

Who Is Satan?

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Revelation 12:9

Even those who do not know or believe the Bible have heard of Satan – the devil, enemy of God. We need to understand who Satan is. He is a real being, not a myth or the personification of evil. In this lesson, we're going to see what the Bible says about Satan – his origin, description, limits, work, and future.

[NOTE: In preparing this lesson, I did take advantage of information compiled by Wayne Jackson in his article, Satan: Everything You've Always Wanted to Know, But Were Afraid to Ask]

Origin of Satan

- Satan is a real being – described this way throughout the Bible (Job 1:6-8; Matthew 4:1-11); not merely the personification of evil
- He would have been created in the beginning (Colossians 1:16)
- He was cast out of heaven (1 John 3:8; 2 Peter 2:4) – the devil and his angels; this event was alluded to in our text (Revelation 12:9)
- He was first introduced in the Bible in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-6) – tempted Eve; sin was introduced

Descriptions of Satan

- Great dragon, serpent of old, devil, Satan (Revelation 12:9)
- The tempter (Matthew 4:3) – tempts us to sin
- The evil one (Matthew 13:19) – opposes what is good
- Father of lies, murderer (John 8:44) – deceives and destroys
- Ruler of the world (John 12:31) – all those who do not submit to God are under his power
- God of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) – same as previous point
- The adversary (1 Peter 5:8) – stands opposed to the people of God
- These descriptions help describe what he is doing – tempting, deceiving, destroying, opposing

Limits of Satan

- Satan is not equal with God (1 John 4:4) – God is all-powerful (Job 42:2); Satan is not
- He cannot tempt anyone against God's will (Job 1:12; 2:5; Luke 22:31) – he is limited in this (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- He cannot "snatch" anyone from the Lord's hand (John 10:28)
- He flees when he is resisted (James 4:7)

- He cannot resist God when his punishment comes (Revelation 20:10)
- The limitation of Satan is described as him being “bound” (Revelation 20:1-3) – he was already inferior to God; here he was limited even further

Work of Satan

- He is the adversary of God’s people (1 Peter 5:8) – so his work is to drive us away from God
- He tempts us to sin (Matthew 4:1) – by appealing to our lust (James 1:14-15); does this because sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2)
- He takes away the word (Mark 4:15) – by distracting us, discrediting the word or the teacher, sowing doubt; does this because the word brings eternal life and salvation (John 6:68; Romans 1:16)
- He puts evil in our hearts (John 13:2; cf. Acts 5:3) – by finding an opening (Matthew 12:43-45); does this because what is in our heart will be produced in our lives (Proverbs 4:23)
- He disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) – through deceptive false teachers; does this because the truth is what will set us free (John 8:32)
- He brings persecution against believers (Revelation 2:10) – through the ruling powers (Ephesians 6:12); does this because we may abandon our faith and miss the reward
- We need to “put on the full armor of God...to stand firm against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11)

Future of Satan

- The whole world lies in his power (1 John 5:19) – yet he will be cast out (John 12:31); his works will be destroyed (1 John 3:8)
- He will be cast into hell (Revelation 20:10) – this is the place that God has prepared for him (Matthew 25:41); not to rule, but to be punished

Conclusion

- We are to be on our guard against Satan (1 Peter 5:8) – yet we can resist him (1 Peter 5:9; James 4:7)
- If we follow his will, we will suffer the same fate (Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 20:15) – this is his goal
- Yet Jesus came to set us free from this (Hebrews 2:14-15) – He will save us if we will obey Him (Hebrews 5:9)