



# Speaking of the Devil

**Satan is not all he's cracked up to be. He's definitely more powerful than we humans, but he is no match for Jesus Christ.**

**C**ontrary to what many might think, the devil doesn't get a lot of press in the Bible. But Jesus does mention him in the first parable recorded in the book of Mark (Mark 4:1-15). Jesus compares the ways people receive the gospel with the ways sown seeds grow. His first example is that of freshly sown seeds being devoured by birds before they have time to take root. Just as birds eat some of the sown seeds, so Satan comes to take away the word of truth that some people have received.

We notice right away that Satan doesn't come to take the truth away from everyone who receives it. We are not told why Satan comes to some and not others, but we should note that the fact that Satan takes away the truth one time, doesn't mean he can do it every time.

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## God vs. Satan?

Have you ever seen a gospel tract depicting a battle between Satan and God for the souls of humans? Sometimes they are in comic book form, showing a demon sitting on one shoulder of a person and an angel on the other shoulder. All rests on the person's decision, and the two spirits do all they can to sway the person to their side. It belongs in a comic book because it is a parody of the truth. Satan is not on a par with God, as though he has the power to prevent God from his redemptive purpose for humanity.

In other words, there is no battle between God and Satan for your soul. That battle, such as it was, was won before the foundation of the world and was made plain to the world in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Satan was defeated long before you were born. He is a "lame duck" ruler. His days as corrupt, bully "prince of this world" (John 12:31) are numbered. He doesn't have the

last word about you or about anyone else; Jesus does. And Jesus' word for humans is "Yes."

Satan is our enemy, to be sure. Peter tells us that he "prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). We are no match for a lion, roaring or not, and we are no match for the devil. But Jesus is. Jesus has already defanged and de-clawed this "lion."

So Peter goes on to say, "Resist him [the devil], standing firm in the faith..." (verse 9). Confronted by faith in Jesus, the devil has no choice but to run.

Peter is talking about faith in the Son of God. When we stand with Jesus, trusting him, we stand also in his victory over the devil.

## Not a Quitter

"As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them" (Mark 4:15). But what happens next? Does Jesus throw up his hands, sigh heavily and shake his head in defeat? Does he say, "Well, you got me on that one, Satan."

Jesus, who tells us to forgive without limit, doesn't fail to forgive without limit himself. He is the one who declared, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32).

In the parable, Satan takes away the word that was planted in the person. We are not told in the parable what the sower does about that. But we are told in the Bible that "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17).

Jesus is a sower who does not give up. The fact that Satan might take away the word from a person doesn't mean that Jesus won't sow in that place again.

Sometimes, in fact, he might sow in such a place through you.

May the message of Easter bring you peace and faith in your Savior. □

—J. Michael Feazell