

The Great Adversary, Satan

The Apostle writes—"Your adversary, the devil," as though he would have us understand that we have much more to contend with than the weaknesses of our own flesh and the imperfections of fellow men. He would have us realize that we have a cunning "wily" foe in Satan, and that we must keep close to our Shepherd if we would be delivered out of temptation and from the power of the Evil One. Let us note some of the many scriptures which refer to this Adversary whose very existence is now being denied by many:

"Your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." [1 Pet. 5:8](#) "Then was Jesus led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." [Matt. 4:1](#)

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [Gehenna, destruction], prepared for the devil and his angels." [Matt. 25:41](#)

"Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts." [Luke 8:12](#)

"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." [John 8:44](#)

"Supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him." [John 13:2](#)

"Neither give place to the devil." [Eph. 4:27](#)

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil." [Eph. 6:11](#)

"Lest...he fall into the condemnation of the devil." [1 Tim. 3:6,7](#) "They may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." [2 Tim. 2:26](#)

"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." [Heb. 2:14](#)

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." [James 4:7](#)

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil...In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." [1 John 3:8,10](#)

"Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." [Jude 9](#) "The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." [Rev. 2:10](#)

"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 with him." [Rev. 12:9,12](#)

"He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,...that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled." [Rev. 20:2,3](#)

"The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone....This is the second death." [Rev. 20:10,14](#)

"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." [John 12:31](#)

"Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." [John 14:30](#)

"When he is come he will reprove the world...of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." [John 16:8,11](#)

"Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." [Eph. 2:2](#)

"If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; 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." [2 Cor. 4:3,4](#)

"When the Pharisees heard it they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus said,...If Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself; how shall then his Kingdom stand?" [Matt. 12:24-26](#) "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" [Isa. 14:12-14](#)

"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." [2 Cor. 11:14](#)

"Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." [2 Thess. 2:9,10](#)

"Lest Satan get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." [2 Cor. 2:11](#)

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spiritual things of the Evil One in the heavenlies." [Eph. 6:12](#) Diaglott.

"He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the Wicked One." [1 John 5:18,19](#) Diaglott.

"There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came amongst them." [Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7](#)

"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee." [Zech. 3:1,2](#)

"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." [Luke 10:18](#)

"I have appeared unto thee for this purpose,...I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." [Acts 26:16,18](#) "The God of

peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." [Rom. 16:20](#) "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." [1 Cor. 5:5](#); [1 Tim. 1:20](#)

"Give none occasion to the Adversary to speak reproachfully; for some are already turned aside after Satan." [1 Tim. 5:14,15](#)

When our Lord said, "Get thee hence, Satan" [adversary, opposing spirit—Young], and again when he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan [adversary, etc.]; thou art an offense unto me, for thou savorest not the things that be of God" ([Matt. 4:10; 16:23](#)), it was saying in effect that being in opposition to God, the same position was also held toward all in harmony with God. And Peter's declaration that he goes about like a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" ([1 Pet. 5:8](#)) seems to teach that he is not "your [the Church's] adversary" alone, but that of all mankind. Our Lord makes a direct assertion to that effect. [John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11](#)

Our Lord's declaration, that Satan is the great Adversary, not only of God, but of humanity, is by no means a fancy sketch, but the plain truth. He is our Adversary in a sense that the world and our own flesh are not our adversaries. Our own flesh opposes the New Creature, not from any bitterness or hatred, nor with any scheming for its temporal or eternal disadvantage; but merely in the sense that the cravings of the fallen flesh are in a direction which is at variance to the best interests of the New Creature and the hopes with which he has been begotten. The opposition of the world is likewise not a malicious one, but merely a selfish one, because of seeing things in different lights and because of selfish differences of interest. Satan alone is the willful, intelligent plotter and schemer who uses a superhuman intelligence and, so far as permitted, superhuman powers, to inveigle our fallen flesh, through depraved appetites, etc., and who frequently uses the worldly as his tools and unconscious instruments in opposing righteousness and truth and those who are of the Truth.

He Was a Liar and a Murderer from the Beginning

— [John 8:44](#) —

The inspired record asserts, persistently and consistently, that Satan began the rebellion against the divine law, and seduced our first parents into disobedience, through his own ambition for power; and that since man's fall this same Adversary has been the implacable opponent of God, of righteousness and of truth; and not only the ensnarer of mankind, but the opposer of the great plan of Atonement which God devised and is prosecuting through Christ. From the Scriptural account it does not appear that Satan had any sympathizers or associate conspirators amongst the angels at the time of his secession and attempt to establish a lordship or dominion of his own in the earth, taking as his subjects God's latest creation—mankind. As surely as Satan himself was a part of the general creation of God, so surely we may know that he was created perfect and upright, in the image of God; because all of God's work is perfect. ([Eph. 3:9](#); [Deut. 32:4](#)) He has but the one standard of righteousness, justice, perfection, and He himself is that standard.

But to be created perfect, and to remain perfect, are two entirely different propositions. God has not been pleased to create any of His intelligent creatures mere machines, incapable of change of motive and conduct. On the contrary, He has been pleased to create all the morally intelligent of His creatures after His own likeness or image, with perfect liberty to follow the

right, the true, the pure, the good, according to his own example and precept; but with power also to alter or reverse their course in these respects, and to become rebels against His law of righteousness. God, however, has guarded this matter, by keeping in His own hands the power of everlasting life; so that He has full control of the situation, and can destroy any of His creatures, if they refuse to acknowledge and obey His righteous requirements. He proposes to blot them out of existence, as though they had never been, and to permit only such as are in heart harmony with His requirements to continue to live everlastingly.

Amongst the angels of high rank (of whom Satan was originally one), there were, apparently from the beginning, and still are, different orders or grades, yet all under the rule of love, and who, in obedience to the will of the Creator, operated in unison and harmony probably for ages. Goodness, love, kindness, obedience to the heavenly Father's requirements, and happiness resulting from these, were for a long while their only experiences. But in due time another feature of the divine plan was developed. Man was created, of a different nature from angels, a little lower nature—human, not angelic—earthly, not heavenly—flesh, not spirit. Additionally, mankind had a separate home—earth—with a family organization, and were paired, male and female, and had powers of procreation—ability to propagate their own species. In all these particulars they differed from the angels, who are not sexually different, and who have not the family arrangement, and who do not propagate their own kind. God's latest creation was, no doubt, a marvel in the eyes of all the angelic hosts—in connection with which their reasoning faculties found abundant opportunity for exercise.

Then it was that one of those of high rank, reasoning out the possibilities of the matter and harboring selfish and ambitious thoughts, concluded that if he could in some manner but capture the newly created human pair, and alienate them from God, then he could through them set up a special kingdom or dominion of his own, of which he would be the god or lord, usurping the place and the honor of Jehovah respecting mankind and the earth. It was his prosecution of this criminal ambition that gave to him his present name, Satan—adversary of God. He did not meditate nor attempt to usurp God's dominion over the angels. Such an attempt would have been absurd, since all of the angels were intimately acquainted with God, and knew Satan as one of themselves. Hence, they would not have thought of consenting to become his servants and followers, very much preferring, and being thoroughly satisfied with, and in no sense rebellious toward, the just, loving and wise administration of Jehovah Almighty.

No sooner did such selfish and ambitious designs find a lodgment in Satan's heart, than he began to measure the Lord by his own false standard, and to suppose that the Lord Jehovah was in all of his work merely carrying out ambitious and selfish designs. Thus it is that the wicked heart is always ready to impute evil to others, be they ever so pure, honorable and benevolent. No doubt Satan justified his own course in the beginning, at least, by false reasoning, to the effect that in creating mankind on a lower plane than the spirit beings, the angels, God was influenced by sinister and selfish motives; and that the limitation to earth as their habitat was with a view to having them the more fully enslaved. Having once permitted this envious, rebellious, unsanctified thought to enter his heart, it was only a question of time when the evil would develop further, in the suggestion and manifestation of open sin and opposition to the divine arrangements.

Perhaps, indeed, it was with the false idea that he was doing justice to the oppressed that Satan approached mother Eve in Eden, and suggested to her that the strict regulations by which Adam and herself had been hedged about by the divine decree respecting one of the trees of the

garden, was the exercise on God's part of unwarranted, autocratic powers—to restrain them from liberties which should properly be theirs and the exercise of which would be clearly to their advantage. He even suggested to mother Eve, and possibly he expressed truly the opinion of his, by this time perverted, judgment that God falsified to them when He stated that the eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree would result in their destruction—their death. Satan had never seen death amongst any of God's creatures made in His own likeness, endowed with reason; and hence, in his perverse attitude of mind, he not only attributed to God sinister motives in connection with the creation, but now assumed that He had deliberately lied to His creatures, in order to further His own plans of keeping them in a measure of ignorance, and under what Satan, by this time no doubt, concluded was despotic authority.

The evil suggestion took effect. The mind of mother Eve—which up to this moment had been thankful to God and appreciative of all His mercies and blessings, and which had recognized Him as the fountain of grace and truth, benevolence and love—was poisoned with the thought that she was being made a dupe; was being deprived of proper liberties to the intent that she might be hindered from acquiring larger measures of knowledge, which were properly her right, and which God, in His determination to keep them in the slavery of ignorance, was misrepresenting to them—threatening them that it would result in their death—whereas this newly found friend, Satan, who loved them better, and who was jealous for their welfare and their liberty, assured them that the eating of the forbidden fruit would not only not bring disaster and death, but would bring increase of knowledge, liberty, and exercise for all their powers. The poison acted quickly; selfishness and acquisitiveness were aroused in the heart of mother Eve, which had never before had such sentiments, because nothing in her previous experience had ever suggested such thoughts or sentiments.

Satan's position on this matter, of course, separated him from Jehovah. He staked his all upon his ability to capture the new human race as his servants, his kingdom; or, as perhaps he would have expressed it, he had staked all in his effort to liberate the new human family from divine despotism. When he saw the effect of the transgression—that the human pair were cast out of Eden, and shut off from its life-sustaining trees, that they gradually began to wither and to perish, no doubt he was disappointed, as well as was mother Eve. Adam, we are informed, was not deceived: he knew what to expect as the result of disobedience. His share in the transaction was a voluntary one, a suicide we might term it. Inspired by the thought that his wife must die, because she had partaken of the forbidden fruit, and feeling that all of his own joy would thus perish, he resolved to die with her. Had he understood better the divine character, as it has since been manifested through God's dealings in connection with the Atonement, he would doubtless have trusted God for help out of the difficulty, and would have been obedient to the divine decree at any cost.

But to return to Satan: Having chosen an evil course, each step of his journey since seems to be taking him only further and further away from every principle of righteousness; so that while his first lie, "Ye shall not surely die," may have been uttered with considerable candor, yet ever since, and today, he endeavors by every conceivable means to perpetuate his false statement, and to deceive mankind into believing that there is no such thing as *death*—that when they die they are more alive than ever before. It is the old lie, "Ye shall not surely die," readjusted to present conditions. None now know better than Satan the reality of death, as it passed upon the whole human family; and none know better than he that if the human family clearly and

distinctly understood the matter of sin, its penalty, the ransom, and the resultant restitution, the influence of the Truth would be to draw mankind toward their just, yet merciful Creator.

But this is what Satan desires to prevent. He therefore attempts to blind the minds of mankind respecting the true character and plan of God, and to fill them, on the contrary, with false and blasphemous thoughts respecting the divine character and plan. Instead of having men see that death, and all the sufferings incident to death, viz., mental, moral and physical decay and disease, are the results of disobedience to God, the results of following his falsehood, he, on the contrary, would have them think, and has succeeded in convincing many, that the great Jehovah, who declares Himself to be the very embodiment of justice and of love, in creating the human family most unjustly and unlovingly did so with malevolent intentions towards the vast majority—that He purposed and predestinated in His heart, before beginning man's creation, that thousands of millions of them should be eternally tormented, and that a "little flock" should be carried to glory, as a sample of what He had power to do for all if He had been kindly disposed. Thus, and with many other somewhat similar delusions and snares, has the Adversary for six thousand years perverted human judgment, and turned the hearts of men away from God and from the message of His Truth. The Apostle confirms this, and explains it, saying: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"—should enlighten them, and drive out the darkness of ignorance and misconception, and let them see the real character and gracious plan of the heavenly Father. [2 Cor. 4:4](#)

Wherever the light of divine revelation (not merely the Bible, but also "the spirit of Truth") goes, it more or less means danger to the darkness of Satan's misrepresentations. The Truth is a thousand-fold more reasonable than Satan's error, and would rapidly prevail against him, were it not for his cunning, "wily" tactics, by which he is continually shifting the scenes, and bringing forward new deceptions to uphold his old lie, and "to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." One of the first and one of the most gigantic and most successful of his efforts to controvert the Truth, and to make the error appear feasible and plausible, was the development of the great Antichrist system, the Papacy. By it he exercised a most wonderful influence throughout the world, so that, in the light of today, and with a measure of freedom from that monstrous institution, mankind looks back to the period of its dominion and describes it as "the Dark Ages"—dark with injustice, dark with error and superstition, dark with persecution, relentless and terrible, against those who sought to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience—ferocious against them in proportion as they obtained the true light and were faithful in holding it up before the people. So diabolical was this great institution, in its methods and influence, and so thoroughly did it represent Satan's cunning and ambition and craftiness, that it is symbolically described by the Lord as though it were Satan himself. It was, in the largest sense of the word, his representative, while claiming to be God's representative.*

**See Vol. II, Chap. ix.*

Throughout the prophecies we find this blending of description and denunciation between Satan and his chiefest representative amongst the enlightened. For instance, after describing the breaking of the power of Babylon—a description which is applicable in part to literal Babylon,

and the bondage of natural Israel, and more particularly applicable to the bondage of mystic Babylon over spiritual Israel—the Prophet proceeds with a description which primarily fits to Satan's own course, and in a secondary sense is applicable to the rise and fall of natural Babylon, and in a yet further sense to the rise and fall of mystic Babylon, saying:

"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! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation [the Kingdom of God's people] to the northward [Pleiades, in the north, has long been esteemed the center of the universe, the throne of Jehovah]: I will ascend up to the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell—*sheol*, oblivion—to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the one that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" [Isa. 14:12-17](#)

As it was true that Babylon highly exalted itself over the other kingdoms of the world, it was also true that Papacy, the Antichrist, exalted itself as a kingdom over the nations of earth, and attempted to rule them with a rod of iron, claiming authority so to do in the name of the true Christ. And as the one was brought down to destruction, much more so there waiteth yet the final fall of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, as a great millstone cast into the sea, to rise no more. But if the ambition of these to have dominion above others was great, still greater was the ambition of Satan to be higher than the others of God's creation, to have a kingdom of his own, and subjects of his own—a rival kingdom to that of Jehovah—over earth, as Jehovah's dominion is in heaven. However, this also shall fail, and Satan himself shall first be bound during the thousand years of the reign of the Redeemer and the lifting of the curse, and the blessing of the world, but subsequently, as the Scriptures clearly show, he is to be destroyed, together with all his angels—his messengers, all who follow his leading and his course. [Matt. 25:41](#); [Heb. 2:14](#); [Rev. 20:10](#)

Satan's Associates in Evil—Legions of Demons

As already seen, according to the Scriptural account, Satan had no angelic associates in his conspiracy and rebellion at its beginning. On the contrary, we may understand that all the holy angels were in fullest sympathy with the divine government, and that some of them were commissioned to rule over fallen man, and to help mankind, if possible, back to harmony with God, and to restrain them from further depravity. This was prior to the flood of Noah's day. It was the first experience of angels with sin, disloyalty to God, moral obliquity. It became to them a test, because it suggested possibilities of an evil course, contrary to the divine will. It suggested pleasures and advantages as the result of such a course, and thus became a test of their loyalty and obedience to Jehovah. The Scriptures clearly inform us that under this test some of the angels, who previously had been holy and obedient, became transgressors, fell into and were contaminated by sin. Both Jude and Peter speak of "those angels which kept not their first estate," and whom, in consequence, God restrained of their liberties, reserving them in chains, under darkness, until a great judgment day, still future, when their cases will be heard. [2 Pet. 2:4](#); [Jude 6](#)

Isolated from the holy angels, these fallen angels are since known as demons, or devils, and Satan is recognized as the "prince of devils"—their leader, with whom they cooperate as mischief workers amongst men. Having no employment in good works, and left to themselves in evil, it need not surprise us that in them evil attains large proportions, and that they are faithful allies of Satan in the inculcation of his original lie—"Thou shalt not surely die." ([Gen. 3:4](#)) Apparently, very soon after the flood these fallen angels, demons, began to debauch humanity, under the guise of religion. While chained, or imprisoned, in the sense of being unable longer to appear amongst men in fleshly bodies, they soon found in the depraved race those who were willing to submit themselves as their agents, or mediums, and they operated through the bodies of these, instead of bodies of their own. Such "*mediums*," or human channels of communication between the demons and mankind were, in olden times, known as "fetishes," "wizards," "witches," "necromancers," "medicine men," and "priests" of false religions. Their various efforts to gain control of the people of Israel, whom God had selected to be His representatives in the world for a time, are distinctly noted in the Scriptures, and the people are strictly warned against them. Laws were enacted and, to a considerable extent enforced, against those who became the agents of communication between the demons and Israel—the penalty being death.

Man, constitutionally, is an image of God, and as such is a free, independent being. This freedom extends to his moral agency; hence the expression that man is a "free moral agent." However much he may lose his personal liberty, or become enslaved either to persons or to his own appetites, nevertheless his moral agency is free—he is free to will, to use his mind in what way he may please. If he wills to submit his mind to the Lord's will, he may do so; if he wills to submit to an evil influence, he may do so; and if he wills to stand independent of both God and evil influences he may do so, to the extent that his physical powers and mental judgment will permit—but impaired by the fall, and its inherited weaknesses, his judgment as well as his knowledge and ability to reason, are greatly diminished, and, hence, his moral independence is proportionately in danger, when assaulted by "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," as the Scriptures declare the evil influence at work throughout the world to be. ([1 Tim. 4:1](#)) It is not surprising, therefore, that these fallen angels, demons, have in every country and in every time, found it possible to obtain possession of numerous mediums. And they are choice as to who their mediums shall be, seeking, so far as possible, those possessed of mental capacity, that through these natural qualities and abilities they may the more thoroughly operate in the control of the masses in general. Consequently we find that in heathen lands and amongst the Indians these mediums, wizards, witches, necromancers, astrologers, and soothsayers, were amongst the wisest and ablest. In modern times, in Christendom, these mediums of demons are often known by this particular name, medium, as amongst the Spiritualists. It is one of the most correct names ever applied, for, simply and strictly, those who submit themselves to these evil influences, to be the channels of communication to men, are merely mediums through which the evil spirits communicate, either by words or raps, or writings, or otherwise.

The general methods and general teaching of these demons, through such mediums, in all times and in all countries, have been practically the same. They misrepresent themselves, and personate the dead, except very occasionally, when they have made themselves so bold as to admit that they are demons—as, for instance, amongst the Chinese. See also [1 Cor. 10:20](#). By palming themselves off as dead human beings they accomplish a manifold work most successfully:

(1) They support the original lie promulgated by Satan in Eden, "Thou shalt not surely die."

(2) Through this falsehood they prejudice the minds of mankind against the Gospel and all its provisions.

(3) The divine provisions for man's redemption and recovery out of sin, and its penalty, death, they thus make to appear inconsistent, unreasonable, nonsensical. Denying that the wages of sin is death, and claiming that the wages of sin is eternal torment, their theory not only blasphemes the divine character, by representing it as the personification of injustice and cruelty, but it makes ridiculous the Scriptural doctrine of a ransom; for even fallen reason is able to discern that our Lord's death at Calvary could not redeem the race from eternal torture; and that there would be no correspondence whatever between the penalty and the ransom price.

(4) It makes the doctrine of the resurrection seem useless and unreasonable, because if there are none dead, how could there be a resurrection of the dead? If all, in dying, become more alive than they ever were before, and are in much better condition than previously, what good purpose could be served by a resurrection? or why should it be held out as the hope, and the only hope, set before us in the Gospel?

(5) It prepares the way for enslaving errors. Amongst the heathen, this, to a considerable extent, takes the form of the worship of parents, and the belief in transmigration of souls—that those who die as men, after remaining for a while in a disembodied condition, will be born into the world again as dogs or cats, horses or cows, rats or mice, and pass through the various experiences of these dumb animals; or, if worthy, pass to nobler conditions.

(6) In Christendom this evil took on its most Satanic form, and the false doctrine became the foundation of all the gross errors and superstitions with which Christianity has contended. There could have been no theory of eternal torture except as built upon this doctrine of demons, that the dead are *alive*—capable of suffering. There could have been no theory and doctrine of purgatory, except for the same teaching; consequently, there could have been no praying for the dead, no paying for masses for the dead. Consequently, also, the great priestly institutions which have fattened on these falsehoods could not have developed, to enslave mankind with their fallacies and misrepresentations of the divine character and plan.

(7) Although the power of Papacy was broken in the great Reformation movement of the sixteenth century, this foundation fallacy, taught by the demons, and supported by them amongst all nations with various proofs, demonstrations, and manifestations, was carefully guarded; and the Reformers stepped forth, still bound by this original lie, taught by the father of lies, and supported by his legions of evil spirits. Thus it became also in Protestantism the basis of all the difficulties and errors with which the various denominations have since struggled. It has blinded them to a large extent to the light of the divine Word, hindering them from "comprehending with all saints the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God." [Eph. 3:18](#)

(8) Adapting itself to the new condition, it has, within the last fifty years, assumed the role of light-bearer to the Church, and affected to lead all desiring the truth. In this it is true to the character marked out for it in the inspired Word, for the Apostle declares, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." [2 Cor. 11:14](#)

(9) Spiritism has been unsuccessful in capturing the majority of Christian people. Although handicapped by the false theory that their dead friends are alive, Christians in general have

somehow instinctively realized that the mediums (the best which Satan could obtain) were not such mediums as God would appoint to communicate information, and to be channels of fellowship between himself and their friends, whom they erroneously believe to be alive, and frequently near them, though unseen; consequently, the great Adversary, while permitting Spiritualism to gather and to hold and to seduce to evil as many as possible, has found it necessary to introduce still more subtle temptations, still more close imitations of true Christianity, under the names of

Christian Science and Theosophy

These systems, pretending a reverence for the divine Word, and taking the name of Christ in vain, without having faith in him as the Redeemer, are used as decoys for Christians who are getting awake in the present time—to satisfy their cravings for something new and better than the husks of human tradition, upon which they have fed so long. These profess to feed their followers upon scientific truth, while ignoring truth, science, in every sense of the word.

Seeing that restitution is the divine plan in the near future, the Adversary is attempting to distract human attention from the divine plan by mind cures, through Christian Scientists, *Theosophists, and clairvoyants. These deceptive counterfeits of the truth, while denying the very foundation of the Scripture truth (the Ransom), are evidences to us that Satan's power to delude Christendom is waning, that his house is tottering to its fall, so far as intelligent people are concerned. The light of the Millennial dawn is breaking upon the world of mankind, and the great defender of error is at his extremity. God be praised that he will soon be bound, and hindered from deceiving the world for the thousand years of Christ's Millennial reign, in which the light of knowledge shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep!

**theosophy, [occult](#) movement originating in the 19th century with roots that can be traced to ancient [Gnosticism](#) and [Neoplatonism](#). The term theosophy, [derived](#) from the Greek theos (“god”) and sophia (“wisdom”), is generally understood to mean “divine wisdom.” Forms of this doctrine were held in antiquity by the [Manichaeans](#), an Iranian dualist sect, and in the Middle Ages by two groups of dualist heretics, the [Bogomils](#) in Bulgaria and the [Byzantine Empire](#) and the [Cathari](#) in southern France and Italy. In modern times, theosophical views have been held by [Rosicrucians](#) and by speculative [Freemasons](#). The international [New Age movement](#) of the 1970s and '80s originated among independent theosophical groups in the United Kingdom.*

[Clairvoyant](#): having or claiming to have the power of seeing objects or actions beyond the range of natural vision:

As we look into heathendom, we see clearly the terrible and degrading work of these demons, how they have riveted their fetters upon the people by the exercise of miraculous powers, through their human agents—as, for instance, the *fakirs of India today, and the "Black Art" generally practiced throughout the world in the darker days of the past. The Scriptures show us the effect of the Gospel upon these works of the devil, and indicate that the light of divine truth is "the light of the world," which alone will be capable of dispelling the darkness of the Adversary. Notice the conflict between the light and darkness, as recorded in the Apostle Paul's experiences, when he traveled through Asia and into Europe, holding up the true light, when "Many that believed came and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver: so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." [Acts 19:18-20](#)

Fakir: noun

1 a Muslim or Hindu religious ascetic or mendicant monk commonly considered a wonder-worker. 2 a member of any Islamic religious order; dervish.

The apostles were continually in conflict with these evil spirits, which sometimes sought to oppose the Gospel, but in general realized that they were wholly unable to cope with the higher spiritual powers operating through the apostles. On one occasion, we read that the evil spirit sought affiliation with the Gospel, and prompted the medium to follow the Apostle and those with him, calling out, "These be the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of eternal life." But whether this was an attempt to associate the Gospel with demonism and mediumship, or whether it was a shrewd trick by which the demons expected to accomplish the very result which followed, viz., a disturbance amongst the people, and an opposition to the apostles, we cannot judge. But at all events, one point clearly brought forward is, that the Apostle recognized these mediums, not as the mediums of the dead, but as the mediums of the demons, the fallen angels. And in conference with the apostles these demons never denied their own identity. See [Acts 16:16-19; 19:15; Jas. 2:19](#).

Likewise in our Lord's ministry, these evil spirits had found many amongst the Jews willing to receive them—known as "possessed of devils." When possessed of many of these demons, as was frequently the case, the victim had almost no control of himself. His thoughts, words and acts were controlled by numerous of these evil spirits, and his conduct was that of insanity. Many possessed of devils were healed in our Lord's time, both by himself and by those whom he sent forth, armed with his spirit, power, influence. An interesting account of one of these instances of the casting out of evil spirits is found in [Luke 4:34-37](#), [Matt. 8:28-33](#), where the demons not only did not attempt to deny their own identity, when holding converse with the Lord, but admitted his lordship and power over them, and their expectation of some future termination of their present restraint or imprisonment—a culmination or judgment in their case.

"We Wrestle not [Merely] with Flesh and Blood"

From the foregoing we see that Satan himself, and the demons, his associates in evil, are really the great power working in and upon and through mankind, in opposition to God, and in opposition to the plan of atonement which He has designed and which began to be put into operation at the first advent and death of our Lord, as the ransom price for sinners. From this standpoint only can we comprehend clearly the significance of the words of the Apostle, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high [exalted] positions." ([Eph. 6:12](#)) And seeing that fallen man is so incompetent to defend himself against this wily Adversary, and that the people of the Lord can escape from his machinations only in proportion as their hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord and attentive to His Word—and then because to such He will grant special assistance and deliverance from evil, which, if it were not for this assistance, would deceive the very elect—we are led to inquire, Why does God permit this great Adversary thus to compass man about with delusive errors, false doctrines, and, to some extent, with miracles in support of these?

The answer to this question, and the only satisfactory answer that can be found, is that God, in the present time, is not seeking the reconciliation of the whole world, not attempting to bring all mankind into harmony with Himself, but, on the contrary, is merely selecting out from amongst the redeemed race the predestinated little flock, the New Creation, who will make their calling and election sure, under divine providence, by becoming, in heart, copies of God's dear Son, their Redeemer, their Lord, their Bridegroom. The world's experience, under these delusions of the Adversary will, during the Millennial age, be thoroughly exposed. All shall then see and fully appreciate the delusive and ensnaring and degrading influences of every other course than the course of righteousness, and of every other spirit and influence than the Spirit of God, the spirit of Truth. All will thus find how thoroughly they have been ensnared, and "led captive by Satan at his will" ([2 Tim. 2:26](#)); how thoroughly they have been blinded by the god of this world against the true light of God's character, shining through Christ ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)), and will have learned a lesson of several parts: (1) That God is the true friend of all His creatures, and that His laws are in their interest and for their well-being. (2) They will have learned of the insidious character of evil, as exemplified in Satan, in the fallen angels, and in their own personal experiences. (3) They will have learned that they cannot trust to their own judgment implicitly; and that with man's limited knowledge, under such conditions, it is possible for light to appear darkness, and for darkness to be made to appear as light—for good to appear as evil, and for evil to appear as good. This lesson will be of everlasting value, so that all mankind will learn to trust more implicitly in the divine wisdom, as well as in divine goodness and power.

The Ministry of Evil

Meantime these errors and superstitions amongst men are serving, nevertheless, to hold them in a bondage of slavery, at a time when they would be incapable of using liberty aright; because only perfect men, only those who have the full "image of God," and who are guided by Him, are properly prepared for a self-control that would be to their own profit. Meantime, also, these oppositions of Satan and his associates in evil, and the opposition of the world, wrought upon through their errors and delusions, are directed against the Truth, against those who become its servants, in proportion as they are loyal to the Truth, and energetic in that service. It was our

royal Master, the most faithful servant of the living God, who declared to those who would follow in his footsteps, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." ([Jno. 15:18,19](#)) Consequently, by the operation of a natural law, we might say, it follows that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." ([2 Tim. 3:12](#)) And these persecutions and oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil are the hammer and chisel and polishing implements of the Lord, which He is using in the development of the New Creation.

God is making use of these implements of opposition which the Adversary is himself furnishing, and is causing the wrath and opposition (both of men and of devils), to praise Him, in that these very experiences and tribulations of His elect Church are *working out for us* "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." ([2 Cor. 4:17](#)) These are the implements by which the living stones of the great Temple of God are being shaped and fashioned, polished and prepared, in harmony with the great Architect's design—to the intent that shortly, in and through this living Temple, all the families of the earth may be blessed and so many as will be brought into at-one-ment, reconciliation, with the Lord. When they realize thus that the oppositions of men are largely the result of their fallen condition, and of the errors and blindness which come upon them through the machinations of the great opponent of God and of righteousness, the Lord's people may have large sympathies, not only for the world in general, but also for those, even, who are their opponents and persecutors. So far from desiring to take vengeance on them, they may very properly love their enemies, and do good to those who persecute them, realizing the meanwhile that, in the fullest and truest sense of the word, "they know not what they do."

Amongst men who are opponents of the Atonement we recognize many who, in various ways and from various motives, are all cooperating with the great Adversary in opposition to God and the work of the Atonement. If we were to mention, as first amongst these, the brothel keeper, the saloon keeper, the gambling-house keeper, and the fetishes and mediums and wizards and priests, we would be stating the matter as it would appeal, probably, to the majority. But from the divine standpoint, which we endeavor to take, it would appear the contrary of this—that those who are the leaders of thought in civilized lands, and who are opposing the light of Truth, while nominally its servants, occupy a place of greatest responsibility in the sight of God, and are most thoroughly Satan's earthly tools—often unwittingly. [Acts 3:17](#)

Our hope for many of those who have come in contact with the light of Truth throughout the Gospel age, and now in the end of the age, is that their opposition to it has been at least partially one of blindness, as the Apostle declares with reference to those who crucified our Lord: "I wot that ye did it ignorantly, as did also your rulers." ([Acts 3:17](#)) From this standpoint we may entertain a measure of hope for some of the most violent opposers of the Truth—Evolutionists, Theosophists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Romanists and Protestants. Our hopes for the future are necessarily less in the case of those who have been enlightened on these subjects by the Present Truth, but who, for the sake of ambition or jealousy or pride in their desire to be somebodies, have become opponents of the Lord's work. Such fall generally into the errors of Universalism, having become blinded as respects the Lord's presence, and even as respects the ransom. It is not for us to pass judgment upon these yet it is for us to fear on their behalf, and to

note, in their case, the application of the Scripture which declares, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the age to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." ([Heb. 6:4-6](#)) It is for us to know the fulfilment of these scriptures, and to have no fellowship with such unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them and to withdraw ourselves from the company of those who walk not after the teachings of the Apostle, and who hold not the faith once delivered to the saints, nor its spirit; for all such are on Satan's side, opponents of the Lord and His plan, of which the *Atonement*, the *Ransom*, is the center or hub. [2 Pet. 2:21](#); [2 Thess. 3:6](#); [Jude 3](#)

In considering this subject of besetments it is well to remember that our Lord's temptations in the wilderness* illustrated most clearly all the temptations to which the New Creation are subject.

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Besetments of the Adversary

One besetment of the Adversary which seems to chime in well with the yearnings of the flesh, is the argument that the New Creation should be so under divine protection that their temporal interests would all be prospered. This, however, is the reasoning of the *natural* man and finds no support in the Word of God, which must guide the judgment of the New Creature. The old mind insists that surely the close relationship of the "adoption" and its promise of future joint-heirship in the Kingdom, *must* carry with it blessings and protections and favors in respect to all temporal affairs. The chief argument is in respect to health: Why should our consecrated mortal bodies be sick or pained? Surely God would not send the aches and pains; and hence, they must be of the devil. These are the arguments, and if they are of our Adversary, should we not consider it an evidence of divine disfavor to give heed to them and pray for deliverance from them?

The Adversary, through various channels, is suggesting these questions today with great persistency; and is suggesting an affirmative answer that many would not suspect to be of his instigation—that sickness in the bodies of God's people is a mark of God's disfavor; that to use remedies would evidence lack of faith in God; that, instead, the prayer of faith should be relied on; that even natural Israelites had such privileges and exercised them, and much more should Spiritual Israelites rely upon God as their healer. Mormons, Christian Scientists, Christian Alliancists, and Dowieites all use these arguments in a most telling manner, to mislead and captivate—"if it were possible the very elect," to turn their attention away from the truth.

The fact is that the real interests of the New Creation and their physical conditions and interests are often opposites. The Prophet David, speaking for these, declares, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." ([Psa 119: 67](#)) The New Creatures—not their mortal bodies—are the actual sons of God; indeed, as we have already seen, God made the *sacrifice of the flesh* (even after it was justified) a condition precedent to our begetting, or acceptance. This was not the

case with fleshly Israel, whose physical favors and temporal blessings, etc., typified the terms and conditions which will prevail during the Millennial age, when the antitypical King and Kingdom shall be in control. [Exod. 15:26](#); [Lev. 26:3-15](#); [Deut. 28:1-14](#)

On the contrary, it is to constitute an important part of the New Creatures' testing that as respects earthly things they must "walk by faith and not by sight." Yea, more than this—must suffer persecution, must practice self-denial, must be as deceivers, and yet true; as having nothing, though really (by faith) possessing all things; as unwise, though really wise toward God. So much so that the prophetic description of the Master must be in large measure applicable to all who follow closely in his steps, viz., "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." The Prophet declares, "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we [as sinners] were healed." Let us not forget that our healing, or justification, preceded our acceptance as members of the body of Christ—members of the New Creation; and that our acceptance to this higher plane of sonship and joint-heirship was upon the special condition that "*we suffer with him*"; or as again expressed, that "we fill up that which is behind of the *afflictions of Christ*." [Isa. 53:4,5](#); [Rom. 8:17](#); [Col. 1:24](#)

True, our Lord had no sicknesses of his own, because he was perfect; but it is written, nevertheless, that "he was touched with a feeling of our [man's] infirmities" and "himself took our infirmities"—the weaknesses going to him as "there went virtue out of him and healed" the multitude. [Heb. 4:15](#); [Matt. 8:17](#); [Luke 6:19](#)

We, as the under-priests, must also be "touched" and brought into sympathy with the world to whom we shall shortly be kings, priests and judges. But it is not necessary or possible for us to give largely of our physical strength, or to take the weaknesses and sicknesses of others—we each have some experiences of this kind anyway, by reason of our participation in the fall; for according to the flesh we were "children of wrath even as others," and sharers with the groaning creation in its afflictions. Our Lord's expenditure of vitality was not on behalf of the Church; for it (the Church) could not be recognized until his sacrifice had been completed and been presented to the Father and accepted by Him on our behalf—not until Pentecost. Until the Spirit had come upon his followers, it was useless to try to tell them of heavenly things. ([John 3:12](#); [16:13](#); [1 Cor. 2:10-12](#)) Hence our Lord's energy was largely expended in uttering parables and dark sayings to be understood later by the aid of the Spirit; but chiefly in healing physical infirmities and showing forth thus, in a figure, the greater works and grander healings in which we may participate, now and in the Kingdom—the opening of the eyes of understanding, the causing of the morally dead to hear the voice of the Lord and even now to begin the new life. Thus, the Apostle declares, we are privileged to "lay down our lives for the brethren"—to fill up "the afflictions of Christ *for his body's sake*, which is the church." [1 John 3:16](#); [Col. 1:24](#)

It will not do to deprive these words of their true meaning and claim that laying down our lives for the brethren will cost us no sacrifice of physical vigor; and that the "afflictions of Christ" cost no physical pain. Our Lord's weariness and loss of "virtue" (vitality) and being "touched with a *feeling* of our infirmities" contradict any such thought. It should not, therefore, be our expectation to fare better than the world in our earthly interests, but to experience *loss*, to "*suffer with him*." Such losses are freely admitted as respects honor amongst men, and financial prosperity—that our Master was made of "no reputation," and "became poor" in his willingness to make others rich—and that the apostles had similar experiences and set us an example. Why then cannot all see that Timothy's "often infirmities," and Paul's "thorn in the flesh," and Epaphroditus' "sickness," were physical ailments similar to those permitted now to the Lord's

faithful? True, they were all of the devil, in the sense that sin was started by Satan and that these ailments are some of the results; but they were no more of the devil than were their imprisonments and stripes and shipwreck and death.

Satan probably was indirectly if not directly the instigator of all those physical disasters—all common to men. Yet the Apostle did not esteem himself disowned of God under such experiences, but gloried in them as parts of the *sacrifice* he was permitted to make, part of the sufferings he was permitted to endure for the Lord's sake, for the truth's sake—and the more these exceeded those of other men the more he rejoiced and counted that his future glory would thereby be enhanced.

However, we are to distinguish between suffering for *righteousness' sake* and suffering for wrong doing. The Apostle points out that much suffering comes to people on account of busyboding in other people's affairs and other evil doings; and we might specify gluttony ([Phil. 3:19](#)) and lack of self-control as among these evils which bring sufferings which cannot be reckoned as sufferings for righteousness' sake. Let none rejoice in such sufferings; but rather mourn and pray and fast—practice self-control. But when, in his best judgment, the New Creature sees the door of opportunity opened to him by Providence and enters it zealously and self-sacrificingly, and it results in physical ailments, which the worldly might consider marks of indiscretion, let him not be ashamed, but glorify God on behalf of such afflictions—rejoicing to be accounted "worthy to *suffer*" for Christ's sake.

Indeed if ailments come on from any cause not sinful or selfish, they can be received with patience and thanksgiving, and lessons learned of sympathy for the groaning creation and of hope and trust for the promised lifting of the curse in the Millennial morning. Grace in the heart does surely exercise a very favorable influence over every function of life; but it could not (without miraculous interposition) recreate or repair our mortal bodies; and God proposes no such miracles, which would be injurious in leading us to walk by sight and not by faith, and would attract into the Church a class God does not now seek. As we have seen, He justifies us by *faith, instead*—reckons us as *whole* while leaving us actually imperfect as ever. Grace in the heart does not render us insensible to the influences of heat and cold, or hunger and thirst, though it does give us patience to endure these when unavoidable, with trust in our heavenly Father's care, and in His promise that *all* things shall eventually work out good for us if rightly received with patience and faith.

Does this imply that, while the world may seek for roots and herbs and balms for its ills, the New Creation shall seek for and use none of these, that they must endure pain to show their faith? By no means. Let us remember, and impress it upon our minds deeply that God's dealings with His people during this Gospel age are not according to the flesh, but as New Creatures. "The flesh profiteth nothing"—we have consecrated it to death, to destruction, anyway, and our interests as New Creatures are our chief concern. We have a privilege, nevertheless, respecting our mortal bodies, to do *what we reasonably can* to keep them in order, free from the distractions of dis-ease (lack of ease), but always as our servants, to enable us to perform our covenant of service unto sacrifice. Do they hunger and demand food and drink?—we may gratify their demands, within reasonable bounds, supplying such viands as we believe our Lord would approve, such as would best enable us to do His work faithfully. Do they feel cold and uncomfortable?—it is our privilege to supply clothing of the kind we believe our Lord would approve. Do they burn with fever? or are they racked with pain?—it is our privilege to reduce the fever and relieve the pain by the use of any remedies we may believe beneficial, but

not to submit ourselves to clairvoyants, Christian Scientists, hypnotists, or others who use enchantments to charm away the trouble by the aid of our Adversary, who would thus ensnare our minds. The New Creation have every *privilege* that the natural man enjoys in respect to the care of their poor, frail, dying bodies. Nay, more, it is the *duty* of every creature to take reasonable care of his body; and this *duty* is intensified in the case of the New Creation, by reason of the fact that their bodies have been devoted to the Lord's service as sacrifices—even unto death—and they should make as great a service of sacrifice as possible out of them.

Some will be ready to say, "Yes, I would quickly apply cream or other simple ointment of my own make for a burn, or regulate my system by discriminating in my use of different foods; but I would think it totally different to purchase medicines and ointments, or to call in a physician." But such discriminations are senseless. We might as well say when cold, "I will put on clothing and get warm, if I can own the sheep and clip the wool and card and weave it, and cut and fit and make the garments necessary to protect me from the cold; but I will not use clothing prepared by others, no matter how superior or more convenient it might be." Or when hungry, do we delude ourselves that we must sow and reap and thresh and grind and bake our bread before it would be proper to use it? And may we avail ourselves of the labor and skill of farmers and butchers and bakers and tailors in caring for our bodily ease, and feel it a sin to make use of the skill of a brother or a neighbor or a stranger in relieving bodily pain? Surely not. We are not to be understood to advocate the use of drugs, but the use of common sense. Drugging can undoubtedly be carried to the extent of folly or even crime. Regulation of the system by care in dieting is much to be preferred whenever possible. The instructions to the New Creation read, "Let your moderation be known unto all," and this applies to medicine as well as to food, etc., etc.

How did Jesus do? and what course did his apostles pursue following in his footsteps? We answer that there is no record that Jesus or the apostles ever healed any of the Church. Is it urged that the Lord's healing of the sick indicated the divine will on the subject? We answer that not the healed ones, but the healer is our pattern. Our Lord miraculously fed the multitude; should we therefore expect to be miraculously fed? No—on the contrary. As the Chief of the New Creation refused to use *divine power* for his personal comfort, so should we. ([Matt. 4:2-4; 26:53](#)) If when he hungered he sent his disciples to buy bread, and when weary he rested on the well or elsewhere—and if while the loss or sacrifice of his vitality "touched" him, yet he never prayed for deliverance from these natural troubles, but cheerfully endured them as a part of his sacrifice—so should we.

More than this: our Lord intimates that it would have been a sinful misuse of power for him to have used the aid of the holy Spirit in the relief of such temporal needs, because it was at his disposal for another purpose. To have called on divine power for his relief or protection from any part of the dying processes would have been sin; *because* he had made a covenant of sacrifice, and any appeal from its effects would have been "drawing back." "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." [Heb. 10:38; Matt. 26:53](#)

Matters stand the same, exactly, with the Church, for we are following our Captain. For us to appeal for *divine aid* for our mortal bodies, which we have consecrated to death, would be in derogation of our covenant, by which we gave all our earthly advantages and rights as men (in the restitution privileges purchased by the precious blood) in exchange for the privilege of running as New Creatures the race for the great prize of "glory, honor and immortality." To ask back what we surrendered implies a desire to withdraw the sacrifice, to cancel the covenant and

to give up our inheritance as New Creatures. This view of prayer for earthly things will be new to some, and to some it will doubtless bring a shock as they reflect that unwittingly they have done this very thing, and that God answered the prayer. Can it mean that they were thus rejected from the race for the prize? We think not. We believe that as an earthly parent would be long-suffering with his ignorant little child, so the Lord is patient toward his people, excusing their unintentional errors, and taking the intention instead of merely the words. And like as a parent might grant the improper request of his little one, so we believe the Lord has frequently honored the faith of his people even when improperly exercised. But the case is different as we grow in grace and knowledge; then it would be sin and might mean a turning back of divine favor—a rejection of the covenant.