

# lesson eight

FEBRUARY 16–22

## *Satan, a Defeated* **Enemy**

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*“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Revelation 12:11, NKJV).*



Instead of focusing on the power of Satan, we can praise Christ for His power over him and for the victory that is already won.

## Introduction *Our Enemy*

Gen. 3:15

A survey conducted by the Barna Group in 2009 found that 40 percent of the Christians interviewed believed that Satan is “not a living being but a symbol of evil.”

Isn't it sad that many Christians do not believe that Satan exists? Four out of ten people is not a small number. The Bible warns that Satan is real. The Word of God paints a picture of the devil as an extraordinarily powerful being who Christians must take seriously. He is present from Genesis through Revelation.

### **The Bible warns that Satan is real.**

In Genesis 3:15 we read about the curse placed on the enemy after the great deception in the Garden of Eden. In the New Testament, Paul warns that our struggle with Satan is “not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12, KJ2000).

Many times, the world in which we live is frightening, cold, unfriendly, and scary. These are some of the signs that Satan really exists; he has something to do with these occurrences around us. As Christians living in this time, we should know the enemy lest we fall for his traps.

The Bible details God's promises, His plans and purposes for His children. On the other hand, the Word of God also teaches about the origins of the enemy, Satan, what he does currently, and how we can avoid his snares. According to Ezekiel 28:15, Lucifer was created perfect, just as any other angelic being. His name meant “morning star” or “light bearer.”

Despite these privileges, Lucifer chose to become Satan—the enemy of God. The Bible, through the prophet Isaiah, reveals that Lucifer rebelled against God. He developed a self-appointed purpose to go against the principles of God; he brought confusion and destruction to humanity and aimed to foil God's purpose.

As this world draws closer to an end, Satan knows too well that he is in the last laps of the race to deceive God's children. Therefore, he uses every means possible to achieve his goals. However, as God's children, we have the assurance that Satan is a defeated enemy. This week, our study will focus on how we, through God's love and protection, can avoid the deceptions of the enemy just before the close of time.

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1. “Most Christians Do Not Believe That Satan or the Holy Spirit Exist,” Barna, April 13, 2009, <https://www.barna.com/research/most-american-christians-do-not-believe-that-satan-or-the-holy-spirit-exist/>.

Rev. 12:9

## Evidence *The Beginning of Satan's Influence*

In 1995, a leader in my local church had the opportunity to attend the General Conference Session in Utrecht, the Netherlands. He came back to narrate a story how, upon their arrival at the airport, they met a drunk man who could not pronounce his own name properly.

I knew that my friend was used to seeing drunken men and women even in our country. Yet somehow he did not expect to meet one that far away from home. Well, drunkenness is just one way by which Satan has affected the world.

### **Many people believe and practice contrary to what the Bible teaches.**

We need to learn the characteristics of Satan and the methods he uses that make him so convincing and deceptive. In 2 Corinthians 11:13, Paul warns Christians to beware of “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” This teaching is consistent with the fact that Lucifer transformed from an angel of light to Satan, the enemy.

In our society today, the works of Satan are evident everywhere. People have divergent views on the purpose of life and the continuing decadence of moral and spiritual standards, values, and lifestyles. Many people believe and practice contrary to what the Bible teaches.

In the midst of all this, God, through Christ, has shown us the way to defeat the enemy. What we learn from the Bible is different from what we see happening around us. This is because Satan has constructed lies for every generation.

Ever since he was expelled from heaven, Satan has been using different methods to tell his lies. He has invaded science, education, entertainment, religion, and other sectors to accomplish his goals. However, God is aware that our enemy lurks around, so He has given us guidelines in the divine Word.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). Those who live in areas infested with dangerous wild animals know the precautions to take in order to avoid confrontation. Ephesians 6:10–18 teaches about the armor of God, which we must take upon us to protect us from the enemy.

### **REACT**

1. What precautions would you take if you were being hunted by a dangerous wild animal? How would you apply your precautions to what we must do to protect ourselves against Satan?

2. How can we make sure that Satan does not invade our spiritual or moral space?

*Robert Kurema, Thika, Kenya*

# Logos

## *A Defeated Enemy*

2 Thess. 2:8–12;  
Rev. 12:1–5, 13, 14, 17

### ***The Woman and the Dragon (Rev. 12:1–5)***

Revelation 12:1–5 describes the intention of the enemy. Satan intended to destroy Christ here on earth; but when he failed in that attempt, he directed his efforts to the church.

The woman in the vision represents the entire family of God. It refers to the nation and people of Israel as depicted in both the Old and the New Testaments. The woman also represents Christians, later referred to as the children of the woman.

One lesson we can learn from this vision is that God preserves His people, even as Satan is roaming about, ready to devour every child of God. It is also important to learn that Satan is not fighting this battle alone. Represented as the dragon in the vision, John writes that the dragon's tail "swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth" (verse 4, NASB).

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### **God's miraculous hand will be upon the church to provide safety and protection.**

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Satan has his agents here on earth, with whom he seeks to deceive the children of God and lead them to his bandwagon. However, through His plan of redemption, God will lead His children to the Promised Land. This is possible through the acceptance of Christ as a personal Savior. The enemy tried to destroy Christ at His birth, during His ministry, and at Calvary—but his efforts failed at each turn. Only through faith in Christ and obedience to God's statutes can we, too, defeat Satan.

### ***The War on Earth (Rev. 12:13, 14)***

This part of the vision describes the persecution of God's people on earth. Satan is enraged about the church and the followers of Christ. He is doing everything in his power to destroy them. In addition, the enemy is aware that if he can destroy the church, he can suppress God's program and achieve his selfish objectives.

However, even as Satan tries to destroy God's people, causing pain and affliction among them, God's miraculous hand will be upon the church to provide safety and protection. The Bible explains that the woman was given wings of an eagle to flee to the wilderness and to escape the tribulation mounted by Satan.

The vision provides a lesson for all Christians today in that even as we face challenges in various circumstances as a church, God is always there with us

every step of the way to ultimately lead us through to safety.

The metaphor of wings is used previously in the Bible, when the Israelites escaped from Pharaoh (Exod. 19:4; Deut. 32:11). In this vision, it implies God's protection over His church and His children. The comparison of an eagle, which can fly above the clouds, and a serpent, which crawls on the ground, is an indication of God's superiority over Satan. God has always provided wings of an eagle to his loved children in the face of raging adversities.

### ***Targeting the Remnant (Rev. 12:17)***

The war with the remnant is an extension of Satan's wrath. He launched attacks on Christ Himself, who eventually defeated him on the cross. From Christ, Satan directed his wrath to the infant church of Christ, trying to destroy Christianity at its inception. This led to the persecution and scattering of the disciples and apostles.

Paul refers to Christians as the "seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3:16, 29). Therefore, the war against the remnant, the persecution mounted by Satan, and the violence are things that every Christian on earth should expect. Even so, we need to understand the distinction between a true Christian and a false one.

John writes that Satan is enraged with those "who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17). These are the true members of the Christian body, not just those who profess it in word.

### ***The Enemy's Final Strategy (2 Thess. 2:8–12)***

Knowing that his judgment is almost here, Satan now unleashes all his power. He implements all sorts of lying wonders and uses every deception of unrighteousness to lure people to eternal death. However, we should note that even the end-time strategy of Satan will not succeed against God's people.

From the beginning of time, God had a plan to deliver His people from the enemy. Therefore, it's only a matter of time before the enemy is consumed in the brightness of the Lord's coming. Satan is at war with us. A true follower of Christ living in this time must suffer. However, the rewards for our suffering will be eternal. In spiritual warfare with the enemy, we can excel only if we keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Christ.

### ***REACT***

1. Which evidences today point to the raging battle between Satan and Christians? How can we win the battles?
2. What are some of the resources that we can use to help us keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Christ?

## Testimony *Fitting Descriptions*

Rev. 12:1-5

“The child which was born to the expectant desires of a waiting and watching church, was our adorable Redeemer, who is soon to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Herod could not destroy him; the combined powers of earth and hell could not overcome him; and though held for a time under the dominion of the grave, he rent its cruel bands, opened a way of life for mankind, and was caught up to God and his throne. He ascended to heaven in the sight of his disciples, leaving to them and us the promise that he would come again.”<sup>1</sup>

### “There seem to be a number of instances in which Satan is spoken of as defeated, or cast down.”

Satan looked forward to Christ’s mission to earth and his last chance to overthrow the plan of salvation. He came to Christ with specious temptations; he tried destroying Him during His ministry; and when he had succeeded in laying Him in the tomb, he endeavored, in malignant triumph, to hold Him there. But in every encounter, the Son of God emerged triumphant and He sends back this gracious promise to His faithful followers: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21).

“Again, there seem to be a number of instances in which Satan is spoken of as defeated, or cast down. One was his first rejection from heaven; another, when Christ overcame him at his first advent; and there will be another in the future, when he is cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up for a thousand years. And on each successive occasion, we behold a regularly increasing limitation of his power. He falls a degree lower in every succeeding combat.”<sup>2</sup>

“If the view is correct that we have already reached the generation which is to witness the closing up of earthly scenes, this warfare against the truth cannot be far in the future.

“This remnant is characterized by the keeping of the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup>

### **REACT**

How can we uphold the commandments of God in faith and practice?

1. Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (Southern Publishing Association, 1897), p. 548.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 551.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 557.

Rev. 12:11

## How-to *How Can We Resist the Enemy?*

We have choices to make in life. Choices about our studies, our jobs, our families, how we spend our money, and many more. Meanwhile, Satan is on the loose, seeking to deceive us. How, then, can we be sure that we are doing the right thing—not being led astray by the devil?

In Revelation 12:11, we learn that we can only defeat the enemy “by the blood of the Lamb.” Christ defeated Satan both in heaven and on earth. Therefore, armed by the blood of the Lamb, we can make the right choices in accordance with God’s will; we can apply God’s truth to every situation that we encounter and in every decision that we make.

### **Meanwhile, Satan is on the loose, seeking to deceive us.**

The Bible teaches that the blood of Christ overcomes the power of Satan (Rev. 12:11). The accusations of Satan against us are useless as long as we purify ourselves with the blood of the Lamb. Moreover, Satan will not have power over us forever. His fate is already decided, upon the return of Jesus Christ.

Christ already paid the penalty for our sins. Even if our sins are as red as scarlet, by the death of Christ on the cross we can be reconciled to God through the blood of the Lamb “in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7).

It is not the literal blood of Christ that cleanses and saves. It is His death on the cross on our behalf, the judgment, and the weight of sin He carried in our place, that saves us. Here is what we must do to resist the devil:

*Know the price of our salvation.* Usually, the highly prized possessions get the best protection and maintenance from us. Our salvation cost Christ His life. He died on our behalf to assure our salvation. We should do everything possible to safeguard our loyalty to Christ.

*Be prayerful.* Prayer and praise are excellent swords against the devil. We should use them at all times, in every situation.

*Use the Bible as a guide.* “Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way” (Ps. 119:104, KJ2000).

### **REACT**

How does the devil accuse us before God, and how can we come clean on the accusations? (cf. Job 2:5; Rev. 12:10.)

## Opinion

# *My Weapon Against the Enemy*

Rev. 12:17

I recently watched one retired major general from my country explaining how he disarmed thousands of armed rebel youth in a peacekeeping mission in Liberia. Interestingly, at some point he said that he did not carry a weapon whenever he went to meet the rebels. I wondered how he managed to perform his duties without the rebels raising a finger against him.

Anyone fighting a war knows very well that fighters must arm themselves with appropriate weapons. When Satan lost the war in heaven, he was thrown down here to earth. Consequently, Satan took the war to those who “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). As a follower of Christ, I’m aware of this war.

### **Yes, I am a sinner, but Satan, my accuser, should know that the blood of the Lamb covers me.**

To protect myself from Satan, combat his endless deceit, and fight the war effectively, I need effective weapons. The first weapon I have is the blood of the Lamb. Christ shed His blood on the cross to save me. The death of Christ assures me of forgiveness for my sins (Rom. 8:31–34). Yes, I am a sinner, but Satan, my accuser, should know that the blood of the Lamb covers me. My sins were nailed to the cross at Calvary, and God will no longer hold them against me. Besides, the blood of the Lamb gives me the power to overcome any snare that Satan might set up against me.

My second weapon is the testimony of Jesus Christ. This weapon refers to my words and my actions. We are called to be the light and salt of the world (Matt. 5:13–16). As such, we are supposed to let our light shine through our words and deeds. By sharing the testimony of Christ with the world, we reclaim territory from Satan, and this intimidates him. The testimony of Christ is powerful, life changing, and indisputable.

The third weapon I have against the enemy is the spirit of selflessness. The Bible teaches that the slain saints were willing to give up anything for Christ. They gave up their possessions, their reputation, and even their lives. In the footsteps of the saints, we would rather die than to prove unfaithful to our Savior. Selflessness is a quality of Christ that we must embrace if we are to defeat the devil and triumph with Christ.

### **REACT**

1. What are some of the things we must give up to be faithful to Christ?
2. What can we learn from the lives of the slain saints, such as Stephen, to help us gain victory in the war we are currently fighting?

*Silas Onyango, Dagoretti, Nairobi, Kenya*

Rev. 19:10

## Exploration

# *Defeating the Enemy*

### **CONCLUDE**

No enemy comes to be defeated. An enemy comes to fight and to subdue the opponent. To defeat an enemy, one must have the required fighting skills, the best weapons, and stamina to fight. We are in a war with Satan. Armed with his best tools, he is ready to attack anytime. On our part, we need the most powerful tools to combat his equipment. Fortunately, God has given us the best message—that Satan is already defeated. As long as we allow Christ to live in us and to fight the war on our behalf, victory is ours.

### **CONSIDER**

- Writing the word *DEFEAT* as an acronym. Use each letter to form a quality that we need to defeat Satan. For example, letter “D” could mean, “Depending on Christ.”
- Drawing the image of a nice-looking person with the qualities of the devil. Connect your artwork with what agents of Satan do to lure followers of Christ.
- Asking a veteran or a retired soldier what preparations one needs to make before going into war. Check out the preparations and precautions you need to observe in your spiritual warfare with Satan.
- Making flash cards with the following words in bold: *THOUGHTS*, *WORDS*, and *DEEDS*. Think of how you can put your thoughts, words, and actions in line with the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ.
- Writing a short story about your journey with Christ, citing the challenges and sufferings you have encountered because of His work. Consider how your challenges and sufferings compare to those the apostles encountered.
- Drawing a timeline of the order of events regarding the war between Satan and God’s people, from the Garden of Eden to our time. Include how God intervenes to protect and save His people from perishing at the hand of Satan.
- Painting the scenes in Revelation 12:1–6. Reflect on the meaning of your painting and use it to illustrate John’s message.

### **CONNECT**

Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 2:16–18; Mark 4:35–41.

Hans K. LaRondelle, “The End-Time Message in Historical Perspective,” *Ministry*, December 1996, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1996/12/the-end-time-message-in-historical-perspective>.

*Erick Onyango, Embakasi, Nairobi, Kenya*