

## Jesus Christ's Purposeful Manifestation

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God made the world perfect so what has gone wrong with it? Since the beginning, Satan has worked at cross purposes with God and humanity at every opportunity he can find. He is the sworn enemy of all humanity, especially those who claim allegiance to God, which is every one of us in this room and those within the sound of my voice.

Working within the parameters established by God, Satan frustrates and deceives people while leading them into destruction. That is his modus operandi. Whether we like it or not, the whole plan of redemption as outlined in the Bible simply cannot be fully understood unless we accept the biblical teaching about the Devil. This message is essential, it is here from the beginning to the end in the Bible.

This fact about the Devil explains mankind's problems and the whole state of the world, the whole attitude of the world. And even though we have human nature that we fight against and try to overcome our sins, Satan is always there trying to punch holes in our resistance and he just has total control of the world.

There are numerous names given to Satan in the New Testament: the Devil, the tempter, the evil one, the prince of demons, the dragon, the ancient serpent, Beelzebub, the accuser, and the enemy. In every way he is pictured as the epitome of evil.

Now the Son of God came because the Devil produced a certain state and condition in the world. We can see this in,

**I John 3:8** [the apostle John says] For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

What did John mean by that?

Let us begin with some background to Satan's infamous reign of the earth. Long before Genesis 1:1 the earth was a perfect creation and it was populated by angels. There was a throne on which sat Lucifer, a super archangel, a cherub. He had been thoroughly experienced in the administration of the government of God, having had access to and been subject to the seat of God's throne in heaven. God had placed Lucifer on the throne on the earth to administer the government of God over earth's angels. And there was peace and happiness on the earth at that time.

Referring to Lucifer, the Moffat translation of Ezekiel 28 reads:

**Ezekiel 28:15** (Moffatt) From the day you were created, you lived the perfect life; till you were discovered doing wrong.

God did not create a devil. He created a beautiful and perfect super-angel. God gave His angels free moral agency, minds free to think and reason and to make the right choices.

Please turn with me to Jude 6. Lucifer had allowed his beauty and perfection to fill him with pride, with self-glory, and self-desire. He became envious of God's power and resented authority over him. So he plotted with his angels and marshaled them into an invading army. He was intent on invading the heaven of God and unseating God off the throne of the universe and beyond. It is a quite a tall order to shoot for.

**Jude 6** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He [that is, God] has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

So the angels who did not stay within their own assigned position of authority, their set place on earth, rebelled against God's authority and sought to be equal to Him. They were defeated and cast down, probably with little effort by God since He is so much more powerful than Satan.

Now, God has kept these beings under His own strict control and the place that they were originally given, the territory of their dwelling place, has become a prison, a place of restraint for them. So, Lucifer was no longer a

light bringer, but an adversary, an aggressor, a competitor, and an enemy. The name Satan means adversary. His angels became demons. A third of the angels united with Satan in the rebellion (as far as we can tell), which caused chaos on earth.

The sin of these angels reached into the heavens and brought destruction on earth. The wreckage of a titanic battle waged by the spirits can be observed throughout space. Look at the pockmarks of the moon and beyond, and all of the destruction that is seen. It is amazing that the creation of God, being so fantastic and great, could receive such physical damage in that type of a conflict.

The earth was created perfectly.

**Psalm 104:30** You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and  
You renew the face of the earth.

That was basically God's reaction after that battle and putting Satan imprisoned on the earth, so to speak.

Satan the Devil came and spoke to Eve, and by extension to Adam, and he enticed them to sin. So they went against God and the result is the state of the world as it has been from the moment that they sinned.

Now summing it all up quickly we can put it like this. This world has become the kingdom of Satan. And Satan has produced certain results which we call the works of the Devil. Our Lord and Savior came into this world because of that. People need to be delivered from the punishment of their sins. Satan bears his own sins, and each individual is judged according to his own sins, but they also need to be delivered. That is, that we need to be delivered out of this kingdom of the Devil, out of the kingdom of Satan. And eventually everyone needs to be transformed into members of the Kingdom of God, the Family of God.

So in a major sense, the Son of God came because of that kingdom that Satan had established. And Jesus Christ came into this world to conquer Satan and his kingdom, and to introduce God's Kingdom, the Kingdom of salvation and eternal life.

In a sense, the Bible is the story of the conflict between two kingdoms, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Devil; the Kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan; the kingdom of Light and the kingdom of darkness; the Kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the world. God gave Adam an opportunity to take the place of Satan the Devil, to sit on Earth's throne and to restore the government of God on earth. Adam rejected that tremendous opportunity and yielded to Satan, who to this day remains on Earth's throne as ruler of this world. Christ, the second Adam, is coming soon to sit on the throne and to restore the government of God.

Lucifer was initially placed here to administrate God's government on earth, but Lucifer refused to do God's will. He rejected God's commands and he snubbed God's government. He substituted his own form of government which resulted in disqualifying himself.

Now, Adam had the opportunity to overcome him, but he failed to conquer Satan by disobeying God. He obeyed Satan the adversary instead and mankind became the property of the Devil, and the whole human race has accepted and been in slavery under Satan's diabolical authority ever since.

Christ came about 2,000 years ago and began the process to unseat Satan from his dominance of the world. In the face of Satan's challenges with the temptations on the Mount, Jesus refused to obey the Devil and He chose to remain in total obedience and faithfulness to God. From that time on, the conqueror of Satan, Jesus Christ, has been qualified to take over the rule of the earth. But Jesus returned to heaven because the appointed time had not yet arrived for His arrival and His taking that position.

Turn to Revelation 12, verse 9, please. Christ's second coming, when He ousts the Devil, is soon and then Christ will rule the earth, God's laws will be restored, and there will be order and peace as there was when God first created it.

Satan leads the whole world astray. His power lies in deception, and by his lies the whole world is deceived about God's truth and way of life. He will pursue the church with vengeance and try to destroy us because he knows he only has a short time until his judgment. Here in Revelation 12, we are going

to read verses 9, 12, and 17. This is the area where it talks about Satan thrown out of heaven.

**Revelation 12:9** So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth and his angels were cast out with him.

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

**Revelation 12:17** 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.

Satan knows that the time he has left to wage war against the saints on earth is very limited. And even if it has been 6,000 years, that is still a very limited time in all history of the universe, so to speak.

Please turn over to Matthew 8, verse 28. In the Amplified Version of Matthew 8, we read the demon's comment to Jesus Christ, acknowledging that the time of their judgment was in the future.

**Matthew 8:28-29** (AMPC) And when He [Jesus Christ] arrived at the other side in the country of the Gadarenes, two men under the control of demons went to meet Him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce and savage that no one was able to pass that way. And behold, they shrieked and screamed, What have You to do with us, Jesus, Son of God? Have You come to torment us before the appointed time?

So the evil spirits are not bound in outer darkness at this time as they will be after their day of judgment; they *are* limited and allowed to tempt and afflict people until then.

Satan is determined to do everything he can to destroy as many people as he can, especially the saints, because he does not want people to be given more power than he has or to be in the Family of God. With Satan it is all about the thirst for power and control driven by pride.

The Devil's methods have brought this whole age of mankind: the global problems of false teachers, wars, famines, pestilences, diseases, and persecution of God's people. At the close of this age, Satan's wrath will bring indescribable suffering and death, followed by God's greater wrath. In the Day of the Lord cataclysmic events will terrify humanity.

Now, the three woes of Revelation 8 involve three final major battles, each so horrifying that God calls it a woe. It represents a time of suffering and anguish and misery and sorrow and despair. Each battle is so destructive that only God can repair the damage the armies will do to the earth's surface.

Three is God's number signifying finality. At the third battle—the third woe and the last trump—mankind will be saved from extinction only by a miracle from God. And if God did not personally intervene in this climactic war, humans would destroy and wipe out human life from the face of the earth. Once we invented atomic weapons and then nuclear weapons and then neutron weapons and then bacterial weapons and viral weapons, we are already past the point of being able to do it. We are in danger of doing it. It shows again the insanity, the mindset of this world.

Lawless societies will be abolished and Jesus Christ will establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

Christ came the first time as a humble messenger to announce the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. But this time when He returns, He will come in all power and supernatural glory to bring God's Kingdom to earth.

Please turn with me to I John 3, verse 5. So the obvious question is: what is wrong with the world? What needs to be destroyed when Christ returns?

Under many guises Satan is revealed as the epitome of evil who works against God and humanity at every opportunity.

**I John 3:5-7** And you know that He [that is, Jesus] was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

And is that not what we are trying to do, especially as we approach Passover, is we are trying to clean our house and try to become with God's help as righteous as possible, getting rid of sin in our lives.

**I John 3:8** He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Verse 8 is the second of two great statements that John makes in this first section of chapter 3 regarding the purpose of the coming of the Son of God into this world. The first statement was in verse 5, "And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin." And again, the second statement in verse 8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

So these two statements remind us of the purpose of Jesus Christ as our Savior. Verse 8 specifies that the reason the Son of God appeared is related to sin and the Devil. "Knowing Christ" means becoming involved in an all-out war against "the works of the Devil," against the practice of sinning.

And so as we work on ourselves before Passover to prepare ourselves to be worthy and prepare ourselves with God's help to be worthy, we must not forget that Satan is needling us and he is always trying to get an inroad into whatever our weakness is to try to get us distracted from the purpose that we are here for, and that is to glorify God by living His way of life.

It seems that despite the records in the New Testament, some people tend to turn the Gospel exclusively into a point of view and a humanly-reasoned idea. They forget that a series of events and facts took place and will occur. So please turn with me to Colossians 2, verse 8. In his letter to the Corinthians and the Colossians, the apostle Paul tells us that he knew the

very subtle danger of the Gospel message being philosophically explained away. He was concerned that false teachers would nullify the gospel message by turning it into a philosophy.

**Colossians 2:8** Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

In his letters to the Colossians, Paul was concerned that false teachers would take some church members captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy. The false philosophy of Colossae was subtle and enticing and based on human tradition and reasoning rather than of Christ and the apostles' teaching. He tells us do not be deceived, brethren, by people who introduce doctrines that are not what you have heard from the beginning of God's church.

Philosophy is defined as the love of wisdom. But if one loves wisdom for wisdom's sake and not according to the purpose of Christ, who is the sum of all wisdom, then that person's wisdom is an empty idol. So the human reasoner will always be learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. This kind of philosophy is based on the world's basic principles. This is partly instigated by the evil spirits who inspire such heresy, deceive people from the truth, and over whom Christ triumphed.

**II Corinthians 4:3-4** But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing [meaning, He has opened our eyes to remove the veil, but not to the world], whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Now, please turn to Ephesians 6, verse 11. It is God who blinds the world from knowing the truth. It is Satan and his demons who deceive but cannot blind anyone to the truth.

**Ephesians 6:11-12** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against



powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

This type of philosophy that I have been talking about is demonic and worldly, and not godly or Christ-like. This is what Paul tried to warn the church to be careful of. These philosophies could, if it were possible, ensnare them and taking them captive.

Please turn into Colossians 1, verse 19. Now, why follow an empty philosophy when we have all the fullness of Christ? This is like turning away from a refreshing clear mountain stream to drink from a filthy gutter in the world. Of course, the false teachers did not outright ask the members of the church to forsake Christ. They asked them to make Christ part of a new system. But this world syncretized the truth of God and removed Christ from His rightful place of preeminence. So Paul gave the true and lasting answer to all false teachings.

**Colossians 1:19-22** For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on the earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, blameless, and above reproach in His sight.

In verse 19, fullness means the sum total of all that God is, all of His being and attributes, all the fullness is in Christ and we have been made full in Him if we continue in His way of life.

The gospel message is not a false philosophy, but a proclamation and announcement of certain things that have happened and will happen. So when we read the book of Acts, we find that the apostles and other ministers of God travelled around proclaiming the gospel message and with a very special emphasis, they told the people of the amazing fact of the resurrection.

The apostles explained how Jesus Christ had been completely misunderstood, not only by the common people, but by the rulers and elders of the people, and that they had put Him to death. Then God raised Jesus

from the dead and manifested Himself to them and His chosen witnesses and others. They told how after He had spent 40 days on the earth that they had seen Him rising to the heavens and now they were preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, the amazing gift Jesus had sent them.

We see that Christ did not come into the world only to teach. He did do that, He gave incomparable teaching. Before His teaching can be of any value to us in any practical sense, we must realize what He came to do. I have mentioned that already. He came, He was manifested, He appeared so He could destroy the works of the Devil. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." He came to do something and our salvation depends on what He Himself has done.

Please again turn back to I John 3:8. Now you remember back in verse 5 he talked about that He came to to save us from our sins. And here he talks about the devil again.

**I John 3:8-10** He who sins of is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest [or clearly seen]: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

The gospel's first and most essential message is to ask us to recognize and then to receive what He has done. That is why salvation is a gift. Our Savior came because of sin.

First, the apostle John looks at sin as it brings us under the condemnation of God's holy law. Secondly, John looks at sin as it puts us under the domination and government of Satan and makes us become a part of Satan's work (talking about people as a whole in the world). So there are two ways of looking at sin and the effects of sin on us. The first way is to see that sin is unrighteousness—that it is a breaking of the law of God, and that sin means we are violating God's holy will for us and God's holy purpose with respect to us.

John says the second way of looking at sin is that continuing in a life of sin and evil identifies you with the Devil and his ways and with everything that belongs to him (similar to what Craig was talking about in his sermonette about being part of a family). Well, what you do and the example you set declares what family you are part of.

Two things stand out very clearly in the way John puts it. The first is that Jesus entered this world to wage a great war, He entered a great battle. And the second is how He was victorious in the fight. He overcame the adversary and his works against us. We are concerned about a fact, not a principle of nature. And the fact is that there in the resurrection, our Savior ultimately conquered death and destroyed the works of the Devil.

Now consider this adversary, the Devil, and his works. So what are the works of the Devil? What has he been trying to do? We already have a pretty good idea of that, I think. Please turn to John 8, verse 44. His great endeavor is to separate people from God, which he intends to accomplish. He was jealous of God's sovereignty and power, and of man's obedience and allegiance to God. And in his bitter hatred of God, his personal obsession was to ruin and destroy the glorious works of God in the world. For almost 6,000 years he has done that work with vengeance and in a very deceptive way. He is often described as subtle and he is also described as a liar. Jesus Himself, in speaking of Satan and his effect on man says,

**John 8:44-45** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."

Jesus Christ, speaking to the crowd there and the Pharisees and those of the world in general.

All of Satan's works have been in some shape or form a repetition of a lie and he has persuaded men and women and children to believe and accept these lies. That is a major part of the biblical explanation of our predicament.

There would be much less evil and sin, there would be much less confusion and conflict, were it not that people in their folly have believed the lie of Satan. That is why the Millennium is going to be such a wonderful period of time without Satan there to pervert and distort and make a sickening world out of things. Because Jesus Christ will rule the earth during that period, especially, and we will rule it with Him and be able to help people to overcome their human nature and not have Satan to deal with. How wonderful that is! It is indescribable because we are so used to Satan's influences bombarding us and everything in the world.

In essence, a lie is something said with the intent to deceive. It is not always a spoken word that is a lie because a life lived under false pretenses, a hypocritical life, may be a lie equally with a false word.

**Isaiah 59:4** No one calls for justice, nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; they conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.

That is what should be written on the flags of the nations of the United States because that is their banner.

Please turn over the I John 2, verse 20. A vain thing like an idol may be a lie, as also a false system. Error, as opposed to truth, is a lie.

**I John 2:20-22** But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ. He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

Generally, an anti-Christ is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ or that there is a Father—God. More specifically, such a person, an anti-Christ, is a human representative of the evil one. Jesus spoke of many anti-Christ.

Please turn to II Thessalonians 2, verse 9. The works of Satan aim to entice people to believe the lie.

**II Thessalonians 2:9-12** The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Again, an apt description of the world we live in today.

There are various forms that lies have taken. The essence of the lie that Satan has persuaded people to believe is the lie about God Himself. It is the old lie about God's attitude toward human beings.

**Romans 1:25** who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

God created man and woman perfect and gave them a perfect world to live in. And He gave them the supreme privilege of having fellowship with Him, which we have been given as well as members of God's church. He gave them, that is, Adam and Eve, everything they needed. In the beginning, they did not have to slave by the sweat of the brow and the dust of the earth to make a living. They had fruits and vegetables to pick, all they had to do was accept and pick what God provided in abundance and enjoy it.

This is not to say they did not work. God told them to dress and keep the Garden and their labor was enjoyable until they sinned against God. God showered blessings upon Adam and Eve but the Devil came and said, and paraphrasing it, "Are you foolish enough to believe that God really loves you and you can trust Him? Can't you see He's making slaves of you? This one thing He's prohibiting you indicates His hostility toward you."

So the lie of Satan is the lie against God from the beginning.

In the average person's heart, when things go wrong, their first reaction is a feeling of hatred against God. It is the work of Satan to stir up that enmity

against Him that resides in human beings. Satan lies to us about God and His attitude towards us, about His love for us and His concern for our happiness and well being. That in turn leads to the next lie, which is, as we have just seen, the lie about God's will.

God has given laws to mankind and has given us these laws for our good and benefit. It is because God made us that He knows what is good for us. And when He gave conditions at the beginning, it was for our good, which Satan lied about and said it was not; but they did not see it. They believe the lie of Satan that the laws of God were against them. People view God's laws as a burden and narrow in scope and many reject them for that reason. And sadly, mainstream Christianity looks at the Old Testament as the Hebrew Bible, for the Hebrews only, and they do not want to do anything but pull excerpts out of it that they like, or read the Psalms. It is sad, but they do not have the truth. For one, they only have a portion of the truth with the New Testament and they do not understand that.

In one sense, it is hard to believe that people think that the sovereign God of the universe and His awesome Son are too narrow and bothersome. That is a lie about God's law, way of life, and holiness. And by nature, people instinctively dislike God's way of life until they are called and receive the Holy Spirit, freeing them from believing the lie of sin.

Of course, the next lie was about the consequences of sin and disobedience. Satan lied to them about the consequences of sin and defiance and that produced all the terrible consequences throughout human history.

Satan continues to do the same thing to this day. He whispers to us all and tells us to disobey God and to break His holy law. He assures us that we can do whatever we want with impunity and nothing will go wrong. And in our folly, we all tend to believe him—at least sometimes. The world believes him all the time. But every once in a while, we find ourselves slipping into believing some part of the lie. Thankfully, we have Jesus Christ's sacrifice that can cover our sins when we repent of them. And that is a miracle and a blessing that we just cannot put enough value on.

The Devil lies about the consequences, and people in their folly believe a lie.

**Genesis 3:4** Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die."

Please turn with me to Galatians 6, verse 7. But later we come to understand that the way of the transgressor is hard, and sooner or later, we discover that the warning by the apostle Paul is eternally true. He warns us in,

**Galatians 6:7-8** Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

So why does Satan do all this? He is always anxious to get us under his own power and dominion. His motive, his desire is to make us sin and to live a sinful life.

This was a being who was created perfect and beautiful and it all went to his head and pride took over. Adam and Eve sinned and began to live sinful lives. This became their way of life and has been the world's way of life ever since.

Please turn over to Romans 6, verse 16. Now, Satan is anxious to prevent us from living the godly and good life. He is committed to robbing us of all the benefits and blessings God has for us. But God has called us out of this world and we have answered that call by rejecting the illusion of power that Satan has offered us. We have rejected the thrills that he uses to seduce us, or at least we are working at rejecting such things.

**Romans 6:16-19** Do you not know that to whom you present yourself slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves who you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves to sin [thankfully that is past tense], yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you present your members as slaves to uncleanness, and of

lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for holiness.

What happens when people submit to lawlessness? They create and cause more lawlessness in their lives. And is that not what this nation is doing to itself right now? They are ignoring the laws of the land and it is creating more lawlessness. It is like a snowball rolling downhill. It is just accumulating strength and power and bowling over everything in its path. But God has control and that is why we do not worry unnecessarily beyond what the day has to present us.

The result of sin is that we make ourselves slaves to Satan. We meaning human beings. The world is in the stronghold of the Devil and he will not let them out, nor will he let them live righteously. And if they try, he will strike them down. They are under his power and dominion and that is the true state of the world today.

The result of the work of Satan is that people are under the rule of Satan and they have disobeyed God and offended Him. They have broken God's holy law and have been condemned. They were told what not to do, but they deliberately went against God's law. So they are left with no excuse and are under the wrath of God. Their world has become a place of anguish and despair, and trouble. And we have experienced it during our lifetime in an exceptional way—wars, confusion, fear, and depression.

Everything has been perverted: religion, science, politics, education, even sports. The sciences and technology are not necessarily wrong but when motivated by pride, people use these things dishonestly to further their own agendas and increase their power and wealth. And have we not seen that to the ultimate, almost, in that they are using that technology and those discoveries and biology to kill human beings, to destroy mankind? All this is the result of the work of Satan. He and his legions instigate people into corrupting and destroying God's creation.

Please turn with me to Revelation 16, verse 12. Satan wants no less than to murder every human on earth to keep people from being members of God's



Family. When we are changed in to spirit beings, we will be made higher than the angels, higher and greater power than Satan himself. And he knows this so he will do any and everything to destroy humanity.

**Revelation 16:12-16** Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to battle of that great day of God Almighty. "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

So the power of Satan will establish the coming world government that will result in great tribulation. Here however, Satan, the world ruler, and the false prophet unite in inciting the nations of the world to gather for the final world war. That is Satan's goal. That is where he is headed with his works.

Satan, knowing that the second coming of Christ is near, will gather all the world's military might into the surrounding area of Jerusalem to resist the coming of the Son of God, who will return to the Mount of Olives. Though the nations will be deceived into entering the war in the hope of gaining political power, the satanic purpose is to combat the armies from heaven at the second coming of Christ. The war continues until the second coming and involves house to house fighting in Jerusalem on the day of the Lord's return. The war will continue for some time but the climax, the main battle, will come at Christ's second coming.

Standing at the end of it all is the fact of death itself. By listening to Satan's lies, people have put themselves under that power of death. Scripture teaches us that all of us in this world, by nature, live under tyranny and the fear of death. It is always present, advancing toward us, hanging over our heads. It is the last enemy and it is inevitable to those who do not repent.

Possibly the greatest of all the results of the Devil's works is the state of the world apart from God and Christ. That is the sort of world into which Christ came the first time in which the Son of God was manifested. He appeared in a world that was under the dominion of Satan, a world sinful, perverted, miserable, unhappy, and alienated from God. It was a world like today's, under the wrath of God and with death always facing it.

Please turn with me to Genesis 3, verse 13. By doing all He came to do, the Son of God has *fulfilled* the ancient promise given to the man and woman immediately after they initially sinned: the seed of the woman shall bruise his head [the serpent's head]. He misled her with subtle deceit. But God said to Adam and Eve that He would send someone, that is, Jesus Christ, who would bruise Satan's head.

**Genesis 3:13-15** And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field. On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed [that is, Christ]; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

So we must view Christ coming into this world in terms of all that Satan had done and had produced. Christ came to fight it; He came with a mighty sword.

**Matthew 10:34** [Christ's words] "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword."

He came to destroy and to undo the works of the Devil and He did it like this. His coming in the flesh tells us one thing more than anything else: that God is love and that God has loved us with everlasting love.

Satan says God is against you, God hates you, and He enjoys making you slaves. But Christ came in the flesh, which makes a great statement that God loves us. And His sacrifice and resurrection even proves it all the more—that

God loves us, and always has and always will. But He loves His church even more than the average human being. And we are so thankful for that.

So here is a world that has rebelled against God. It spat in His face. In arrogance, it lifted itself up against Him. A world like that deserves punishment. It deserves condemnation. Yet into that same world, God sent His Son. He came to contradict Satan's lies in His appearing and coming to undo the original lie. It is proof that God loves us because it is for us that He has done this. Often I wonder about the world's mentality when they are proven, or maybe scientists prove, that God exists. How in the world they can deny it?

I have told some of you this story. There was a Christian interviewer who was going to college campuses and interviewing students and he was choosing the atheists to interview and talking to them about God and why they did not believe in God. He went through a series of scriptures and a series of scientific proofs to prove that God exists. And so by the end, one interview caught my attention. He said, "So God exists, right?" He said, "Yes, you've proven God exists." And he said, "Well, why do not you believe in Him or why do not you believe that you need to obey Him?" He goes, "*I choose* not to believe He exists."

That is how defiant a human mind can be. And that just put shivers up my spine that a human being would acknowledge God and then deny Him flat-out—and admit it. So Satan has quite a grip on people in the world and they do not even realize it.

Look at Jesus Christ's life and way of life. He has lived a perfect life in all His virtue and sinlessness. He established that the only life worth living is absolute conformity to the commandments of the holy God. His teaching exposes the evil nature of sin. He says that even if you do not break the letter of the law to sin, just looking with lust in your eyes is sufficient.

**Matthew 5:28** "But I say to you, that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

He gets down to the depths and says that evil thoughts and other sins proceed out of the heart.

**Matthew 15:19** "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemies."

Christ exposes the perversion and the twistedness of evil—the abomination of sin. In His teaching, He is undoing the lie and the works of Satan.

Please turn to Luke 13, verse 10. As Christ works His miracles and mighty works, what is He doing? He is doing the great work of undoing and destroying the works of Satan. Take, for example, the occasion when He healed the poor woman who was not only crippled but was doubled up and had been for the past 18 years. He spoke to her and immediately she stood erect. What did He do there at that point?

**Luke 13:10-13** Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

In effect, He said, Satan bound this woman for 18 years and I am undoing the chains that Satan forged around her. I am setting her free.

Luke 11, verses 14 through 22 is the third miracle of the deliverance Christ performed that received the accusation from his enemies that He was in league with Satan. Instead of rejoicing that God had sent the Messiah, the religious leaders were rebelling against the truth of God's Word and trying to discredit Christ's work and character. You are very familiar with this incident. Imagine people being so blind that they could not distinguish the work of God from the work of Satan.

**Luke 11:14-15** And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He cast out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

By the way, Beelzebub was one of the names of the Philistine god, Baal. It means Lord of Flies or Lord of Filth and the Jews often use this name when referring to Satan.

**Luke 11:16-22** Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. [This question was part of the accusation. In effect, they were saying, "If you are really working for God, prove it by giving us a sign from heaven, not just a miracle on earth."] But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own place, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils."

Now, in view of the context, the strong man here refers to Satan and the stronger man to Christ Himself. Luke does not state when Christ attacked and overpowered Satan. He may have had in mind Jesus' temptation experience or the resurrection or maybe the ultimate binding of Satan. But the parable's point is that Jesus is the stronger one; therefore He has the right to divide the spoils. He has the right to divide up or to take over the kingdom that Satan, not the kingdom as a demonic kingdom, but the area, the territory that Satan had been ruler over. In this case, spoils included formerly demonic influenced and possessed people who no longer belong to Satan.

Jesus answered their charges with three arguments. The first argument is their accusation was illogical. Why would Satan fight against himself and divide his own kingdom? The second argument is that their charges were self-incriminating. By what power were the Jews casting out demons? Contrary to what they accused Him of, Christ's miracles show that the Kingdom of God is supreme and more powerful than the kingdom of Satan. And the third is that their accusation was really an admission of Christ's power because He could not defeat Satan unless He were stronger than Satan.

Jesus pictured Satan as a strong man in armor guarding his palace and his goods. But Jesus invaded Satan's territory, destroyed his armor and weapons, and claimed the spoils.

Christ is setting the prisoners free and He will capture the evil warden. Though Satan is permitted limited authority, he is already a defeated enemy. And we are so thankful for that. Jesus Christ sets the captive free and that is what He does in His miracles. He undoes Satan's works. He breaks the forged chains in various ways. He sets the captive at liberty.

So look right through His life and then come to His death. What did He do? He dealt with guilt; He is undoing the condemnation accompanying the lie. He paid the penalty for sin.

Please turn over to John 12, verse 27. He is setting us right with God. He is reconciling us to God. He has undone the condemnation of sin that resulted from listening to and accepting the lie of Satan. Then there is the resurrection that gives us the final ultimate proof that God is pleased with the work His Son has done, and is doing. He is proclaiming to us that we can be sure of our salvation if we reject Satan's lies as Christ did.

**John 12:27-33** "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.

Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

Satan is the ruler of this world in its present fallen state, sinful state. And now the Devil will be cast out at the cross, decisively defeated. Jesus' triumph over Satan in His death and resurrection is the basis for Jesus' final triumph.

Please turn to Hebrews 2, verse 11. Now Jesus shows that He has conquered even death itself, the very last enemy. By rising from the dead, He established that He conquered every single enemy. He exposed and conquered Satan and all his principalities and powers.

**Hebrews 2:11** For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

**Hebrews 2:14-15** Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Now, please turn over to Revelation 20, verse 1. All the works of Satan through human instruments will be finally undone and destroyed at Christ's return, followed by Satan's captivity for 1,000 years.

**Revelation 20:1-3** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. Then he laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

So those 1,000 years of the Millennium, as I mentioned earlier, will be wonderful. And we look forward to those and we should be looking forward to those more than we are looking forward to the place of safety, which sadly, I think the Worldwide Church of God originally fell into, looking more toward the place of safety than in God's Kingdom. Maybe not in so many words, but that seemed to be the focus for so many years.

In the light of the resurrection, we know that we can have a new life. In fact, we are in the process of being made new now if we truly are faithful members of God's church. Christ has grafted us into Himself. He has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit, the mind of God. We are being made a new creation. So, for all practical purposes, since Christ dwells in us through His Spirit, the devil's works have been and are being undone and destroyed by us as well as we obey and glorify God by living as Jesus Christ lives.

This work of God is still being carried on in us right now. Christ takes hold of each of us one by one. He, individually and as a spiritual body, rescues and delivers us out of this world and from Satan. And as we believe and submit and repent and overcome with the help of God's Holy Spirit, we are being transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light, the Kingdom of God and His Son.

Christ is, in glory, seated at the right hand of God and they are continuing with Their plan. At the appointed time, Christ will come again and He will return to this world as King of kings and Lord of lords and finally accomplish and complete His work. The Son of God will come with a mighty sword, power, and glory. Not only evil and sin, but Satan himself and all his cohorts will be banished from the sight of God. And He will destroy the works of the Satan completely when He returns.

And our guarantee of all this is the glorious fact that Jesus Christ's life, sacrifice, and resurrection has been shown to us and our minds have been opened to it and we have faith in those things. God the Father has controlled and orchestrated all this plan with Jesus Christ. God the Father was the author of creation. Christ spoke it out as the spokesman of God. And so They work hand-in-hand together and we are looking forward to being able to do that as well.



Our guarantee of all this is the glorious fact of Jesus Christ's life, sacrifice, and resurrection. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil and take away our sins.

Remember, then, what He has already destroyed and what He has done for us. We look forward in anticipation to the hope that faces us as God's elect. And we are so very pleased that He is in the process of delivering us from the hand of Satan, as well as taking away our sins.

So if we live a life like Christ, live God's way of life, obey Him, and glorify Him in all that we do, we can be assured that Satan cannot touch us. He can influence us a little bit but he cannot get to us like he can in the world.