

Devilish Influence

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. – 2 Corinthians 2:11

Satan's hatred for Adam's race is outmatched only by his fury for the redeemed among them. The fact that Christ took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and made a public spectacle of Lucifer and his hordes at the cross was insult enough. But then, the fact that Jesus rose to the right hand of God and is redeeming for Himself a chaste and pure bride from every kindred and nation and tribe and tongue that will ultimately be exalted above the highest of the heavenly host is something that stokes his infernal rage. As the prince of the power of the air, he continuously disperses his doctrines and thereby safely controls the multitudes, laying the whole world securely in the web of his wickedness. But the saints of the Most High require much more work on his part, work which he is more than willing to invest in an effort to sully Christ's reputation and thwart our progress toward the Celestial City.

As believers, we must remain sober and vigilant until we are glorified because our adversary seeks to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). When given leave to do so, he is happy to oppress us (Acts 10:38). He was quite active amongst the twelve apostles, so we must not be foolish enough to think he will leave us alone. If we do not diligently keep our hearts, he puts things therein that will destroy us (John 13:2). No matter how loyal we may believe ourselves to be to the Master and His cause, Satan will still make his claims to sift us. It is only our Lord's intercession that protects us from the full force of these audacious attacks. (Luke 22:31-32).

But we have an integral part to play in stifling his advances as well. The Holy Spirit has made it clear that by submitting to God we can resist the devil. Amazingly, in that resistance, he must flee! (James 4:7) We are not to give him place (Ephesians 4:27). That may sound simple enough, but we should meditate upon this frequently – i.e., where am I permitting the devil to set up camp in my life? Honest assessment of this introspection will likely yield astounding revelations and should serve as impetus for us to take immediate remedying action. We must also keep in mind that while our Enemy is not ubiquitous, he does have a vast network of cohorts. While the devil himself may not directly attack us, his satraps are more than happy to carry out his designs. We must wrestle daily with these principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). Resting is not an option. We must stand and fight. It is said that Martin Luther so sensed the devil's presence that he threw an inkwell at him. It would be wise to exercise ourselves toward a similar perception of Satan's nefarious efforts to influence each of us.

The glorious wonder is that our hellish foe, while both wily and obstructive, is nonetheless defeated! The only reason we can claim daily victory over him is because he already lost the war to our matchless Christ. He knows he has a short time. But until we see him bow in submission to our King of Kings and be cast away into everlasting fire, let us resolve to be continuously mindful of his prowess, and walk circumspectly. -- *D. Murcek*