

July 24, 2016

Is Satan Real? Ephesians 6:10-13

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Is Satan real? Should we take him seriously? Does he really _____ us and want to steal our soul? What does the Word of God say about the devil and what should I know about him?

For most people Satan is a _____ that won't go away. We've heard about him, known about his evil influence, and wrestled with him more than once. Many folks, however, don't know what to make of Satan. A recent Barna poll found that more than half of American adults (almost 60 percent) say the devil, or Satan, is not a living being, but just a _____ of evil.

Medieval Christians depicted Satan as a character with a _____, dressed in a _____ suit, smelling of brimstone (that is, sulfur), and carrying a pitchfork. They believed that he was the warden of _____ and will torture us for an eternity; and he'll torture the unfortunate, evil souls who are cast from the presence of God.

Hollywood usually _____ Satan as rich, cunning, successful, powerful, and good looking. He appears as a winner with every _____ that he wants. His prime work seems to be to _____ over the earth seeking individuals who will sign over their _____ to him in exchange for special powers or possessions. In the end of a Hollywood script Satan never wins but gets outwitted and reverts to a more familiar angry, immature, hate-filled guy with horns and revenge in mind. To Hollywood, Satan doesn't seem particularly intelligent because he's easily _____ by humans. But is that the _____ Satan?

The Bible always tells the _____. If we want to know what Satan is _____ like, let's go to the Bible. We don't want someone's imaginary _____ about Satan. We want what _____ has to say. Only the Bible can give us the _____ picture

Our reading today comes from Ephesians, chapter 6:10-13.

People who _____ the supernatural usually regard Satan as merely a symbol of evil. For them Satan is a spiritual threat but not an _____ being. To them the devil, or Satan, is only an impersonal evil _____ present and operating in the world. Since mentioning hell or judgment is politically incorrect, they have no _____ for Satan. Many believe that everyone is ultimately going to be _____, so Satan is merely a token, spiritual opposition. For 13 percent of Americans, hell is just a symbol for a _____ outcome after life is over. Many people regard Satan as the personification of an influence.

The Bible describes Satan and his demons as actual beings during the days of Jesus, but churches that hold classical _____ views explain Satan away by saying the first century was pre-scientific and used the concepts of demons and Satan to _____ people into obedience and to account for events and diseases for which they had no other explanation. They regard belief in Satan and demons as real, say that they're real today as a view that was _____ _____ from a pre-scientific day.

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The word “Satan,” as it appears in both Hebrew and Greek, means “_____.” The word describes a person who lies in wait as an _____. Satan is commonly called “the devil,” which points to one who engages in slander or accusing. In addition to these two principal names, the Scriptures also call Satan the tempter (Matthew 4:5); Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24); the enemy (Matthew 13:39); Belial (2 Corinthians 6:15); an adversary (1 Peter 5:8); the deceiver (Revelation 12:9); and the father of lies and a murderer (John 8:44). First John 3:8 says the devil has “sinned from the beginning.” The Lord Jesus describes Satan as the “evil one” (Matthew 13:16); that is, he is the one whose _____ and _____ are given over to evil. Moral evil is his dominant attribute. The devil stands in stark _____ with God the Father who is the “Holy One” (Isaiah 1:14).

He is also called “the dragon,” and “the old serpent” in Revelation 12:9; he is “the prince of this world” (John 14:30); and he is “the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2). Paul calls him “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4), and “the spirit that is now working in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2).

Satan’s _____ is very great in the world. He is like a “roaring _____, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Satan is the one who takes the _____ away from men (Mark 4:15). The Bible says people are “taken _____ by him” (2 Timothy 2:26). Paul warned Christians against his “_____” (2 Corinthians 2:11). James called on Christians to “_____” him (James 4:7).

The Lord Jesus _____ Satan when he was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1). Satan tried to persuade Jesus, the Son of God, three times to follow His desires and to _____ the will of God. However, Jesus met each temptation by citing to the devil _____ from the Word of God, specifically from the book of Deuteronomy. In the end, the Lord Jesus said, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.’” Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him (Matthew 4:10-11). Luke 4:13 notes that when “the devil had finished every temptation, that he left Him (that is, Jesus) until an opportune time.”

In this Biblical passage, one has to admit the devil is just as _____ as the angels are. If Satan is merely an influence, this passage actually becomes nonsense. When Jesus told Satan to “go,” He wasn’t speaking to a symbol but to a _____. In these verses, the Bible speaks of the devil as a person who travels, speaks, reasons, and is persistent. Such characteristics belong to a person, not a symbol.

When Jesus predicted to his apostles that He must go to Jerusalem and there suffer many things, be killed, and rise again the third day, Peter took Jesus aside and _____ him saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” In response, Jesus said, “Get behind Me, Satan! You’re a stumbling block to me; for you’re not setting your _____ on God’s interests, but man’s” (Matthew 16:21-23). Calling Peter “Satan” suggests that Jesus considered Peter’s behavior like that of the evil person Satan, who sets his mind on _____ interests. Personalities (not symbols) set their minds, make decisions, and oppose the will of God. Satan is a person!

In Luke 22:31, Jesus revealed that Satan had asked permission of God to _____ Peter like wheat. Such language again suggests that Jesus considered the devil as a person.

Again, the Lord Jesus recognized the _____ that the church at Smyrna faced in living in a city where they were being blasphemed. Jesus condemned “the blasphemy by those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9). The book of Revelation reveals that the final _____ of Satan, or the devil, and what it’s going to be. If Satan were just a symbol, such a graphic statement would be meaningless. Revelation 20:10 says, “the devil who deceived them was _____ into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” You can’t torment a symbol; one can only torment a person.

That Paul regarded Satan as a real person may be _____ in many of his statements about Satan. When he wanted to visit the Thessalonians, Paul said, “Satan _____ us” (1 Thessalonians 2:18). In 2 Corinthians 2:11, Paul described Satan as one who had “schemes”; that’s a sure indication of intelligence and personality. In 2 Corinthians 11:14, Paul reveals that Satan “disguises himself as an _____ of light.” From this, Paul says it’s not surprising that “his servants also disguise themselves as _____ of righteousness” (chapter 11:15).

Paul judged the man who had his father’s wife by delivering “such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his _____ may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Corinthians 5:5). In 1 Timothy 1:20, Paul handed over Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan, “so that they will be _____ not to blaspheme.” Such statements do not _____ a mere influence, but rather suggest one who has the ability to do physical harm to disobedient saints.

In a different way, Paul also speaks of being given a “thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!” (2 Corinthians 12:7). Paul was well aware of the _____ in the heavenly places with which he wrestled. Satan was not an influence, not a personification, and not a symbol; he is a person.

Read again God’s Word from the text in Ephesians 6:10-13.

Each of us faces a _____ in life against the devil. This is a personal battle, and we can’t _____ this battle off to somebody else. When people fought battles in ancient times, the one who was standing at the end was the winner; the other was _____. Our battle is spiritual; we’re not fighting for our lives; we’re fighting for our _____. We’re also fighting to show others what side we are on—to _____ others to fight the good fight and to stand.

We need the Lord’s _____ in fighting this battle. We need His _____ and the armor that He provides to us. If we fail to arm ourselves with God’s strength, we will fall _____ to the devil. If we are unwilling to _____, we will perish spiritually. To lose this battle means we’ll lose our _____. This is no matter to take lightly.

Read what God’s Word says in Ephesians 6:14-17.

The Lord loves us and so He equips us with armor that will _____ us win. Fasten on “the belt of _____.” Why, because the devil is a liar and the truth exposes his lies. God gives us the knowledge of the truth in the Word of God. The best way to defeat the devil is to _____ him

for what he is, an enemy who lies and accuses people falsely in order to gain power. He gains power when he _____ people to sin. He promises the pleasure of sin, but that pleasure never _____. In the end, it enslaves and destroys.

The Lord equips us with the _____ of righteousness. God lovingly forgives and cleanses us from sin. Righteousness motivates us to do what is _____ and to avoid destructive sins. The Lord equips us with protective _____ that allow us to move quickly in the gospel of peace. The gospel of Christ gives us peace and confidence, so that we can handle life's spiritual challenges without _____.

The Lord equips us with the _____ of faith, which is able to put out the fiery arrows of the devil. When a Christian believes in Christ and believes in His love and in His Word, he has the _____ to block the lies that the devil tells. He knows Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and every word that He spoke is _____ and righteous altogether. He knows that whatever Jesus says is right and there's a _____ between right and wrong. He knows he's a created being not a _____ of evolution. He knows heaven and hell are real destinies of each of our _____.

The Lord equips us with the _____ of salvation. That helmet protects the _____ from the blows of the opponent, and our salvation protects us today. The Scriptures marvelously promise, "if we _____ in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, that we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). Verse nine says, "if we _____ our sins, He's faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we walk with the Lord Jesus and confess our sins, asking God to forgive us, we have an ongoing relationship with God that keeps us completely free from sin.

The Lord also equips us with the _____ of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. God's Word instructs, reproves, corrects, and trains us so that we might fight the good fight of _____. Soldiers used the sword both defensively and offensively. Scripture _____ us from sin and also helps us to _____ the devil by exposing his wicked ways. You can trust the Bible to give you the _____ that you need to overcome temptation, overcome sin, and overcome the devil. So keep your Bible close to your heart if you wish to win this battle for your soul.

The Scriptures reveal that the devil is a deceiver, a liar in disguise. He wants people to think he's an angel of light, while in reality he is pure evil. Make no mistake, Satan is not now, nor has he ever been, your _____. **Read what the Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8-9. Also read James 4:7-8.** God wants us to draw close to Him and _____ to His commandments. If we draw close to God and resist the devil, the devil will _____ from us, and we'll win this battle.

How do you draw close to God? Submit your heart and your will to Him, place your trust in Him. You can't be friends with sin and be friends with God. You must give up the sin and submit to God. With your faith and repentance, out of love, you must be willing to confess your faith in Jesus Christ before others and to be baptized in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). At that point, God cleanses you from sin, and adds you to His family, the church. If you draw close to Him, He will draw close to you! If you're a Christian who's moved away from Christ, why not come back to Him by repenting of that sin and praying to God for forgiveness.