

* The Heights Baptist Church * Sermon Series: Doctrine * * Topic: Satan * Genesis 3:1-6 * 5/3/26 *

MAIN POINT

Satan is a powerful spiritual being who rebelled against God and now leads demonic powers against God. Their goal is to thwart God's plans, and destroy people's lives by drawing them away from God. But unlike God, Satan is a finite being, and God protects his children from Satan and his schemes.

INTRODUCTION

If you had to guess, about what percentage of Americans do you think would say they believe in the devil?

How is Satan depicted in pop culture? What about these depictions is accurate? What is inaccurate?

A 2023 Gallop poll found that about 58% of U.S. adults say they believe in the devil. This is less than the number who believe in God (74%) or angels (69%). But misconceptions about Satan abound. People think of him as all-powerful, or as a red-suited being with horns and a pitchfork ruling in hell. Others think if they appease him, he will be nice to them. In today's lesson, we will be looking at what the Bible has to say about Satan.

UNDERSTANDING

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ ISAIAH 14:12-14 AND EZEK. 28:15-18

These two passages use pagan kings and kingdoms as pictures (or "types") of Satan. What do they tell us about Satan's origins?

These pictures show us that Satan was originally a high-ranking angel, who fell because of pride.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES

Note to study leader: Make a list on the white board as people come up with attributes of Satan.

What truths about Satan are mentioned in these verses?

- **1 Peter 5:8 and Jude 1:9:** Satan is very powerful.
- **Luke 22:31-32 and John 10:10:** Satan wants to destroy us.
- **John 8:44:** Satan is a murderer and a liar.
- **Daniel 7:25:** Satan's goal is to thwart God's plans.
- **John 13:2 and Rev. 12:10:** Satan's goal is to lead the world astray.
- **2 Cor. 11:14:** Satan can appear as an angel of light.
- **John 13:2, 27 and Acts 5:3:** Satan can influence and possess people.
- **Job 1:6-7 and Rev. 12:9-11:** Satan currently has access to heaven and accuses us before God.

Based on these verses, how would you summarize the attributes of Satan?

Satan is a powerful spiritual being who is opposed to God and who is filled with hate. He is out to thwart God's plans and destroy people.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ REVELATION 20:10

What will be the end result for Satan?

Satan will ultimately be condemned to hell forever.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES

Note to study leader: Make a list on the white board as people come up methods to defeat Satan.

What do these verses tell us about how we are to defeat Satan in our lives?

- **Matt. 6:13, John 17:15, and 2 Thess. 3:3:** Realize God is stronger than Satan and limits his power.
- **James 4:7-8:** Come near to God, submit to God, and purify our hearts. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
- **Acts 19:13-16 and Jude 1:9-10:** Don't try to fight Satan in my own strength.
- **Matthew 4:4, 7, 10-11:** Respond to Satan's attacks with scripture.

How would you summarize how we should relate to Satan as Christians?

On our own, we would be no match for Satan. But God is stronger than Satan and protects us from him. Draw near to God and submit to God. Then resist Satan through Christ's strength, focusing on our walk with Christ, not on Satan or demons.

Note to study leader: In 2 Thessalonians 3:3, we read that the Lord "will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one." The Greek word translated as "from" (apo) means, "any kind of separation of one thing from another", meaning God will keep Satan at a distance from us.

*"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."
C. S. Lewis (The Screwtape Letters)*

THE CASE STUDY OF SATAN AND EVE

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ GENESIS 3:1-6

What was Satan's motive when he approached Eve in Genesis 3? Is he concerned that Eve was missing out?

Satan was not concerned about her well-being. He was trying to destroy her.

"Our enemy is Satan, and the full-on attack of Satan—starting in Genesis 3 and being played out in every headline in the paper and in the news—the full-on attack of Satan is to take out Genesis 1 and 2. Take out marriage, take out your identity, take out your sexuality, take out God as creator. And here's why Satan is doing this. Satan is smart; he's not as smart as God; he's not all-knowing. But I'll tell you something, he's smarter than you, and he's incredibly strategic. When Satan takes out Genesis 1 and 2, guess what, the entire rest of the Bible is irrelevant. Here's what Satan does; 'I'm going to attack the first page, you don't need to read the rest.'" Pastor Randy Hahn, The Heights Baptist Church, sermon on May 7th, 2023.

What was Satan "accomplishing" by the question he asked Eve in verse 1, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

With the question, "Did God really say?", Satan cast doubt on the clear command of God. Either you heard him wrong, or "I can't believe he said that to you, because that means he is just holding out on you.

Eve recited back God’s original command in a way that was pretty close to correct. In what subtle ways did she change the original command?

1. She referred to the tree by its location rather than by its name. This may have focused on the rule while inadvertently minimizing the importance of the tree and the reason not to eat from it.
2. She declared God had instructed them not only to avoid eating the tree’s fruit but also to avoid even touching the tree. Perhaps she or Adam believed adding the additional requirement about not touching the fruit would better enable her to keep God’s command.
3. She maybe accidentally dropped the word “surely”, or “certainly” from God’s command. This could have inadvertently reduced the certainty of the punishment of death.

What was Satan “accomplishing” by his reply in verse 4 when he said, “You will not certainly die. For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God...”?

Now that he’s got her confused and maybe doubting, he goes on to flat-out tell her God is flat out lying.

What contradictions and lies did the serpent make in his reply in verse 4?

1. “You will not certainly die”. He told her God is lying.
2. “For God knows that when you eat from it...” He assigned a false motive to God.
3. “You will be like God, knowing good and evil.” He feeds her a major lie here, with the inclusion of a partial truth to make it seem more likely that his lie was true.

What are some examples of how people can change or redefine God’s commands as Eve did?

How might Satan try to get us to doubt God’s word today?

He is trying to get us to doubt God’s account of creation, doubt God’s moral absolutes, and doubt the truth of any part of God’s word.

In what ways did Satan use the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge to tempt Eve in Genesis 3:6?

The fruit was good for food (the lust of the flesh), pleasing to the eye (the lust of the eye), and desirable for gaining wisdom (the pride of life). (1 John 2:15-17)

APPLICATION

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5 AND EPHESIANS 6:10-18

We are not in a battle against flesh and blood. We are in spiritual warfare. And the weapons we fight with are not the same as we would use in physical battle. What specifically does it tell us about the shield of faith?

We are to use this shield to block the arrows of Satan.

Which of these pieces of armor do I need to do a better job of putting on each day?

PRAYER

We thank you God for your promise to protect us from the Devil when we submit to you. Help us do our part in putting on the full armor of God, so that we can take our stand against the devil’s schemes.

Note to study leader: Since this lesson is comprised of many individual passages from scripture rather than one larger chunk of scripture, the usual Commentary section is not included in this lesson.