

EVIL SPIRITUAL BEINGS – SPIRITUAL WARFARE

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THERE ARE EVIL SPIRITUAL BEINGS, AND THEIR LEADER IS SATAN. SOME OF SATAN'S PURPOSES AND ACTIVITIES ARE:

1. To suppress the truth of the Bible for unbelievers so they do not believe

“And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. But when they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.” (Mark 4:15)

2. To possess people and animals, forcing them to do his will

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

“And all the demons begged Him, saying, ‘Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.’” (Mark 5:12)

3. To cause problems for believers / To afflict believers

“And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.’” (Luke 22:31)

“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 Corinthians 12:7)

4. To influence believers to do things against God's will

“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?’” (Acts 5:3)

5. To tempt believers to commit immorality

“Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Corinthians 7:5)

6. To exercise influence over people, manipulate, and deceive believers (especially to cause divisions)

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

7. To present himself as a beneficial being in order to gain people's trust

“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14)

8. To hinder the plans of believers

“Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.” (1 Thessalonians 2:18)

9. To promote false religiosity based on works, in order to deny the need for Christ's death for our salvation

"I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan." (Revelation 2:9)

10. To trap and dominate believers so they do his will (especially in relation to false doctrine)

"And that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will." (2 Timothy 2:26)

11. To promote idolatry

"But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons." (1 Corinthians 10:20)

"And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk." (Revelation 9:20)

12. To cause illnesses (physical, emotional, mental)

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." (Acts 10:38)

"And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" (Luke 13:16)

13. To incite and promote pride

"Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil." (1 Timothy 3:6)

14. To accuse believers in order to discredit them

"Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:7)

"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.'" (Revelation 12:10)

15. To kill and to lie

"You people are from your father the devil, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

"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)

16. To deceive the world (using the angels who followed him in rebellion against God)

“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 12:9)

17. To perform miracles and wonders to deceive, counterfeiting the work of God (operating through human beings under his control)

“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.” (2 Thessalonians 2:9)

18. To inspire false prophets, counterfeiting the work of the Holy Spirit in order to deceive

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1)

Some would include this:

To lead believers to ruin and even untimely death

“Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (1 Corinthians 5:5)

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THESE EVIL BEINGS?

The example of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,

and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”

Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus held the Word of God as the only and sufficient authority, and He lived in absolute obedience to it. Jesus helps us understand that the key to resisting, fighting, and having victory over evil spirits is the Word of God. We need to study it carefully to know it well and understand it clearly, so we can consistently put it into practice in daily life.

OTHER PRACTICAL ADVICE:

- **Do not give the devil any foothold** – This means staying under the control of the Holy Spirit and avoiding being controlled by human emotions (such as anger). “Nor give place to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:27)
- **Forgive one another**
(See 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 above)
- **Submit to God and resist the devil**
“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)
- **Be alert and maintain constant vigilance in daily life**
“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)
- **Help others come to know Christ and escape Satan’s dominion**
“To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” (Acts 26:18)
- **Use all the armor God has provided**
“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11)
- **Understand that this is a serious spiritual battle**
“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 6:12)
- **Stand firm, without wavering or retreating**
“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.” (Ephesians 6:13)
- **Live with integrity**
“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth.” (Ephesians 6:14a)
- **Live in holiness**
“Having put on the breastplate of righteousness.” (Ephesians 6:14b)

- **Trust in the message of the gospel, which produces stability and peace in our lives**
 “And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”
 (Ephesians 6:15)
- **Maintain an unshakable faith in God** (keep your focus on God, not on circumstances)
 “Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” (Ephesians 6:16)
- **Recognize our security in Christ, which produces peace as we trust in Him**
 “And take the helmet of salvation.” (Ephesians 6:17)
- **Establish the Word of God as our only and sufficient authority and use it wisely to fight evil forces**
 “And take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17)
- **Pray continually**
 “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18)
- **Proclaim the good news of the Gospel of God**
 “And for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.” (Ephesians 6:19)
- **Be a faithful ambassador of Christ to everyone, wherever you are**
 “for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may be able to speak boldly as I ought to speak.” (Ephesians 6:20)
- **Remember that only through the authority of Jesus Christ can the works of the devil be destroyed**
 “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 — see also John 15)

It is interesting to note that a large part of the activity of these evil beings is directed straight at believers. The three major areas of attack are (1 John 2:15-16):

- Temptations related to sex, food, drink, and drugs
- Temptations related to materialism
- Temptations related to pride

Their activity toward unbelievers is mainly to do everything possible to keep them from believing in Christ. We should pray daily that God would frustrate Satan’s plans and protect us from every evil being. It really is a spiritual war! The good news is that God is in control, and we can trust Him 100%.