

Our Adversary the Devil: His Methods, Cont

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[0 : 00] turn in your Bibles to start to 1st Chronicles chapter number 21. 1st Chronicles 21 is where we're going to pick up to start. We are studying the fifth portion of this series on our adversary the devil. We are in the section now of his methods and how it is that he's going about to oppose God, his creator. And we've learned a few things already about his methods. Number one being that he uses deception and I believe that's a big one.

And then last Sunday we studied how he uses temptation. And maybe one of the greatest points of that I think is kind of obvious from what you've been around the Bible, been around Christianity at all. You understand the idea of temptation and the devil tempting or luring.

But I also try to stress there's other ways to look at that. There's other means of temptation. And one of them we saw in 1st Thessalonians 3 was when there's afflictions and trials the tempter's tempting them to quit and to give up and just to say forget this. And life's easier without trying to fight this sin or fight these adversaries or the opposition of the world and getting up and going to church and reading my Bible and praying. And he could just tempt you to give in and let it go and just let happen what happens. And that's a real temptation. And I showed you a few other areas. Galatians 6, 1st Chronicles 7 or Corinthians 7 where temptation shows up in some different avenues. It's not always just dangling money or dangling lusts or things that will attract you in front of you. So now we're going to get into what I'll say the third method that Satan uses that we find in the Bible. In 1st Chronicles chapter 1 or 21 verse 1 you'll see that he uses provocation.

Notice this in verse number 1. The Bible says, And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. Now before we go any further, let's pray together.

Our Father, we come before you humbly and we bow before your throne and ask that you'll help us in this time. Help us to understand the words of this Bible to give us some light into this battle that we face and that we fight and our enemy and adversary, the devil. Lord, I pray you'll give us ears to hear and hearts that will receive truth and free us from distractions and things that would cause us to not understand or not care.

[2 : 49] And God give us light, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. So provocation. You see it's in the verse, Satan stood up, he provoked David to number Israel. This is one of David's few sins mentioned in the Bible.

And it's one that goes through the entirety of this chapter. And it was, it cost a lot of people their lives. And we read that Satan's the one provoking.

Now to provoke is to motivate, is to stir. If I could say that tempting is kind of that luring, like pulling you in, then I think provocation is pushing you. It's the other side of it. They're similar, it's kind of the goal, but I think they're a little bit different there.

And so provoking is to prompt, to push, to stir, to motivate, to do something. Many, many times the word in the Bible is associated with God being provoked to anger. It's all over, the majority of the usage of the word provoke is God's being provoked to anger because of the sin of his people.

And their rejection of him and it just, it fires him up to see what they're choosing and what they're doing. And so God gets provoked to anger. Several times he's provoked to jealousy.

[4 : 07] And the Bible says that we are to provoke one another unto love and to good works. And that's a good idea is that we push each other and push each other to grow and move forward. But here we got Satan provoking David.

This is one of his methods of opposing God. So what's he doing? Why is he provoking David? Well, it says at the beginning of the verse that Satan stood up against Israel.

Now we ought to consider that and understand something. If we could get a, I'd say a bigger picture of what's happening here and kind of look at this, this opposition from Satan against God, whatever God's doing, whatever God's will is, whatever he's seeking to, his plan to see unfold on this planet.

One thing he's done is he's promised some major things to Abraham. and even coming in through Moses with this law, he's, it's obvious to Satan God is working through this people.

I mean, there's, it's not being hidden at all. This is wide open. God loves that people. He's using that people. He's blessed and sanctified them and set them apart from all the rest of the nations.

[5 : 15] And so God's going to do something. He's promised the Messiah, a deliverer, would come through that people. He's said it several times. Now, Satan knows this.

Now, considering this people under Moses and his leading them out, it's like, okay, God's doing something here. He had them oppressed in Egypt and now God's delivered them.

But all through that wilderness, that people was a people of disbelief, a people that chided against their leader and tempted God in doing so. They were never content.

They lusted for other things. The Lord provided and protected them and they weren't happy with it. And so, he's looking at these people like they're just easy pickings.

They're not really worth anything. And then Joshua leads them into the promised land and they don't even obey completely what the command was in getting rid of their enemies. And so, they're not very established.

[6 : 11] They're in the land. God brought them into the land that he promised Abraham. He's fulfilling it. But I don't, these people aren't that big of a threat. So, there they are in Judges. In hundreds of years, this people is just falling on their faces after these idols and other gods of the lands around them.

And the Lord just gets so upset, fired up with it. He just, he keeps destroying them. He keeps punishing them. He keeps, remember the cycle we discussed? It just goes over. Hundreds of years this is happening.

This is the people God is seeking to bless and to bring this promised deliverer from. And they can't even stand on their own two feet. And I don't think Satan's too worried about it. Then they finally get a king.

And looking at the way that transpired, that wasn't of the Lord. That was the people saying, we want a king and getting on Samuel and then the Lord saying, okay, give him a king.

And Satan's probably thinking this is a good thing. And if we would go through the people in this, in all of this history, even within Israel, the types of the Antichrist are there. I know it's a deeper study, but they're popping up all over the place in this time.

[7 : 17] Now, then comes David. And this is where I see Satan getting involved now. Because David's a man after God's own heart. David's a man that fell, but David repents.

David worships God. Saul was a mess. David now, he's got it together. He's got a good man on the throne and it's getting established. And not just the throne and unifying the country, but now he's pushing back all the enemies and this thing has gone farther than it's ever gone under David.

And now David has peace in his kingdom. And this man, he speaks at the mouth of the Lord.

He writes psalms. His heart is devoted to his God. He spends time in communion with him in devotions, if you want to call it. This is nothing like the previous king before him.

This man is a holy, spiritual man before his God. And so Satan says, oh boy. So he sees God working. He sees perhaps that this plan, these promises of hundreds of years, generations ago is starting to come to pass.

[8 : 28] And then it says in verse 1, Satan stood up against Israel. He's going to do something to get God to punish and to curse this people. He's done it in the past and here he is. Things are going a little too well.

So Satan sees God's plan coming together, things stabilizing out and he decided he's going to oppose it. He's going to oppose the will of God. That's what he's doing. So he provokes the king in verse 1 to number Israel.

What's he doing? He's doing something against the law. He's doing something that's searching out his own glory and his own power and filling his heart with the knowledge of his greatness and of his strength.

Satan is pushing or provoking David to find, to be lifted up in pride, to hear of his greatness and of his magnitude. It sounds exactly what Satan did before he was cast out and destroyed.

He should know what he's talking about. He knows how God will react if a leader gets lifted up and exalted and so he pushes David, provokes David to get to that position. There's other cases of this in the Bible and I won't take you to them but you know Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel chapter 4.

[9 : 42] You remember how his heart got lifted up looking at his kingdom that he has built for himself and it's that picture of a tree that gets cut down because his heart was lifted up.

You see it in Isaiah chapter 10. There's an Assyrian that comes in and defeats some nations because God's punishing some nations and punishing Israel and the Assyrian says look what I did.

Look what my hand hath done. And then the Lord says oh no, I've got to cut you down too. And you'll see this all through there when a leader gets lifted up God's got to put him in his place. He has to abase him.

We saw that back in our previous study with the devil in Job chapter 40. 41 maybe. So the Proverbs says this in 25, 27 for men to search their own glory is not glory.

And the Bible says God resisteth the proud. And so Satan is provoking David to get to that place where God will resist him and God will punish him and put him down and destroy what is coming together and seeming to start to stabilize out as a kingdom.

[10 : 52] I think when we look at this thought and I mean really Satan stood up against Israel and he provoked David to number them. To get to the to put down the nation he goes to their head.

And I think it's quite unsettling to consider that Satan can work unnoticed and can work in a spiritual man a man that sits and communes with God and loves his God and walks with him.

He can plant thoughts into his mind he can lead him he can provoke him to do something that would be against God and that spiritual man that holy man that walks and communes with God thinks that's a good idea and decides to do it.

And maybe the scripture as it should if you've got the scripture you go in it should ring in your ears it should check you it should say wait a minute the word of God says you're not to do this and yet even a godly spiritual man a leader can be provoked by the devil and I think unnoticed just not have knowledge that there's a spirit that is pushing me to do something I shouldn't be doing now it can be noticed and we can notice this if we're going to be in tune with the Lord and if we're going to keep our hearts humble before his word and before him in prayer he'll show you he will shed light the word of God is a lamp unto your feet it will shed light on what you're about to do if it's not of the Lord there won't be peace about it but if you won't consult the Lord and his word when you're about to make a decision you better be careful you might be provoked by another spirit and he's just as alive today he's our adversary and here he is standing up against Israel as an adversary and going to David now it's hard to say

I think it's hard to even imagine how often this method of provocation is being implemented by the devil this thing here in this chapter got David and it got all of Israel into a very terrible place I mean thousands and thousands are being murdered being as a punishment for David's sin and I think the devil there is probably like that's what you get that's what we wanted to see happen God's against his man God's against him and he's punishing and destroying them just look at him go and what's God what's his plan it's to oppose God that's what it is and this is one of his methods it makes me wonder how many messes happen in our lives and in the lives of individual believers and homes Christian families or churches when messes take place it makes me wonder how many of those are because the enemy is provoking unknowingly to us but he's there he's pushing he's doing something because he knows the result of it if we take the bait another case is Job while you're here you're not too far away just flip over to Job chapter 1 provocation is a method the adversary will use to oppose God it's not the same as tempting it's got a little different spin to it but the goal is the same is to oppose what God's will is so in Job chapter 1 we're very familiar with this we've come through this already just notice the statement here in verse 8 where the Lord rebukes Satan and the Lord said unto Satan hast thou considered my servant Job there's none like him in the earth a perfect and an upright man one that feareth God and escheweth evil then Satan answered the Lord and said does Job fear God for naught hast thou not or hast not thou made an hedge about him and about his house and about all that he hath on every side thou hast blessed the work of his hands and his substance is increased in the land but put forth thine hand now and touch all that he hath and he will curse thee to thy face

[15:11] Satan saying he's no better than me at all God's saying yes he is he fears me he's an upright man he's nothing like you he's better than you and Satan says oh no there's a reason why things are going so well and so what does he do what's his goal here you know what takes place right you know what happens in the rest of this chapter with all of his substance and all of his children and Job is taken down to nothing it's all taken away and what's the goal in this the goal is as he stated was to get Job to curse God quote to his face so Job chapter 2 you see it again where he gets past round 1 and the Lord brings that to Satan's face and says he won he was right I was right he did right and Satan says well it's because you didn't harm his actual body because you can take some things happening on the outside but when it's on the inside and when you're feeling it in your flesh that's a whole other level so he says in verse 4 skin for skin yea other man hath will he give for his life but put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face so you know what's going on here

I see this is another case God rebukes Satan pointing out Job's character Satan replies oh it's just because there's a hedge about him you've made a cushy little life and you've blessed him and of course he's going to be happy everything's good in Job's life take it away watch what happens Satan says he's just like me he's no better than any of us and so the story goes all the evil that befell Job at the hand of Satan and it was grievous all of it was for a purpose of provoking Job to curse God that is provocation right there he is pushing Job with as heavy of a hand as he can push him taking away everything he had his children his wife turning on him losing his health laying in ashes and scraping himself it's a horrible place that Job's at and it was the hand of Satan and what's he doing all this pain and suffering it's a means of provoking Job

I think it's pretty obvious if you're familiar with the story so there's other times I'm convinced throughout the scripture where it may be silent as to pointing the finger to the devil or just saying Satan provoked or Satan did this but throughout the Bible the cases I think they're many throughout our lives I wouldn't doubt that the cases are many and although Satan is not identified you often read how Israel provoked God to jealousy with what with idols with bowing down to idols to other graven images that they fashioned with their hands they cut a tree down they make themselves an image they bring it into their home and then they bow down to it Isaiah says that they say deliver me save me and they have no knowledge in them God's provoked a jealousy in these cases but I suppose I suppose do you suppose that Satan's playing a role in pushing this and promoting such a practice do you think they're just like coming up with that out of thin air let's just cut this tree down and carve it to look like to look like what to look like an eagle and let's bow down to that eagle and worship it let's cut this tree down and make it to look like oh you know what these nations over here have these images and they're grotesque figures but they have names they call them let's make one look like that and bring it to our land and do you think these ideas are just man's ideas now I'm just supposing

I'm reaching out a little bit here on that thought but seeing understanding the motivation understanding that he's using this method of provocation I wouldn't put it past him one bit I think it makes quite clear sense that Satan is playing a role in the situations they're repeated so many times in this Old Testament with this nation over throughout all their generations they just keep going back to idols keep golden calves do you remember that study on the cherub and the gold and all of that where did that come from come on the devil the devil's provoking these people to do such a thing pushing them to go a direction because he knows how it will result in fashioning golden calves witches soothsayers conjuring up or calling up spirits that's taking place in the land of Israel and God is I mean the land's defiled because of it throughout the history of that nation

I suppose the devil's behind those practices I suppose he's pushing Israel to defile the land and cause God to punish them and to curse them rather than to bless them because those were the two options he gave them when he said I'll take you into the land you're going to obey me and I'm going to bless you you're going to disobey me I'm going to curse you so I see it pretty obvious to me that Satan's behind keeping an eye on Israel keeping an eye for that promised seed to show up looking for that deliverer or that Messiah so provocation I think it's all over the place even though maybe it's not spelled out specifically I think it makes sense that that is absolutely one of his methods there's a fourth one we'll study here briefly this morning and that is perversion perversion it is a method of Satan to oppose the work of God the will of God what is God from his throne doing what is he connecting with on earth what has he put down here whatever it is

[21 : 16] Satan's going to show up and just twist it just a little bit perversion is to to pervert is to distort or to twist something that is right something that is real to the end of it it causes confusion it causes I think in the end it causes a complete disregard for what is truth for what is right in the end imagine in my this is the way I see it Satan just sprinkles a little bit of perversion like a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump he sprinkles a little bit of perversion and then just lets it go for a generation to a generation and it grows and it grows and it starts to become a truth a supposed truth he doesn't have to show up and just blast he doesn't have to show up and say there's no God he just has to sprinkle a little perversion about the truth of God's nature and just implement it into the mind of man and just let it go and there's some areas in which avenues in which we live today that perversion it's very perverted but it didn't start this bad it started a whole lot less and under wraps and behind closed doors and now it's wide open and presumed to be a truth now come back to Genesis chapter 3 let's learn something here he uses perversion in what way there's several ways and let's start with one of the big ones

Genesis chapter 3 and Satan perverts the words of God Genesis chapter 3 and verse number 1 now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made and he said unto the woman yea hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden now come back to chapter 2 and let's see what God said because Satan here remember as we studied this a few weeks ago the serpent brings up the question yea hath God said he's saying isn't it true that God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden like you can't eat of every one of them so let's see what God said back in chapter 2 verse 16 the Lord God commanded the man saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it for the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die now

Satan opposes the work of God and the will of God and in this case the words of God by perversion by just simply twisting or cleverly altering or bending a truth to something close something very similar but it's not the same and as he says isn't it true that God said you can't eat of every tree of the garden yeah he hath God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden well what did God say I want you to notice this God said it differently what God said was of every tree of the garden thou mayest free I mean he looks at the garden and says the whole thing is yours of every that's how God said it to the man and to his wife of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat it's all yours guys have at it but and then singled out one of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil so that's off limits but what was his focus in his statement it was wide it was broad it was the whole thing's yours that's where he led off what's

Satan's focus what's his idea or thought process here as he's bringing this up to the woman his question is have God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden did God say you can't eat of every tree of the garden instead of I'd say he's coming at it differently Satan's perverting what God said making it sound like he said it in a different way in doing so he's working an angle as we well know and what he's trying to do he's getting her to now focus on the forbidden tree he's drawing but God didn't say come here and stand at this tree now let's all look at it let's all remember God said thou mayest eat of every tree of the garden the whole thing is yours it's wide open Satan though singles out the forbidden tree and causes as we've studied over the last few weeks he causes attention and focus to be on that tree and then even straight up lies about what perversion of what

God said thou shalt surely die ye shall not surely die he perverts the words of God and the woman now that she's focused on the tree and sees that it's good for food and so forth didn't take long for the two of them to drop God's statement highlights the great liberty that they had in the garden Satan though deliberately perverts and emphasizes and draws attention to the only thing that's off limits and makes it look bigger than it is I think the two statements are similar but the one has a subtle tone of deception behind it because it's working an angle and it's obvious by reading the fallout from that and he's more subtle there's subtlety in what he's saying you can't just dismiss it and say no he's just saying it differently he's just asking no he's not he has an end in his mind and he got to that end pretty quickly and he's perverting what God said turn to

[27 : 22] Jeremiah 13 if you're not convinced Jeremiah 13 oh sorry 23 Jeremiah 23 so just look at verse 36 for the moment the Bible says and the burden of the Lord shall ye mention no more for every man's word shall be his burden why for ye have perverted the words of the living God of the Lord of host our God ye have perverted the words whose words are they they're the words of the living God that's whose and who's doing the perverting the prophets of

Israel the preachers they're not telling the truth they've twisted they've changed they've perverted they've cleverly altered or bent them to say something similar but not true they've perverted here in this passage somewhere he says you steal the words of God I think it's in this one yeah verse 30 I'm against the prophets say the Lord that steal my words God gives his words they're to preach his words but no they steal his words they pervert his words and they come out different words this isn't me kicking a hobby horse or making a case for something it's truth from the word of God that men pervert God's what words plural his words not his word like the Bible to say that oh these other religions no no his very words they're words they're his words look at

Psalms chapter 12 this is more important than most people believe than most people ever consider in their mind the gravity of this thing it's in the book God revealed it but men are slow to believe it Psalm 12 and I just want you to get one point out of this much like Jeremiah said that they're the words of the Lord God in Psalm 12 and verse 6 the Bible says the words not the word of God not the Bible the words of the Lord whose words are they they're the Lord's words they're his they're property of God the words of the Lord are pure words they're pure words they're his words now if they're God's words then they're pure that's what the

Bible says that's what I believe they're God's words then they're pure but man as we've seen in Jeremiah has perverted the words not the word the words of God they've perverted his words and he's against them for doing so number one they don't have the right to pervert his words they're his property they're his words he's the creator and author of them you I want it to read easier I don't care if you want it to read easier God says I'm the author of these words they're pure don't pervert them don't mess with them don't alter them don't bend them so the pure words of God say study to show thyself a proof study the word of God is the context but the perversion that man has put in there is be diligent or do your best instead of study go look it up 2

Timothy 2 15 the word of God the pure words of God say narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and man has perverted that to say difficult is the way that leadeth unto life that's a little that's a big difference as a matter of fact for one to say it's narrow as in singular I am the way the truth and the life and then to say oh no difficult is the way few there be that find it because it's such a hard path to get to life to eternal life the words of God say that that to abstain from all evil and others say oh no all kinds of evil the words of God the pure words of God say Easter the others say Sabbath the words of God say heaven the pure word and man's altered it to say heavens and he's added an S to it but then in another case in Revelation where Jesus Christ is getting the kingdoms plural of this world he's changed that to say kingdom singular of this world and there's a difference and there's a perversion there's somebody twisting something where the word of God says we are saved the new versions

[33 : 00] I call them per versions because they're perverting the words of God rather than saying we are saved it says we are being saved there's a doctrine there can't miss that where the word of God says hell it says grave where the word of God says devil it says demon and perverts the words of God now here's an issue that I I hope everybody understands this I hope I can even make it clear it's not that complicated you've probably heard it before but this copyright situation the issue is incredibly enlightening to consider that the King James Bible has no copyright on its text in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth period and that's not owned by anybody and the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters and God said let there be light and there was light and I

John will have to do the rest but I can't finish the chapter but we could go on I could type that up and email it to everybody on my contact I could just keep going I could chapter after chapter I could print it I could mail it out to the community I could publish it on a website I could rent some air time and read it out loud nobody owns those words well actually somebody does we've already read who owns them they're the words of the Lord and it's very interesting that there's one version one English Bible that is not owned or controlled by man at all he can't touch it and then on the other hand there are those words that man has changed or perverted and made his own words and the evidence is astonishing if you'll be honest and look at it clearly every single new version of the Bible per version of the words of God is owned and copyrighted and controlled by man you do not have the right to those words he does somebody does somebody owns them proves to me they're the words of man that proves it to me that that Bible that version is the words of man man owns the ESV mankind some man some company owns the new

King James version they own the new international version they own the living Bible and go down the list of two to three hundred or more of them that are out today they own them they can control them because they've perverted God's words to be their words now if this doesn't mean anything to you it'll just roll off your back and you'll just say there he goes pitching a fit again about the Bibles it's up to you to open your eyes and to consider do I have the words of God and can I believe it here's what I do here's what I believe is in my hand are the pure words of God I believe it I mean I believe it with all my heart now the difference is can you hold up any other version or your Bible and say in my hand are the pure words of God free of error without mistake and believe that go to your professor go to somebody in some college somewhere any Christian college in this state or in this nation any one of them and ask them to hand you a copy of the words of God that are pure without error and if he's honest he'll say

I can't do that he doesn't believe he can do that because he doesn't have them well then what does he have the truth is he has a perversion he has the words of man now that's a bigger deal than you might care to consider and it's God's words and he's against those men that steal his words he said alright so he perverts the word of God we could go on and I could put it on the screen and I could just blast all the new versions with simplicity but let's stay in Genesis come back to Genesis chapter 1 if you've got the truth you can talk about it and you can stand on it and if you don't have the truth you don't got nothing to say you keep your mouth shut because you don't have the truth and you know it and you don't have a place to stand you don't have a position you go into some of these churches today that have all these 15 different versions everywhere and they put them all on the screen this one says this this one says this they're never going to stand and tell you which one's right and how they know it's right they don't have an authority they're just going to have to pick and choose and try their best and we won't do that here alright

Genesis chapter 1 he perverts the words of God secondly I'll say that he perverts we've got to run out of time here I'll just point this out we're done he perverts the will of God for man and this kind of goes in a lot of ways but the first the major one here is verse 28 the very first command given to the man and the woman is to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth that's the first thing God says to the man and his wife to do to be fruitful and multiply and Satan shows up and perverts what God's will and command is for the man and his wife and for what we'd call the family there's a term people use for that I can't think of what that is the something family nah I don't know it's not the traditional family it's a better word what is that nuclear family that's probably it that's probably it husband wife children it's it's just the way it is there's no other way and so

[39 : 21] Satan then perverts that and we're gonna I'll just stop right there because we're gonna go off on pride month for a while so we'll come back next week into that one Lord willing so let's take a ten minute break and we'll come back