

Deliverance from Satan

Have You Ever Encountered Satan?

Have you ever encountered Satan? Let me share a personal experience and see what you think. I asked someone, (not a family member) if he had done a particular job. He told me he had. Later, I discovered he had not. He had looked me in the eyes and told me without equivocation he had done something he certainly knew he had not done. Would that qualify as an encounter with Satan? Jesus once told a group of critics that Satan is the “father of lies”. In other words, lies originate with him. He is their source. So when a lie is spoken, who is behind it, who produces it? It is of course Satan. We are beginning a series on “Deliverance and the Joy of Freedom”. Today we will look at deliverance from Satan. Our Big Idea is, “Live in Deliverance from Satan”.

The history of Satan and people begins with an encounter Satan had with Eve. Satan was at the time attractive and engaging, someone you would enjoy being around. Eve clearly was not disturbed by Satan’s appearance. Ezekiel 12 indicates that Satan was “perfect in beauty”. It is not surprising that Eve had no problem talking with Satan. When Satan enticed Eve to eat the forbidden fruit, Eve was fooled by Satan into taking it. She let Satan’s attractiveness distract her and then what she saw in the fruit drew her like a wolf to blood. **When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.** (Genesis 3: 6a NIV) Adam on the other hand was not enticed by Satan or the fruit. He was more loyal to Eve than he was to God and so he also ate the forbidden fruit, knowing full well the terrible consequences of his actions. **And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.** (1 Timothy 2: 14 NIV) What came next is crucial to understanding the strategy of God. He took away Satan’s good looks. The way Satan came to Eve was in the form of a serpent, at the time an attractive and smart creature. But the Lord, as punishment, made the serpent ugly and despicable to the woman. **So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman...”** (Genesis 3: 14-15a NIV) God by doing this, provided for the woman and all who followed, deliverance from Satan. No longer could the attractiveness of Satan captivate people. He was from that point forward disgusting to behold and no longer living physically. Why? No one would want him if they saw how he looked. What Satan can still do however is entice people in non-physical ways to turn from God.

Eventually God will be done with Satan altogether and our greatest enemy will be thrown into the Lake of Fire and that will be the end of him. For now though Satan does impact your life, with evil intent. Satan wrecks plans. Notice what Paul said of Satan. **For we wanted to come to you — certainly I, Paul, did, again and again — but Satan stopped us.** (1 Thessalonians 2: 18 NIV) How many times has Satan done that to you, ruined your God centered, good plans? Perhaps hundreds of times. Satan has the power of bringing death. **Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil—** (Hebrews 2: 14 NIV) Satan brings suffering to your life. Consider the agony Satan brought Job. Paul pointed out how Satan poured misery into his life. **To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.** (2 Corinthians 12 :7 NIV) Now it must be pointed out that even with Job and clearly with Paul and also with you, what Satan intends for your ruin, as you trust Christ with your life, God always turns it around for your good. Satan tests your faith. Take a serious look at what Satan did with Simon Peter. **“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”** (Luke 22: 31-32 NIV) Satan does that to you also, wanting to show that your faith is weak, or nonexistent. It was painful emotionally and psychologically for Peter when it happened, but the Lord used it to break down Peter’s spiritual pride so that he could truly follow Christ. But most importantly for the purposes of our study today, Satan tempts you to sin. We know Satan famously tempted Jesus to turn away from the will of the Father. But he tempts you in sly and subtle ways that can end up wrecking your life. A practical example is listed by Paul. Some believers chose to abstain for a while from sexual relations with their spouses in order to get closer to God. Paul warned them to watch out however because Satan could use their sacrifices against them. **Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.** (1 Corinthians 7: 5 NIV) I’m guessing that form of temptation doesn’t need further elaboration.

Here are some documented ways Satan used temptation to wreck lives. He enticed David to stop trusting God and convinced him to take a census of Israel. **Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.** (1 Chronicles 21: 1 NIV) We can't be certain why this was so bad. My guess is that by trying to find out how many men he could conscript into his army, David was showing his lack of faith in God but even if that isn't the case, it clearly was wrong, and David knew it. **This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished Israel. Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing."** (1 Chronicles 21: 7-8 NIV) We know that it was Satan who somehow convinced Judas to betray Jesus and in the end it led to Judas committing suicide. Satan took the greed in Ananias and Sapphira and talked them into lying to the church and to the Holy Spirit of God about how much they were giving as an offering. **Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"** (Acts 5: 3 NIV) How many times has Satan convinced you to do something that was wrong, that hurt you and others, that pulled you from God and His blessings? How many times have you wrecked your life like Adam and Eve because you followed Satan's tricky, ungodly logic? You are no less prone to fall into Satan's trap than David was if we are being honest. It is crucial to get out from Satan's influence if you are to be fully filled with joy and peace.

Here is what the Bible says you must do if you are to keep free of Satan's manipulation. The first three secrets to being free of Satan are quite practical but maybe not intuitive. 1. Believe in Christ for your salvation. When you lack faith in Jesus, you are completely under Satan's sway. He has you in the grip of his hand and can easily manipulate you. In fact unbelief is the clearest sign Satan has taken over your life. Jesus said this to Paul as he was coming to salvation and what he said of unbelievers back then is true today. **I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'** (Acts 26: 17-18 NIV) 2. Avoid getting angry. **"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.** (Ephesians 4: 26-27 NIV) Satan has a field day when you are angry. You fall for all sorts of temptations when your rage kindles. If you are angry, nearly every single time it is because you have let the devil manipulate you. Calm down and pray and ask Jesus immediately to take away your anger. 3. Forgive each offence against you. If you hold a grudge against someone, regardless of how badly you have been treated, you are doing so because Satan is having his way with you. **If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven — if there was anything to forgive — I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.** (2 Corinthians 2: 10-11 NIV) If you think you are far smarter and more spiritual than Apostle Paul and can outwit Satan, then stay upset with others. But it seems far shrewder to forgive every time if you want to make the most of your life.

The next two strategies for avoiding Satanic influence are perhaps what you thought. 4. Follow God every time. By doing so you will push Satan away from you and he will avoid you. **Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.** (James 4: 7 NIV) If just doing what God says is enough to keep Satan away, that should be incentive enough to obey God. Can we learn the lesson from the Israelites who rather than invading the Promised Land like God said, didn't and spent the rest of their lives wandering about aimlessly in a dry and barren land? Do you not think there are people filling your social and work circle who are like them, living pointless lives because they don't follow God? Of course there are. Don't be one of them. Boldly follow God like David who struck down Goliath because he knew the best life is trusting God no matter what. 5. Know the Scriptures. Become an expert on the Bible. Jesus quoted the Bible each time Satan tried to get Him to turn from God. When Satan tried to get Jesus to miraculously turn stones into bread, something that at the surface sounds like a great idea, the Lord had a ready answer. **Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"** (Matthew 4: 4 NIV) There is no excuse for not studying and memorizing the Bible. It is pure laziness that keeps us from doing so. You will fall into Satan's traps if you do not know your Bible and you will have only yourself to blame for it. Let's recap the five strategies for defeating Satan. 1. Believe in Christ for your salvation. 2. Avoid getting angry. 3. Forgive each wrong. 4. Obey God immediately. 5. Know the Scriptures. Rather than ruin yourself by falling for Satan's traps, defeat him. Our Big Idea. Live in deliverance from Satan. Today, state your loyalty to God and then tell Satan he is a liar, and you will not follow him. Live your best life.