

**The Great Doctrines of the Bible
The Doctrine of Satan**

By Rev. William Evans, Ph.D., D.D.

I. HIS EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY.

- 1. EXISTENCE.**
- 2. PERSONALITY.**

II. HIS PLACE AND POWER.

- 1. A MIGHTY ANGEL.**
- 2. PRINCE OF POWER OF THE AIR.**
- 3. GOD OF THIS WORLD.**
- 4. HEAD OF KINGDOM OF DARKNESS.**
- 5. SOVEREIGN OVER DEATH.**

III. HIS CHARACTER.

- 1. ADVERSARY.**
- 2. DIABOLOS.**
- 3. WICKED ONE.**
- 4. TEMPTER.**

IV. OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS SATAN.

- 1. LIMITED POWER OF SATAN.**
- 2. RESIST HIM.**

V. HIS DESTINY.

- 1. A CONQUERED ENEMY.**
- 2. UNDER ETERNAL CURSE.**

VI. DEMONS.

THE DOCTRINE OF SATAN.

Throughout the Scriptures Satan is set forth as the greatest enemy of God and man. Too long has Satan been a subject of ridicule instead of fear. Seeing the Scriptures teach the existence of a personality of evil, man should seek to know all he can about such a being. Much of the ridicule attached to the doctrine of Satan comes from the fact that men have read their fancies and theories into the Scriptures; they have read Milton's *Paradise Lost* but have neglected the Book of Job; they have considered the experiences of Luther instead of the Epistles of Peter and Jude. To avoid skepticism on the one hand, and ridicule on the other we must resort to the Scriptures to formulate our views of this doctrine.

I. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN.

1. HIS EXISTENCE.

To science the existence of Satan is an open question; it neither can deny nor affirm it. Satan's existence and personality can be denied therefore only on purely *a priori* grounds. The Bible, however, is very clear and positive in its teaching regarding the existence of a personality of evil called the devil. It is popular in some circles today to spell devil with the "d" left off, thus denying his real existence.

Matt. 13:19, 39--"Then cometh the wicked one The enemy that sowed them is the devil." John 13:2--"The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him." See also Acts 5:3; 2 Cor. 11:3, 14; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

How Satan came to be is not quite as clear a fact as that he exists. In all probability he was once a good angel. It is claimed by scholarly and reliable interpreters that his fall is portrayed in Ezekiel 28:12-19; cf. Isa 14:12-14. That he was once in the truth but fell from it is evident from John 8:44. His fall (Luke 10:18) was probably in connection with the fall of angels as set forth in such passages as 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6. Pride (?) was one of the causes (1 Tim. 3:6; Ezek. 28:15, 17). This fact may account for the expression "Satan and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Paul doubtless refers to the fact that Satan was once an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). Whenever Satan is represented under the form of a serpent, we are to understand such expressions as describing him after his fall. There is certainly no ground for presenting the evil one as having horns, tail, and hoofs. This is only to bring into ridicule what is an exceedingly serious fact. A careful consideration of all the scriptures here given will assure the student that Satan is not a figment of the imagination, but a real being.

2. HIS PERSONALITY.

John 8:44--"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." 1 John 3:8--"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Satan is here set forth as a murderer, a liar, a sinner--all elements of personality. He had the "power over death" (Heb. 2:14), and is the "prince of this world" (John 14:30).

The narrative of Satan in Job. (cc. 1, 2) strongly emphasizes his personality. He is as much a person as the "sons of God," Job, and even God himself. Zech. 3:1, 2; 1 Chron. 21:1; Psa. 109:6 also emphasize the fact of Satan's personality. Throughout all these Scriptures the masculine personal pronoun is used of Satan, and attributes and qualities of personality are ascribed to him. Unless

we veto the testimony of the Scriptures we must admit that Satan is a real person. How can any one read the story of the temptation of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11) and fail to realize both parties in the wilderness conflict were persons--Christ, a person; Satan, a person?

Such offices as those ascribed to Satan in the Scriptures require an officer; such a work manifests a worker; such power implies an agent; such thought proves a thinker; such designs are from a personality.

Our temptations may be said to come from three sources: the world, the flesh, and the devil. But there are temptations which we feel sure come from neither the world nor the flesh, e.g., those which come to us in our moments of deepest devotion and quiet; we can account for them only by attributing them to the devil himself. "That old serpent, the devil, has spoken with fatal eloquence to every one of us no doubt; and I do not need a dissertation from the naturalist on the construction of a serpent's mouth to prove it. Object to the figure if you will, but the grim, damning fact remains." --*Joseph Parker*.

There can scarcely be any doubt as to the fact that Christ taught the existence of a personality of evil. There can be but three explanations as to the meaning of His teaching; first, that He accommodated His language to a gross superstition, knowing it to be such--if this be true then what becomes of His sincerity; second, that He shared the superstition not knowing it to be such--then what becomes of His omniscience, of His reliability as a Teacher from God? third, that the doctrine is not a superstition, but actual truth--this position completely vindicates Christ as to His sincerity, omniscience and infallibility as the Teacher sent from God.