

Church of God, The Eternal

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Greetings Brethren:

It is time now to address some of the things that might come to us unawares. Temptation from Satan might come to us, but we are not aware of it. We may even have yielded to his temptation, be sinning and not know it.

Temptation might appear nice, good in our eyes or life, but it is not nice in God's eyes. As the saying goes, deceived people do not know they are deceived. The Church of God is warned not to be deceived. This warning would not be necessary if a church member never could be deceived. But this warning is necessary because you may be caught off-guard and in a wrong spirit or attitude without knowing it.

Before we were converted, Satan had deceived each one of us in one way or the other. In fact, he has deceived the whole world and has blinded the minds of all nonbelievers.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world (*New King James Version* throughout unless otherwise stated, Revelation 12:9).

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe (2 Corinthians 4:3–4).

Just how has he done this? Not only by the false religions of this world that appear right, or by politics and worldly governments, or by secret societies, lodges, fraternities and by false science, but above all he deceived each of us by appealing to our carnal desires. Before we were converted, he led us to accuse our neighbors, friends, brethren, and to talk behind the backs of others. The devil encourages us become dejected and discouraged, seducing us to give up on life, making it appear to be the right thing to do.

"There is a way that seems right to a man. But its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12). But has Satan lost track of us since our conversion? Is he unable to deceive us any

longer? No! Many of us are not aware of Satan's devices and wiles, and are being caught off-guard and may not even know it. The Apostle Paul was not ignorant of Satan or his devices. We need to learn of these satanic devices.

Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices [some still are] (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Everyone has problems. At times, some blame God or even brethren in the church for these problems; we are not in a physical battle only, but in a spiritual battle.

The Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 6:12:

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (*King James Version*).

When Satan hinders us today, we often blame physical conditions only. Some who are delayed or are prevented from going to services on the Sabbath or to one of the Holy Days, blame the weather, car trouble or a host of other things. Satan is not recognized as a hindrance.

Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us (1 Thessalonians 2:18).

Satan is angry with God's church as John reveals in Revelation 12:12. This is God's church—the church that keeps the commandments of God and has the testimony of Jesus Christ. Satan is not angry with those who are still deceived by his many devices, but he is angry with those keeping the commandments of God.

He is angry with the church of God because he knows that he has but a short time left. He will do all he can to hinder this work, to hinder any of those in God's church. It is his desire to sift us as wheat too, or to divide us against each other. He has done that, and he might do that in the future.

Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat (Luke 22:31).

How can we recognize the fruit of Satan? We can recognize the work of God by the fruits. They are the fruits of the Holy Spirit of God, but the fruits of Satan are entirely different. Satan is called the accuser of our brethren, who accuses them before our God day and night.

An example of Satan's accusation is found in Zechariah 3:1. "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him" (*KJV*).

Satan can change a positive thing to become negative. He can blind the eyes so that any good things you have done cannot be remembered. He can make you to appear as a black goat among the sheep. His business is to accuse brethren; he can make someone's mistake to appear as big as Mount Everest.

Satan does not appear in bodily form to accuse us before our brethren for he knows that church members then would not be deceived by his devices. They then would know that the lies were coming from Satan.

Satan puts thoughts in the mind, brother against brother. They appear very logical and right in every respect. The thought of accusation seems entirely correct, and yet it has been devised by "the father of lies." He has twisted the facts in our minds so that they appear logical and right.

Here is another example of Satan and his accusations back in the Garden of Eden: "And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said . . .'" (Genesis 3:1). Here Satan accused God. He was putting forth wrong motives to Eve. He wanted Eve to think that she did not hear truly what God said, and what Satan said appeared right in every respect to Eve. She was deceived, yet she was wrong.

Has a negative thought ever come to your mind about a brother? Has your brother said certain things that your mind, influenced by Satan or his demons, reasoned as having a wrong motive. Satan may even lead you to twist Scripture in accusing your brother, just as he attempted to use Scripture to tempt Christ.

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down" (Matthew 4:5–6).

Satan used the word "if" to confuse Christ. He thought Jesus would doubt that He was the Son of God.

Satan accused Job before God, saying he only loved and feared Him because of all that he had. Read Job chapters one and two. Satan entered into Job's wife to make Job turn against God, but Job did not.

Satan can use your spouse to accuse you and make you turn against God. You might think it is not possible for Satan to put such thoughts into your mind, but let us see what the Scripture says about this.

"Now Satan stood up against Israel" (1 Chronicles 21:1). He is standing up against God's church today, against you and me! He stood against the writer of this newsletter in another way. He provoked David to number Israel, a great sin in God's sight. How did he do it? He first put a thought into David's mind. This thought appeared right and logical to David. It was a way that seemed right to him. There were probably hundreds of reasons why it was the right thing to do, and yet it was wrong, it was sin. Satan still does this today.

Are you aware of such devices?

In John 13:2, Satan put betrayal into the heart of Judas. It seemed right in the sight of Judas to do that:

And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him.

Satan or his demons put wrong thoughts into our minds and instead of putting these out immediately, some continue to think about them and dwell upon them. Then this idea within us grows and brings forth bad fruit, sin and evil.

What are we to do?

Paul has a word for us in 2 Corinthians 10:5:

Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Another temptation is discouragement. If we are obedient to God in everything and yet become hopelessly discouraged, Satan has won his battle. He has caused some to come to the point where they no longer even want to live, where they feel it would be better to die since that would give them rest from their problem rather than to continue on under such a terrific load.

Discouragement came to Job after Satan tempted him for days with applications of severe boils or ulcers, after he had taken away everything else including his children.

If you were Job, what would you say or do? Would you accuse God or yourself? Would you recognize that it is Satan doing that to you?

In the third chapter of that book we find how Job became discouraged. He was sorry for the day he was born. Wishing he had never been born, he said that he preferred death so that he might rest.

It is vital that we recognize the works of Satan and his demons; otherwise how can we fight against them? We should command him as Jesus told him in Matthew 16:23: "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me" And in James 4:7, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Finally, we must put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:13–18). Do you have the truth of God, or are you deceived by new-found "truth"? Do you have faith? It does not come twice, it comes once. Do you have the helmet of salvation, sword of the spirit and breastplate of righteousness?

In addition to all these, pray always and watch. As you look back now, you may see where Satan has used you with his lies and accusations. You may have falsely accused your brother in your mind, even possibly telling others. That must be behind you now! Satan can put into your thoughts not to forgive your brother who has wronged you, and you will think it is not necessary to forgive.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matthew 6:14–15).

If Satan told you it is wrong to forgive your brother, he has put that thought into your mind without you knowing. Jesus has something here for us: "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses" (Matthew 18:35).

So we have to be aware of all of Satan's devices, especially among the brethren. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and returns to you saying, "I repent," you must forgive him (Luke 17:4).

Please go back to read the *Monthly Letter* of March 2006. It talks about how we should forgive our brethren, and if we fail to do that, we will not enter into the Kingdom of God. Satan can cause you not to want to forgive your brother or your spouse.

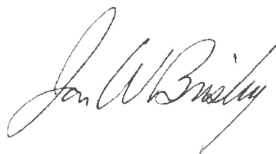
This is the time we must be aware of some splinter groups who have been accusing us in many ways, but God has been gracious to this remnant body for all these years. We must pull up our socks in the final lap to the Kingdom.

You should not be deceived any longer. You should recognize these satanic devices because we are living in Satan's world. Can we say with the Apostle Paul that "we are not ignorant of Satan or his devices"? With the help of God, we can be overcomers. The hard way is the only way out.

Your servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isaya Owak', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Isaya Owak

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon W. Brisby', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Jon W. Brisby