

Doctrinal Summary of Satan & Company: A Skillful and Methodical Enemy

In Ephesians 6:11 the apostle Paul identifies Satan & Company as attacking God and His kingdom through systematic methodologies.

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”

The word “schemes” is translated from the Koine Greek word μεθοδείας (“me-tho-dei-ahs”) which more literally means, “systematic procedures for treating a matter in order to bring about a desired result, based on response.” Systematic procedures are ones which work in a step-by-step manner, one building upon the previous. The procedures used by Satan & Company are designed to bring about a specific intended or desired result in those they are attacking. As such, the procedure used is based on response to whatever result they are attempting to accomplish and to the individual upon whom the procedure is being used. Some procedures work better on certain individuals than others. This is evident especially in regards to temptation as seen in James 1:14.

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”

It is each one’s own specific lust that is the agent under which temptation occurs. The source of temptation is Satan & Company (cf. James 1:13-16) who employ their systematic procedures against their target to entice the individual to disobey and act independently of God. For this reason, the temptations of some are not the temptations of others. Satan & Company do not use attacks that are not likely to be effective in the one they are targeting. The enticement provided appeals to the specific lust pattern of the individual being attacked. The goal is to bring forth the natural, carnal desire of the individual from within and build it through that which is being offered to the point that the free will of the individual consents to consume what is being offered through experience with it in some form or manner. This is true whether in temptation or any other of the methodical strategies of Satan & Company.

Satan & Company are shrewd in which scheme they employ, and against which target upon whom they employ it. God reveals this in Ezekiel 28:17

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.”

The word “wisdom” is translated from the Biblical Hebrew word חָכְמָה (“chahc-maht”) which more literally means, “possessing practical skill in technical matters that allow one to understand how to accomplish a goal or objective.” It carries with it the idea that one knows the ins and outs of how things work and is skilled at interacting with something in such a way that allows them to accomplish their objective. While Lucifer’s wisdom was corrupted, it was not lost. It became used by him to carry out rebellious activity rather than to serve God in the position for which he was created.

The attacks of Satan & Company are surgical procedures selected specifically to accomplish their specific objective against the specific individual being attacked. Furthermore, they are carried out with the skill necessary to be successful. But, God has provided the believer armor which is able to be put on for the purpose of standing firm against these schemes (cf. Eph. 6:10-17).