



The Doctrine of Satan

Luke 22:31-32 ³¹ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren."

In Conjunction with A Holy Calling Radio Ministry, the radio arm of School of the Called Seminary.

Parts 1 & 2

Intro: Our Adversary, The Devil

"Show me an individual or a congregation committed to spiritual progress with the Lord, interested in what the Bible teaches about spiritual perfection and victory, and I will show you where there is a strong and immediate defiance by the devil!" A. W. Tozer, *I Talk Back to the Devil* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications Inc., 1972) 10.

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by **your brotherhood in the world.** 1 Peter 5:8-9

Introductory Notes:

*"It is now fashionable to deny the existence of this evil spirit . . . [Satan] well knows that they who deny his being will not be afraid of his power and influence; will not watch against his wiles and devices; will not pray to God for deliverance from the evil one; will not expect him to be trampled down under their feet . . . they will become an easy and unopposing prey to the enemy of their souls. . . . It is well known that, among all those who make any profession of religion, those who deny the existence of the devil are they who pray little or none at all; and are, apparently, as careless about the existence of God as they are about the being of the devil. Piety to God is with them out of the question; for those who do not pray, especially in private, (and I never met with a devil-denier who did,) have no religion of any kind, whatsoever pretensions they may choose to make." – Adam Clarke, *Christian Theology* (Dublin: R. Griffin & Co., Glasgow, and Tegg, Wise, & Co., 1835) 391. (From Clarke's published and unpublished writings; by Samuel Dunn, 2nd ed.)*

The Bible presents Satan as real; not as if he were a mythological creature to be put in the category of leprechauns and elves, but as the believers' very real adversary, seeking whom he may devour.

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. Luke 10:19-20

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

1.) Satan is presented in the Scripture as a real enemy:

Consider Acts 19 & Ephesians 6

*"... let it be stated that the Bible makes no apology in giving the world the biography of the devil. God, Christ, prophets, apostles and Satan-bound souls had no doubts as to the reality of this enemy of man. It is a cunning device of Satan's, however, to try and convince man that he does not really exist." —Herbert Locker, *All The Doctrines of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964) 133.*

¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² 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*. Ephesians 6:11-12

Notes: _____

Do we, after seeing the assault on Christian principles in government and our schools, the anti-Christian bias of Hollywood and the news, the gaining of homosexuality in our nation and in churches, the belittling of the things of God in music and T.V. sitcoms, the internet, and much more . . . **wrongly think that there is no devil behind these things?!?**

2.) Names Used For Satan:

- Satan:** Matt 4:10, Luke 10:18, John 13:27
- Devil:** Matt 4:1, Luke 8:13, John 13:2
- Wicked One/ Evil One:** Matt 13:19, Eph. 6:16, John 17:15
- The Tempter:**..... Matt. 4:3, 1 Thess. 3:5
- Accuser:** Rev. 12:10
- (our) Adversary:** 1 Pet. 5:8
- Beelzebub / ruler of the demons:**..... Matt. 12:24
- Ruler of this world/ god of this world:**John 12:31, 2 Cor. 4:4
- (The devil seeks worship):** Matt. 4:9, Luke 4:7
- Murderer:**John 8:44
- (Thief):** John 10:10
- Father of Lies:**..... John 8:44

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 Cor. 11:14-15, 2 Thess. 2:9-10 Disguises himself to deceive | 2 Tim. 2:6 Blinds /people to take them captive to do his will |
| Matt. 4 & Luke 4 Misuses Scripture | John 13:2,27, Acts 5:3 Puts evil thoughts into people |
| Eph. 6:11 Schemes | Eph. 2:2 Works through unbelievers |
| Eph. 4:26-27 Seeks a hold in our lives | Matt. 16:23 Works through believers when able to |
| 2 Cor. 2:10-11, Gal. 6:1 Seeks to take advantage of unforgiveness | Luke 4:13 Looks for an opportune time to tempt |
| Gen. 3:1 Insinuates/slanders to plant doubts about God | Job 1:8,2:3 Considers the saints |
| Jude 15, Job 2:4-5 Wants soul to speak harsh, even to curse God | Acts 19:29,32 w/ Eph. 6 Takes advantage of and creates confusion |
| 2 Cor. 12:7, Luke 13:16, Job 2: Afflicts believers when he can | John 8:44 Accomplishes his will through his children |
| Acts 10:38 Oppresses with various ailments needing healing | 1 Tim. 3:7 Ensnares |
| 1 Thess. 2:18 Desires to hinder the work of the saints | Luke 22:3 Enters people, uses, and cares not for them |
| Luke 8:12 Works to take away God's Word from people | Matt. 13:25,39 Seeks to discredit God's work in the world |
| 2 Cor. 4:4 Blinds minds | 2 Cor. 11:13-15 Works in churches, ministers of unrighteousness |

Notes: _____

3.) Satan's Desire to Steal, Kill and Destroy:

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10

King James: And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you [υμας, you in the plural (all of them)], that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee [σου, you in the singular (Peter)], that thy [σου, you in the singular (Peter)] faith fail not: and when thou [συ, you in the singular (Peter)] art converted, strengthen thy [σου, your in the singular (Peter)] brethren." Luke 22:31-32

In The King James Language:

You = pronoun in the plural

Thee = singular pronoun

Gk (Strong's #5209), υμας [hoo-mas'] = "you" plural

Gk (Strong's #4675), σου [soo] = "thee" singular (Genitive Case)

Gk (Strong's #4771), συ [soo] = "thee" singular (Nominative Case)

Certainly some have had an unhealthy interest in the spiritual realm of wickedness, whose fascination with it has crippled them with all sorts of fears, ascribing credit/blame to Satan for things which he has sometimes not earned. But there is another error (expressed more in an attitude) that has given the enemy a great advantage over souls as well. An attitude that, for all practical purposes, does not believe that Satan can really do anything to affect the believer's life at all. How shall such be made to "Be sober, be vigilant" against their "adversary the devil," when (for all practical purposes) they do not believe he has the ability to do anything? Consider:

¹⁰ Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, ¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. 2 Cor. 2:10-11

Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. 1 Chron. 21:1

So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job 2:7

So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath? Luke 13:16

Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. Luke 22:3

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat." Luke 22:31

Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." John 13:27

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?" Acts 5:3

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. 2 Thess 2:9-10

For some have already turned aside after Satan. 1 Tim. 5:15

Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. 1 Thess. 2:18

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 2 Cor. 12:7

And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. 2 Cor. 11:14-15

Notes: _____

To the Reader:

There was not time in the lecture/broadcast to go further into the topic of Satan’s abilities concerning his being a thief who seeks to steal, kill and destroy. On the very last page of these notes you will find the topic addressed under: A Holy Calling Additional Note. The additional note is given in the hope that the minister and student of the Word may be guarded from the attitude/error which does not think that Satan can do very much in this realm. Indeed, as the Scriptures on page 3 reveal, Satan can affect the physical realm.

Some are quick to tell the limits of Satan’s abilities, failing to realize it may not be a limit of ability that Satan has, but a level of permission. It is certain that Satan can afflict with physical suffering (as Job 2:7 plainly reveals), but it would seem he can only do so with permission. The limits of his powers are not described in Scripture, although clearly he is not omnipotent, omnipresent, nor omniscient. But he who showed Jesus “*all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,*” certainly has great abilities and powers.

That Satan can affect the physical realm is true. That we do not see more of his devilish work under the light of the sun may have nothing to do with whether or not he has the power or ability to do such works. Satan may indeed have greater powers to do evil and touch the physical realm than is commonly ascribed to him. However, that does not mean he has the permission to do so. And, under the right set of circumstances (*specifically concerning the believer, when he has permission granted by God for reasons God alone may fully know* [e.g., Job 1:19]) Satan can indeed afflict the physical realm.

4.) Satan, A Morally Fallen Spirit: (Direct Information)

1 Timothy 3:6-7 . . . not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

2 Pet. 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment...

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

Notes: _____

That Satan had such a fall from purity is clear from a variety of solid proofs, first and foremost that Scripture clearly states that all things were created through our Lord Jesus Christ as God Almighty, whether visible or invisible — which would include Satan. It is also certain that God could not create any being sinful. Thus, Satan (and all fallen spirits) were created in holiness and with the exercise of a free will, yet fell through sin from that domain which once was theirs’.

5.) Indirect Information About Satan: (Carefulness In How We Interpret Scripture)¹

Ezekiel 28:11-19

¹¹ Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

¹² "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God:

¹³ "You *were* the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

You were in Eden, the garden of God;

Every precious stone *was* your covering:

The sardius, topaz, and diamond,

Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.

The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes

Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

¹⁴ "You *were* the anointed cherub who covers;

I established you;

You were on the holy mountain of God;

You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

¹⁵ You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

¹⁶ "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within,

And you sinned;

Therefore I cast you as a profane thing

Out of the mountain of God;

And I destroyed you,

O covering cherub,

From the midst of the fiery stones.

¹⁷ "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;

You corrupted your wisdom

for the sake of your splendor;

I cast you to the ground,

I laid you before kings,

That they might gaze at you.

¹⁸ "You defiled your sanctuaries

By the multitude of your iniquities,

By the iniquity of your trading;

Therefore I brought fire from your midst;

It devoured you,

And I turned you to ashes

upon the earth

In the sight of all who saw you.

¹⁹ All who knew you among the

peoples are astonished at you;

You have become a horror,

And *shall be* no more forever." ' ' "

Notes: _____

¹ For anyone to say that it can *only* be a reference to Adam's fall and what happened in the garden of Eden that the king of Tyre is compared to because of the mention of Eden, does not make good sense. For certainly the cherub who fell cannot be a direct reference to the cherub who guarded the tree of life – another problem since it was cherubim (plural) that guarded the way to the tree of life. Likewise, it would seem that those who say the comparison applies only to Satan, would need to make Eden only symbolize a place of paradise rather than the actual garden of Eden, for Satan surely fell before man was placed in the garden. In man's beginning, Satan was already a murderer (John 8:44), hating mankind and seeking to tempt him away from God, indicating he had fallen already – thus was not perfect in Eden. Also, those who say it is no more than simply symbolic language referring to the king of Tyre alone, seem to miss the obvious practice of comparing spiritual things with spiritual. Thus, the most reasonable option appears to me to be that Ezekiel is speaking of the fall of the king of Tyre in reference and in terms especially of another great fall, that of Satan.

Isaiah 14:12-15

1 "How you are fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the
ground,
You who weakened the nations!
13 For you have said in your
heart:
14 'I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above
the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of
the congregation
On the farthest sides of the
north;
15 I will ascend above the heights
of the clouds, I will be like
the Most High.'
Yet you shall be brought down
to Sheol,
To the lowest
depths of the Pit.

Notes: _____

Let us be careful not to have an unhealthy interest (fascination) about the details of Satan's fall, lest we imagine ourselves to have all sorts of information about our enemy which we are not directly told – and our supposed "knowledge" open us up to one of his deceptions. Though we have been given clear information concerning the fact that Satan had a real fall, God has not given us volumes of direct biographical information about that fall. God has certainly given us all the information we need to know, and let us be satisfied with the knowledge that He has given us so that we may be victorious over our ancient foe.²

. . . lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 1 Timothy 3:6

² I believe 1 Timothy 3:6-7 is a text where we are given clear and direct information about Satan's fall. There are however other text which seem to describe events in such a way as to *parallel* Satan's original fall, even though these text cannot be classified as directly giving biographical information of Satan's original fall. That is, they appear to make reference to that great fall of Satan *while speaking about other situations*. For example, Luke 10:18, where Jesus declares, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." The occasion that Jesus said this was upon the 70 returning and being excited over all the things that they had seen as they ministered in the power of Jesus' name; how even demons were subject to them in His name. Jesus answered them saying: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Jesus' words in context appear to be referring not specifically to Satan's great original fall, but rather to the things that were reported to Him by the 70, saying in affect that: Satan's kingdom was unable to stand before them (the 70 sent out in Jesus' name), and thus fell like lightening from his exalted position and the hold that he had on souls before the presence or these 70 who ministered in the power of His name; through whom He had given them power over all the enemy.

Notice the context of the surrounding verses in which Jesus' words appear about Satan falling like lightening:

17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Thus, the words of Christ, whereas they may well be referring in particular to the works of the 70 over Satan's kingdom that had just been experienced by the 70, yet, by way of similarity, His words give evidence confirming that there was an original fall of Satan so long ago, that original fall which Jesus also saw. But this is not the same as directly speaking about it. Thus, I believe it cannot be argued that this account is a description of Satan's ancient fall, yet nonetheless, *can we not see that it still gives evidence by way of similarity to his original fall having happened?! – I believe so.*

Likewise, I do not believe the things described in Rev. 12 are given as biographical information of that fall of the devil and his angels, but rather that they have a meaning within the context of what is going on in the period it is describing. However: I do believe (by the similarity of the victory spoken of in Chapter 12 over Satan) that a reminder is made of [and thus evidence given for] that original fall of Satan, as well as a promise that he will always fall before those who resist him and draw near to God.

6.) Knowing Your Enemy:

- 2 Cor. 11:3..... Crafty, Subtle
- 1 Pet. 5:8-9, John 10:10.....Destructive
- Luke 22:31, 1 Cor. 10:13, Job 1:11 and 2:5..... Desires to do more evil than he's allowed to do
- Luke 4:5, Job 1:6 Powerful, but not with any "omni" powers
- Job 1:7-11, 2:4-5, 1 Tim. 3:6.....Prideful

"...He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." 1 John 4:4

"It is certain God has greater power from the fact that Satan could tempt Job only by divine permission. Also God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:13). The limitation of Satan's knowledge is evident from his failure to know that Job would endure his trial. If he had foreknowledge of the actions of free beings, he would have no occasion to tempt those who will not yield, as in Christ's temptation in the wilderness." — Russell R. Byrum, Christian Theology, third ed. (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1950), 267.

Notes: _____

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12

"He [Satan] is a foe with whose devices we have to reckon in fighting the battle of life. . . . He is one at whom we cannot afford to laugh, and whose existence we cannot afford to deny. Nothing gives the enemy such leverage as the denial of his existence. It is the very lie he loves to put into our mouths. The only "father," surely, who loves his children to disown his existence. . . . He is a foe before whom we need not quail. *While we may not laugh in careless indifference, we need not cower in fear. Life is not so easy as if there were no devil to fight; it is not so hard but that we may ensure his defeat.*" — Pulpit Commentary Revelation 12:17, (under homiletics. IX [public domain]).

7.) Our Enemy Is Not To Be Taken Lightly: Notes: _____

Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" Jude 9

8.) Satan Can Be Defeated by the Power of God In Us:

Revelation 12:10-12

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

¹¹ "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

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."

Notes: _____

1 John 2:12-14
¹² I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.
¹³ I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.
I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one.
I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father.
¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.
I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

¹⁹ Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:19-20

¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col. 2:14-15

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. 1 John 3:8

⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. James 4:7-8a

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Rom. 16:20

Eph. 6:11-13

¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² 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. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Notes: _____

"... because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." 1 John 4:4

“A Holy Calling Radio”

Don Minkler

Additional Lecture/Radio Note Concerning Satan, Our Powerful Foe:

It is the opinion found in many well recognized Christian works that Satan may have indeed come in some sort of a visible appearance to Jesus in the temptations in the wilderness. Names which either believe or allow for the very real possibility that Satan came in a deceiving appearance (perhaps as an angel of light) include: A. L. Williams from the Pulpit Commentary, John Gill’s Commentary, Matthew Henry’s Commentary, Joseph Benson’s Commentary, Matthew Poole’s Commentary D.D. Whedon’s Commentary on Matthew, the People’s Commentary, A.T. Robertson, in New Testament Word Pictures from the Greek, John Wesley’s Commentary Bengal’s Gnomes, and J.A. MacDonald from the Pulpit Commentary. (Various quotes from some of the above authors are given on the third column of this page under “Quotes”).

Also, though not “smoking gun” evidence, consider that it is the same word in the Greek that says Satan “came” to Jesus in Matthew 4:3 that is used for the angels which “came” to Him in Matthew 4:11. Thus, it is indicated that Satan came to Jesus in the same manner that angels are said to have come to Him. And we would expect that to be visible, even as we are specifically told so in Luke 22:43. No one has any doubt about the ability of the holy angels to appear to Jesus in some visible manner.

The fact that angels came and ministered to Him, implies that Christ may well have expected some angelic help in His weakened state to come to Him at the end of the 40 days of temptation. It is clearly in line with Satan’s character to seize upon such an opportunity. That Jesus did not immediately tell Satan to get behind Him indicates strongly that part of the deception included Satan looking like an angel of light who had come to minister to Him. But when Satan said “Worship me,” any deception was exposed. Our Lord immediately said away with you Satan, for he was fully revealed in saying such.

That Jesus was tempted the entire 40 days by Satan is clear from Luke’s account. Also clear is the fact that at the end of the 40 days (as the accounts in Matthew and Luke reveal) he tempted Christ *in some new way through coming to Him*. Many believe the context naturally reveals that Satan appeared to Him in some deceitful manner that Christ could actually see, most likely as a caring angel. Certainly we know that (at the very least), he came in a manner as deceitfully as he came to Eve.

The language of the whole account concerning “took Him up” (Matt. 4:8), “showed Him” (Matt. 4:8) and “left Him” (Matt. 4:11) indicate a visual appearance. Likewise the interaction between Christ and Satan indicates such an appearance as well, in which on the third temptation when Satan is exposed, Christ says, “Away with you Satan!”

Such a scenario would also give a reference point to Paul’s declaration that *Satan masquerades as an angel of light*, as well as adding earnestness to the charge to listen to no other gospel, *even if it comes from an angel from heaven*. However, though Satan may well possess the ability to appear visibly, that does not mean he has the permission to do so.

It is troublesome how two extremes of Christian thought in the Church both manage to belittle the devil’s ability. One through foolish disrespect for the enemy so that Satan is seen as no serious threat, and the other through a degrading of Satan’s ability to really affect this realm so that he is again seen as no serious threat. These two errors may seem miles apart from one another because of the teachers that rally around them are so opposite to one another in doctrinal understanding, yet the truth is, both of these attitudes have a serious commonality between them – which is that Satan is underestimated by them.

But, in contrast to these teachers, it appears that Satan may well possess the ability to manifest himself in *some sort* of a visible form – *yet (whether through lack of ability or through lack of permission), Satan certainly never can present himself in such a way as would be able to pass a close examination, such as the actual coming of Jesus with flesh and bones - Luke 24:39*. Yet, though Satan (and perhaps some of the fallen angels) may have the ability to do so, that does not mean they have the permission to do so.

Remember that the devil desires to do more evil than he is allowed to do. Recall that he had to get permission from God to do what he did to Job; recall that he had to *ask* to sift Peter and the other apostles like wheat. Satan may have *ability* to do all manner of *visible* things which some are quick to underestimate and deny to him. However, that does not mean that he has the permission to do them. For God will not let the believer be tempted beyond what he can bear.

This is the point: Whereas spirits do not come and appear in flesh and blood which can be touched and handled (Luke 24:39), reveals to us that those who speak of sexual encounters (and even pregnancy of some sort) from demons are wrong and have more in common with the fantasies of mythology! But as well, I believe it would be too dogmatic to say that they are therefore unable to cause people to see (or make them believe they have seen) some frightening (albeit, shadowy) form of some sort at all, if they receive permission to do so for reasons God alone understands in His goodness.

Quotes:

In a visible shape and appearance, to tempt him outwardly, as he had done inwardly before. Joseph Benson’s Comm. Matt.4:3.

Came; came up to Him (προσελθών). The Word expresses local nearness, and suggests, though we cannot affirm it as certain, that he appeared visibly. The thought of physical nearness is continued in “taketh Him” (vers. 5,8), and “the devil leaveth him” and “angels came near” (ver. 11; cf. ver. 5, note). On the other hand, such expressions may be parabolic, and intended to express the closeness of the spiritual combat.” — A. L. Williams, Pulpit Comm., Matt. 4:3.

When he is here said to come to Christ at the end of forty days and nights, we are not to suppose, that he now first began to tempt him; for the other Evangelists expressly say, that he was tempted of him forty days, (Mark 1:13) (Luke 4:2) but he now appeared openly, and in a visible shape: all the forty days and nights before, he had been tempting him secretly and inwardly; suggesting things suitable to, and taking the advantage of the solitary and desolate condition he was in. But finding these suggestions and temptations unsuccessful, and observing him to be an hungered, he puts on a visible form, and with an articulate, audible voice... — John Gill’s Commentary, Matt. 4:3.

Came to Him — In what form Satan came is not said. He tempted Eve as a serpent; perhaps he tempted our Lord as an angel of light or truth. At any rate, he was at first disguised; for our Saviour did not recognize him to be Satan until the deceiver claimed his worship ... “*Get thee hence, Satan*” — For now Satan has, so to speak, showed his cloven foot. This soft-spoken man, this most interesting angel, turns out to be none else than God’s foe. He demands to be worshiped! And that ends the matter. D.D. Whedon’s Commentary on Matt. 4:3,10.

προδελθών Αὐτῷ, having come to Him . . . in a visible form. The Tempter watched his time. — ὁ πειράζων, the tempter who did not wish it to be known that he was Satan. . . Bengal’s Matt. 4:3

Became Bread (artoi genontai). Literally, “that these stones (round smooth stones which possibly the devil pointed to or even picked up and held) become loaves” (each stone a loaf). — A.T. Robertson, in New Testament Word Pictures from the Greek, Matt. 4:3.

THAT SATAN IS ARMED WITH FORMIDABLE POWERS. 1. *Probably he appeared in an assumed shape.* (1) For he appeared to the manhood of Christ. He is introduced as “the tempter,” but not named. Jesus did not give him his name until the tempter had fully discovered himself as the god of this world (ver. 10). (2) This was not the only instance in which Satan assumed a disguise. He tempted Eve under the form of a serpent. After the fall he enshrined himself in men. Demoniacs. — J.A. MacDonald, Pulpit Commentary, under homiletics

