



How Satan Gains Access to Work in our Lives

Part 6: Deception

As we examine the subject of deception as a potential avenue of Satan's entrance into our lives, we come face to face with the very nature of Satan. Just as love defines the essence of God's nature (1 John 4:8), so deception defines Satan's. When we walk in love, God lives in us (1 John 4:12); when we walk in deception, we manifest the works of Satan, who is the father of all lies (John 8:44). Deception marked his work in the Garden of Eden and has been his defining mantra ever since (Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9). It also marks the spiritual beings in his service (1 Tim. 4:1; 1 John 4:6) and those through whom they work (1 John 2:26; 2 Pet. 2:13; 2 John 7).

Because Satan gained dominion over man in the Garden of Eden (Rom. 6:16; Col. 1:13), he has been able to corrupt our inner being with his own nature (Jer. 17:9). (Usually we consider this to be the "flesh.") Lies and deception are therefore a natural outpouring of the unregenerate or unsanctified heart (Mat. 15:19; Rom. 1:28-29; 3:13; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9). Unfortunately, when we indulge in this behavior, we are submitting to Satan's influence and opening a door through which he can establish a foothold. Should we become entrenched in such activity, a true stronghold of darkness can take hold of our lives.

Deception can take many forms: lying, bearing false witness, perjury, libel, slander; fraud, double-crossing, cheating, infidelity, false representations, false measurements, concealing of truth, exaggeration or distortion of truth, half-truths, duplicity. Matthew 5:37 says, "Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this *comes from the evil one*" (NIV; italics mine). That should leave little doubt that entering the realm of deception opens the door to Satan.

Believers lie to God when they don't acknowledge their sin (1 John 1:8) or when they say they know God but do not obey Him (1 John 2:4) or claim to have fellowship with Him and yet do the things that please Satan (1 John 1:6). Ananias and Sapphira lied to God about the nature of a gift they brought to Him. In this case Scripture explicitly states that Satan filled their hearts to lie against the Holy Spirit, again confirming the origin of such lies. For them, the consequences were very severe—instant death (Acts 5:1-10).

Any time we sin against God's commandments to abstain from falsehood and deception (Ex. 20:16; Lev. 19:11; Eph. 4:25), we reap consequences (Prov. 19:5; Jer. 9:5-9; Hos. 10:13; Micah 6:10-15). While this may not be instant death, God has repeatedly said that He will shorten the lives of those who are deceitful (Ps. 34:12-13; 52:2-5; 55:23; Prov. 21:28). He abhors all forms of deceit (Micah 6:10-13ff; Ps. 5:6; Prov. 6:16-19; 12:22), and His response to it is usually severe. The one who lied to God in the Old Testament sacrificial system was put under a curse (Mal. 1:14). God also put Israel under a curse because of the deception that occurred at Ai. He would not be with them in battle until they made things right in His sight (Josh. 7:11-12). At the very least, the deceitful person misses out on God's blessings (Ps. 32:2; 34:12-17; Matt. 6:33), and cannot come into His holy presence (Ps. 24:3-4; 101:7).