

SATAN'S GREATEST DECEPTION

"The devil made me do it!" said Flip Wilson. Funny? You bet. Millions laugh at such quips. In daily conversation, people say they have a "devilish" good time; call a child a "little devil," speak of a suffering friend as "poor devil," or eat devil's food cake. They may take pictures of the ocean pounding its waves into the "Devil's Punchbowl." A common expostulation is, "The devil you say?" And is there any more common slang term than the word "hell"? (Which some people feel is cursing.) In these and other ways millions of people seem to acknowledge there is such a creature as the devil. Yet, those same millions are victims of *Satan's greatest deception!*

By Garner Ted Armstrong

When did you first learn about the impish, frivolous, quixotic fellow in the red body suit; with small horns, a spade beard, thin mustache, a long pointed tail, and carrying a trident? From your earliest childhood, you probably recall being told about the devil. Today, at Halloween, children by the thousands dress up like this imaginary "devil" and go out in their neighborhoods to promise mayhem and property damage if they are not "treated" with candy and food.

In ancient Ireland, Druids believed that "Shaman" or 'Sam-hain," the "lord of the dead" (the devil) was abroad on the evening of "All Hallows" (All Saints Day). They believed they could cajole this evil spirit into releasing the departed spirits of loved ones from the bodies of animals or wherever they were otherwise held captive.

Bonfires, offerings of food, putting out an extra serving at their own table for a supposed invisible guest; lighting of a candle and placing it in a "jack-o'-lantern" in the window to frighten away evil spirits - these were common practices in ancient Ireland.

It was supposed Sam-hain, the lord of the dead, or his impish demons, would come to partake of the food. This practice comes to us directly as "trick or treating" on Halloween.

Where did we get this traditional view of Satan? Who was the original "jack" of the lantern; the imp or demonic trickster in his funny looking costume?

If you ask one thousand church-going, professing Christians to describe for you the *devil*, would not all of them describe him in the fashion portrayed above? Would they not tell you that he appears with horns and tail, evil laughter and spade beard, a pitchfork or a trident held in his hand? Or, would they describe him to you as a *snake*? Ancient tradition portrays the devil as a *snake* wound around a *tree* in the Garden of Eden!

Believe it or not, the concept of the devil as a "snake" is a myth!

It is a *complete perversion* of the story of Adam and Eve in the garden. Pictures from dim antiquity show a naked man and woman - probably already covered decorously with the proverbial fig leaves, standing by a tree loaded with apples. Wound around the trunk of the tree is a *serpent*. Some pictures or woodcuts show the woman plucking the fruit, and handing it to the man.

Anciently, they said that when you swallow it is your "Adam's apple" that moves up and down. This quaint myth, concocted from pure applesauce, comes down to us from ancient people who thought it funny to refer to the human vocal apparatus as a portion of the renowned (and

nonexistent) "apple" which they said stuck in Adam's throat when he ate it.

But is that really what happened? Was it an apple tree? Did a portion stick in Adam's throat? Did a snake or a *serpent* talk them into it?

Has Anyone Ever Seen The Devil?

Turn to the Genesis account, and read of the *true history* of man's first encounter with the devil with your own eyes. Remember, the Bible was not written in *English*, but Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic.

It is to the ancient *Hebrew words* we will refer, to glean the *truth* from this passage.

First, read it as it appears in the King James Version:

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Eternal God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

"But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

From a casual view of these words comes the ancient myth of a *snake* wound around a tree. However, the Hebrew word translated "serpent" is *nachash*. The word *nachash* means "to hiss, mutter, whisper; as do enchanters." Secondary meanings are to "divine," "enchant." It is because of these expressions that the noun "serpent" appears.

An allied Chaldean word means *brass*, copper, from a root word "meaning to *be bright*." Dr. Bullinger, in the Companion Bible, says "the Hebrew term probably includes the sense of *fascinate, enchant* (see Deuteronomy 18:10, etc.). This element of *fascination connects with the later use of nachash* as 'serpent.'"

Interestingly enough, there is another Hebrew term that is used in two ways to describe a celestial created being.

It is the term *saraph* (plural seraphim). It means (1) to *burn*, (2) to be *elevated*. In Numbers 21:8 you read of a "fiery serpent" and the Hebrew word is *saraph*. Yet, in the following verse you read of a "serpent" and the Hebrew word is *nachash*. Read Numbers 21:6! In that verse, both words are translated "*fiery serpents*!" Now turn to and read the description of *seraphim* in Isaiah 6, verses 2 and 6! Here, exalted spirit beings *right around God's throne* are described! You will see, a little later, that the use of the Hebrew word *saraph* (also translated "fiery serpent") may be interchangeable with the word *cherub*! The *seraphim* of Isaiah 6 seems to appear with *six wings*, and are displaying only *one aspect*, or one facial appearance at a time.

Who Was Satan Before He Became "The Devil"?

There are only three archangels mentioned in the Bible by *name*. One is Michael, another is Gabriel, and the third is *Lucifer*.

Turn to and read the two biblical accounts which are both prophecy and *history* of *Lucifer*, one of the three archangels who were close to God's own *throne* long before the world began!

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

"I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

"Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?" (Isaiah 14:12-16).

Here, in the midst of a proverb against the *king of Babylon*, we are given an obvious *type*, or description of Satan's original state. He is called "Lucifer, son of the morning!" The name Lucifer means "morning star" or "bright shining star of the *dawn*." He was said in Isaiah's prophecy to "weaken the nations!" Compare this with Revelation 12:9, where the devil is said to "deceive *all nations!*"

In verse 13, where Lucifer said he would "exalt his throne" above the *stars of God*, we have another reference to *angels* around God's throne, irrespective of rank or beauty. The Bible frequently uses *stars* as a *type* of *angels*.

The type of Satan the devil fades quickly to the antitype, the king of Babylon, with verse 15 and 16.

A parallel scripture is found in Ezekiel 28. "Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

"Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

"Thou art the *anointed CHERUB that covereth*; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee" (Ezekiel 28:12-17).

There can be no mistaking the reference to the *devil* in this passage, for he is said to have been in "Eden the garden of God."

Notice verse 14! He is called "the anointed *cherub that covereth*." Again, in verse 16: "I will destroy thee, *O covering cherub!*"

What *is* a cherub? Next, turn to the first chapter of Ezekiel and read the entire chapter. We will quote here only a few select verses which give you a *description* of *cherubim*! "Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. "And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. "And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. "And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

"Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the faces of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. "Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies" (Ezekiel 1:5-11).

Notice that each one of these creatures had four faces; four wings, and their bodies seemingly included the aspects of all four of the chief *creatures* of the whole earth. Man reigns as supreme; the most intelligent, at the very top of the food chain, having been placed *over* all the creatures of the field, the sky and the sea. The domestic ox is the largest and most useful of all animals. It can draw wagons, plow, be milked, and give meat. The eagle reigns supreme in the air; is the symbol of many nations, including the United States of America. The *lion* is revered as the "king of beasts"; the most powerful and majestic of all the big cats, and has no natural enemy, save man. In each of these spheres, the creatures spoken of as "cherubim" are representative. Strangely, a *cherub* appears in each of these *four* manifestations. When the Levites were given directions for the decorations inside the ancient tabernacle, they were told to decorate it with "cherubs." Yet, no *descriptions* are extant in any of the first five books of the Bible which would tell these artisans what "cherubs" looked like!

Satan was called the "the cherub that covereth." What did this mean? In the ancient ark of the covenant, there appeared two *cherubim*, over the mercy seat, wings outstretched, almost touching, as if hovering *over* the ark.

The famed "ark of the covenant" contained the original (the second set, written with the finger of God after Moses broke the first two in anger) ten commandments; a stone jar or pot in which a sampling of the original manna was contained, and Aaron's rod, or staff, which was used in the miracles to send plagues upon Egypt.

Outside the ark were the scrolls of the *Torah*, the first five books of the Bible, or the "Book of the Law"!

The ark was carried about by *handles*, borne upon the backs of specially-selected Levites, It was obviously a representation of God's *throne*.

Now, why was it not necessary for God to *reveal* to those ancient artisans *what cherubim looked like?*

Because they already knew!

Now turn to Genesis 3:24. "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way, of the tree of life."

How long did the garden of Eden survive? We have no further information, except that by the very fact that God placed guardian *cherubim* at the entrance to the garden, it is *obvious* the garden *remained* for a considerable period of time - that God intended that Adam and/or his future progeny would be *denied access* to the garden of Eden - called the "garden of God."

There is every reason to assume that the garden of Eden was obliterated at the time of the Noachian deluge! In other words, it's quite likely that the cherubim (the Bible does not state how many were so assigned) were stationed at the entries of the garden of Eden, perhaps *one-sixth of all human history until now*.

Think about it. Adam and Methuselah were contemporaries. Men lived to great age during the pre-flood period. For all of these hundreds of years, approximately ONE THOUSAND YEARS, these great creatures were stationed at the entrance to the garden of Eden, *refusing entry* to any humans who assayed to enter into the garden!

Now, think about the incredible collection of fables extant in many, many cultures around the earth!

Flood Fables

History and archaeology prove that practically every civilization on the face of the earth had a *deluge tradition*.

From the famous flood epic of Babylon to traditions among

American and Central-American Indians; from ancient Chinese to the South American Mayans, from Indo-Europeans to Alaskans, ancient tradition said that the *whole world* was destroyed by a *flood!*

Some fables portray wretched human survivors on a floating log. Others say they escaped in a boat. Still others claim that an *egg* was borne upright on the waters and that men emerged from the egg after the flood.

But for all the grotesque, or strikingly *accurate* portrayals among different races around the earth, there is a "universal flood tradition" extant. A few examples: In ancient Babylon, in the temple of Marduk, is a story that reads as follows: Xisuthros, a king, was warned by one of the gods to build a ship, and take into it his friends and relatives and all different kinds of animals, with all necessary food. Whereupon he built an immense ship, which was stranded in Armenia. Upon subsidence of the flood, he sent out birds; the third time, they returned not. He came out, builded an altar, and sacrificed."

Among the ancient natives of Peru was a tradition that only one man and one woman were saved in a box that floated on flood waters. American Indians had various legends in which one or several persons (though never more than eight!) were saved in a boat above the waters on a high mountain! Even in ancient Polynesia, there were stories of a flood from which only *eight* escaped! In Hindu tradition, "Manu" the name of the hero of the Hindu flood, was somehow mysteriously warned, built a ship, and he alone escaped from a deluge which destroyed all other

creatures.

Few have realized that it is axiomatic that, the farther human tribes wandered from the original centers of civilization, the more perverted and grotesque became their knowledge. However, other fables may give us a *clue* as to the *real appearance* of the creature which spoke to Adam and Eve in the garden!

Jack and the Beanstalk

Every child in our culture is told the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk." In this fable, with its dozens of variations among Europeans and English-speaking cultures, the impish boy, Jack, carelessly tosses away some magic beans (perhaps outside his window). He is startled to watch a gigantic beanstalk growing, growing, growing until it reaches into the sky. Assaying to climb the beanstalk on one occasion, he reaches a land high above, where at the end of a craggy precipice is a gorgeous, and gigantic *castle*.

According to various tales, the castle is guarded by a dragon; but in any event, it is inhabited by a *giant*, who possesses a "goose that lays the golden egg."

Dozens of varieties of this, and other mythological tales all portray similar scenes:

(1) That a fabulous, treasure-filled, idyllic castle, subterranean world, lost continent, or city is in existence somewhere.

(2) That such a castle or great-gilded city is guarded by a DRAGON. (Saint George and the dragon is but a derivative of this original myth.)

(3) The hero always encounters a huge, serpentine-appearing creature with *wings*, probably featuring FIRE coming out of his mouth!

(4) If the hero of the myth can somehow conquer the dragon, behold, the gates to the continent, city, or castle lay open before him, wherein are treasures unimaginable!

What is the origin of these and other myths?

How many times, prior to the flood of Noah, did human travelers either accidentally stumble across one of the *cherubim* God had placed to guard the way to the garden of Eden? And what does a cherubim look like? Refer again to the chapters you have read; Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel 10, Isaiah 6, and the *true meaning* of the Hebrew words *nachash* and "cherub."

A cherub appears, at various times, with the body of an oxen or a lion; with the wings of an eagle, the head of a man, or any mixture of any of the four creatures already mentioned!

The body of some of these mythological creatures appear *serpentine*. However, *wings* are usually present, or *feathers* on the body of the serpent!

That God placed *cherubim* to guard the way to the garden of Eden, plus a "flaming sword," possibly *wielded* by the cherubim, is a direct statement of Scripture!

When these chance wayfarers, or deliberately-intent human beings came upon the cherubim, what happened? In ancient, pre-flood times, did a startled group of human beings see a roaring creature coming toward them which looked for all the world like a gigantic oxen, with huge

wings, lion claws and tail, and the head of a man? Beneath the wings were there arms, wielding a fiery *sword*?

"The Host of Heaven"

Repeatedly, God warned the Israelites not to worship the "host of the heaven" as did the ancient Zidonians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Philistines, and many others.

When God says "the host of heaven," He means, literally, *what He says*. God's *throne* is revealed, in the book of Revelation, to be surrounded by twelve elders; to have cherubim and seraphim in association with it; to be overshadowed by brilliant rainbows, and to be surrounded by countless *angels*!

The representation of cherubim over the mercy seat of the ancient ark is nothing more than a *physical* representation of the close association *Lucifer*, the "cherub that covereth" *once enjoyed* at the very throne of God!

But Lucifer became corrupted by reason of his brightness and his vanity! He decided to *overthrow* God! He wanted to *replace* God at the very seat of power in all the universe! Because he was assigned leadership over one third of the angels, and because of his magnetic, charming, subtle personality, he was able to *influence* all of these angelic beings, who were lesser in luster, power and authority, *to follow him* in his rebellion!

The original "star wars" resulted in the wreckage of our solar system; our immediate neighborhood in the universe! When we are ushered upon the scene in the first few chapters of Genesis, we see a *wrecked world*; the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of "the deep." All the continents are submerged beneath roaring waves! An earlier creation, perhaps replete with billions of creatures (not man!) has been buried beneath the muds and ooze of that ancient pre-Adamic world.

Satan was *cast down* from heaven, and has been "bound" by God's spiritual power to his *present habitation*, this world!

He is called "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), and is called "the god of this world!" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Archaeology has revealed literally *thousands* of representations of "the host of heaven" throughout the pagan cultures and societies of ancient times.

In ancient Babylon and Assyria, kings frequently used *cherubim*, believe it or not, to decorate palace walls; especially the *entrances* into king's chambers!

Asher-bannipal had such huge creatures on his palace, as did Sargon, of ancient Assyria.

These creatures may be seen today in the museums of the Middle East, the British Museum, or the Louvre.

Usually, they are huge, ox-like creatures, with the bearded head of a man, the tail of a lion, and the wings of an eagle.

In ancient Egypt, eagle-headed man-like creatures appear on the monuments.

Hundreds of replicas of the famous "sphinx" of the great pyramid existed in the palaces of some of the kings in Memphis.

These great man-headed, lion-like creatures were also adopted by the *Greeks*, who sometimes showed the heads of the creatures as womanlike.

In many cases, the lion's bodies had *wings*, the heads of men (with a pharaoh's headdress) and a *serpentine* tail!

The chief "god" of many of the cultures of Central America, North and South America and Mexico was "Quetzalcoatl."

Today, if you journey to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, you will see that the national currency is the "quetzal." The "quetzal" is a beautifully-plumed *bird* of the Central American jungles. Its picture appears on the money, and it is the *national bird* of Honduras.

"Coatl" in the ancient Aztec and Incan language meant *serpent* or *snake*.

So, "the bird-serpent" was worshipped by Central and South American cultures.

Festooning the pyramids and temples of the ancient Aztecs, Incas and Mayans were the grotesque heads of *serpents*, appearing like a blunt-snouted rattlesnake.

This was the representation of "Quetzalcoatl," the "winged flying *serpent*" which was one of the major "gods" of those races!

To Quetzalcoatl and in his name were sacrificed countless thousands of human victims.

When I first visited Mexico City, in 1954, long before the present museum of natural history was built, Professor Benjamin Rea and I visited the museum, then located in a central part of Mexico City. In it, I saw an ancient baptismal font, used by some of the early Catholics in Mexico. The base of the font was formed by a coiled *serpent*, the coils narrowing, then gradually fanning out to form a bowl-shaped receptacle for the water which would be used by Catholic priests in baptizing infants among the heathen natives.

Strangely, the serpentine form had *feathers* instead of *scales*!

It was nothing more than a clever method of *adapting* a pagan symbol, "Quetzalcoatl," a winged, flying *serpent* (and therefore a representation of Satan the devil!) into a "religious object"; a baptismal font!

No wonder the heathen savages cheerfully gathered by the droves before such baptismal fonts, presenting their infants before a symbol of Quetzalcoatl, allowing a priest to dip his fingers in water, sprinkling it on the face of the infant, pronouncing some sort of "mumbo-jumbo" in a strange tongue!

Savage tribes all over the world have worshipped the "host of heaven." Their perverted chief is *Lucifer* who was cast down from God's throne, who became a *devil*, instead of a "bright shining star of the dawn"!

Did Satan Really Appear as a Serpent?

Remember, the Bible uses similes, analogies, metaphors, and various figures of speech.

A few examples are when the tribe *Dan*, renowned for *renaming* various conquered or discovered areas is called a "serpent's trail" (Genesis 49:17). Nero is referred to as a "lion" (2 Timothy 4:17), and Herod is referred to as a "fox" (Luke 13:32). But the tribe of Dan was not a snake or a serpent; Nero was a man, and not a lion, and Herod was crafty, wily, perhaps more like a skulking coyote than a fox - but nevertheless the *metaphor* is used to connote the *character* of the individual.

Judah is referred to as a "lion's whelp."

For example, in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew Jesus uses "leaven" as a type for the kingdom of God, while in Matthew 16:6 He uses it as a type of *sin* (as it is used during the days of unleavened bread). Here, we have an example of biblical type or analogy used in two *opposites*.

Many times, self-professed biblical "scholars" fail to realize how often the Bible uses "figures of speech." Notice *how many* figures of speech there are in the Genesis account of Adam and Eve in the garden; of their encounter with some great being which was "more subtle than all the other beasts of the field," and with the prophecies concerning this encounter. For example, the Bible says "thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:13). This does not mean that the literal heel of flesh, cartilage and bone would be bruised or damaged, but means something far more! We can only derive its ultimate meaning by looking at the attempt of Satan the devil to *kill* Jesus Christ when He was yet a newborn Babe; to realize that Satan must have hovered around the child, attempting to break through His angelic defenses and attack Him any number of times during His young life; to read carefully the account of how Satan tempted Him in the wilderness, trying to break His will and resolve; to understand that Satan entered *personally* into Judas and brought about the sufferings and death of Christ!

Therefore, the "bruising of His heel" connoted a *wounding of spirit*; a *trying of character*, a *testing of will* - like a nettlesome, bothersome, plaguesome problem - NOT a literal "bruise" on the fleshy heel of Jesus Christ!

Notice verse fifteen again. "He shall crush thy head" is likewise a *figure of speech*.

It did not mean, literally, that Adam or anyone else would step on the serpent's head (though there is symbolism in the fact that the *head* of the serpent is the dangerous part, and is usually crushed when one tries to kill a snake), nor that Jesus Christ would somehow crush the head of the being who appeared to Him.

It means, rather, that every scheme, purpose, plan, policy, plot and invention of Satan will be totally and finally *crushed!* The apostle Paul said Satan will be eventually "bruised under our feet" (Romans 16:20).

But even this does not mean our *literal feet*, but something which is actually *more real!*

Now, notice Genesis 3:14 where God says "on thy belly shalt thou go." He also says, "dust shalt thou eat." But do serpents literally *eat dust*? Turn to Psalm 72:9 where it refers to David's enemies as "licking the dust." Is this to be taken *literally*? Of course not! Men do not eat dirt, or "lick dust." It is a *figure of speech* connoting total defeat, being cast down, prostrate on the ground, utterly weary and subjected to despair.

When God says the great, bright, shining, subtle creature (in whatever guise he appeared to

Adam and Eve) will "go on his belly" from thenceforth, it is no more to be taken *literally* to imply the belly of flesh, blood (or scales?) than the words "head" and "heel" are to be taken literally.

Rather, it shows utter subjection, prostration, wriggling or writhing low to the ground, in humiliation and defeat.

Remember, Satan himself quoted scripture to Jesus Christ! The flaw in his reasoning the subtlety in his attempted deception is evident when he continually cited to Jesus Christ various scriptures saying "*It is written!*"

Satan was referring to the literal text - just as it was written! Notice how he takes this *literal text* and craftily applies it, as if it is to be taken LITERALLY!

You will read the entire account in Matthew 4.

Jesus rebukes Satan, showing the MEANING of the text, showing there are certain figures of speech, allegories, parables, similes and analogies used in the Bible.

It is precisely this subtle *twisting of scripture* which Satan has used *to deceive the whole world* about his appearance, about his encounter with Adam and Eve in the garden, and about his character and appearance today!

A serpent has no organs of speech! Was it really a snake or a serpent that appeared to Adam and Eve?

No! It was a being of incredible brightness and luster; it may have appeared as one of the cherubim, perhaps with the head of a man, the body of a huge ox, a lion's tail, and eagle's wings. No matter which of the four, or whether the "cherub that covereth" appeared to Adam and Eve portraying *all four* of the characteristics of the cherubim, the being that appeared to them stood upright, glowed with magnetic and attractive luster, spoke with dynamic, subtle, engaging and reasoning tone, and *appealed* greatly to them!

The creature would have appeared *superior* to all the other animals with which they were rapidly becoming familiar.

Satan as an "Angel of Light"

Turn to and read what the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, *transforming* themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is *transformed* into an *angel of light*. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Notice the apostle Paul says the "pseudo-apostles" are *transformed* into the apostles of Christ. The Ephesian church is commended (Revelation 2:2) for *trying* those who "say they are apostles." How did they do this? Doubtlessly by comparing carefully all that was taught or said with their knowledge of the *Word of God!* Paul then says that it is no marvel that deceitful men can *call* themselves "apostles" while they are NOT apostles of Jesus Christ, since Satan himself is TRANSFORMED into "an angel of light"!

In my nearly thirty years in the ministry of Jesus Christ I have heard many individuals tell me of "spiritual experiences." A number have told me they actually heard and *saw* angelic-like beings.

One tried to tell me he had *seen Jesus Christ!* When I carefully questioned him, the traditional picture of "Jesus" emerged. The man told me he saw someone in white standing at the foot of his bed, and proceeded to describe the traditional, proverbial long, brown locks softly cascading over the shoulders; the faraway gaze, the thin, narrow nose and petulant lips. The halo and the aura of the "Jesus Christ" that is commonly seen in the favorite pictures of "Jesus" being sold in Bible book stores.

Further, when the man awoke he claimed to have had the imprint of a *cross* on his forehead! I did not know if the man was lying, or not. Perhaps, he actually *saw* some figure or other But that figure was NOT Jesus Christ!

How did I know? Simple! I know, through the scriptures, that Jesus did not look like that! Also, I know that Jesus was crucified on a pale (the Greek word is *stauroo*) and not a *cross*. (See the Companion Bible, in the Appendix on "The Cross.")

Others have told me of various encounters, and in every case that I recall, *none* met the test of the Scriptures!

Think what you have learned. Is Satan the devil concerned about the world in general; the world of government, big business, industry and science; the world of the military, of culture, art, literature, music, language, of education?

Why? The Bible clearly shows he is the "god" of *that world* -this, present, evil world all around you!

No. Satan was always at the primary focus of God's attention on this earth! Wherever God was working, doing important things, Satan was to be found!

He appeared immediately in Eden, the "garden of God," at the creation of Adam and Eve, and attempted to *wreck* and destroy God's creation. Satan was right there at the birth of Jesus Christ, tried to overthrow Him during the temptation in the wilderness, and entered personally into Judas, causing Christ's death.

Where is Satan working today? Would he not try to work *as closely as possible* to God's own church? Would he not be trying to *deceive* God's people?

Satan's Greatest Deception

If you were to equip one thousand church-going professing Christians with drawing materials (assuming they had reasonable drawing talent) and ask them to portray two of the most famous characters of the Bible for you; Jesus Christ, and Satan the devil, what would they portray? No doubt, they would draw a picture of the "imp" of history; a "Satan" with little horns, spade beard, thin, pencil mustache, sardonic, glowering, hateful expression, red body-stocking, long tail with a fork or spear-like shape to the end of it, carrying a *trident* or pitchfork in his hands. No doubt, emitting from beneath or behind him would be vaporous *smoke*, connoting eternal fires!

Ask them to draw a picture of "Jesus," and they would portray the figure I described above. He would appear with a long, flowing robe; open-toed sandals, long hair, pointed, neat beard, far-away gaze in perhaps soft brown eyes, with a *halo!*

Put it another way. If you had a perfectly-done artist's representation of these two "characters" as defined and you showed them to literally *millions* of church-going professing Christians; to

teenagers and young children as well, would there be even ONE MISTAKE out of MILLIONS if you gave them a *multiple choice* as to who these personalities were?

Would there be one out of one million who would say that the figure in the white robe with the halo was *SATAN!*?

Yet, believe it or not, your Bible says that Satan the devil has managed to pawn himself off as the "god of this world"; as the "prince of the power of the air," as a "minister of righteousness," and as "an angel of LIGHT"!

The apostle Paul warned people of "another Jesus," and "another gospel."

Consider: (1) Satan the devil is an *immortal created being*. (2) *Satan is a member of a triumvirate; a three-part exalted rank of angelic beings, a member of a trinity*. (3) Satan knows that his suffering will be *eternal*, for the simple reason that he will not be *destroyed*, but continue in conscious life. (A clue is found in the book of Jude which refers to demonic spirits as "wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.") (4) Satan tried to GET TO HEAVEN. to overthrow God from His throne, to *leave* this earth, ascend "above the stars of God."

Now, consider: (1) One of the most fundamental doctrines *assumed* and carelessly taken for granted by the so-called Christian world is the doctrine of the "immortality of the soul," which says that we human beings *live forever* - that there is something *immortal* inside of us! (2) Millions believe they *go to heaven* when they die! Satan tried to get to heaven and was cast back down to this earth! But is HEAVEN the reward of the saved? (3) Satan has the whole world believing in "a trinity," yet the Bible shows *duality* throughout. There is the Old Testament and the New Testament. God the Father and Christ the Son. The first man Adam and the second man Adam, Jesus Christ. There are two sexes, two magnetic poles, two parts to the day! God's creation shows *duality*; two sexes, reproduction possible only through those *two*, not three!

God's Holy Spirit is said to be "poured out"; it is likened unto wind, water, fire, and a roaring, rushing wind! 1 John 5:7 did not find its way into the later Latin texts until *after the invention of printing!* It is completely spurious, was deliberately added by lying, cheating copyists, and is found in NONE of the dozens and dozens of earlier manuscripts; does not appear in the *Codex Sinaiticus, Vaticanus* or *Alexandrinus!*

Thus, Satan the devil has taken various characteristics pertaining to *himself* and has foisted them on a deceived, unsuspecting world as the *mainstay* of, so-called, "Christian" doctrines!

Millions believe in the immortality of the soul; getting into heaven; a triune godhead; and eternal torture or torment as the reward of the wicked!

The truth is far different!

Thus, Satan's greatest deception seems complete! He has palmed himself off as "the devil," and millions believe they would recognize him instantly! Instead, he comes to them as an "angel of light" in whom they believe!

He has managed to foist off upon the world a fake, false "Jesus" whom they worship as "the Lord." Millions do not know the REAL Jesus Christ, which is precisely why I entitled my first book *The Real Jesus!*

Are *you* one who is willing to dust out the cobwebs of your mind; blow the dust off your own Bible, look into it and see what it says? Are you willing to become UNdeceived? Jesus said, "Ye shall know the *truth*, and the truth shall make you *free!*" You have seen and read biblical *truth* in this article. May God help you to *prove* it to yourself, and to accept what you see *proved!*

-End-

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The Garner Ted Armstrong Evangelistic Association
P.O. Box 747
Flint, TX 75762
Phone: (903) 561-7070 • Fax: (903) 561-4141

More FREE literature is available at our Internet Web Site:

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