

# **Simon, Satan, And The Savior**

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Luke 22:31-32

The passage of scripture quoted above introduces us to the three main forces which are at work in the earthly and spiritual realm. Jesus spoke the above statement to indicate to Peter that he would betray Him three times that night. Peter, not realizing the power of Jesus' prophecy, said, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death" in v. 30. Certainly, Peter felt as if he were up to the temptation of betraying the Lord.

If each of us were put in the same position as Peter, we would probably not hesitate to answer the Lord in the same way he did. However, we all have to realize that we are nothing more than weak human beings. If anyone is ever going to fight sin, they must have a good concept of the forces which work both in their favor and the forces which work against them. In order for you to be better prepared, we will examine these forces.

## ***Simon – The Man***

Simon Peter is the perfect representative of all mankind. He, like the rest of us, was a mixture of both good and evil, weakness and strength. Every human being has a conflict raging within them. It is the conflict of our flesh and spirit (Romans 8:5-9). Living under the Old Law, Paul fought this same battle (Romans 7:15-25). Our flesh brings us down to the most carnal level and drives our desire to sin. On the other hand, our spirit or "conscience" feeds the realm of thought which elevates us to the level of spiritual fellowship with God through obedience to His holy will. It boils down to a conflict between two very powerful forces: one which wishes to destroy us and one which tries to save us. In Romans 7, Paul gained the victory through Jesus, as we will see in a moment.

## ***Satan – The Enemy***

First Peter 5:8 says, "... your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." I have often wondered if Peter had the incident in Luke 22 in the back of his mind when he wrote this statement. Satan desired to sift Simon like wheat. This meant that he would try to aggravate Simon's faith so as to overthrow it. He had no interest in Simon's salvation. He wants all men, especially the children of God, for the same purpose. Peter used the word "seeking" in 1 Peter 5:8 to mean that

Satan was thoughtfully and carefully looking for someone to devour (cp. Matthew 6:33; 7:7). This was not a casual glance. Satan is constantly seeking you!

### ***Jesus – The Savior***

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Jesus was indeed man's friend and intercessor. Every single work that Satan can accomplish can be counteracted by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. He prayed for Peter as an illustration of His intercessory work (Hebrews 7:25). Jesus was the Lamb that has taken away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Notice that Jesus commanded Peter to strengthen his brethren after Satan was finished sifting him. Peter fulfilled that very mission by warning Christians since that time about the incredible power of Satan.

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