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Who Is Satan?

Series: A Brief History of Satan

Rev. Andrew Hawkins, Ph.D.

The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

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I. **Putting Satan in His Place**

A. Why study about Satan?

1. Avoided the subject
2. Didn't want to give Satan any more credit than he deserves
3. Evangelicals have often misused demonology
 - a. Wrong teaching
 - b. But you don't correct wrong teaching by non-teaching
4. Decided to put Satan in his place in this short series

B. **Correcting Common Errors**

1. First, we do that by correcting common errors
2. Lewis: Screwtape Intro: There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.
3. **Denying the existence of Satan or ignoring his activity**
 - a. **Ephesians 6:12** (ESV) — 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
 - b. Easy in this day and age for Christians to fall into this error
 - c. Social pressure from pseudo-scientific culture
 - d. Most evangelicals would not deny his existence, but would ignore his activities
 - (1) Defacto disbelievers
 - (2) Reason – think the enemy's activities are characterized a certain way, but in reality the enemy is working in an entirely different way, unrecognized
4. **Becoming preoccupied with Satan**
 - a. **1 John 4:1–4** (ESV) — 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you

heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

- b. People are believing every spirit
 - (1) Don't disbelieve; they believe every spirit
 - (2) Many who have power encounters with demons actually take everything demons say at face value
 - (3) They forget that Satan is the father of lies
- c. John's message – you don't need to be preoccupied with demons
 - (1) Test them by this test of orthodoxy
 - (2) If they fail, put them aside
- d. Know that He who is in you is greater; concentrate on Him

C. **Comprehending the Ways of the Serpent**

- 1. **Proverbs 30:18–19** (ESV) — 18 Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand: 19 the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin.
 - a. Author not really concerned with Satan here
 - b. But Bible identifies Satan with a serpent
 - (1) Something mysterious about serpents
 - (2) Bible recognizes some corresponding relationship between them
- 2. **The subtlety and craftiness of Satan**
 - a. **Genesis 3:1** (ESV) — 1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made...
 - b. **2 Corinthians 11:14** (ESV) — 14 ... for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
 - c. Once in the Bible, Satan appeared as a friend to encourage another friend who seemed to be depressed, or at least, was speaking negatively, talking as if he were about to die
 - d. Wasn't practicing the Norman Vincent Peale Power of Positive Thinking
 - e. Who wouldn't want to encourage a friend in a time like that
 - (1) Friend was Jesus Christ
 - f. **Matthew 16:21–23** (ESV) — 21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."
 - g. Makes us wonder when we might be influenced by Satan in our interactions with our brothers and sisters!
- 3. Fall into that trap because we don't understand the ways of Satan

- a. His influences are not what we think they are
 - (1) Tendency to think that anything that's painful or aversive that happens to us is coming at the hand of Satan
- b. Actually not the case all the time, maybe not even most of the time
- 4. Satan does more of his best work by affluence than he does by poverty
 - a. Would just as soon lull us to sleep as he would pummel us into submission
 - b. Loves to get people to believe they are self-sufficient
- 5. Satan's wiles are much more subtle and dangerous than that
 - a. That's why we need to understand the mysterious ways of Satan

D. **Glorifying God**

- 1. The other way we put Satan in his place is by concentrating on the glory of God
 - a. When we understand who Satan is, what he does, and how he does it, we learn that he is on a short leash
 - b. And God holds the leash
 - c. And the better we understand Satan, the more we see God at work
- 2. Luther: The Devil is God's Devil
 - a. Not to say that God is the author of evil
- 3. That's really the best way to put Satan in his place
 - a. Satan wants to be God
 - b. The best way to put him in his place is to see any of his activity as used by God to accomplish God's purposes
- 4. Consider the story of Job
 - a. Satan was allowed to test Job
 - b. Took Job's possessions and family
 - (1) Job didn't flinch
 - (2) **Job 1:21** (ESV) — 21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."
 - c. Took away Job's health
 - (1) **Job 2:10** (ESV) — ... Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.
 - d. The core of the book – Job wrestles with his friends about what God was up to
 - (1) Although Job didn't do anything to deserve his afflictions
 - e. **Job 42:2–6** (ESV) — 2 "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. 3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' 5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but

now my eye sees you; 6 therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

5. Satan got put in his place twice
 - a. God showed him a man who was willing to trust God no matter what
 - (1) Who believed that God was better than life itself
 - (2) “Yea, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him”
 - b. Job learned more about the magnificent supremacy of God
 - (1) The picture God paints for Job about Himself is so far beyond anything a two bit demon could demonstrate on his best day
6. That’s how you put Satan in his place
 - a. Put him beside the sovereign, supreme, God of all creation
 - b. Demonstrate that whatever Satan does, God uses it to demonstrate His supremacy
 - (1) Which is the opposite of what Satan wants
 - (2) He fashions himself to be God, but finds that he’s only a pawn

II. Illustration

- A. Story of Jean’s jury duty
 1. Man on trial
 - a. Businessman
 - b. Made expensive parts for expensive pieces of equipment
 - c. Equipment only wealthy people would buy
 - d. On trial for fraud – collecting money and not delivering goods
 - (1) Over nearly a decade
 2. Conspiracy trial
 - a. Had a bookkeeper, office manager, secretary
 - b. Kept the scam going
 3. Interesting
 - a. When some of the customers complained that they had not received merchandise, they inquired why not?
 - b. Told that the man was in jail
 - c. Some of the customers continued to deal with the company, fully expecting that he would deliver!
 4. Defenses – either stated or implied
 - a. Wealthy customers were the real idiots
 - (1) Man shouldn’t be held liable for their stupidity
 - b. Man couldn’t provide the merchandise – he was in jail!
- B. If you knew that this man was in jail for fraud, would you give him \$10,000 up front to provide merchandise that he hasn’t yet constructed?
 1. Would you do business with this guy?
- C. We would do business with people on certain bases
 1. **Character**

2. **Intentions**
 3. **Methods**
 4. **Track record**
- D. The more significant our business transaction, the more careful we are about character, intentions, methods and track record
1. More we have to lose
- E. Might laugh at wealthy people who have \$10,000 to burn on some fraudulent scheme
1. Most of us, at one time or another, are willing to do business with someone with far more at stake than money
 - a. Our own souls!
- F. We are either ignorant of his character, intentions, methods and track record, or are in denial of those things because the enticements are so appealing

III. **The Names of Satan**

- A. Being with many names
1. Significance of names
 2. Change of names
 - a. Significance of name changes
 - (1) Cf Abram – Abraham
 - (2) Cf Sarai – Sarah
 - (3) Cf Jacob – Israel
 - (4) Cf Simon – Peter
 - (5) Cf Saul – Paul
 - b. **Lucifer**
 - (1) **Star of the Morning (shining one)**
 - (2) **Isaiah 14:12–14** (ESV) — 12 “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! 13 You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’
 - c. **Anointed Cherub who Covers**
 - (1) **Ezekiel 28:11–19** (ESV) — 11 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: 12 “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. 14 You were an anointed

guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. 15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. 16 In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. 18 By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”

3. Those exalted names would never again be used
 - a. Many other names would be applied

IV. The Character of Satan

A. Wicked One

- a. Ho poneros = the evil one
- b. Of a bad nature of condition
(1) Specifically moral or ethical sense
- c. 1 John 5:18–19 (ESV) — 18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

B. Murderer

1. Anthorpoktonos (Gk) = Man-slayer

C. Father of lies

- a. Pseustes (Gk) = liar
- b. Pater (Gk) = father
2. John 8:44 (ESV) — 44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
 - a. He is a pseustes and the pater of it
3. If you knew that was his character, would you do business with him?

V. The Intentions of Satan

A. Satan

1. Both Heb and Gk
 - a. **The Adversary**
 - b. One who opposes God and those whom God loves
 2. **1 Chronicles 21:1** (ESV) — 1 Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.
 - a. David – man after God’s own heart, being moved by Satan
 3. **Job 1:6–11** (ESV) — 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 The LORD said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” 8 And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” 9 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? 10 Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.”
- B. He is opposed to God and to God’s people
1. Opposition is limited
 - a. Don’t have two equal Gods contending with one another
 2. Opposition nevertheless
 3. Would you do business with someone who you knew was against you?

VI. **The Methods of Satan**

- A. **Devil**
1. **Diabolos (Gk) = accuser**
 - a. Special kind of accuser – false accuser
 - b. Prone to slander
 2. **Zechariah 3:1–2** (ESV) — 1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”
 - a. Nature of this method is insidious as well – Satan trying to get God to condemn the objects of His own love!
 - b. Would you do business with someone who was constantly attacking your own character, making accusations against you?
- B. **Deceiver**
1. **Planao (Gk) = to cause to stray**, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way; to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to deceive
 - a. **Revelation 12:9–10** (ESV) — 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 And I heard a loud

voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

2. Would you believe someone who was known to be a deceiver, who is always trying to lead you astray, away from what is good and right and blessed for you?

C. **Tempter**

1. **Peirazo (Gk) = to test one maliciously**, craftily put to the proof feelings and judgments
2. Good sense of testing using the same word
 - a. Remember the character and intentions of the one doing the testing
3. **Matthew 4:3** (ESV) — 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”
4. **1 Thessalonians 3:5** (ESV) — 5 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.
5. Would you do business with someone whom you knew characteristically sought to maliciously lead you to fall?
6. Other names speak to the ferocity and malevolence with which the Devil engages God’s people

D. **Roaring lion**

1. **1 Peter 5:8** (ESV) — 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
2. Lions used in a sporting way to destroy the people of God
 - a. Cf Daniel
 - b. Early Christian history
 - (1) Literal, physical sense
3. Satan’s devouring is even worse – attacks the soul, that eternal dimension of humanity designed to have a relationship with God

E. **Destroyer**

1. **Abaddon (Heb), Apollyon (Gk)**
 - a. Destroyer
 - b. One who rules the place of destruction
2. Plague of locusts from the bottomless pit – Revelation 9
 - a. **Revelation 9:11** (ESV) — 11 They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

F. **Dragon**

1. **Revelation 12:9–10** (ESV) — 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the

authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

- G. Would you do business with the Mob, with those you knew to be ruthless enemies of humanity, who would destroy you without batting an eyelash?
1. Why then, would you do business with a roaring lion, a dragon, bent on your very destruction
 2. Not just of the body, but of the soul

VII. The Track Record of Satan

A. Serpent

1. Speaks of method (craftiness), but used in the Bible to speak of the track record
2. **Revelation 20:2** (ESV) — 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,
3. **2 Corinthians 11:3** (ESV) — 3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.
 - a. Eve is to be our example

B. Ruler of the world; God of this age

1. **Archon tonton kosmos; Theon tonton aionos**
2. Do you like what you see in this age? Or is there much evil in it?
3. **Galatians 1:3–5** (ESV) — 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
4. We have tendency to blame the guy in charge when something goes wrong
 - a. Every presidential election hinges on the state of the economy
 - (1) President likely has little or nothing to do about it, but if its good, incumbent gets reelected; if bad, contender gets the job
 - (2) Why? He's in charge
5. Every evil dimension of our present age is presided over by Satan himself
 - a. He actually has a lot to do with it
6. Would you do business with someone whom you knew to leave catastrophe everywhere he's been?
 - a. Remember the All State Insurance commercial
 - b. "Protection from mayhem like me"
7. Interesting parallel in education
 - a. Most devastating philosophical systems in our century – Marxism
 - (1) Left death, destruction, oppression, bondage everywhere it has been tried
 - (2) You'd think no one would want to have anything to do with that system
 - b. Educational leadership in US is wholly bought into it!
 - (1) Largest school of thought is neo-marxist

- c. Education system is in shambles – not because of incompetence, but because of ideology
 - C. If that's the track record of someone, would you do business with him?
- VIII. At one level, our fight of faith, our fight for holiness, hinges on understanding the source of the desires and inclinations we have
 - A. If we can identify them as Satanic, then the battle is more than half over
 - 1. Character
 - 2. Intention
 - 3. Method
 - 4. Track record
 - B. Don't need to know much more than that