Wiles Of The Devil

Intro: There are some subjects that one cannot do justice to that subject. Sometimes sufficient information has not been given us to answer our questions, or so much material has been given that it cannot be sufficiently covered. In some ways, both of these things are true as we study this subject. Since we are dealing with the Devil and his wiles, let us first of all notice the subject.

I. THE SUBJECT OF OUR STUDY: THE DEVIL

A. What do we know about the Devil (who he is, where he came from, his origin, his character and nature, his work)?
   1. Does he appear to us in a red suit with horns, a long tail and a pitchfork in his hand?
      a. We would either laugh him to scorn (probably) or be absolutely frightened.
      b. At least he would be more easily seen and combated.
      c. However, he does not appear in such a way to man.
   2. We can learn a great deal about him, his character and nature by noticing the names applied to him.

B. Devil
   1. It is from the Greek word διάβολος (diabolos) which means “accuser” or “slanderer” “accusing falsely.”
   2. He falsely accused God; Gen. 3:4-5 “4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”
      a. He falsely accused God of lying.
      b. He falsely accused God of withholding what was good for them.
   3. Accuses Job before God of serving God only for gain; Job 1:9-11 “9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.”
   4. Called the “accuser of the brethren”; Rev. 12:10 “10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”

C. Satan
   1. Hebrew שָׂטָן (saw-tawn) and in the Greek σάταν (satan) and means “adversary.”
   2. He is the archenemy, adversary, of God and man.
   3. 1 Pet. 5:8 “8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”

D. There are other terms that give us an insight to his character.
   1. “prince of this world”
      a. John 14:30 “30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince [ruler—NKJV] of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.”
      b. 2 Cor. 4:4 “4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”
Mat. 4:8-9 “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; “And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

2. Belial or Beliel
   a. 2 Cor. 6:15 “And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?”
   b. While likely functioning as a name for Satan, the word means “worthlessness” and embraces the idea of “wickedness” or “evil person.”

3. Hebrew “Abaddon” and Greek “Apollyon.”
   a. Rev. 9:11 “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.”
   b. This name means, “Destroyer.”
   c. Consider what the devil is trying to do; 1 Pet. 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

E. In addition to these, he is also called:
   1. The wicked one; Mat. 13:19 “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.”
   2. The enemy; Mat. 13:39 “The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.”
   3. Beelzebub (from Baal); Mat. 10:25 “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?”
   4. 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.”
      a. Murderer
      b. Liar
      c. The father of lies
   5. Rev. 12:9 “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”
      a. Great dragon
      b. Old serpent
      c. Devil
      d. Satan
      e. Deceiver

F. However, 70 of the 83 times his is specifically named, the terms used are “Devil” and “Satan.”

G. We learn that the devil is the author and embodiment of all sin and evil.
   1. He works untiringly, energetically, and dedicatedly to thwart the will of God and damn the souls of men.
   2. Numerous illustrations are in the Bible illustrating this fact.
   3. Such is his desire for you at all times—he will use anything and everything to send your soul to torment and rob both you and God.
   4. With the rest of this lesson, we are going to concern ourselves with how he does this.
II. ORIGIN OF THE DEVIL

A. There are many conjectures and suppositions regarding this subject.

B. Early Jewish fathers (Rabbi) advanced the idea that the devil was created on the sixth day of the creation week.

C. Early church fathers: a fallen angel.

1. Isa. 14:12 “12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations?"
   a. This view began with Origen (ca. AD 185-254).
   b. It is a prophecy of the demise of Babylon.
      (1) Isa. 14:4 “4 That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!”
      (2) Lucifer is the king of Babylon, not Satan.

2. Eze. 28:13-19 “13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. 16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. 18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.”
   a. Tertullian (ca. AD 197-254) associated this with Satan’s sin and his demise.
   b. This passage relates to the fall of Tyre (and Sidon), not Satan.
   c. Eze. 28:12 “12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.”

3. Rev. 12:7-9 “7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”
   a. This, in harmony with the book and general context, is a symbolic description of the battle of the church and the forces of Satan of which the church will be victorious by the blood of the Lamb.
   b. It has nothing to do with Satan’s origin.
   c. Rev. 12:10-11 “10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

4. Parallel passages:
   a. 2 Pet. 2:4 “4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;”
   b. Jude 6 “6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”
c. These deal with angels and are not concerned with Satan.

5. Luke 10:18 “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”
   a. This is when the apostles return and tell Jesus what great things they did on the
      limited commission (cast out Satan, heal the sick, etc.).
   b. Thus, this is dealing with the power of Satan, not his origin and fall.

D. Eternal Dualism
   1. Good and evil have always existed.
   2. Thus, both God and Satan have always existed; they are both eternal.

E. The Bible simply does not say.
   1. We know he exists.
   2. We know he works to destroy our soul.

III. WILES OF THE DEVIL

A. We should never underestimate the power or ability of the devil. He claims a power
   and an ability that can be successfully combated only with God’s power.
   1. Eph. 6:10-11 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on
      the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”
     a. Lenski uses “expert methods” for “wiles.”
     b. Normally Satan does not engage us in open, straight forward warfare but deals in
        “wiles” and stratagems—expert methods that are crafty, skillful, varied and many.
   2. 2 Cor. 2:11 “lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

B. Get us out of the church
   1. Eph. 3:21 “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.
      Amen.”
   2. By not obeying the Gospel.
      a. Convince us that church membership does not matter; just live a good moral life.
      b. By the false doctrines of man: grace only, faith only, baptism is not for salvation, etc.
      c. Procrastination:
         (1) Acts 24:25 “And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,
            Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I
            will call for thee.”
         (2) Acts 26:28 “Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”
      d. Convince us that the church is simply a denomination and/or all denominations
         are acceptable to God.
   3. By getting us to fail to be faithful workers in the kingdom.
      a. Getting us to make excuses for attending all the worship services.
      b. Making sure we were too busy to engage in the works the church is doing.
      c. Rev. 3:15-17 “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or
         hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my
         mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and
         knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”
   4. Getting us to apostatize; 2 Pet. 2:20-22 “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the
      world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and
      overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to
have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

C. Get us to stop studying God’s Word
1. Hos. 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”
2. No longer loving the Scriptures.
   a. Psa. 1:2 “But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”
   b. Psa. 119:97 “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”
3. We have the need to study; 2 Tim. 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

D. Get us to stop praying.
1. Satan knows that prayer will stop sin and sin will stop prayer.
2. Jesus told Peter, James, and John; Mat. 26:41 “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
3. Our need for prayer:
   a. Rom. 12:12 “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;”
   b. Eph. 6:18 “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”
   c. 1 The. 5:17 “Pray without ceasing.”

E. Get us discouraged.
1. Consider Elijah:
   a. 1 Kin. 19:2 “Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.”
   b. 1 Kin. 19:4 “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.”
   c. 1 Kin. 19:10 “And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”
2. When we get discouraged, we often stop doing what we need to do.

IV. THANKS TO GOD, THERE IS A WAY OF ESCAPE
A. God’s part
1. God knows how to deliver the godly; 2 Pet. 2:9 “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished;”
2. God provides a way of escape; 1 Cor. 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

B. Man’s part
1. Keep yourself; 1 John 5:18 “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.”
2. Be sober and vigilant; 1 Pet. 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;”
3. Resist him and he will flee; Jam. 4:7 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”
4. Do not give place to him; Eph. 4:27 “Neither give place to the devil.”
5. Put on the whole armor of God; Eph. 6:11 “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Conclusion: God will provide a way of escape for us. However, unless we do our part, Satan will destroy us.