

The Works Of The Devil Destroyed

The Purpose of the Son of God
Martin G. Collins
Given 04-Oct-08; Sermon #904

The Apostle John made the statement, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8). What did he 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 angels populated it.

There was a throne on which sat Helel, 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 Helel on the throne, on earth, to administer the government of God over earth's angels.

There was happiness and peace on earth. Referring to Helel, the Moffat translation of Ezekiel 28:15 reads, "*From the day you were created, you lived a 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 that were free to think and reason, with the right of free choice.

Helel 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 the authority that was over him. 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.

So Helel became 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. That is what caused the chaos of this earth. The sin of the angels reached into the heavens, and brought chaos on earth. What the astronomers see is not an evolving universe, but the wreckage of a titanic battle waged by spirits throughout space, a battle fought before man's creation.

The earth was created perfect. Then it became chaotic, as a result of rebellion. And in six days, God re-made the earth, and created human beings to live on it.

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

God gave Adam a chance 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 the ruler of this world. Christ, the second Adam, is coming soon to sit on that throne, and restore the government of God.

Helel was originally placed on this earth to administer God's government on the earth, but he 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 him disqualifying himself.

Adam had the opportunity to overcome him, but he failed to conquer Satan by not obeying God. He obeyed Satan the Adversary instead, and man became the property of the devil. The whole human race has accepted, and been in slavery, under Satan's diabolical authority ever since.

Jesus Christ came about 4,000 years later, 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 Christ 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 went to heaven, because the appointed time had not yet arrived. The time of Christ's Second Coming, when He ousts the devil, is only a few short years away. Then Christ will rule the earth; God's laws will be restored, and there will be order and peace.

God did not create a devil, He created an archangel. Helel was perfect in his ways, but with the power of free choice, he transformed himself into a devil, by rebellion against God!

Satan is the one who 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. Sometime in the near future, he will come after the true church with a vengeance and try to destroy it, because he knows that he only has a short time until his judgment.

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 the earth is limited.

In the *Amplified Version* of Matthew 8, we read of the demons' comment to Christ, acknowledging that the time of their judgment was in the future.

Matthew 8:28-29 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Satan and the demons know that Christ is coming after them, at the appointed time.

The evil spirits are not bound at this time, as they will be after their day of judgment; they are allowed to tempt and afflict people until that time. Satan is determined to do everything that 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. With Satan, it is all about the thirst for power, driven by pride. We see that in the business practices in this world today, and especially in the financial systems of the world.

So, the devil's methods have brought this whole age of mankind the global problems of false teachers, wars, famines, pestilences and diseases, persecution of God's people, and much, much more. In one word, they have brought suffering.

At the close of this age, Satan's wrath will bring untold suffering and death, followed by God's greater wrath, in the Day of the Lord. Cataclysmic events will terrify humanity.

The three woes of Revelation 8 involve three final major battles, each so horrifying that it is called a "woe" by Almighty God. Each battle is so destructive that only God will be able to repair the damage that man's armies will do to the surface of the earth. Three is God's number signifying finality.

At the third battle, the third woe, and last trumpet, all mankind will be saved from extinction, only by a miracle from God. If God did not personally intervene in this climactic war, men would destroy the last vestige of human life from the face of the earth!

At this point, we arrive at the significance of the Day of Trumpets. It is a solemn day for the world, but for those who obey God, it is a time of rejoicing. When we observed it the other day, we were all celebrating and enjoying it and we were excited over its meaning. Today's lawless societies will be abolished, and Jesus Christ will establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

Jesus 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 the power and supernatural glory of God's Kingdom! Instead of submitting to death as the sacrificial Lamb of God for our sins, Jesus Christ will return to earth to put an end to sin, forcibly.

What is so wrong with the world? What is it that needs to be destroyed when Christ returns? In our minds, as members of God's church, we say, "Where do we begin the list?" We could not put it on one sheet of paper.

Under many guises, Satan is revealed as the epitome of evil, who works against God and humanity at every opportunity. He is the sworn enemy of all humanity, especially those who claim allegiance to God.

I John 3:7-8 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 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 the first section of chapter 3, with regard to 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.*"

These two statements remind us of the purpose of Jesus Christ, as our Savior.

It seems that in spite of the records that we have in the New Testament, the tendency of some people is to turn the gospel exclusively into a point of view, into an idea and a teaching. They forget that it was first and foremost a series of events and of facts that actually took place, and will take place.

The Apostle Paul tells us in his letters to the Corinthians and to the Colossians that he was aware of the very subtle danger of the gospel message being philosophically explained away. He was genuinely concerned that false teachers would nullify the whole gospel message, by turning it into nothing more than a philosophy. This is what we see in mainstream Christianity today, it is a philosophy rather than a true religion.

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 letter to the Colossians, Paul was concerned that false teachers would take some of the members of the church captive, through hollow and deceptive philosophy. The false philosophy at Colossae was subtle and enticing, and based on human tradition and reasoning, rather than on the teaching of Christ and the apostles. So what you see is the same thing happening today: Satan's influence and the false doctrines that he infused into their society are also infused into our society. The same issues are coming back, and being promoted as God's truth, when in fact, they are ancient Babylonian and Gnostic beliefs, from the time of Christ.

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. He will be always learning, but never able to acknowledge the truth. This kind of philosophy is based on the world's basic principles, on its "elementary principles" and "elemental spirits". The evil spirits, who inspire such heresy to blind people from the truth, and over whom Christ triumphed, in part instigates this.

II Corinthians 4:3-4 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 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.

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 is demonic and worldly, 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, taking them 'captive.' As we see what has happened to our previous affiliation, the Worldwide Church of God, it caught up many of them into that snare of false doctrine.

So Paul gave the true and lasting answer to all false teaching:

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 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, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.

The word "fullness" in Colossians 1:19 means 'the sum total of all that God is, all of His being, and attributes.' All fullness is in Christ, and we have been made full in Him.

The gospel message is not first and foremost a teaching, but a proclamation, an announcement of certain things that have happened and will happen. It is also teaching and doctrine, and very importantly so. We must not forget, that it is also actual events that happened. When we read the book of Acts, we find that the apostles, and other ministers of God, traveled around proclaiming the gospel message.

With a very special emphasis, they told the people of the amazing fact of the resurrection. They told them how Jesus Christ had been completely misunderstood, not only by the common people, but by the rulers and elders of the people, and how He had been put to death.

They said, then, that God had raised Him from the dead, and He had manifested Himself to them, His chosen witnesses, and to certain other people. And they told how, after He had spent forty days on the earth, that they had seen Him rising to the heavens. Now they were preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, the amazing gift that He had sent them.

We see that Christ did not come into the world only to teach. He did do that, and He gave incomparable teaching, but before His teaching can be of any value to us in a practical sense, we have to first realize what He came primarily to do.

He came, He was manifested; He appeared so that 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."*

Our salvation is dependent upon what He Himself has done. He does not just come and call on us to do something.

The first and the most essential message of the gospel 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, and He has given us this wonderful gift, the opportunity to receive eternal life, if we will obey Him and repent of our sins.

I John 3:8-10 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. 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: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

First, the Apostle John looks at sin as it brings us under the condemnation of God's holy law, and secondly, he looks at sin as it puts us under the domination and under the government of Satan, and

makes us become a part of Satan's work. This was until we are called, converted, baptized and received God's Holy Spirit,

This is the second way: John says, *'To continue in a life of sin and evil is just to identify yourself with the devil and his ways and with everything that belongs to him.'* That is what is emphasized in verse 8.

Two things stand out very clearly in the way John puts it. The first is that Jesus Christ came into this world to wage a great war. He entered into a great battle. The second is the way that He was victorious in the fight, the way that 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 established His conquest over the devil. So, since Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, let us continue by considering this 'adversary,' the devil.

The Son of God came because there was a certain state and condition in this world that had been produced by the devil. Now whether we like it or not, the fact is that the whole plan of redemption, as it is outlined in the Bible, simply cannot be fully understood unless we accept the biblical doctrine with regard to the devil. Any person that claims to be a Christian yet denies the existence of Satan and the demons is unable to fully understand God's work.

According to scripture, God made the world perfect. So what has gone wrong with it? Someone evil, who is described in various terms and by various names, came and spoke to the man and the woman, whom God had placed in that perfect world. The devil came and spoke to the woman, and by extension to the man, and he enticed them to sin.

So they went against God and the result of all that is the state of the world as it has been from the moment that they sinned.

Summing it all up, we can put it like this: This world has become the kingdom of Satan; Satan has produced certain results, these are called the 'works of the devil.'

And our Lord and Savior came into this world because of that fact. People need to be delivered from the punishment of their sins. But they also 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, into the Family of God, and that process is ongoing.

In a major sense, the Son of God came because of the kingdom that Satan had established. Christ came into this world to conquer Satan and his kingdom, and in order to introduce God's kingdom.

In a sense, the Bible is the story of the conflict of the 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 this world.

That is the general sense of what is going on, so let us look at it a little more specifically.

Evil has come in through the devil, that great adversary of God and of man. So what are the works of the devil; what has he been trying to do? Well, his great endeavor is to separate people from God; that is what he is really intent on accomplishing. He was jealous of God's sovereignty and power, he was jealous of man's obedience and allegiance to God, and in his bitter hatred of God, his personal

obsession is to ruin and destroy the glorious works of God on earth, and he wants to especially destroy us, because God's work is literally being worked out in us today.

And now for almost 6,000 years, he has proceeded to do that work with a vengeance and in a very deceptive manner. 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 8:44-47 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. "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

All of Satan's works have just been, in some shape or form, the repetition of some kind of a lie. He has persuaded men, women and children, to believe and to accept these various 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. Granted, we all have our personal responsibility in sin, and with human nature we deceive ourselves in committing it. But the concentration of this sermon today is Satan and his effect on the world, and what is going to be done about it.

In its very essence, a lie is something said with 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.

It is to the point now where we cannot believe a word of what a politician says, or the media. It is just a total waste of time to be watching it. We have to get sources from different angles and people, to even decipher what the truth is in all of the mess and the chaos that we find ourselves in.

A vain thing, like an idol, may be a lie, as also a false system. Error, as opposed to truth, is a lie. The denial of the deity of Jesus Christ is regarded as "the" lie (I John 2:22).

I John 2:20-23 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. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

There are various forms that the lie has taken, and that is the worst of all. 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 towards human beings. God made man and woman perfect and gave them a perfect world to live in, and God gave them the supreme privilege of having fellowship with Him.

He gave them everything they needed. They did not have to slave by the sweat of their brow in the dust of the earth to make a living at the beginning. They had fruit and vegetables to pick, and 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. But their labor was enjoyable until they sinned against God.

Genesis 3:17-19 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

God had showered blessings upon Adam and Eve, but the devil came and said, 'Are you foolish enough to believe that God really loves you and you can trust Him? Can't you see that He is making slaves of you? This one thing He is prohibiting you is an indication of His hostility toward you.' On and on went Satan's deceptive speech.

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

In the average person's heart, when things go wrong, their first reaction is a feeling of hatred against God. Even atheists are that way. They claim not to believe in God, but they are very quick to blame Him. It is the work of Satan to stir up that enmity against God that resides in human beings. Satan lies to us about God and about His attitude towards us, about His love to us, and about His concern for our happiness and well being.

And that in turn leads to the second lie, which is, as we have just seen, the lie about God's will. God has given laws to mankind, and He has given us these laws for our good and for our benefit. It is because God made man and woman that He knows what is good for them, and when He gave conditions at the beginning it was for their own good, and for every human being after that.

But they did not see it, and they believed the lie of Satan that the laws of God were against them. For the most part, people look at God's laws as burdensome and narrow in scope. And, many reject them for that reason. 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 are a bother.

Well, that is the lie about God's law, God's way of life, and God's holiness. By nature, we all instinctively dislike God's way of life until we are called and receive the Holy Spirit because we believe the lie of sin.

Then, of course, the next lie was the lie about the consequences of sin, and of disobedience. Satan deceived Adam and Eve, and everyone since because he told them:

God said that if you disobey and break His law, then certain consequences will come upon you and you will die. Do not believe Him. If you do this prohibited thing, your

eyes will be opened and you will become like gods. God does not want you to be like Him, so He is holding you down and limiting you. But do this thing and I tell you, you will be greater than you are now.

Adam and Eve believed that lie.

So Satan lied to them about the consequences of sin and disobedience, and that produced all of the terrible consequences down through the history of mankind, because every last human being has sinned.

And 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, and 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.

But later we come to understand that the way of the transgressor is hard and that though for a moment we may go against God and imagine we have wonderful freedom, sooner or later we begin to discover that *'whatever a man sows, so shall he reap,'* and *'he who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.'*

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.

Life is both a constant test, and a choice.

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

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

So, why does Satan do all this?

He was anxious to get the man and woman under his own power and dominion. His motive and desire was to make them sin and to live a sinful life, and he succeeded. They did sin, and they began to live that sinful life. It became their way of life; and it has been the way of the life of the world ever since.

Satan is anxious to prevent us from living the godly and good life. He is anxious to rob us of all the benefits, all the blessings that God has for us. And, the result of all that is that, having listened to the lie of Satan, and having put ourselves under his dominion, we were just as duped as everyone else. But no longer, no more if we are one of God's people!

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 the world seduces us with. Or, at least we are working at rejecting such things.

Romans 6:16-19 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, 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 presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

Satan hates that we are doing that, and will come against the church with a vengeance, but God is holding him back somewhat.

The result of sin is that we make ourselves slaves to Satan. The world is in the stronghold of Satan and he will not let them out; nor will he let them live righteously. If they try, he will strike them down; they are under his power and dominion. That is why many are called, but few are chosen.

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. 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. God, in His mercy, will give everyone an opportunity to live His way of life, and if an individual is unable to live God's way of life under Satan's occasional influence, then they will have an opportunity again some day.

Not only that, their very nature has a tendency toward sin. They prefer evil to good. There is an instinct of enmity in them that takes them astray. There is something within them that lusts and gives in to their desire. Their nature has become perverted and twisted, and as a result of this, they experience misery and unhappiness, and yet they still will not turn to God's happy way of life.

Their world has become a place of anguish, despair and trouble. And we have experienced it during our lifetime in an exceptional way, in wars and confusion, fear and depression. Everything has been perverted: religion, science, politics, and education.

We feel the effects of various pollutions of our food and water, and the environment in general. As if the pollutions of pesticides and herbicides were not enough, we have harmful microwaves beaming at us constantly.

Our DNA is being mapped so some corporation can lay claim to it, and later own and enslave us. The animal DNA of one species is being combined with the DNA of other species.

It is not that the sciences and technology are necessarily wrong, but when motivated by pride, men use these things in perverse ways to further their own agendas, and increase their power. All this is the result of the work of Satan. Satan and his legions instigate people into perverting and destroying God's creation.

Satan wants no less than to murder every last human on earth to keep people from being made members of the family of God. When we are changed into spirit beings we will be made higher than the angels—higher and greater in power than Satan himself, and he knows this. So, he will do anything 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 the 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.

The coming world government in the Great Tribulation will be established by the power of Satan. 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.

Satan, knowing that the second coming of Christ is near, will gather all the military might of the world 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 may be deceived in entering into the war in hope of gaining world political power, the satanic purpose is to combat the armies from heaven at the second coming of Christ.

The war continues right up to the day of the Second Coming and involves house-to-house fighting in Jerusalem itself on the day of the Lord's return. The war will be going on for some time, but the climax (the main battle) will come at Christ's second coming.

Zechariah 14:1-16 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.

I believe that the reason that is going to be done is that the Mount of Olives, at the time of Josiah, blocked the way of their escape when an earthquake came and if that is split through there, it is to make a way of escape, because the Mount of Olives is 330 feet higher than the city of Jerusalem. That is just a speculation.

Zechariah 14:5-9 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light; the lights will diminish. It shall be one day which is known to the LORD—neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light. And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea; in both summer and winter it shall occur. And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—"The LORD is one," and His name one.

Zechariah 14:11-16 The people shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their

tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand; Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey, and on all the cattle that will be in those camps. So shall this plague be. And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Standing at the end of it all is the fact of death itself. By listening to the lie of Satan, people have put themselves under the power of death. And we see here that God will bring that, and even worse types of death, upon those people who fight against Him. Scripture teaches us that all of us in this world by nature live under the tyranny and the fear of death. It is always present, always advancing towards us, and hanging over our heads. It is the last enemy, and it is inevitable.

Finally, and possibly the greatest of all the results of the works of the devil, 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 miserable, unhappy, sinful, perverted, and alienated from God. It was a world, like today's, with death always facing it.

So why did Christ ever leave the courts of heaven, and the glory that He shared with His Father from the beginning? Why did He come?

You know the answer: *'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.'* By doing all that He came to do, the Son of God has fulfilled the ancient promise that was given to man and woman immediately after they initially sinned.

The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. He misled her with subtlety. But God said to Adam and Eve that He would send someone (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?" 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; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

So we have a view of 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.

Christ 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; it is 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 and that makes a great statement that God loves us.

Here is a world that has rebelled against God. It spat into 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. I think we tend to avoid this scripture because the Protestants use it as a banner, but it is a true and very important scripture.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

That is the great purpose of Jesus Christ.

He came to contradict the lies of Satan, and His appearing and coming is in itself an undoing of the original lie—it is proof that God loves us. It is proof that He is going to resurrect us if we are obedient to Him, and that we live His way of life. Nevertheless it is a gift.

Look at Jesus Christ's life; look at His way of living. He has lived a perfect life. Look at Him in all His virtue and sinlessness. He established that the only life worth living is lived in absolute conformity to the commands of the holy God. In His life He denies the lie of the devil.

His teaching exposes the evil nature of sin and of wrongdoing. He says that you do not have to break the letter of the law to sin; just to look 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 depth, 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, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

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

As Christ works His miracles and His 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 like that for 18 years. He spoke to her, and immediately she stood erect. What did He do there?

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 His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

In effect He said, "Satan bound this woman for eighteen years and I am undoing the chains that Satan put around her, I am setting her free." That is what "loosed" means; it means loosing the bonds, or setting a person free.

Luke 11:14-22 is the third miracle of deliverance that 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 seeking to discredit Christ's work and character. Imagine people being so blind that they could not distinguish the work of God from the work of Satan!

Luke 11:14-22 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 casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. 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 palace, his goods are in peace. "But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils.

In view of the context, the strong man refers to Satan, and the stronger man to Christ Himself. When it was that Christ attacked and overpowered Satan is not stated by Luke. Luke may have had in mind Jesus' temptation experience, or the Resurrection, or maybe the ultimate binding of Satan.

The point of the parable is that Jesus is the stronger One, and therefore He has the right to divide up the spoils. In this case, the spoils include formerly demon influence or possessed people who no longer belong to Satan.

Jesus answered their charges with three arguments.

First, their accusation was illogical. Why would Satan fight against himself and divide his own kingdom?

Second, 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!

Third, their accusation was really an admission of Christ's power, because He could not defeat Satan unless He was 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 his 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, it is just a matter of time and he is getting somewhat frantic over that.

Jesus Christ sets the captive free. That is what He is doing in His miracles; He is undoing the works of Satan. He is breaking the chains that were forged in various ways; He is setting the captive at liberty.

Look right through His life and then come to His death. What did He do? He dealt with the guilt; He is undoing the condemnation that accompanies the lie. He paid the penalty for sin. He is setting us right with God; He is reconciling us to God. He has undone the condemnation of sin that results from listening to and accepting the lie of Satan.

Then there is the Resurrection. That gives us the final proof that God is pleased with the work of His Son; He is proclaiming to us that we can be sure of our salvation if we reject Satan's lie 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.

He is showing here 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 Satan himself and all the principalities and powers.

All the works of Satan through human instruments will be finally undone and destroyed at Christ's return, followed by Satan's captivity for a thousand 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. 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.

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 members of God's Church. Christ has grafted us into Himself. He has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit—the very mind of God.

We are being made a new creation. So for all practical purposes, the works of the devil have been, and are being, undone and destroyed in us. This work of God is still being carried on in us right now. He 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.

As we believe, submit, repent, and overcome with the help of the Holy Spirit we are being translated 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 going on with their plan and at the appointed time Christ will come again. He will return into this world as King and Lord, and He will finally accomplish His work.

The Son of God will come with a mighty sword, and not only evil and sin but Satan Himself and all his cohorts will be banished from the sight of God on the Day of Atonement, and then the millennial period will follow.

And our guarantee of all of this is the glorious fact of the Resurrection. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. He will destroy the works of Satan completely when He returns.

Remember then what He has already destroyed. And look forward in anticipation to the hope that faces us as God's elect, because we will be helping Him with that final and complete destruction of the works of Satan, and binding Satan himself.