

“Then Cometh The Devil”

Introduction. In 1942, Patton was preparing to face Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, Germany’s most decorated military leader. Rommel was preparing to launch a massive assault on Allied troops in North Africa. His specialty was tank warfare. But Patton’s intelligence service had intercepted a German radio transmission bearing news of the impending attack. On the morning of the battle, Patton is awakened by his aides. A book lies open on his night stand. Its title: *The Tank in Attack*, by Erwin Rommel. The Allied forces sprung their surprise, and executed a successful assault on the enemy. They were victorious because Patton had read Rommel’s own book!

How do you win a battle? You become familiar with the enemy’s tactics, gain knowledge of his ways, and study his personality and strategies in previous battles. We all know our enemy is the devil. In the parable of the sower, when the seed was sown in the way side, the devil took it out of the heart (Luke 8:11-12). What are his tactics? What is his strategy to ensnare us?

I. The Devil Is An Active, Aggressive Adversary

- A. He is a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8-9).
- B. He is the old serpent (Revelation 12:9; 20:2).
- C. He is the accuser of brethren (Revelation 12:10).
- D. He has “wiles” or schemes and fiery darts (Ephesians 6:11, 16).
- E. He is the ruler of darkness (Ephesians 6:12).
- F. Man can know about his schemes even though he is deceiving (2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:3).

II. What Does The Devil Do?

- A. He hinders (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; Acts 17:13).
- B. He blinds people to the truth (2 Corinthians 4:4; 11:3; Ephesians 4:17-19).
- C. He ensnares and captures (2 Timothy 2:26).

III. When Does The Devil Come?

- A. When we appear invulnerable (Genesis 3:1-6; Luke 8:11-12; Galatians 2:11-14; 1 Corinthians 10:12).
- B. When we are weak and weary (Matthew 4:2-3).
- C. When we prosper (Deuteronomy 8:11-13; 2 Chronicles 26:16; Luke 12:15-21; 1 Timothy 6:6-12).
- D. When we are poor (Proverbs 30:8-9; Job 2:9).
- E. When we are persecuted (Matthew 5:43-45; 2 Corinthians 6:3-10; James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:14-16).
- F. When we are convicted of sin (Matthew 14:6-11; Luke 22:31-34; Matthew 26:56; Acts 24:25; 26:28; cp. 2 Samuel 12:7, 13).

Conclusion. Let’s not be “ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11). You defeat the devil by learning his devices, observing his tactics, and recognizing his schemes. After all that, follow the advice of James and Peter (James 4:7-8; 2 Peter 3:14-18). Take up the word of God and learn from it (John 6:44-45; Hebrews 4:12).