

# Ministudy Beware of Your Adversary!

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God's Word warns us, prophetically, that Satan the devil will be extremely active in this end time. As the conclusion of Satan's rule over this earth rapidly approaches, the archdeceiver and his demon henchmen know that only a short time remains before they will be completely restrained by God. Soon they will no longer be able to deceive the world and work to thwart God's plan for mankind. Therefore, Satan is pulling out all stops in a last-ditch effort to destroy God's spiritual Church!

Forewarned is forearmed. Though no human is a match for the powerful, cunning Satan, this study will show you how to be victorious in your battle with Satan's kingdom. But first, let's review a few basic facts about Satan's origin and why he is determined to destroy all Spirit-begotten Christians.

The Bible reveals that God created multitudes of angels before bringing the earth into existence (Job 38:4-7). Among these was a powerful, wise and beautiful cherub - the great archangel Lucifer, who was perfect in all his ways.

Later, the earth was created and became the home or abode of angels. And God set Lucifer over the angels to administer God's government on earth (Ezek. 28:13-17, Isa. 14:12-14).

1. Was Lucifer originally one of the anointed cherubs who covered God's throne in heaven? Ezek. 28:14, Ex. 25:18-20.

Lucifer was originally stationed at the very throne of God. He was already trained in the administration of God's government when God placed him in charge of the angels on earth.

2. Lucifer, the super archangel, was perfect in all his ways from the day of his creation until something happened. What was found in him? Ezek. 28:15. Did he become vain and corrupt? Verse 17.

When Lucifer began thinking thoughts of competition and greed, resentment and rebellion welled up in him. His mind became perverted, distorted, twisted. His thinking became totally warped.

3. Did Lucifer decide to leave the earth and ascend to heaven in an attempt to exalt his throne (which was in "Eden the garden of God" - Ezek. 28:13) above all the angels ("stars") of God? Isa. 14:12-14.

Did he convince other angels to follow him in his rebellion and thus sin against God? Jude 6, II Pet. 2:4. How many of God's angels did Lucifer subvert? Rev. 12:3-4.

4. Did Lucifer actually want to be *like* the most high God? Isa. 14:14.

Lucifer had nothing less in mind than knocking the Creator God off His throne and becoming supreme ruler himself. He was no longer satisfied with rule over only one planet. He wanted to rule the universe.

Thus Lucifer became the first sinner.

5. What happened to Lucifer's and his angels' attempt to wrest control of the universe from their Creator? Isa. 14:12, Rev. 12:3-4. (Also see Revelation 12:7-9, which describes a second attempt to dethrone God.) How did Jesus describe Satan's original fall from heaven? Luke 10:18.

Lucifer deliberately became his Maker's adversary. That was Lucifer's choice. And so God changed his name to what he became - Satan - which means adversary, competitor, enemy. And the angels who were cast back down to the earth with him became known as demons.

6. Has God allowed Satan to continue as the invisible ruler of this world? II Cor. 4:4. When and how will Satan's rule over the world come to an end? Rev. 20:1-3.

A basic principle of God's government is that the state can never be without a head. God originally placed Lucifer on the throne of God's government on earth. When Lucifer rebelled against God, he ceased to administer that government and disqualified himself. But he must remain on that throne until his successor, Jesus Christ, who has qualified to replace him, dethrones him and assumes world rulership at His Second Coming.

7. Are we plainly told that "the world to come" - the 1,000 years and thereafter - will not be ruled by angels? Heb. 2:5.

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But if we become the born-again sons of God, are we promised rulership over all the angels? Verses 6-8, I Cor. 6:2-3. Only humans have the potential to be begotten and born into the very Family of God. We can become the sons of God and rule this earth and ultimately the entire universe with Jesus Christ. Satan knows and hates this fact.

With his perverted and twisted mind, Satan, who tried to usurp all God's power and authority, now looks upon mankind as competitors.

Satan attempted to thwart God's plan to reproduce Himself by inducing the "first Adam" to rebel against his Creator (Gen. 3:1-6, 22-24), thus disqualifying Adam from replacing Satan.

He then attempted to have Christ, the "last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45), killed by the human civil government while Christ was still a young child. Then, when Christ was an adult, Satan attempted to destroy Him spiritually by tempting Him to sin (Matt. 4:1-11). Christ won that titanic spiritual battle with Satan by proving He would obey the government of God and faithfully rule by God's law throughout eternity.

And so must we before God will make us corulers of this earth and the entire universe with Christ. We, too, must overcome Satan by the Word and Spirit of God as Christ did.

8. Are we plainly told that Spirit-begotten Christians are in an all-out battle for their spiritual lives? I Pet. 5:8, Eph. 6:12, II Cor. 2:11.

We are in spiritual warfare with wicked spirits. We need to know how to protect ourselves from these invisible enemies who are out to destroy us spiritually.

9. What is the chief weapon Satan uses in his attempt to destroy God's saints? Eph. 2:2-3.

Satan broadcasts his sinful attitude to all humanity. But once the Holy Spirit of God is added to a person's mind upon repentance and baptism, the person has the spiritual awareness and strength to resist the attitudes of lust, greed, vanity, jealousy, resentment, bitterness and hate that Satan broadcasts.

The devil has no power to force anyone to obey his impulses. But the unsuspecting automatically do so without realizing what is taking place in their minds (Gal. 5:19-21).

10. After your begettal by God's Holy Spirit - after you become a real Christian (Rom. 8:9) - will the devil continue to try to deceive you and lead you away from Christ and Christ's ways? II Cor. 11:2-3. Did some Christians in Paul's day begin to fall victim to the devil's promptings again? Gal. 1:6-8, 3:1. Does Satan also have his

own ministers through whoa he works? II Cor. 11:13-15.

Conversion does not shield us from Satan's wavelength. He continues to broadcast the attitudes of his nature to our minds in an attempt to overthrow us. Those who have turned from Satan's way must be on guard against him and fight to overcome his subile urgings and to remain true to God's way.

11. Are Christians today t., resist the devil by remaining firm in the truth G )d has revealed to them? I Pet. 5:8-9. What must the devil do if we resist him steadfastly? Jas. 1:7.

12. The apostle Paul gives us specific instructions on fighting against the impulses and attitudes of the devil. What are Christians to put on in order to fight this spiritual battle? Eph. 6:10-13. Of what does God's spiritual armor consist? Verses 14-20.

"Truth," the first piece in the Christian's spiritual armor, refers to the inspired Word of God (John 17:17). The "breastplate of righteousness" is obedience to God's ommandments (Ps. 119:172); the "gospel" is th+, good news of the coming government of God or earth and the righteous rule of Christ.

The "shield of faith" refers to the faith of Jesus Christ, which can be within us (Gal. 2:20, Phil. 3:9). This faith is God's gift and is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit (Gal. ):22). It is this faith - Christ's faith within us - that will enable us to conquer and overcome Satan and sin.

The "helmet of salvation" s the knowledge of salvation - the purpose of lite, the true goal and potential of mankind - becoming Spirit-born members of God's Family.

The "sword of the Spirit" refers to the written Word of God (Heb. 4:12). It is the Christian's only offensive weapon in fighting against the wiles of the devil. But in order to rightly use this weapon in waging a winning battle against the crafty rulers of darkness, we must study the Bible and learn God's will and His promises.

Paul lastly mentions "prayer" as an aid in withstanding the attacks of Sate . Christians are to draw close to God in persever;ng prayer (I Thess. 5:17) - praying for the Work and ministry of God's Church, for all of God',, people and themselves.

This is the way to overcone Satan and force him to flee. This is the perfect strategy for defeating the devil's army of demons. If you will diligently follow this formula your success in overcoming these deadly foes is guaranteed!