

Satan the Stealth Being

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I think most of you know that I am interested in all things aviation. It's been a passion of mine since I was a little boy, and I keep track of all the latest developments of airplanes and military aviation also. The B-2 Stealth Bomber—I'm sure most of you have heard of it—is probably the most awesome flying machine that's ever been built. It certainly ranks among the top two or three.

For those of you who don't know anything about it, the B-2 is a flying wing and it's piloted by a crew of two—just two pilots. Only twenty-one exist, only twenty-one were ever made, at a cost of over a billion dollars each. They can be loaded with up to sixteen tons of smart weapons, and by mid-air refueling they can bomb any place on earth so accurately that you can measure the error of the bomb with a yard stick. It is a plane unlike any other.

All the B-2s are based at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri; most of us are familiar with hangars for airplanes but they developed what they call docks for the B-2. As I said, it's a flying wing, so these docks are about as wide as a football field is long, and the B-2, this wing, can just be backed into the hangar or the dock, the door is closed, all of the maintenance is done out of sight, the weapons loading is done out of sight—all done behind closed doors, in part, because if the enemy sends a satellite over (Russia or China) they can't see what's going on inside that dock and that's for security reasons.

Since the B-2 has no external ordinance, meaning it doesn't hang bombs or fuel tanks below the wings as most fighters and fighter bombers and other bombers do, all the ordinance and the fuel are housed inside. When they open the door to the dock and the B-2 taxies out, no one knows if it's going on a training mission or it's going to fly halfway around the world and bomb the daylights out of somebody—you just don't know.

The B-2 began operating in 1995 and its first taste of combat was in Kosovo, Yugoslavia. On its first mission, it took off from Whiteman on a thirty-hour, round-trip flight all the way to Yugoslavia, unloaded the bombs with pinpoint accuracy, turned around, and flew all the way back to Whiteman. It never touched ground—thirty hours, fifteen hours there, fifteen hours back—and accomplished its mission. It was also heavily involved in both Iraq wars, again based out of Whiteman.

The B-2 was designed from the beginning to be stealthy, meaning it is almost undetectable by enemy radar. For those of you who don't know how radar works, you have a transmitter on the ground in an area you want to defend, and this transmitter sends radio beams up into the sky; there is a receiving dish right nearby and those radio waves travel out, and if there's an aircraft up there (you can imagine a commercial airliner or something like that) when those radio waves hit the side of the airliner, they

are reflected back to the ground so that this dish picks them up, and they are seen as a blip on a radar screen. The operators who watch that radar screen can become quite skilled at identifying the type of plane, its altitude, its direction and all of that. However, the B-2 is designed to be totally stealthy, and the shape of it is designed to reflect the radar waves away from the B-2 and away from the ground so there is no return. The skin of the B-2 is designed to absorb radar, and the paint on it, the all-black paint, is designed to absorb radar.

The bottom line is the design is so successful that the B-2 has a radar reflection of a tiny bird. So you can imagine being a radar operator and trying to find a B-2 around you, and there's a flock of birds going by, but the B-2's reflection is no greater than any single bird in a flock of birds—it's almost impossible to detect. However, it must fly at night. The reason is because of its unique shape. This wing, it looks like something out of a science fiction movie, and the fact that it's painted all black makes it really easy to see during the day. I've seen them fly and you just think it's like something out of science fiction, because it looks like it can't even fly almost. Because of its shape and the black paint, in the day it can be easily seen, and it has no defensive armament. It can't defend itself at all. Therefore it has to fly at night, and when it flies at night, it is almost undetectable. You can't see it, the radar can't see it, and the first evidence that the B-2 is there are the bombs raining down, bringing havoc and destruction.

Okay, so what does that have to do with the Sabbath, and what does that have to do with us today? There's a scary reality and that is that we have an invisible being who does exactly the same thing. Being stealthy and invisible, we don't know this being is around; he operates undetected in a cloak of a darkness; he creates havoc and destruction with no warning at all. Most people in the world, and some even in the Church, don't even know this being exists, don't even know there's a spirit world out there, and that, as we're going to see, is a part of his plan. So in these last days, I think it's appropriate that we consider this being who is, more than ever, actively working in the lives of God's chosen people. I got a couple of e-mails this week, saying, I have never seen such anger, opposition, hatred, directed my way—this from an individual out there among the scattered brethren. It just seems like Satan is stirring things up as never before. So the title of the sermon is: Satan the Stealth Being.

We're going to talk about that today, because we have an adversary, and if we don't pay attention to that adversary and we don't understand the reality of that adversary we do so at our own peril.

Okay, the first point we want to make is:

1. What is Satan's history and nature?

As we go through this together, we'll lead up to how this relates to us and what we need to be looking out for. What is Satan's history and nature? Let's go to a familiar scripture, Ezekiel 28:12; I'm going to read this out of the New International Version. It's

in some ways more accurate and certainly reads better. God is talking initially about the King of Tyre but we're going to see very quickly that that cannot be a human being.

Ezekiel 28:12 *"Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. (NIV)*

So obviously here, when it says the model of perfection, perfect in beauty, and then in the beginning of verse 13,

13) *You were in Eden, the garden of God;*

This is obviously not talking about a human being. Going on in verse 13,

13 continued) *... every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.*

We see here that this being was created by God to be in splendor, and apparently unlike any other created being at that time, absolute splendor. Verse 14:

14) *You were anointed as a guardian cherub, [the King James says *the anointed cherub that covereth*, alluding to the throne of God] for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones.*

So we see this being was present in front of God's throne. Going on in verse 15,

15) *You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.*

We see there was a time, and we don't know how long that time was, but there was a time when Satan was sinless and then something happened. Going on in verse 16, this gives us a hint, but not definitively,

16) *Through your widespread trade [the Hebrew can mean "traffic", it can mean "merchandise", so trade, traffic, merchandise—because of that] you were filled with violence [the Hebrew can mean "injustice by oppression or cruelty"] ...*

We see that by this trade, Satan's nature reflected violence, oppression, and cruelty, and then, the middle part of the verse:

16 continued) *... and you sinned. (NIV)*

Someday we're going to find out exactly what this means, when it happened, and what actually happened—we don't know, but someday we will. Going on in verse 16,

16 continued) *So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.*

17) *Your heart became proud [so there was a time apparently when his heart was not proud, but his heart became proud] on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. (NIV)*

So the blame is on Satan; it says, you corrupted your wisdom—nobody else corrupted it for him, he did it. So what happened? He corrupted himself because of pride and because of vanity.

Now let's go to the other defining set of scriptures, in Isaiah 14, and we'll just read a couple of verses there. We'll begin in verse 12 and read through verse 14 out of the King James. Again, this is talking about Satan and what has happened to him.

Isaiah 14:12 *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! (KJV)*

God knows the thoughts of every being, be they spirit being or physical being.

13) *For thou hast said in thine heart, [in other words, this is a motivation—something Satan thought] 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 [I'm going to sit where God sits, I'm going to elevate myself up to His level], in the sides of the north: (KJV)*

Verse 14, let me quote from the Revised Standard Version,

14) *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High. (RSV)*

The word *like* in the Hebrew means “comparable to”—I'm going to compare myself to God; I'm going to be on His level. So we see here that Satan becomes competitive with God, and this is the first time this has ever happened in the history of created beings, be they human or spirit beings, that a being began to be competitive with God. He desired to have God's throne, to take God's throne, because, frankly, in his mind, if you put all the scriptures together, he thought he knew better than God. Remember in the Garden of Eden when he said to Eve, you can't believe what God says; God is a liar—let *me* tell you the truth. So you see that there came a time when something changed and he became competitive with God Almighty.

Now let's go to John 8:38 and we'll break into the account where Christ is speaking to the scribes and the Pharisees. They are self-righteous because they think Abraham is their father and they're putting down Jesus Christ, and of course Christ straightens them out very quickly. John 8:38, Christ is speaking:

John 8:38 *I speak that which I have seen with my Father [can you imagine how that rankled them when He said that?] and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.*

39) *They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (KJV)*

Verse 40; I'll read out of the New Living Translation [an older, online version]:

40) *I told you the truth, I heard from God but you are trying to kill me. Abraham wouldn't do a thing like that.*

41) *You do the deeds of your father. (NLT)*

Now let's go back to the King James and jump to verse 44:

44) *Ye are of your father the devil [it can't be more clear], and the lusts of your father ye will do. (KJV)*

This tells us that Satan has lusts inside him and he provokes people to follow up on those lusts:

40 continued) *He was a murderer from the beginning...*

It's interesting the Greek word for *beginning* means a commencement. So what beginning is that? We don't know; someday we will find out.

40 continued) *... and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. [Nothing true.] When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (KJV)*

So we see that Satan lusts for what he does not have. He lusts for God's throne, he lusts for God's position, which he did not have. He will lie and he will murder in order to get what he wants. He turned from the truth, as Christ just said, to the point that he became so perverted there is no truth in him—absolutely no truth in him. He doesn't have a remnant of the truth or a part of the truth; there is nothing truthful in Satan. So summarizing this first point: Satan is competitive with God. He seeks all for the self and his perversion is about getting and not giving. That's the first time that happened, that a being was dedicated to get and not give.

The whole plan of salvation, God and Christ working together to work that plan, is about giving and not getting, and Satan turned that around. He wants to exalt himself above God and he wants to get human beings to worship anything but God. He is, as we're going to see, wanting to destroy everything belonging to God, including all of us. He wants us destroyed.

Okay, that leads now to the second point we need to make. We need to ask the question:

2. How far-reaching has God allowed Satan's authority to be?

Satan can do nothing without God's permission, God's approval. Satan may think otherwise but that's the reality. So the question is, how far has God allowed Satan to go? Let's go to John 14:27. We're breaking into Christ's talk with the disciples on the night He was taken—His last discussion with them. He is leaving them and notice how He ends this:

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* (KJV)

Those are words we should take to heart quite often during these troubled times in which we live. Verse 28:

28) *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.*

Christ said, that's where I want to be and you should be happy for Me that I'm going.

29) *And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.*

Now here we get to the point we need to make today:

30) *Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.* (KJV)

The Greek word for *prince* means "chief ruler". So we see here Christ is warning them and saying, after I leave, the one that's going to come is the chief ruler of this world and he has nothing in Me. Remember, he has no truth. So we see that Satan has become so perverted that he and Christ have absolutely nothing in common—zero in common. With that in mind let's go to 2 Corinthians 4:4. We've seen Satan called the prince or the chief ruler of the world—2 Corinthians 4:4 adds to that. Paul is informing us. I'm reading out of the King James unless otherwise noted. Notice this:

2 Corinthians 4:4 *In whom the god [that Greek word is *theos*; it can refer to God or Christ, or in this case, Satan] of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* (KJV)

So we see here in talking about how much authority God has allowed Satan to have, God is saying that Satan is god of this world and chief ruler of this world, and it is by God's authority that this is happening. That's something we need to understand and pay attention to, because this being, this stealth being, is god of this world—he is the

chief ruler of this world. Now let's notice that he has plenty of help. We won't turn there but in Revelation 12 we're told that a third of the angels followed Satan when he rebelled against God. So with that in mind, let's go to Revelation 5:11. We're breaking into an account where John is beholding God's throne. Notice what John sees and hears:

Revelation 5:11 *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels [can you imagine?] round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; (KJV)*

If this is a literal number—and I'm not saying it is, because we don't know—but if this is a literal number, 10,000 times 10,000 is a hundred million, and then if you have thousands of thousands, that's at least two, so you're talking about 102 million angels around God's throne. Remember when this was written, Satan had already rebelled, so this is the two thirds of the angels—out of the total number of angels—that are the loyal, holy, faithful angels, so that means the one third that left to go with Satan are 51 million angels as a minimum. Now if this is not literal, and we don't know, it could be a lot more than 51 million, but at least we can say it is not less than 51 million. The point is, regardless of which it is, Satan has a lot of help. He has a lot of help to mess around with God's people and to try to come after God's people.

Closing this second point—how far-reaching is Satan's authority?—he is only the god of this world. Think about that. So when we see what we see on the news today, it's no wonder. On the radio coming down it said there was a mass shooting in Philadelphia, where this man walked in and said something to the effect that all Jews need to die, and he killed eight people, including a little baby that was being circumcised. That was the early report. Guess who is behind all of that? Who would provoke somebody to do something like that? That's the god of this world.

Now let's go to the third point. We've seen Satan's authority, we've seen his nature, now the third point is, we have to ask the question:

3. What is Satan's goal during this age, the age in which we now live—what is his goal?

What is he trying to accomplish? If we know what he is trying to accomplish, we can be on guard and we can defend against it. Let's go to 2 Timothy 2:24. I'm going to read this out of the New King James; it is more clear. Paul is talking to Timothy about being an elder and that's this first phrase.

2 Timothy 2:24 *And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25) in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,*

26) *and that they may come to their senses [notice this] and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. (NKJV)*

We see here that there is a *snare of the devil*. The point is for that snare to take God's people captive in order to do Satan's will. The Greek word for *snare* can mean a trap or a trick or a stratagem. Satan has something in mind, and as we're going to see it's based on our weaknesses, not our strengths. His will is to turn people against God. The first thing he did with Adam and Eve was to turn them against God—no, you can be like God, you don't have to listen to God, you don't have to do what He says—and Satan was successful with Adam and Eve.

What is his goal during this age? We find it in a parable of Jesus Christ. Let's go to John 10, the very familiar parable of the sheepfold. John 10:1; Christ is speaking to the Pharisees, so keep in mind to whom He is speaking and why He says what He says, and the way He says it.

John 10:1 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, [the Greek for sheepfold means a pen, a pen that houses the sheep] but climbeth up [that's interesting that he would use this] some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. (KJV)*

If you go back (archaeology supports this and history supports this), back when this was written, they didn't have chain link fences and barbed wire. So how would you have made a pen for the sheep? Well, they had plenty of rocks, and what they would do is stack rocks together to form a fence around whatever size sheepfold or pen they wanted or needed. They would stack them in such a way that the sheep couldn't climb up or jump up over. So, in effect, it became a pen, and at one end was a door, and there was a door keeper. So we see here, going on in verse 2,

2) *But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. (KJV)*

Remember in verse 1, he says if somebody climbs up another way, he's a thief and a robber. Meaning climbing up over the rocks, not coming in through the door.

3) *To him the porter [or the gate keeper] openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.*

It was quite common for multiple shepherds to house their sheep in a pen at the same time. It wasn't reserved for just one shepherd's sheep. The shepherds would come and herd their sheep into the sheepfold and then when that shepherd and those sheep needed to go back out, that is what Christ was talking about right here, when He says, he that calls his own sheep by name and leads them out, verse 4,

4) *... when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (KJV)*

A shepherd can walk into the pen and call the sheep by whatever they're used to him calling them, and the by tone of his voice—they recognize it. He walks out of the sheepfold and the sheep follow him out. The other sheep don't recognize his voice and they stay put. So Christ here is obviously talking about Himself. He's talking about those whom God has called and turned over to Him, who recognize His voice.

5) *And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

6) *This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. [They didn't get it.]*

7) *Then said Jesus unto them again [as He starts to explain], Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. [I'm the door to the sheepfold.]*

8) *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. (KJV)*

Those who came prior to Him were thieves and robbers. Go back to the Garden of Eden. What did Satan promise to Adam and Eve?—you'll be just like God. What Satan did, in essence, was act as a thief and a robber of the truth, and he caused Adam and Eve to make a wrong decision. In that sense you could say that he stole them from God, although this was part of God's plan, we understand that. Satan says you can be just like God and that's exactly what he wanted to be when he rebelled—he wanted to be just like God; he's offering the same thing to Adam and Eve. But Christ says the sheep will not hear the thieves and robbers.

9) *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (KJV)*

Find green grass, find water, be taken care of, be fed.

10) *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy [the thief comes to do those three things, kill, steal, destroy, then Christ says, in contrast to that]: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (KJV)*

So we see here, Satan is the ultimate thief. His goal is to steal the sheep (us) away from God and Christ by any means necessary. We've already seen that he will lie, he will murder, he will do anything necessary to steal the sheep away from God and Christ. The second thing is he will kill. We just said, he wants to kill us physically. It's only through the grace of God we're here, because if Satan had a free reign we would all be dead. Third, he wants to destroy the sheep, meaning destroy the sheep forever in the lake of fire, and if he can get to us, and pervert us, and twist us so that we reject God, as he rejected God, then we will be in the lake of fire. Steal, kill, destroy; my point is, this threat is real. We often don't think about it, we often go about our daily lives, but the fact is only through God's intervention are we still alive, because if God didn't put limits on Satan with us, we wouldn't be here, we'd be dead. So we need to take this threat personally. It's not just to the Church in general or God's people in general—we

need to take it personally, in the sense that Satan wants to steal and kill and destroy me, personally.

Now as we lead to the next point, let's ask the question, what is Satan's greatest accomplishment thus far, since Adam and Eve?

4. Satan has convinced human beings that he does not exist.

You see, that's the ultimate stealth. At the beginning of the Iraq war, Bagdad was one of the most heavily defended air spaces in the world. Saddam Hussein had spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying the latest state-of-the-art Russian radar and Russian anti-aircraft missiles, and he had put them all around Bagdad and the other cities and military bases in Iraq. When the order was given to start the war, the B-2s led the way; starting from Whiteman Air Force Base, they flew all the way to Bagdad; they came right over the top of Bagdad and nobody knew it. The radar operators were looking at their screens and there was nothing there. The next thing they knew, bombs were raining down from heaven blowing up their radar installations, the air force bases, the munitions supply depots, and all of that from this stealth bomber that flew half way around the world and can put a bomb on a target within a foot-and-a-half circle—think about that. Here they thought they were okay—hey, it's going to be a quiet night, nothing on the radar screen, let's sip our coffee and put our feet up and not worry about things, and then the first explosion occurred.

The point is that the stealth bomber is just a toy compared to the stealth being—an intelligent, brilliant being who is stealthy. Let's go to Isaiah 47:1 and get a hint of how Satan operates, what his tactics are. In Isaiah 47 God is talking about the daughter of Babylon. We know who Babylon is, what Babylon is, know how it got started. We know it is a system that is alive today, and the religious ceremonies and many of the religious beliefs are alive today in this world's religion.

Isaiah 47:1 *Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon [so this is a daughter of the Babylonian system], sit on the ground: there is no throne [God has taken the throne away], O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. (KJV)*

Okay, so with regard to this daughter of Babylon, let's ask the question, who is behind Babylon—the first Babylon—and who is behind the daughter of Babylon? Who is behind the Babylon that exists today? Who is provoking Babylon down through the millennia and today? Who is the being behind it all? Let's go to verse 10:

10) *For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: [this daughter of Babylon] thou hast said, None seeth me. (KJV)*

Isn't that interesting? This gives us a hint of Satan's chief tactic. I can do what I do, I can pursue and teach my perverted religion, and nobody sees me, nobody is aware of it. This gives us hint that one of Satan's chief tactics is stealth. We don't know he's

there. You can see over the millennia, that in little, bite-sized chunks this being behind Babylon has perverted the entire world. Christmas, Easter, New Year's—the Japanese keep Christmas, for crying out loud. It's all over the world. There's an article in the paper today, guess what they want to do—they want to change Halloween to Saturday. Do you think Satan thinks he's jerking God's chain somehow? They want to do it on a Saturday night, because it's such a strain to lead the children out in the middle of the week and they have to go to school the next morning, and I've go to work the next morning and it's just such a hassle, so let's make it a Saturday night, so we can follow Satan with a freer hand. It'll pass, you just watch; it's going to happen. Satan does it so stealthily—little, bite-sized chunks until he's got us. Going on in verse 10,

10 continued) ...*Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee;*

The King James margin says, *led you astray*. This is true for the daughter of Babylon but it's equally true for the being behind the daughter of Babylon.

10 continued) ... *and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.* (KJV)

That's exactly what Satan said when he tried to take over God's throne—I am the end all and be all; I am above God, there is none like me, and I'm going to take over this throne. It is the same attitude, the same being that is behind Babylon. If that wasn't enough, let's go back to Isaiah 29 and read one verse, verse 15. We're establishing the principle that one of Satan's tactics is to do these stealthily, in such a way that people don't think he even exists, therefore they can't defend themselves.

Isaiah 29:15 *Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD ...* (KJV)

I've met people in the Church who thought that they could sin and God wouldn't know it. Can you imagine that? They convinced themselves they could sin and somehow God would wink at it, or He wouldn't see it, or He wouldn't acknowledge it, and that's exactly what's happening here.

15 continued) *Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* (KJV)

You see, this is exactly what Satan is doing. The key to Satan's stealthiness is that he deceives humanity into believing there is not a spirit world at all. If you can't measure it, if you can't see it, if you can't smell it, if you can't taste it, if you can't touch it, it does not exist. That's what our children are taught in school, that's what young people are taught in colleges and universities of higher learning: There is no spirit world—Satan has deceived the entire world into thinking he doesn't exist. Now, let's notice the power of this stealth being. Let's go to the familiar scripture, Revelation 12:9; we believe this describes something that has yet to happen. I think when it does happen some

dramatic things will occur on earth, but as soon as I think I have it figured out, it doesn't work out that way, so I'm not going to make any kind of stand on this one.

Revelation 12:9 [A time yet future, probably] *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, [so there's no doubt about who this is referring to] which deceiveth the whole world: (KJV)*

It's interesting the Greek word for *whole* means complete, every whit. Think about that—it doesn't leave any room for an exception—complete, every whit, every tiny little bit. He deceives the whole world, and we underestimate this stealth being at our own peril if we don't realize that. The entire world, not just part of it—the world.

Now with that in mind let's go to 2 Corinthians 11:14 and see how this deception occurs, how he can deceive us into thinking that he's not a threat, that he doesn't exist in the world or among God's people, that we don't have to worry about it. Paul says,

2 Corinthians 11:14 *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (KJV)*

Now a key point is the King James margin; if you have a King James, it says *Satan transforms himself into an angel of light*. In other words, some outside force doesn't transform Satan into an angel of light, Satan himself changes himself so that he gives the appearance of an angel of light. Because of this, because he can transform himself into an angel of light,

15) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness [wolves in sheep's clothing]; whose end shall be according to their works. (KJV)

Now how does he do this? Verse 3 tells us:

3) But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds [in like manner] should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (KJV)

The Greek word for *subtlety* is Strong's #3834 and it means, quoting Strong's, "in a bad sense, trickery or cunning craftiness". We would say today, "stealth", because through trickery, through cunning craftiness, the world doesn't believe Satan exists, and even God's people don't believe he is an everyday threat to our lives, to our minds, to our emotions, and that is his great accomplishment. He's not real to the world, and on a daily basis, he's not real to too many brethren either. Often, they allow themselves—we've all done it, and I'm speaking of myself, too—to have moods, and attitudes, and spirits that are just not right, and we just kind of go with the flow, not stopping and thinking, where did that come from? Who's behind that? Too often we think the enemy is other people. The enemy is our boss, the enemy is our neighbor, the enemy is the

government, or the enemy is this person who doesn't like me very much. The real question is who is behind those who oppose us? What's the spirit behind them?

It's easy when somebody comes after us with a vengeance to focus on that person, rather than stopping to take a deep breath, and to ask, okay, who is provoking this person to come after us? What is the spirit behind this person? Who would inspire him or her to behave this way? Let's go to Ephesians 6:12. When we face opposition, this is something of which we need to be continually mindful. I'm going to read this out of the NIV. This we need to keep in the forefront of our minds:

Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood ... (NIV)*

Let's just stop here and ask, can I accept that, can I realize that? When we have physical opposition from physical human beings, that is not the real struggle. The real struggle is what is behind them, what is motivating them or provoking them. Going on in verse 12:

12 continued) *... but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (NIV)*

Since Satan is the god of this world and he has in excess of 50 million helpers, and the world is the way it is, as we see daily—there's a shooting or a rape or somebody being taken captive, in what is supposed to be a civilized country, and if this is happening here, it's what's happening all around the world—who is behind all of that? Spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms. The point is that Satan is our real adversary and he is the one who provokes human beings into doing what they do. We are often the recipients, but we forget—it's just human nature—and react to what's being yelled at us, or screamed at us, or written about us. We react to that, but we don't stop and think, who or what provoked them to do this? We need to keep that in mind. We need to be on guard against our real enemy. Let's go to 1 Peter 5:8—a very familiar scripture. We need to remember this on a daily basis. I'm going to read this out of the NLT [an older, online version]. It's an interesting translation:

1 Peter 5:8 [Peter is saying to us today] *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (NLT)*

Yes, he's looking for someone, but Peter says if we are self-controlled and alert, we don't have to be that one. He'll go after somebody else, because if we are alert and we are controlling ourselves, meaning we are not sinning, then we're not easy to target. Satan will go after somebody else. Let's go to Revelation 12:10; we were there earlier. This gives us a hint of what Satan does and who our real enemy is.

Revelation 12:10 [John says] *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down [this hasn't happened yet, but*

it's going to happen; the point is Satan doesn't change], *which accused them before our God day and night.* (KJV)

So this tells us, before Satan is cast down, Satan is accusing God's people before God the Father, day and night. We can go back and read the account in the book of Job where Satan was walking up and down in front of God's throne and God knew what he was doing. God said, have you considered my friend Job? That started a conversation, and Job was accused by Satan, who said to God, "Look, You let me touch him and he's going to curse You to Your face"—accuse, accuse, accuse. So we see here that Satan accuses us before God, day and night. Verse 11, here's the good news:

11) *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;* (KJV)

The Greek word for *testimony* means "record". They overcame Satan by their record, what they actually did. We are all establishing our record in our lives that is, as we say, written in stone, and we're going to have to answer for that record. We're told here that those who overcome Satan do so by their record—what they actually do and what they think and what is in their mind, and,

11 continued) ... *they loved not their lives unto the death.* (KJV)

That's how far it can go. You see, Satan's stealthiness is a threat to each one of us and the reason it's a threat is he can convince us that it's not a personal threat. It's a threat to the Church, yes, and some would say he's a threat to the work of God or the truth of God, but we don't often apply it to ourselves by saying, he is out to get me, to steal, kill, and destroy me. He does so by keeping us so busy with day-to-day stuff with the world, that we're not aware of his influence, not aware of the emotions, the attitudes and the thoughts he can put in our minds. But you see, Paul tells us that we can know Satan's plan. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 2:10. We can know his plan and that helps us defend against his efforts to destroy us. I'll read this out of the NIV; it's a little more clear.

2 Corinthians 2:10 [Paul says] *If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake ...* (NIV)

Verse 11 is the key. One of the things we have to do is forgive and not let a root of bitterness come because that is a way Satan can get to us, and Paul is saying we need to forgive, in verse 11,

11) *in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.* (NIV)

The New International Version says *schemes*, the King James and New King James say *devices*. Thayer says *evil purposes*. So we see here, Paul says we can know them, we can be aware of them, and that can help us fight our adversary.

That leads us to the final point—point number five.

5. What are Satan's stealthy schemes?

His overall objective is to get us to sin. We won't turn there but in Isaiah 59, in the first two verses, we're told that sin separates us from God. So Satan is brilliant—if he can get us to sin then that separates us from God. Then we are more easy to attack because we are not as close to God as we were before we started sinning. So we have to keep in mind that his goal is to get us to sin.

Back to the B-2 for a minute. When the B-2 launches there is a computer disk in the massive computer that's in this airplane—it couldn't fly without the computer, it's aerodynamically unstable, and the computer keeps it flying, literally. Part of that computer system is a disc that has all the targeting instructions for that particular mission. Through on-the-ground intelligence, satellite intelligence, and all of that, they know where the radar stations are, the antennas and the broadcast stations for the radar—they know where they are located in the enemy's territory, and I've seen some of these maps. The maps show a bird's-eye view; you're looking down and you see the mountains and the terrain and all of that, and over here, shown by a symbol, is a radar station, over here is another radar station, and over here is yet another radar station. So rather than just ignore the strengths of the enemy, what the computer does is fly the plane in a profile position relative to these radar stations.

The B-2 has a stronger radar return in some angles than others, so if they can keep the attitude of the B-2 relative to the transmitter and receiver, to where the B-2 has the lowest possible return, then that maximizes their chance of being successful. So when the B-2 navigates at the correct bank angle, at the correct altitude, at the correct profile of the plane relative to the radar, it maximizes its chance of success. It exploits the weakness of the enemy, where their radar might be weak or where their area of coverage might be not as good. So this is all programmed into the computer, and before it takes off, this flight plan is set to maximize their chance of success, to avoid the strengths of the enemy, and to attack the weaknesses of the enemy. Satan does exactly the same thing. He is warped, he is perverted, but he is brilliant. He identifies our weak points and he attacks our weak points. He doesn't attack where we are strong, he attacks where we are weak because he knows that that is where he is most likely to succeed in getting us to sin. He influences our thoughts, our moods, our attitudes. Let's go to Ephesians 2:2. Satan can do things that humans beings can't and he does so stealthily, and if we aren't aware of it we are putting ourselves in jeopardy.

Ephesians 2:2 [Paul says] *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince [same Greek word, chief ruler] of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:* (KJV)

This is talking about the chief ruler of the air. What could Paul mean by that? My wife's mother, who lived to be 102 years old, described to us once what it was like to hear a

radio for the first time. When you think about it, if you've never heard a radio before, this would seem like something magical and marvelous. A neighbor bought the first radio in the area, and she said, they invited us one night to come over and listen to and see this box (back in those days, radios were big boxes, waist-high boxes with a lot of components inside), and she saw the plug in the wall, but that was it. They turned the radio on, tuned the dial, and all of a sudden a voice came out of this box. Now if that had never happened to you before, what would the reaction be? Like, wait a minute! You walk around it, you look, and there's nobody inside the box, and all of a sudden you hear a voice out of this box—where did that come from? Well, there's a transmitter miles away and it's coming through the air, but we don't see it—that's the marvel of modern communication—but the point is that Satan works the same way, and I think this analogy of the air, the power of the air, draws a direct analogy for us today—maybe not a thousand years ago but it does today. Paul knew that. Verse 3:

3) Among whom also we all had our conduct in times past [in the prince of the power of the air] in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (KJV)

So we put all of this together, much like a radio transmitter transmits to a radio receiver in somebody's home, and out comes a voice; the same thing can happen to us. Everything was fine and now all of a sudden we feel kind of angry or we feel a little knot in the stomach of fear or anxiety, and it came from nowhere. Two minutes ago we were fine, now we're not, and if we're not aware of what Satan is doing, if we just never think of the source of it and then kick the cat or yell at somebody or do something like that, rather than stop and say, wait a minute, two minutes ago I wasn't angry, two minutes ago I was at peace—what happened? If we have our mind on our adversary, our accuser, then maybe we can stop and say, okay, that thought is not a godly thought, that emotion is not a godly emotion, so guess who's behind that—who broadcast that into my mind? So we stop and say a prayer, and ask God to rebuke the thought and to shield us from those broadcasts, and then we go on with our life. But why thoughts, moods and attitudes—why does Satan do that rather than some other way? Let's go to James 1:13. There's a principle here that we are getting to.

James 1:13 *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:*

14) But [here's the key] every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, [where is that?—it starts in the mind] and enticed.

15) Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (KJV)

The principle here is sin begins in the mind, that's where it starts, and if Satan can provoke us to sin in our minds, he has us. We have to be aware of that, be aware that there's an adversary broadcasting those thoughts and emotions and we need to stop it. Let's go to 1 John 2:16. We need to remember who is behind this world. The Apostle John put it well:

1 John 2:16 *For all [the Greek word all means the whole, the entirety] that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (KJV)*

Who is the god of the world? We've already talked about that, it's this being. That is why we have to have a new mind. We won't turn there but in Ephesians 4, and in Colossians 3, we are taught we have to put away the old man or the old woman and put on the new man or the new woman, and this new man or new woman is made after the image of God and Christ. We are told, you can use it as a reference—Ephesians 4:27—if we don't do that, we give Satan a foothold. Meaning, if he broadcasts an emotion or a thought and we don't deal with it and reject it, now he's got a foothold. Then what happens is we commit a sin. We might yell at somebody, we might say something we later regret, we might go do something that we later regret. That gives Satan a foothold. So ending this fifth point, Satan's strategy is to get us to sin and to separate us from God and Christ, our Shepherds (John 10:10), so that he can destroy us and kill us—he can steal us.

So let's summarize now. There's nothing new here today, we all know this, but I have to be reminded of it, I have to remind myself that there is a force working against me and against all of us, and we need to recognize this force. The force working against us is the second most powerful force in the universe—I think sometimes we don't realize that—the second most powerful force in the universe and that force is trying to separate us from God. But the good news is we have access to the most powerful force in the universe, that is greater than the force of our accuser or our adversary. Let's go to James 4:6 and let's read what James had to say about this, because this is the key—when we are tempted, tested, have thoughts, emotions that we shouldn't be having—this is a good series of verses to read.

James 4:6 *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud [that's Satan of course, pride], but giveth grace unto the humble [Christ was humble].*

Here is what we need to do:

7) Submit yourselves therefore to God [—the first thing we need to do; the second] Resist the devil, [don't accept it, don't act on it, stop and reject it] and he will flee from you. (KJV)

That is a promise. If we resist, we are given a promise that he will flee because God is more powerful than Satan.

8) Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. (KJV)

That is another promise. So we submit, we resist, we draw near. And now our job, the last sentence:

8 continued) *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.* (KJV)

We need to ask God for His protection. That's why in the model prayer in Matthew 6, in our daily prayer, we are told to pray that God would deliver us from the evil one, as it should be, and not just from evil, but from the evil one.

Remember in Jude 9, the archangel Michael was fighting with Satan over the body of Moses, and Michael said, the Lord rebuke you, because Michael was not more powerful than Satan, but he knew God was, so he called on the power of God. Similarly, when we get into a difficult situation, we have to call on the power of God to rebuke these thoughts, these emotions, these attacks from Satan.

Let's go to one final scripture in Psalm 91:1. The psalms are so encouraging and this is a psalm we can go to when the adversary, the accuser, is attacking us. There are so many promises here. We'll close with this scripture:

Psalm 91:1 *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* (KJV)

The Most High, the Almighty—in God's presence.

2) *I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*

Not in myself, not in other human beings, but in God.

3) *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.*

4) *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: [drawing an analogy of a protective mother or father bird] his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.* (KJV)

Knowing the truth. Jumping to verse 11.

11) *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

That is a promise.

12) *They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

13) *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.* (KJV)

In verse 14, God speaks:

14) *Because he hath set his love upon me [God says], therefore will I deliver him: [that is a promise—love God with all our heart, with all our being; if we love God with all our heart—the first commandment] I will set him on high, [why?] because he hath known my name. (KJV)*

That individual knows who God is and trusts God. You have to know who He is first, in order to trust Him. So this is a promise: If we just understand who God is, that He is the most powerful force in the universe, and Satan must do His will, then when we get in a difficult situation and are under attack, read Psalm 91, verses 1-14, and claim the promises: that God will provide, He will take care of us, and He will set us on high.

So let's always have the reality of Satan in the forefront of our minds, and always be aware of his presence and the fact is he is stealthy. Let's always be aware of his evil intentions toward us so that we can avoid giving him a foothold in our lives, so we will not allow him to affect our lives, and we will draw closer to God and resist Satan, and overcome him through the power of God and Jesus Christ.