

BUT SATAN HINDERED US

TEXT: I THESSALONIANS 2:17-19

INTRODUCTION:

1. Satan “hindered” the apostle Paul (2:18). Paul recognized it. Unfortunately, some people do not understand that Satan is hindering them!
2. We are introduced to Satan the hinderer back in Genesis 3:1, where he crawled into the Garden of Eden disguised as a serpent.
3. Referring to this, the apostle Paul wrote in II Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
4. This tells us that Satan is very subtle and that he corrupts peoples' minds. Sometimes even the minds of Christians (II Cor. 11:3).
5. In Revelation 12:9, Satan is referred to as "the great dragon" and "that old serpent, called the Devil, and we are told that he "deceiveth the whole world."
6. Revelation 12:9 says, "Satan...deceiveth the whole world."
7. Ephesians 6:11 says, “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” “Wiles” refers to his cunning, his deceit, his craftiness, and his trickery.
8. Satan ensnares people. Second Timothy 2:26 says, “And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”
9. Satan ensnares and he destroys. He destroys individuals, and he destroys marriages, and he destroys families, and he destroys churches, and he destroys nations.
10. The Bible says Satan is the great deceiver, and the great destroyer,

and he is the great devourer!

11. First Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

12. First Peter 5:8 refers to Satan as our "adversary." The word Satan means "adversary." Satan is referred to 33 times in the Bible as "the devil," which means "slanderer."

13. Satan slanders God to man (Genesis 3), and he slanders man to God (Job 1 & 2).

14. In Luke 11:15 and Matthew 12:24, Satan is referred to as "Beelzebub the chief of the devils." These devils help Satan build up his kingdom, which is a highly-organized kingdom.

15. Jesus said in Luke 11:18, "If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?"

16. If you are working to advance God's kingdom, then Satan will try to hinder you. "But Satan hindered us" (I Thessalonians 2:18).

17. Satan is also the "sifter." In Luke 22:31, the Lord said to Simon Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

18. Satan is also referred to as "the tempter" in I Thessalonians 3:5, and he is called "the prince of the power of the air" in Ephesians 2:2.

19. Three times in the Gospel of John, our Lord referred to Satan as "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

20. And in II Corinthians 4:4, Satan is referred to as "the god of this world."

21. Satan is the deceiver, the destroyer, the devourer, our adversary, the chief of the devils, the tempter, the slanderer, the sifter, the prince of this world, and the god of this world.

22. And Satan is the “hinderer.” Therefore, let us stay close to the Lord at all times.

23. Hudson Taylor said, “Satan, the hinderer, may build a barrier about us, but he can never roof us in, so that we cannot look up.”

24. Satan is a defeated foe. His days are numbered. He cannot prevail.

25. The book of Revelation says, “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Rev.20:10).

26. “I've enlisted in the fight for the cause of truth and right, Praise the Lord, I'm on the winning side!”

27. How is Satan the “hinderer”?

I. SATAN RESISTS THE TRUTH

1. Satan keeps very busy resisting the truth. In Zechariah 3:1, the LORD shewed the prophet Zechariah Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, “and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.”

2. Satan moves men to resist the truth. Satan moves men to oppose that which is good and right. In Acts 5:3, Peter said, “Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?”

3. Satan was behind Ananias' deception.

4. After God killed Ananias, his wife Sapphira arrived (she missed his burial), and Peter gave her time to repent.

5. But she did not repent. She lied, just like her husband lied. “Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?” (Acts 5:9).

6. Satan resists the truth, and he moves people to lie. Our Lord said to the Pharisees, “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).

7. “For he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44). Satan is the father of lies!

8. Hell is full of liars, and Satan helped put them there. Revelation 21:8 says, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

9. Satan is the hinderer. He is hindering people from getting saved. He is hindering people from telling the truth. He is hindering people from serving God.

10. Satan resists the truth, and he moves men to resist the truth. Second Timothy 3:8 says, “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”

11. When Moses, God’s servant, stood up for God, Satan’s messengers, Jannes and Jambres stood up to oppose him (Exodus 7:11). Their names are not recorded in the book of Exodus, but in Paul’s second epistle to Timothy we discover their names were Jannes and Jambres.

12. When Nehemiah set out to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, he worked hard to restore the city of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by the Babylonian army. But Sanballat and Tobiah constantly tried to hinder and harass him.

13. Sanballat and Tobiah were tools of Satan – resisting the truth and hindering the work of God.

14. All throughout the Old Testament, we see Satan endeavouring to hinder the work of the Lord, and we see the same thing in the New

Testament.

15. When the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth Satan constantly hindered him. As soon as He was born, Herod tried to have Him killed.

16. Matthew 2:13 says, “Behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.”

17. Satan confronted our Lord in the wilderness, and when his temptings failed, Satan used the scribes and Pharisees, and Sadducees, and Herodians to try and hinder Him.

18. One of the most frightening verses in the Bible is Luke 22:3 – “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.”

19. When the apostles began their ministry in Jerusalem, Herod and the Jews sought to hinder them. And when persecution did not impede the advancement of the Gospel, then Satan used other methods to try and hinder them (cf. Acts 13:6-12).

II. SATAN BLINDS THE MINDS OF SINNERS

1. First Corinthians 4:4 says Satan blinds the minds of them which believe not.

2. When Saul of Tarsus was converted on the road to Damascus, the Lord told him that he would deliver lost souls “from the power of Satan unto God” (Acts 26:18).

3. Sinners are blinded by Satan. Many sinners are religious, and Satan has deceived them into thinking they are worshipping God when in fact they are being misled by Satan (cf. II Corinthians 11:1-3, 13-15).

4. This blinding will get worse and worse as we get closer to the second coming of Christ. Revelation 13:8 says that during the tribulation period, “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the

antichrist), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

5. The Bible says the antichrist will get his power from Satan (referred to in the book of Revelation as “the dragon”).

6. Revelation 13:4 says, “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”

7. Satan blinds the minds of sinners. It is very dangerous to hear the Gospel and procrastinate. The devil quickly confuses peoples’ minds so that they are unable to grasp what is at stake – eternity in either heaven or hell!

8. Jesus said in Luke 8:5 that, “A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.”

9. In Luke 8:11 and 12, our Lord explained the parable: “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”

10. “Then cometh the devil...” (Luke 8:12).

11. Satan is the hinderer! Satan tries to hinder sinners from coming to Christ.

12. Satan tries to hinder Christians from coming to church.

13. Satan tries to hinder churches from winning souls for Christ.

14. Be careful! Don’t let Satan hinder you.

15. The Lord warned Simon Peter, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat” (Luke 22:31). I am concerned that some of you are being sifted right now. You look a little shaky!

III. SATAN HURLS FIERY DARTS (EPHESIANS 6:16)

1. Certainly, nothing can hinder a man worse than being attacked by fiery darts!

2. I say, "Satan hurls his fiery darts," but the Bible does not actually say that. Ephesians 6:16 does refer to our ability to quench Satan's fiery darts by "taking the shield of faith."

3. I say, "Satan hurls his fiery darts," because I am used to singing that great hymn:

I want to live above the world,

Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;

For faith has caught the joyful sound,

The song of saints on higher ground.

Lord, lift me up, and let me stand

By faith on Canaan's tableland;

A higher plane than I have found,

Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. (Johnson Oatman Jr.)

4. Sometimes I imagine Satan shooting his fiery darts, the way Indians used to shoot their fiery arrows at army forts, and covered wagons, and the homes and tents of their enemies.

5. Satan's fiery darts are different of course, but are even more dangerous. His fiery darts include strong temptations to do wrong, or excitements to sin, or blasphemous thoughts, or feelings of unbelief and despair, etc.

6. Barnes' Notes says Satan's fiery darts:

(1) come suddenly, like arrows sped from a bow;

(2) come from unexpected quarters, like arrows shot suddenly from an enemy in ambush;

(3) they pierce, and penetrate, and torment the soul, as arrows would that are on fire;

(4) they set the soul on fire, and enkindle the worst passions, as fiery darts do a ship or camp against which they are sent. The only way to meet them is by the "shield of faith," by confidence in God, and by relying on his gracious promises and aid. It is not by our own strength; and, if we have not faith in God, we are wholly defenseless. We should have a shield that we can turn in any direction, on which we may receive the arrow, and by which it may be put out.

CONCLUSION:

1. Satan's darts are hurled, but God is on His throne, and we must at all times trust Him. Martin Luther wrote these words in his great hymn, "A Might Fortress is Our God":

For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;

His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,

On earth is not his equal.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,

We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us.

2. The apostle Paul lived in the light of the second coming of Christ. He said in I Thessalonians 2:19, "Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

3. Satan is hindering, but he will not hinder the Lord's return!