

# Are You Resisting the Adversary?

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Brethren, so many times in the past years, we have come to find that so many of the beliefs that we have once had in the past turned out to be different from the truth and from reality.

One of those beliefs is the knowledge that God Our Father is indeed Yehovah, the El Shaddai, the God Almighty, of the Old Testament and that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It seems that we come to find in many instances that beliefs that we took for granted in the past, beliefs that we thought we had proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, beliefs that were bedrock beliefs in our belief system, turned out not to be exactly true.

In today's sermon, I want to explore another topic that we have always taken for granted to be true, without even thinking about and or researching its origins, and have just taking someone else's word for it to be true.

The subject of today's sermon is about a powerful, conniving, deceitful, evil, and hateful fallen angel who has been the cause of so much carnage and misery over the past 6,000 years of human history.

We commonly know this fallen angel as Satan, Lucifer, and the devil. He has been commonly and famously characterized and personified as a red man with horns, a tail, and a pitchfork. He is shown as a chummy, smiling, cartoonish entity in pictures, in movies, and in animated cartoons. This popular caricature of this fallen angel as an easy-going, sociable, and even friendly being is so far from reality and the truth. This fallen angel is definitely not our friend. He is the enemy and adversary of our Heavenly Father.

The Apostle Peter exhorted the called-out ones of the congregations to resist the devil, but he also adds a little more information.

**1 Peter 5:8** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*  
**9)** *Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (KJV)*

The Apostle Peter wrote that the devil is our adversary who wants to *devour* us and that we must *steadfastly resist* him in the faith.

The Apostle James also exhorted us to resist the devil.

**James 4:7** *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (KJV)*

My sermon this afternoon entitled:

### Are You Resisting the Adversary?

I would like to explore more in depth about our spiritual adversary, the being that we know as Satan, and to explore the tools that he uses to try to keep us from entering our Heavenly Father's Kingdom.

To begin with, as always, it is important to define our terms. In the Churches of God and the churches in the world, English-speaking believers have substituted an abstract English name for the meaningful descriptor word of important beings in the original languages in the scriptures of the Bible. We will quickly analyze three beings in which this has been done.

#### **1) "God" – The Mighty One**

The first instance of substituting a name for the descriptor word of a being is the word *God*. The Hebrew word for *God* is "אֱלֹהִים" (elohim – Strong's #430 – "Mighty One"). In many verses like in Genesis 5:22 where we read that "*Enoch walked with God*", the word for *God* is "הָאֱלֹהִים" (ha Elohim – the Mighty One) which is a term used in specifically designating God Our Father. In many other occurrences in the Old Testament, the term ha Elohim – the Mighty One is used. The use of the definite article "the" is important because of its specificity to a single Being.

In the New Testament, the Hebrew words "Elohim" and "Ha Elohim" were translated into the Greek into the words "ὁ Θεός" (ho theos – Strong's #2316 – the God). It is important and crucial to note that the overwhelming occurrences of "God" in the New Testament in English have the definite article "the" in front of the word "God" in Greek. Therefore, in Greek, the term was "the God", not just "God". It was specific and referenced one Being, whom we know as God Our Father.

However, in the translation into Greek of the Hebrew descriptor word "the Mighty One", the meaning of that descriptor "ha Elohim" (the Mighty One) was lost, because the translation into Greek resulted in the word "ho theos" (the God), which was a Greek term used for their plethora of pagan gods.

Then, in English, the historical translations in English dropped the definite article "the" from the Greek, and the result in English was a de facto name, which the churches of the world (and the Churches of God) have come to use as a name – God. But we know that "God" is not the name of our Heavenly Father. He does have a name, and that name is יהוה – Yehovah. With the translations into different languages and with the passage of time and doctrines, the deep meaning of the original word "the Mighty One" has been hidden and lost.

So, ultimately, over time, we have substituted the word "God" for the name of our Heavenly Father.

#### **2) "Christ" – The Anointed One**

The second instance of substituting a name for the descriptor word of a being is the word "Christ".

Throughout the Old Testament, the Hebrew descriptor for “the Anointed One” was “הַמָּשִׁיחַ” (ha mashiakh – the anointed one). The English word “Messiah” is a near transliteration of this descriptor word Ha Mashiakh. This term was used for anyone who was anointed, such as the priests in Leviticus 4:3, 5 and 16; the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 12:5; King Saul in 1 Samuel 26:11 and 16; and King David in 2 Samuel 19:21 and 2 Samuel 22:51.

As a side note, it is important to know the difference between translation and transliteration. Translation is defining a word into another language by its meaning. Transliteration is transferring the sounds phonetically of a word from one language to another without translating the meaning.

An example is with names. If an American man has a last name “Green”, and he travels to Mexico, he would be referred to as “Señor Green”. This is a transliteration of the sounds of his name, not its meaning, even if it is spelled differently. If his name were translated, he would be “Señor Verde” because “verde” means “green” in Spanish. This is a good example of the difference between translation and transliteration, and this is important, because both translation and transliteration come into play in the subsequent appearance of Hebrew and Greek terms in English.

In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), the Hebrew word “Ha Mashiakh” was translated (not transliterated) into the Greek into the words “ὁ Χριστός” (ho Khristos – Strong’s #5547 – the Anointed One). Furthermore, it is important and crucial to note that the overwhelming occurrences of “Christ” in the English in the New Testament have the definite article “the” in front of the word “Christ” in Greek. Therefore, in Greek, the term was “ho Khristos – the Christ”, not just “Christ”. Christ was not Jesus’ last name. It was a descriptor word showing that Jesus was indeed “the Anointed One” of His Heavenly Father.

The word “Christ” is an example of the transliteration (not translation) of the Greek word “Khristos” into English. The translators of the King James Version in 1611 transliterated the descriptor word “Khristos” as “Christ” instead of translating the descriptor word as “the Anointed One”. The translators in 1611 could have just as easily translated “ho Khristos” as “the Anointed One”, and we would all be reading and referring to Jesus today as Jesus the Anointed One instead of Jesus Christ. But, unfortunately, they didn’t.

So, “Khristos” was not Jesus’ name; rather, it was His descriptor. Every time it was used in the New Testament, it reinforced that Jesus was indeed the Anointed One of the Father, prophesied and promised to come into the world.

So, ultimately, over time, we have substituted the transliterated descriptor word “Christ” as a name for Jesus, instead of using the English translation of the descriptor word which means “the Anointed One”. Using this term “Christ” as a name has led to the loss of the deep meaning of the term.

### **3) “Satan” – The Adversary**

The third instance of substituting a name for the descriptor word of a being in the Bible is the word “Satan”. The English word “Satan” comes directly as a

transliteration of the Hebrew word “שָׂטָן” (satán – Strong’s #7854 – adversary). Throughout the Old Testament, this Hebrew word “satán” was used to refer to adversaries, whether physical or spiritual.

In 1 Kings 11, there is an example of this Hebrew word “satán” being used in reference to a human being.

**1 Kings 11:9** *And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, 10) And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 14

**14)** *And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom. (KJV)*

The Hebrew word for “an adversary” in verse 14 is “שָׂטָן” (satán). So, Hadad the Edomite, a physical man, was a “satán” or adversary to Solomon. Other Old Testament scriptures containing “satán” in reference to a physical man include 1 Kings 5:4; 1 Kings 11:2; and 1 Kings 11:25.

In these occurrences of “satán” in Hebrew, the noun is indefinite, meaning that the noun does not have the word “the” in front of it. Therefore, “satán” by itself is indefinite and would be translated as *an adversary*, which is the way that it was translated into the King James Version in those verses.

However, in reference to the fallen angel who opposes God Our Father and His Son, this same word is used, but it is used with the definite article “the” which is the word “הַ” (ha) in Hebrew. There are 17 occurrences in the Old Testament of the word “הַשָּׂטָן” (hasatán – the adversary) which is a reference to that fallen being.

The first occurrence in the Bible of this term is in Job 2. The angels were presenting themselves before Yehovah, our Heavenly Father, and a certain being came among them.

**Job 2:1** *Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. (KJV)*

The Hebrew word translated into English simply as “Satan” is “הַשָּׂטָן” (hasatán – the adversary). So, in Hebrew, verse 1 simply states – “*Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yehovah, and the adversary came also among them to present himself before Yehovah.*”

So, “satán” in Hebrew was not the name of this fallen angel; rather, it was his descriptor. It described who he was. Every time it was used in the Old Testament, it just reinforced that this fallen angel was indeed the adversary.

The same is true in the New Testament, where the Hebrew descriptor word “hasatán” was transliterated (not translated) into Greek as “ὁ σατανᾶς” (ho satanás). In the grand majority of the usage of “satanás” in the New Testament, the word

appears with the definite article “the” or “ὁ” (ho) in Greek. The term “ὁ σατανᾶς” (ho satanás) appears 29 times in the New Testament, all referring to that specific fallen angel.

However, the usage of (ho satanás) in the New Testament began sometime between the writing of the Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C. and the time of Jesus. It appears nowhere in the Septuagint. So, at sometime during those two centuries, some of the Jews may have begun to equate and use σατανᾶς as the name for the fallen angel who was the adversary.

In the Septuagint, the Hebrew term “hasatán” (the adversary) was translated into the Greek as “ὁ διάβολος” (ho diabolos – Strong’s #1228 – *the slanderer*, “the one who slanders, the one who accuses falsely”). So, the Hebrew meaning of “the adversary” was lost when the Greek translation used the term “ho diabolos” (the slanderer). This term “ho diabolos” is the origin of the Spanish word “el diablo” and the French word “le diable” and ultimately the English word “the devil”. However, the use of the English word “the devil” does not connote the deep meaning of the Greek word and does not describe the characteristic and description of being a slanderous, fallen angel.

In the New Testament, this fallen angel is also referred to as “ὁ πονηρός” (ho ponerós Strong’s #4190 – *the evil one*). This term is used 79 times in the New Testament. In Jesus’ model prayer known today as the Lord’s Prayer, this term was used in the recording of Jesus’ words.

**Matthew 6:13** *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (KJV)*

In this verse, the English word “evil” is actually “ὁ πονηρός” (ho ponerós – *the evil one*) in the Greek. So, Jesus was telling us to pray that God Our Father would keep us and protect us from “the evil one”, which is the fallen angel who is our adversary.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares where Jesus mentions this fallen angel with Jesus’ words being recorded in the Greek as both “ὁ πονηρός” (ho ponerós – the evil one) and “ὁ διάβολος” (ho diabolos – the slanderer).

**Matthew 13:37** *He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;  
38) The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one [ho ponerós – the evil one];  
39) The enemy that sowed them is the devil– [ho diabolos – the slanderer];  
the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. (KJV)*

Another descriptor for this fallen angel appears in 1 Peter 5

**1 Peter 5:8** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: (KJV)*

In verse 8, the word *devil* in the Greek is “διάβολος” (diabolos – “the slanderer”), and *the adversary* in Greek is “ὁ ἀντίδικος” (ho antídikos – Strong’s #476 – “the opponent, the adversary”). In Greek, (ho antídikos) is a direct translation of the

Hebrew “הַשָּׂטָן” (hasatán – the adversary) while “ὁ σατανᾶς” (ho satanás) is a transliteration of the sounds of the Hebrew word “הַשָּׂטָן” (hasatán – the adversary).

The adversary is known by another term in the New Testament. We won't go there but in Revelation 12:10, our adversary is described as “*the accuser of the called-out ones*” who accuses us day and night before our Heavenly Father.

Many scriptures throughout the Bible also refer to this fallen angel by the descriptor words *serpent* and *dragon*.

So, in summary, the fallen angel whom we know by the name Satan was never referred to by the name Satan in the Hebrew but he was referred to again and again in the Bible as *the adversary*, *the slanderer*, *the accuser*, *the serpent*, and *the dragon*.

Again, with the passage of centuries and millennia, the name “Satan” has supplanted the original meaning of the descriptor words which God Our Father had originally caused to be written in the Bible. In giving that fallen angel a “name” (which is not his name), the deep meaning of the descriptor words referring to him has been lost.

So, the fallen angel whom we commonly refer to as “Satan” is in fact our *adversary*. He is our *slanderer*. He is our *accuser*. The adversary wants to destroy us, and he earnestly wants to sabotage our journey and our entry into our Heavenly Father's Kingdom. He does not want us to have eternal life with our Heavenly Father and with Jesus the Anointed One.

The adversary has intentionally blinded humanity to the truth about the identity of our Heavenly Father in the pages of the Bible. He is happy to let people praise and worship Jesus, Allah, Buddha, animals, nature, celestial bodies, and even himself. The one Being that he does not want humanity to ever worship and praise, follow, and obey is God Our Father.

The adversary is the fallen angel who is the direct enemy of God Our Father. Whom did this adversary try to kick off His throne? It wasn't Jesus. The adversary tried to kick God Our Father off His throne.

**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!  
13) 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:  
14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.  
15) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. (KJV)*

In verse 12, the name “Lucifer” does not appear in the Hebrew. The word in Hebrew translated into English as *Lucifer* is “הֵילֵל” (helel – Strong's 1966 – *the shining one*). Lucifer is simply Latin for “light bearer”. Again, this descriptor word in Latin has become another name for the adversary.

Well, things didn't go as planned for the adversary. God Our Father is infinitely more powerful than the adversary. Jesus even records seeing the failure of the adversary's attempt to remove God Our Father from His throne.

**Luke 10:18** *And he [Jesus] said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. (KJV)*

Again, the Greek words for "Satan" in this verse are "ὁ σατανᾶς" (ho satanás), the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew for "the adversary".

Again, this powerful fallen angel is the adversary to our Heavenly Father and to His Son, Jesus the Anointed One. He hates our Heavenly Father and all that He stands for, all that He is, and all that He wants and desires. The adversary hates all that our Heavenly Father loves, and He especially hates the Father's plan of salvation and the very called-out ones of the Father.

Now having defined our terms, for the remainder of the sermon, I would like to explore 5 tools in our adversary's toolbox. These tools he uses to facilitate our sinning against our Heavenly Father in an attempt to prevent us from entering our Heavenly Father's Kingdom and receiving eternal life. Each of these tools builds on the previous one, ultimately causing schisms and painful separation of the called-out ones from our Heavenly Father. Again, the adversary wants to destroy us.

The first tool in our adversary's toolbox is:

### **1) Being offended**

We live a world today which thrives on being "the victim" and on being offended and on finding offense with just about everything. It just seems that people today go looking for being offended and for finding offense in every little thing in life, and what you earnestly look for with all your might, you usually find. As called-out ones of our Father, we are not to be offended. We are not to deliberately and earnestly search for ways to be offended by what someone says or does.

David wrote that we should not be offended.

**Psalms 119:165** *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. (KJV)*

Jesus gave a parable about the sower and the seed, which depicts the calling from our Heavenly Father and our immediate and subsequent responses to that calling.

**Matthew 13:18** *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.*

*19) When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*

*20) But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;*

*21) Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. (KJV)*

The key in verse 21 is that we may endure in the truth for a while, but *by and by*, after a while, whether one week or three decades, we become offended and turn from the truth. Are we easily offended? Do we walk around with emotional chips on our shoulder just waiting for someone to knock it off? Do we even bait people to knock it off?

God Our Father does not want us to feel that we are victims. He does not want us to wallow in our own pity party. His Spirit gives us the power to forge ahead with confidence, looking to the future.

Being offended is looking to the past, bringing up the past over and over and over again. It is thinking about and concentrating on all the hurt that people have done to us, all the wrongs that they have committed against us, and all the injustices that have occurred to us.

The Apostle Paul warned us about looking back to the past.

**Philippians 3:13** *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*

*14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

Again, are we looking backward and continuing to stew on and focus on injustices in the past and continually concentrate on and think about actions and words of others which make us offended. Are we letting the hurtful experiences of our past rule our lives in the present and in the future?

Or do we “let go and let God”. Do we focus on the future, a bright future, leaving in past those things of the past? We have no control over the past. We do have control over the present leading into the future. If we are not careful, being offended can lead to a worse tool in the toolbox.

The second tool in our adversary’s toolbox is:

## **2) Bitterness**

Being offended and letting those offenses fester and grow within us leads to the second tool that the adversary uses very effectively.

The Apostle Paul exhorted us to think on the positive things in our lives.

**Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

*9) Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace [ho theos –the God – God Our Father] shall be with you. (KJV)*

The Apostle Paul is exhorting us to think, meditate, and concentrate in our lives on the good things, on the pure things, on the things which bring us joy, on the things



that are true and honest. He is telling us not to dwell on the negatives in our lives – the hurts, the offenses, the injustices. We are either on an upward spiral, thinking on the good things in life. Praising our Heavenly Father for all the good things and the blessings, and focusing on those positive uplifting things and events in our lives. Or we are on a downward spiral, thinking about all the injustices, all the offenses and all the cruelty by words and by deeds that we have had to endure in our lives.

**Hebrews 12:14** *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

*15) Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; (KJV)*

In verse 15, the Greek word for *looking diligently* is “ἐπισκοπέω” (episcopéo – Strong’s #1983 – “to exercise oversight, care for, properly focus on”). The Apostle Paul is exhorting us to properly focus on the good and positive and righteous things in our lives so that *the root of bitterness* will not take hold in our lives.

Bitterness defiles us. It makes us think wrongly. Instead of finding the good in people and in circumstances, bitterness leads us to concentrate on the bad things, the hurtful things, and the sinful things in life. Bitterness makes us look at a half-full glass of water as being half-empty. It makes us always see the negative of every situation. This attitude is not Godly. It is definitely not a characteristic of our Heavenly Father and of His Son, Jesus.

In Ephesians 4, we read an important instruction from the Apostle Paul.

**Ephesians 4:31** *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (KJV)*

Are we bitter? Are we bitter about the things that have happened to us in the past? Are we willing to let go of those things which have been unjustly done to us and to let go of the bitterness that comes from concentrating on and focusing on those injustices? We must be careful, because bitterness will lead to a worse tool in our adversary’s toolbox.

The third tool in our adversary’s toolbox is:

### **3) Anger**

Anger is a very powerful emotion which can lead people to do unspeakable things that they would never do otherwise. People have killed people in fits of rage. People have said terrible words and horrible things to others in fits of rage that they can never ever really take back. Anger blinds the angry person to where they cannot see at that present moment the damage that they are causing to others.

Are we angry? Is anger a characteristic that others see in us? Are we known for our anger? The Apostle Paul shows that anger is not a fruit of the Spirit of God Our Father. Anger is the fruit of our adversary.

**Galatians 5:19** *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

20) *Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

21) *Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)*

The Greek word for *wrath* in verse 20 is “θυμός” (thumos – Strong’s #2372 – “outburst of anger, outburst of passion”). So, an uncontrolled temper is a fruit of the flesh and will keep us out of our Heavenly Father’s Kingdom.

**Ephesians 4:31** *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (KJV)*

The word for *wrath* in this verse is (thumos – “outburst of anger”). The Apostle Paul is instructing us and warning us to put away all wrath and outbursts of anger and resentment from our lives. Do we wear our emotions on our sleeves? Do we get emotionally upset to the point of losing clarity and focus in our lives? Are we having to apologize again and again for actions we do and words we say to others in a fit of rage or when we are angry?

This is not good. It will keep us out of the Kingdom. It is a major tool in our adversary’s toolbox to keep us out of our Heavenly Father’s Kingdom. This anger will lead to the next tool in the tool box of our adversary.

The fourth tool in our adversary’s toolbox is:

#### **4) Contentiousness**

Are we contentious? Do we enjoy “picking fights” with others? Are we agreeable or are we contentious with one another? Are we known by others for our contentiousness with others? Are enjoyable to be around?

Again, contentiousness is not a fruit of our Heavenly Father’s Spirit. In Romans 2, Paul equates the contentious man with those who do not obey our Father’s truth and those who will be judged.

**Romans 2:6** *Who will render to every man according to his deeds:*

7) *To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:*

8) *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath [thumos – outburst of anger],*

9) *tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; (KJV)*

God Our Father will judge contentious people. Again, it is a characteristic which could keep us out of the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul discusses contentions within the congregation in Corinth.

**1 Corinthians 1:11** *For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (KJV)*

The Greek noun for *contentions* in verse 11 is “ἔρις” (eris – Strong’s #2054 – “contention, strife, wrangling”). So, in Paul’s day, there were contentions and strife among the very called-out ones at that time of the Father. They were not immune to strife and contentiousness at that time, just the same as we are not immune today.

Paul exhorted Titus to avoid strife and contentions with others.

**Titus 3:8** *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

9) *But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions [eris – “contention and strife”], and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. (KJV)*

Again, are we contentious with one another, or are we forgiving of one another, accommodating to one another, generous with one another, patient with one another, and kind and loving to one another? Our Heavenly Father is always looking, always seeing, and always noting what we do. The Apostle Paul instructs us to do something that is the complete counter to contentiousness.

**Romans 12:18** *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (KJV)*

Do we live peaceably with all men, or are we contentious with most men? Contentiousness brings forth another tool in our adversary’s toolbox.

The fifth tool in our adversary’s toolbox is:

## 5) Divisions

In war, a common and effective strategy is “to divide and conquer”. By dividing an enemy army into smaller and smaller groups of soldiers, the smaller groups can be overwhelmed, conquered and/or killed much more easily than if they were in a large force.

In nature, predators usually do not charge into the large flock of sheep or other animal flocks or herds. Instead, predators usually isolate one animal of the flock or herd, or go after one animal who has strayed away from the flock or herd. The same is true in our spiritual warfare that we have against our adversary. Our adversary wants division, he wants us to be strays, he wants us to divide ourselves into ever smaller and smaller and smaller flocks.

The Apostle Paul warns us about divisions within the called-out ones of our Heavenly Father.

**1 Corinthians 1:10** *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

11) *For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (KJV)*

The Apostle Paul continues this warning.

**1 Corinthians 3:1** *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

*2) I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*

*3) For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

*4) For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

*5) Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?*

*6) I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. (KJV)*

Jesus talks about the scattering of His sheep and that there will be people who will scatter the called-out ones.

**Matthew 12:30** *He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. (KJV)*

The Greek verb for *to scatter* in verse 30 is “σκορπίζω” (skorpízo – Strong’s #4650 – “to disperse, to scatter abroad as in sheep”).

Jesus uses an analogy to show that the devil scatters the called-out ones of our Heavenly Father.

**John 10:11** *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

*12) But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. (KJV)*

Jesus is stating that He is the Good Shepherd. In this analogy, the wolf is the adversary, the devil. It is the devil who scatters the called-out ones of our Heavenly Father. God Our Father hates division. As Proverbs 6:19 shows, those who sow division and discord among the called-out ones are an abomination to the Father.

Are we divisive in our actions and in our speech? Do our words to others heal or do they open old wounds? Are we promoting further divisions among the called-out ones of our Heavenly Father? If we are, we are being effectively used by our adversary for his purposes and he is using one of his biggest tools in his toolbox.

In today’s sermon, we have explored the many characteristics of our adversary, the devil. We have explored that Satan is not his name, but rather, it is the very descriptor word – the adversary – used by God Our Father to refer to him in Hebrew. We also explored five tools in our adversary’s toolbox that he uses against us.

1) **Being offended**. Are you looking to be offended each and every day? Are you looking to be a victim of others? Are you putting yourself in a position where you will be a victim so that later you can be offended? This is the beginning of a downward spiral that ultimately leads to not entering our Heavenly Father’s Kingdom.

2) **Bitterness**. Are you bitter? Bitterness is an emotional state which sucks all joy out of life. Bitterness comes from focusing on unresolved offenses and hurts done to us by others. We must overcome any bitterness in our lives by using the Father's Spirit to resolve these hurts and offenses with others or just with ourselves.

3) **Anger**. Are you angry? Do you allow yourself to get into fits of rage against others? Are we known for our anger? Anger is not a fruit of our Father's Spirit. Anger and fits of rage can make us irrational and do irrational things that we normally would not do. Anger also opens ourselves up to demonic influences against the wishes of our Heavenly Father.

4) **Contentiousness**. Are you contentious? Are you always picking a fight with someone? Do you always have to win? Can you calmly discuss topics with others, or do you use the discussion to pick a fight? Contentious people will not be in the Kingdom. God Our Father wants us to live peaceably with all men, if at all possible.

5) **Divisions**. Are you guilty of causing divisions among the called-out ones of our Heavenly Father? Do you let disagreements grow into factions and then into divisions where people don't even talk to each other anymore? Our adversary revels in seeing this occurring among the called-out ones in the Church and it saddens our Heavenly Father. By our actions, our words, and our attitudes, are we guilty of contributing to the further division and scattering of the sheep of our Heavenly Father and of our elder brother, Jesus the Anointed One?

In conclusion, we will read a section of scripture, parts of which, we have read earlier in the sermon – Ephesians. The Apostle Paul sums up this sermon in his exhortations to the Ephesian brethren.

**Ephesians 4:21** *If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:*

22) *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

23) *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

24) *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

25) *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*

26) *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*

27) *Neither give place to the devil.*

28) *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

29) *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

30) *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

31) *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:*

32) *And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (KJV)*

We have a spiritual adversary, a very powerful fallen and evil angel. He is the enemy of God Our Father and of Jesus, His Son. He is against all that God Our Father stands for and represents. He hates God Our Father with a total irrational conviction. He desperately wants the Father's plan of salvation to fail and we are a main part now of that plan of salvation.

Our adversary wants us to fail. He is not our friend. He is not our ally. He is not ever to be trusted. He is our enemy. His name is not Satan, but satán is just a descriptor in Hebrew showing exactly what he is – *the adversary*.

In the few weeks remaining before Passover, let's examine ourselves on where we are on our journey to our Father's Kingdom. Are we diligently striving to overcome our weaknesses and our sins so that we will be able to enter our Father's Kingdom? Where are we eliminating from our lives the tools in our adversary's toolbox:

*Being offended, Bitterness, Anger, Contentiousness, Divisions.*

Are we putting those evils out of our lives? Are we turning to our Heavenly Father and His Son in times of weakness? Are we continually saying "no!" to sin and "yes!" to our Father's way of life? If we are, we will be resisting our adversary, the devil.

Brethren, are you resisting the adversary?