

## **Satan**

Satan, also called the Devil (Rev 12:9), is a person.

There is not a single, impersonal reference to him in the whole Bible. Personal names, personal pronouns, personal acts, personal planning and plotting, personal reasoning and scheming are all attributed to him, showing him to be an actual person, as truly as God is a person, as truly as men are persons. Satan is not merely an evil influence or an evil principle.

Satan is a person of great dignity (Jude 8, 9). Originally created perfect, he fell from his high estate through pride. Doubtless he is the spiritual king of Tyre described in Ezekiel's prophecy (compare Ezekiel 28:11-17 with John 8:44 and 1 Timothy 3:6). Unlike the fallen angels of Jude 6, he is not under restraint, but "as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt 5:8).

Satan is not in hell. Though that awful place is especially for him and his angels (Mt 25:41), and he will certainly be cast at last into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10), his residence during the present age is chiefly in the heavenly realms, where he has access to God's presence and accuses the saints before Him day and night (Job 1:6-12; Rev 12:10). His ejection from heaven, described in Rev. 12:9 is yet future. The Lord Jesus spoke of the same event prophetically in Luke 10:18 and John 12:11. When Satan finally reaches hell it will be to suffer eternal torment. He will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and forever" (Rev 20:10).

Meanwhile Satan is now a ruler—the ruler of the host of wicked, demon spirits in the heavenly realms, the prince of the power of the air, the prince of this world and the god of this age (Eph 2:2; 6:12; Jn 10:21; 12:31; 14:30; 2 Cor 4:4; Lk 4:35; 9:1, 42).

Although Satan is supernatural and superhuman, he is not all knowing, which would be omniscient. Nevertheless, through his followers' observations, there is great awareness of our frailties and limitations. He can influence greatly by many means (but he cannot possess). If he were not limited, then it could not be said: "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn 4:4). I thank God that Satan cannot tempt us in any way without God's permission, and that with every temptation God Himself makes means of escape (1 Cor 10:13).

Nevertheless, Christians are exhorted to "put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph 6:11, 12). "We are to put on the whole armor of God—taking the shield of faith, with which ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph 6:13-18).

The Christian is not to give place to (or heed) the devil (Eph 4:27), but rather is to submit to God. As we submit to God and resist the devil, he will flee from us (Jas 4:7). Satan is a strong adversary —whom we are to resist steadfast in the faith (1 Pt 5:8, 9). Satan seeks to influence Christians to turn from serving and worshiping of Almighty God. But as

we put ourselves under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, Satan is overcome and flees. The Lord Jesus defeated Satan by means open to Christ's humblest follower, the intelligent use of the Word of God. See Matthew 4:4, 7, 10. And remember the Lord said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5).