

THE DEVIL IS LIMITED

INTRODUCTION:

- A. To experience a measure of success, we must define goals identify and avoid matters that can prevent achievement.
- B. True in spiritual application. Christian's goal to please God and have heaven as home (Matt 5:48; Matt 5:12).
- C. Devil wants to keep us from achieving this goal 1Pet 5:8
- D. Must not underestimate devil - a powerful foe Eph 6:11,12
- E. Many overestimate devil & attribute ability he doesn't have

DISCUSSION:

I. DEVIL CAN'T DIRECTLY TAKE HUMAN LIFE Job 1:8-11

- A. Devil can't, against man's will control mind 1Pet 5:9
 - 1. No indication devil can appear incarnate (in human form) or through demons possess people today
 - 2. In fact, devil is said to be resistible Jas 4:7
- B. Many matters indicate devil has limited power

II. DEVIL COULD NOT PREVENT JESUS' BIRTH OR LIFE

- A. Most important birth and most threatening to Satan
 - 1. Appears devil knew God would raise up One to present ultimate defeat Gen 3:15
 - 2. Abrahamic promise offered blessing and world anticipated birth of Jesus Gen 22:18, Gal 3:16-19
 - 3. If Satan could have prevented Jesus' birth, he certainly would have, but he did not.
- B. When Jesus was born, the devil could not kill him.
 - 1. When devil failed to prevent Jesus' birth, his next option would have been to kill him
 - 2. In this matter, we see devil becoming active.
 - 3. Through Herod, an agent, devil effected ruthless slaughter of male babies two years and under in attempt to destroy Christ. Matt 2:16
 - 4. Efforts ineffective - Jesus not harmed Matt 2:19ff

III. DEVIL NOT ALL KNOWING

- A. Shown by his efforts to kill Jesus by killing all babies two years old and under Matt 2:16
 - 1. From police video of actual satanic worship service: "Great and all-knowing art thou," said in praise of the devil, "You have unlimited power and ability and we, therefore, serve you."
 - 2. Not so! they worshipped a limited being.
- B. Not only is devil limited, but in view of horrible acts of fornication; even murder followers of Satan engaged, shows the devil is representative of all that is bad, sinister, and against man (worshippers cut out heart of victim, offered it as sacrifice to Satan and passed it around each one consuming parts of it).

IV. THE DEVIL COULD NOT INDUCE JESUS TO SIN

- A. After failing to prevent Jesus' birth and destroying him once born, devil attempts to persuade Jesus to sin.
- B. Devil appealed to Jesus through lust of flesh, pride of life, and lust of eyes Matt 4:3,4,6,9
 - 1. Yet, Jesus resisted every thing devil offered.
 - 2. "It is written," was Jesus counter reply Matt 4:4,7,10
 - 3. Devil used with Eve bringing sin to world Gen 3:6
 - 4. But, with Jesus, devil utterly fails. Matt 4:11
- C. Satanists teach devil has more power than God; yet a false claim as seen in Jesus' temptation.
- D. Think what accomplished if devil had succeeded
 - 1. In view of success with Eve, with Jesus would have total control and God would be utterly defeated.
 - 2. Show apparent determination to succeed yet failed!
- E. Devil failed in stopping Jesus' becoming sin offering for world. Isaiah prophesied Isa 53:4
 - 1. Jesus knew he would die and what it meant, but went to Jerusalem and His fate there Matt 16:21-23
 - 2. If possible, devil would stop Jesus' vicarious death, but he did not because he could not!

V. DEVIL COULD NOT PREVENT JESUS' RESURRECTION

- A. Series of events, each viewed separately, meant so much as to Satan's failure or success.
- B. Yet, collectively considered, all culminated in Jesus' triumphant victory over death and the grave.
- C. If devil failed to prevent Jesus' birth, His incarnation, to cause Jesus to sin, and Christ's death, now had to succeed in keeping Jesus from experiencing greatest victory, arising to die no more, but again devil fails.
- D. Consider accomplishments of Jesus' resurrection and what a blow these were to the devil: 1Cor 15:13-22

CONCLUSION:

- A. Devil doesn't deserve image and reputation some give him
 - 1. "Devil so strong I can't overcome him" false and cop out
 - 2. Some say: "I can't continue in truth because so many false teachers." Listen to 1Jhn 4:4
 - 3. Devil is failure & ones controlled by him are weaklings because they are not using God's power to defeat him
- B. It is true that we must not underestimate our enemy the devil (1Pet 5:8), but neither are to we overestimate him.
- C. Have been many things devil could not do because of lack of ability and today devil is still inept.
- D. Man needs to cease giving too much credit to the devil and start resisting the devil and put him to flight (Jas 4: 7).

(by Don Martin - revised by JLH)