

Sabbath School Lesson #8 – Satan, a Defeated Enemy – 16-22 February 2019

Christ illustrated how to defeat Satan. When tempted on every point by the devil, His sole reply was, “It is written” (Matthew 4:1-11), followed by a text of Scripture that met the case exactly. The Christian who would stand fast must do the same thing. There is no other way. This is also illustrated by David’s words, “By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer” (Psalm 17:4). It is this of which we read in Revelation 12:11, where, in speaking of the casting down of the “accuser of our brethren” (verse 10), the heavenly voice says: “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” This does not mean the word of their testimony in meeting, but the word of the testimony in which the psalmist found so great delight. They overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of God. But this cannot be done except by those who have the word of God abiding in them. The Spirit is given to bring truth to remembrance, in time of trial; but that which one has not learned he cannot remember. But if he has hidden the word in his heart, the Spirit will, in the hour of temptation, bring to his remembrance just that portion which will foil the tempter. Every true Christian can testify as to the power of the word at such times. When inclined to congratulate himself on some real or fancied superior attainment, what a powerful check are the words, “Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7). When harsh and bitter thoughts are struggling within him for control, what power to quell those turbulent emotions lies in the words, “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). When provoked almost beyond endurance, how the gentle rebuke, “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men,” helps one to be calm (2 Timothy 2:24). Add to this the many “exceeding great and precious promises” (2 Peter 1:4) which bring victory to every soul that grasps the living word by faith.

Sunday: The Woman and the Dragon – Read Revelation 12:1-5. A woman in the Bible is a symbol for a church. A comely woman symbolizes the true church. “I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman” (Jeremiah 6:2). It is the comely woman pictured in Revelation 12. Closed in the sun: represents the light of Jesus and the glory He bestows on His church. “For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psalms 84:11). He says to His church, “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall” (Malachi 4:2). The true church then reflects the light to the world. Christ declares, “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). Christ is the source of light and power for His church. If the heart is pure and right, if godliness is dwelling there, it will be revealed in the life. In symbolism of the woman, Christ is the head of His church. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body” (Ephesians 5:23).

Read Revelation 12:9. Satan is “the great Dragon” that was cast out. Isaiah saw this long before John did: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! how art thou cut down to the ground.” Jesus said: “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” Though defeated in heaven, Satan did not stop his war. He came into Eden in the form of a beautiful fiery serpent (this was before the serpent was cursed and made to grovel in the dust, as it now does) and deceived Eve so that she did not know it was Satan. So she was taken captive by Satan, and through conquering Adam and Eve, Satan got power over the earth and began his work of destruction here. Then Michael, who had conquered Satan in heaven, came down to earth to fight the great Dragon. As it *was man* whom the Dragon had overcome, it *was man* only that could break his power over humanity. So the Son of God came in the form of man and fought with the Dragon and conquered him. Christ “took upon Himself our nature, that with His human arm He might encircle the race, while with His divine arm He grasps Omnipotence, and thus links finite man to the infinite God” {4T 563.1}.

Monday: Satan Cast Down to Earth – Read Revelation 12:7-9. Satan is antichrist. The “antichrist” means “opposed to Christ.” The great antichrist, therefore, is Satan himself, for

he is the instigator and abettor of everything that has ever come up in opposition to God and Christ. In Revelation 12:7-9 we find the description of the first opposition to the Son of God. Herein Michael is the archangel (Jude 9), that is, the chief or prince of the angels; and the archangel is Christ, for it is the voice of the archangel that will be heard at the last great day, when the dead shall be raised (1 Thessalonians 4:16); and Christ declared (John 5:26-29) that His own voice would be the one that should penetrate the graves, and called forth the dead. Therefore this war in heaven was between Christ and his angels on one side, and Satan and his angels on the other side. It was the beginning of the great controversy which has been going on till the present time. When Christ was on earth he again met the devil in person, and again vanquished him; but still the warfare is kept up; Satan still opposes Christ by seeking to blind the minds of men so that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may not shine unto them (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). So, Satan was cast out of heaven, he continues his war on earth, and this will cease only with the utter destruction of Satan and all his works.

Tuesday: The War on Earth – When we appreciate the history of the war that begun in heaven and how Christ has fought victoriously, we have cause to rejoice! Jesus said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” “Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not.” “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” Satan is cast down to the earth as the result of Christ’s victory over him. He spends his time going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it (Job 1:7), “seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). But in this very thing we have cause for rejoicing, because in that he is cast down to the earth we have the evidence that salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of His Christ are come to us. Knowledge of the danger brings to us the knowledge of victory. What if we do read, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” in Revelation 12:13-14? Since we have been made alive with Christ, and have been raised up, and made to sit with Him in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion (Ephesians 1:20-21; 2:1-6), we are altogether out of Satan’s reach as long as we abide in Christ. “He that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that wicked one toucheth him not” (1 John 5:18). This is our joy and rejoicing. The war on earth, as the war that was in heaven, is not ours, but between Michael the archangel and the great antichrist.

Wednesday: War Against the Remnant – Read Revelation 12:17. It is by the testimony of Jesus that the war against the remnant is won. They do not have the testimony of Jesus in the church. The church comprises individuals. The church does not have the testimony of Jesus simply as a mass, but each individual have it for himself. Just as the human body is composed of an infinite number of cells, each cell having life, the life of God, and the life of the body is the united life of all these, so the church of God is composed of a vast number, each one having life from God; and the life of the church is the union of all those units.

That is simple enough. But does the dragon make war with the church as a whole, or with individuals? Satan comes pretty close to us as individuals oftentimes; and the fact that somebody in the church has successfully resisted him, while it is an encouragement to us, is not resistance for us. I like to hear the testimony of how brethren have met the enemy, and conquered him in the faith of Christ; but that does not conquer him for me. I also must resist, steadfast in faith. “Here are they [the individuals] that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Each individual of the body keeps the commandments of God, and each individual has the testimony of Jesus Christ. And as Christ has already won the war, and it is between Christ and Satan, each individual should abide in Christ to be safe from the devil.

Thursday: Satan’s End-Time Strategy – Satan’s strategy is deception. Satan does not always carry on his work of opposition openly. Satan “is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14), and “deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). Now no one can deceive unless he appears to tell the truth; therefore it must be expected that Satan will in his work counterfeit the truth as nearly as he can. Christ warns us that “there shall arise false christs, and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matt. 24:24). This being the case, no one need be surprised to find that Satan has carried and does still carry on his work under the guise of Christianity.