We do it with the words found in the Bible. But we will not know them unless we pray and study them. That is the armor of God. When we get together with brethren, do we take a stand for what is right by using God's words? Or do we slink away refusing to make a difference? We should speak to one another often to provoke one another to love and good works. The ministry was given to us to exhort and provoke us to love and good works, and they do this through words—the words of God that come from the Bible.

Do we thank God for each other every day? Or do we only consider one another on the Sabbath? Or does godly care for one another continue throughout the week? We should always be considering one another in provoking each other to love and good works. This all starts with words, which become thoughts, which become actions, which become sin, or righteous deeds. That is what God wants from us.

We are all in this war together. None of us are an island.

We had better be putting on the armor of God that Christ gives us with the example He showed us in Matthew 4. The words of God we find through prayer and Bible study will protect us from Satan, wolves in sheep's clothing, and the tares within God's church.

Remember that the tares are among us, and their ammunition in this daily battle is nothing more than words. But we can defeat them if we know God's words thoroughly.

And then again, in Mark 13:

**Mark 13:22** “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

This is how serious this business is. You and I are the elect. Satan is so cunning, so good at what he does, that if God would allow it, he can deceive even the elect. We would even be deceived. God knows how Satan works, so God gives us the armor of God to combat Satan, if want it. But you and I have to want it.

We all know this armor comes through prayer. As we pray to God, God opens our minds to His Word—the Book, the Bible. But we have to do our part. We have to pray, and we have to crack the Book. It is all about words. God's words, which we find in the Bible, defeat the works of Satan. Christ gave us the example and shows us how it works in Matthew 4:1-11.

Christ defeated Satan with the armor of God, which is nothing more than God's words. He defeated Satan in a very weak and vulnerable condition, with the words of God.

Think about that.

Forty days of fasting, and He defeated Satan.

Turn to Revelation 12.

**Revelation 12:12** “Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

God addresses the spirit world, and then He goes on to talk to us.

So now I have a question: Has this already taken place? Or is the fulfillment of this verse still in the future? I am not sure. But I will tell you one thing: The greater churches of God are experiencing trials like never before. It seems like no matter who I talk to, they say they are having to endure one trial or another. So, whether this verse is now happening, or will happen in the future, we should know that the times will getting much tougher. It *is* coming.

When God says woe to us, it should get our attention. Remember, Satan attacks when we are the weakest and most vulnerable; when we are going through some trial; or when we are not using the armor of God because we are too busy with the world, doing our thing.

It is all about words. In order to protect ourselves, we need to know God's Word inside and out. Our whole defense starts with our knowledge of the Bible, and the words that are in it.