

AN ENEMY IN OUR MIDST

“Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
—EPHESIANS 6:12

The vast majority would agree there is evil in this world, but far less agreed upon is the existence of Satan. Is he real or isn't he? Scripture is unambiguous about the fact that Satan is a literal being. He is mentioned in twenty-six books of the Bible, and Jesus referred to him on fifteen occasions. He is spoken of as one who acts, thinks and makes decisions. He possesses a mind, emotion, a will and purpose.

Still, there remains a philosophical haze surrounding the existence of Satan. Why would a good God create an evil devil? The answer is God did not create an evil devil, but the most beautiful angel, adorned with precious stones and jewels. He was named ‘Morning Star’, which in Hebrew means ‘Lucifer’. Ezekiel 28:15 says of him, “You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.” And in verse 17, “Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor.”

God did not create robotic angels anymore than He created robotic people. He gave us freedom to choose, and Lucifer chose to declare war upon God. God hurled him down to earth, lower than the angels, and with him a league of others who joined in his rebellion.

We need to believe in the existence of this invisible realm as much as the existence of the world we live in. There is a domain of fallen angels under Satan's control and direction, whose primary interest is to drive the will of man to live at enmity with God. Paul writes, "Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13).

Some English translations have modified Matthew 6:13 of the Lord's Prayer to read, "deliver us from evil," but most translations say, "deliver us from the evil one." The night of His arrest, Jesus prayed for His disciples, saying, "My prayer is not that you take them out of this world but that you protect them from the evil one" (John 17:15). Scripture warns us we are in a battlefield with an enemy in our midst. If we think we are prepared in ourselves, we are hugely underestimating the power of Satan. If we are second guessing his existence, we will not even see him coming, but to know what Scripture says about him, we are equipped and prepared in advance to stand our ground in the strength of Christ.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, when temptation comes my way be my strength. Protect me from anything that attempts to lure me away from You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I prepared and equipped to counteract the lures of Satan?