

When Satan Appeared

Job 1:6

The Bible warns us about Satan. He is described as roaring lion seeking to devour us. 1 Peter 5:8-9. From time to time we need to remind ourselves that he is there and he does NOT have our well being in mind. And he can appear at any time.

This is not a lesson designed to address the reality of Satan. We know that there is evil around us, and if God is good then Satan has to exist. And the Bible does give us some details about him. But in this lesson, I want to consider some times when Satan appeared in scripture, and make some application to us.

I. He appeared in the Garden to Eve

- a. Genesis 3:1-6. This is his first recorded appearance. Described as a serpent (Revelation 12:9, 15, 20:2).
- b. He tempted Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit. He lied to her (John 8:44). He used every avenue of temptation – 1 John 2:15-16. All 3 of these were used against Eve: lust of the flesh – it was good for food; lust of the eyes – pleasant to the eyes; and the pride of life – desirable to make her wise. It is in these 3 avenues that we are going to be tempted.
- c. The world is where it is because of this appearance by Satan – and I speak of the ever present wickedness around us, as well as the penalty of death (Romans 5:12)
- d. In this we learn that Satan is always looking to tempt us – he walks about as a roaring lion seeking to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). He can “appear” at any time. Paul, speaking to the Corinthians was concerned about this – 2 Corinthians 11:3. But, we must also remember that while he tempts us, we do NOT have to give in to that temptation. Remember James 1:12-16 AND 1 Corinthians 10:13

II. He appeared before God as recorded in Job 1:6, 2:1, etc.

- a. It is from this text that we glean our title. We are told twice in Job that Satan appeared when the “sons of God” appeared before YHWH.
- b. While I do not know the details of these appearances, we do find that he accused Job of only serving God because of his blessings. So Satan is permitted to bring suffering into Job’s life. And of course, much of the book records his dealing with this suffering, but he never denies God in this.
- c. So we learn here again that we can resist the devil.
- d. Consider: Is it possible for Satan to appear when God’s people are together in a given location? Can he appear when we gather to worship? I believe it absolutely is. He can cause trouble. When we behave in such a way as to distract others in their worship, or even if we are distracted ourselves.
 - Worship is very serious and to be done properly (John 4:24, 1 Corinthians 14:15, etc.).
 - But can we do so improperly? Consider the entire context of 1 Corinthians 14 – a competitive attitude, disruptive behaviors, etc.
 - Consider 1 Corinthians 11:17-19ff – Paul noted their coming together was not for the better, but for the worse. They were doing things the wrong way and with wrong motives. That need to be cleared up.
 - Consider 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 where Paul appeals to individuals and their attitudes. In my studies I am convinced this context deals with doing things properly, both collectively and individually (I do not believe this means sinless perfection when one approaches God – for then few, if any could ever partake). Either way, when we do wrong, it is the influence of Satan.
- e. And he can make his appearance among the godly at other times as well – so always be alert.

III. **After Jesus was baptized, and then in the wilderness for 40 days**

- a. Recorded in Mark 1:12-13. Here we find Jesus is led (driven – Mark 1:12) by the Spirit into the wilderness where for 40 days Jesus fasted. Afterwards, He was hungry. And then we read that the devil (Matt. 4:1), called the tempter (4:3), Satan (Mark 1:13).
Matthew 4:1-11 records the 3 temptations of Satan – again we have all three avenues that we mentioned with Eve and Adam – Lust of the flesh – Jesus was hungry – make bread from stones; Lust of the eyes – showed all the kingdoms of the world; and pride of life – cast yourself off the temple. Of course, Jesus resisted each temptation with scripture – that is WHERE we will always find the answers to dealing with the temptations of Satan.
- b. Consider: This was after an occasion of weakness – Jesus was hungry, and possibly physically weak in other ways.
 - When we are hungry and tired, we tend to let down our guard.
 - Understand that Satan is always looking for your weaknesses both at certain times and places. He knows your vulnerabilities and will seek to exploit them. 2 Corinthians 2:11 speaks of Satan taking advantage of us – but he also notes, “for we are not ignorant of his devices.”
 - 1 Peter 5:8 tells us to be sober and vigilant, because Satan is always seeking to devour (exploit) us.
- c. Let us also think about this – sometimes people “push our buttons” of “hit a sore spot” – if we are not careful, this is a perfect time for Satan to exploit us – tempting us to ungodly attitudes and feelings toward others, and maybe even ungodly actions. Cf. Ephesians 4:26-27, “*Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.*”
Friends – the blessing of brotherhood is too precious to allow our differences to drive us apart. And there is a lot of that going on right now.

IV. **He appeared among the apostles**

- a. On the night of His betrayal, as Jesus is with the twelve and institutes the Lord’s Supper, we find Satan is there. Luke 22:6 tells us Satan was there. We find him at work in several ways.
- b. **Together they were arguing about greatness** – Luke 22:24. I am convinced this is what prompted Jesus to wash their feet, INCLUDING the feet of Judas (John 13:1-15ff).
- c. **Judas Iscariot** – we are told Satan entered him and he went and betrayed Jesus (John 13:27, Luke 22:3, etc.) for 30 pieces of silver. We find here corrupt character that yielded when the occasion presented itself.
- d. **He appeared to Simon Peter** – it was on this occasion that Jesus said all would deny him, especially Peter. Luke 22:31-34 records this including Peter’s denial that he would (Also Matthew 26:33-35). Of course, we know that Jesus was right. And it all started with Peter mingling with those conspiring against Jesus (John 18:16-18ff)
- e. Consider: Satan can appear among leaders and cause problems for them and those who follow them. Leaders are not immune to the temptations of Satan. We are warned about this. Consider Acts 20:28-30 which warns them about wolves in their midst (this could include amongst the leaders). Galatians 2:11-13 describes an occasion when Peter was rebuked by Paul for being a hypocrite. His actions also influenced others including Barnabas. Leaders MUST be alert and realize they are leaders who will be followed, whether elders (1 Peter 5:1-4) or preachers (1 Timothy 4:12-16, etc.).

V. **When we are sowing seed**

- a. One final example is found in Matthew 13:3-8 describes the parable of the sower. His seed falls on all types of ground – wayside, thorny, rocky and good soil. Fruit is produce accordingly. Matthew 13:18-23 finds the explanation of this parable. The wayside is described as the hardened heart – one who REFUSES to accept the word of God. “The evil one” (the devil – Luke 8:12) comes and snatches away the seed. He also works on hearts that are flawed (with “rocks” and “thorns”).

- b. The point: NOT everyone is going to be receptive to the truth. You may have control of Satan in your life, but far too many do not. You CANNOT force the truth on anyone. 1 John 5:19 tells us that the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one (same word as Matthew 13:19). As we are living our lives as Christians and sowing seed, we must remember that Satan is at work as well. He will snatch the seed from the heart before it has a chance to penetrate, OR he will sow "tares" in the hopes of damaging a good heart. So DO NOT lose heart when others reject the truth. It is Satan at work. You may grieve over that fact, BUT do not let it stop you from letting your light shine (Philippians 2:15) – someone is looking.

And thus we can see some times in scripture when Satan appeared. As always, there are lessons for us to consider with such. BUT, as we read in 1 Peter 5:8-9 – realize that we can resist him (also James 4:7 – resist him and he will flee from you). Remember in the case of Job, Satan could only do what he was permitted to do (Job 1:12), and Job NEVER denied God.

Let us never forget that Satan is always around and looking for opportunities. Don't give them to him. What about you? What are you doing to keep Satan out of your life? Think about it.