

sway over the hearts of men, the structures of society, the disciplines of knowledge, and the categories of value (ethics, esthetics, politics, religion), there Satan rules.

Since a rule without power would be an empty formality, presumably Satan has power to exert influence toward moral evil in those places where he rules.

- (2) During the present age, Satan can roam wherever he pleases on the earth.
- (3) By God's permission, Satan can bring down fire from the sky and can raise winds to destroy buildings, animals, and human beings. Such fire and winds could doubtless destroy crops as well.
- (4) Satan can inflict various types of disease and illness upon human beings.
- (5) Satan has dominion and power over unbelievers, and can tempt them, can deceive them, can influence them to do his will, and can possess and control them.
- (6) Satan can blind the minds of those unbelievers who hear the gospel, and can take away God's Word from them.
- (7) Satan can tempt and influence believers to do evil things.
- (8) Satan can buffet believers with thorns in the flesh.

The thorn suggests something painful; it could refer to something physical, such as a diseased condition which made Paul's eyesight a painful difficulty, or something non physical, such as a severe temptation which Satan suggested to Paul again and again and again, and which caused Paul spiritual and emotional pain and distress.

- (9) Satan can assault believers with doubt and unbelief.

Since it is the shield of faith that can extinguish the flaming missiles of the evil one, it is probable that these missiles are missiles of doubt and unbelief. They may include other things as well, but faith would certainly seem to imply doubt and unbelief as the kinds of missiles about which Scripture is speaking.

- (10) Satan can accomplish his evil purposes through believers who are not careful in their conduct.
- (11) Satan can hinder believers in their plans to minister the Word of God.
- (12) By God's permission, Satan can cause believers to be cast into prison, to suffer, and to be put to death. Satan influences unbelievers and uses them as his instruments to do these things.
- (13) Satan can accuse believers before God of wrongdoing, and does so day and night.

NOTE: Nowhere in Scripture (and we have examined all 65 references to Satan in the Bible) is there any evidence or even any hint that Satan has the power to bring anything objectively real into existence; i.e., create anything real! He can distort natural processes and forces to destroy physical bodies, and can influence the minds, emotions, and wills of human beings to destroy souls, but there is no evidence that he can create something into existence.