

Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT ESTABLISHED 1786 MISSIONARY

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

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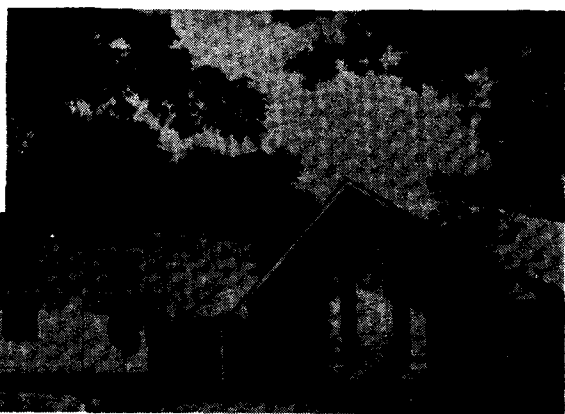
No. 4

SATAN USING PETER TO TEMPT CHRIST

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. 16: 21-23).

The passage before us is fraught with interest and filled with lessons we need to ponder. It shows how Satan used Peter to tempt Jesus Christ. Across the pages of history moves a sinister figure who has many aliases or names. He is called Satan--hater and accuser. He is also called the devil--adversary or opponent. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seek-

ing whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8); "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan" (I Tim. 5:14,15). He is called the lie just as Jesus Christ is called the truth because he is the personification of a lie. He is a liar and father of lies. He invented the principle of falsehood. He began his career on earth by lying to Eve. And she fell for his lie and brought ruin to the race by getting Adam to disobey God. Satan started the sin of murder--the first murder ever committed was done by his instigation. We read that Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother (I John 3:12).



Location: 3.3 miles out Bryan Station Road. Right on Briar Hill Road.

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| Sunday School | 9:45 a.m. |
| Worship Service | 11:00 a.m. |
| Evening Service | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting | 7:30 p.m. |

Air-Conditioned

Nursery Provided

Pastor Alfred M. Gormley
Ph. 299-1430 347 Sierra Drive
Lexington, Ky. 40505

This strange person was one of God's creatures, but he usurped the prerogative of the Creator. He wanted to be like the Most High and exalt his throne above the stars of God. He belonged to the angelic order of creatures and must have been their chief and leader. And as leader he drew many of the angels after him when he broke with God.

Being expelled from heaven, he wormed his way into the garden of Eden and turned man--made in the image and likeness of God--against God. He conquered the first Adam by his subtle temptation, but he failed with the last Adam, Jesus Christ. Christ withstood his temptations and went on to the cross where he destroyed the works of the devil. Satan caused the first Adam to give up God's word, but Jesus Christ, the last Adam, held on to it. Jesus Christ exalted God's word. He said man is not to live by bread alone, but by the word of God. And when Satan tried to get Christ to fall down and worship him, he replied, "It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God." And when Satan tried to get Christ to throw himself from the pinnacle as a sensational stunt to prove that God would take care of him, He replied again, "It is written that you shall not tempt the Lord your God."

Satan has a twofold objective. He wants to slander God and ruin man. To do this he tries to keep men in his clutches and when he loses one to Christ, he still tries to use him against God. Human nature has been enslaved to Satan. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:24-26). When he loses a man to Christ, he loses him forever so far as causing him to perish. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27,28).

But we have here an illustration of his using a man after he is saved. Peter was a saved man and an apostle, but Satan uses him to tempt Jesus Christ to stay away from the cross. Satan seemed to know why Jesus Christ came into this world. He knew who he was and why and how he came. He knew he came to die on the cross and that his death would mean his defeat. And so he is determined to keep him from the cross. We can see Satan's hand in using King Herod in his effort to slay Jesus while he was a baby. And when Jesus entered his ministry, Satan's temptation was for the same purpose. He offered him all kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship him. This would keep him from the cross. This would be a short cut to the kingdom. This would be an easy way to glory. But on that occasion Jesus said, "Get thee behind me Satan."

And Satan is working through Peter for the same purpose--to keep him from the cross. Jesus had been telling his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed and be raised again the third day. And Peter takes him aside and rebukes him, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." And Jesus sees the hand of Satan and says, "Get thee behind me Satan."

Christ said to Peter, "Your idea of what shall happen to me did not come from

God." This was soon after Peter had confessed Jesus as the Christ, the son of the living God. And at that time Christ said, "flesh and blood did not teach you this but my Father in heaven." This shows how the same person may be under divine influence at one time and under Satanic influence soon after.

Peter was a saved man and an apostle. He was a friend of Christ. He loved the Lord. He thought he was doing right in protesting his death. But suppose Peter had had his way--suppose there had been no cross--suppose Christ had been spared all the pain and grief he had predicted for himself. Then there would have been no salvation for Peter or any of us.

We see here a prevalent error of that hour. Even those who believed Jesus to be the Christ or Messiah had a false conception of his Messiahship. Peter and others thought of him as a political Messiah giving earthly benefits to Jews and overthrowing Gentile nations. They thought of a conquering Messiah and not a suffering one. This was why he charged his disciples to tell no man he was the Christ. With their misconception of the Christ, they would fanatically try to make him an earthly king.

It was at this time he began to instruct them about his coming death. This was six to nine months before his crucifixion. He not only shows them his future suffering on earth, but also what others will have to suffer who follow him. The religion of Jesus Christ is not meant to insure a life of ease and pleasure here and now, but to insure an eternal future of glory in heaven. The man who tries to save everything here and now will lose everything in eternity. Just as it was a cross before the crown with Jesus Christ, it is to be the same with us. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. If we take up our cross, he will hand us our crown when he comes to settle with us. It is for work and suffering we are to be rewarded, and in that day all earthly badges and honours will fade away.

Jesus had not told them these things sooner because he was with them. Of course, in his early ministry there had been veiled hints and references to persecutions and trials, but there had been no need of much reference because he was with them and had been the recipient of all opposition and abuse. While he was with them he would take care of them as a hen cares for her brood.

So our Lord had a loving reason for keeping some things from them until a given time. Have not all of us felt and even said, "If I had known all this before, I do not think I could have lived to face it?" Our Lord knew just when to break the news to them. He is going away and it is time to tell them plainly of the persecutions that will confront them. He does not want them to stumble through surprise. He proceeds on the principle that to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Peter fell into the same kind of sin that was natural to him. His tendency was still to err in a certain direction. He always blurted out what he felt. He was an extrovert--what he was quickly showed itself. He was prone to correct and even rebuke the Saviour. When Christ spoke of his purpose to die, Peter said, "Be it far from thee Lord." And for this Christ rebuked him, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

What were your faults before conversion? Guard against them now. Here is where your danger will be. Regeneration does not make us self-sufficient; if it did we would not have to look to Christ or the Holy Spirit for help. We are never confirmed in holiness in this life; we must always look to and depend upon the Holy Spirit. In conversion we received a new and better self, but the old self is there still. Your weak points will still be your weak points. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:10, 11).

—By the late C. D. Cole