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B0535 – September 4, 2005 – Major Bible Themes
Chapter 24 – Satan: His Work and Destiny

I. THE CAREER AND DESTINY OF SATAN



C = creation (Ezekiel 28:11-21)

F = fall (Isa 14:12-14)

J = judgment (John 12:31; 16:11; Col 2:14-15)

CD = cast down (Isa 14:12b; Rev 12:9ff)

EOS = execution of sentence (Rev 20:1-2)

LS = little season (Rev 20:3)

LOF = lake of fire (Rev 20:10)

A. His Creation

Satan's career begins with his creation, most likely on day 1 of creation (Gen 1:1).

B. Judged at the Fall

Satan's fall most likely occurred between Gen 2:25 and 3:1. The sin itself was "pride" as signaled by the five-fold use of "I will" in Isa 14:12-14. Although Satan did not lose access to God in the 3rd heaven he was judged by being separated from God spiritually. Satan's spiritual separation from God resulted in the permanent loss of fellowship that he enjoyed with God before his fall. Further, there is no plan to restore this broken fellowship.

C. Judged at the Cross

Many things were judged at the cross; sin, death, and Satan.

John 12:31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Satan became "ruler of this world" when Adam handed over this domain to Satan at the Fall of mankind (Luke 4:1ff). But the cross judgment upon this world made certain the ultimate eviction of Satan the usurper.

In a prophetic forecast, Jesus said in John 16:8-11 that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of

John 16:11 judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

This judgment took place on the cross. In this great victory for Christ is fulfilled the prophetic promise of Gen 3:15

Genesis 3:15 He [seed of the woman] shall bruise you [Satan] on the head,

A mortal wound, a death wound was inflicted on Satan at the cross. As a result

Colossians 2:15 When He [God] had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him [Christ].

Even though Satan was judged at the cross the judgment sentence has not yet been executed.

D. Judgment at Mid-Tribulation

At the middle of the Tribulation Satan will be cast out of the 3rd heaven so that he will no longer have access to God where he can accuse the brethren, an activity which he engages in both day and night.

Revelation 12:9-10 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown

down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ Then 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 brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

When he is cast down he will begin to execute the final stages of his plan through the Antichrist. He will commit the abomination of desolation and set himself up as God in the Temple to be worshipped in Jerusalem. He will then seek to destroy Israel because he knows that he has only a short time left to fulfill his plan.

Revelation 12:12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time."

E. Execution of the Sentence

While Satan was judged at the cross the sentencing will not come until Christ's Second Coming. For 1,000 years Satan will be sealed in the abyss.

Revelation 20:1-2 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ² And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

He will no longer be free to roam and devour people for the entire 1,000 year kingdom on earth. This means he will not be actively tempting people during the 1,000 year kingdom. However, after the 1,000 years he will be loosed for a "little season" (*mikros chronos*; cf John 12:35).

Revelation 20:7-9 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. ⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

You can see from this passage that during the kingdom on earth not everyone will believe in Jesus as Messiah even though He will be known visibly by all as the King and His past work on the cross will be well-known to all who live in the kingdom. In fact, a huge number of people will not believe in Him but will rebel against Him.

F. Final Doom of Satan

After the short rebellion is put down Satan, the demons, and unregenerate men will be cast into the eternal lake of fire.

Revelation 20:10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;



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II. THE WORK OF SATAN

Isaiah 14:12-14 describes Satan's career, plan, and purpose. We want to know his career, plan and purpose for several reasons. First, it is important to understand Satan's career because it ultimately ends in doom. Those who are aligned with Him are also doomed. This should create compassion in your heart for unbelievers giving you impetus to give a

clear gospel presentation to your lost family and friends. Second, it is important to understand Satan's plan so that you will be able to recognize when you are being used to carry out his plan. If you are unaware of his plan then you will be much more likely to be an instrument in his hand. And we should always remember that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8-10a). Third, we need to understand Satan's purposes for the same reason we need to understand his plan. We want to align ourselves at every instant with Christ the King and not with Satan.

Let's begin with his career which began, of course, at creation. Everything was fine until deceitfulness was found in his heart. At which point it is apparent that his new plan was not to carry out the will of God but to become equal to God and to carry out his own will. His ultimate purpose or goal is to rule the heavens and earth. He tirelessly works toward this goal.

Isaiah 14:12-14 ¹² "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! ¹³ "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. ¹⁴ 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

"How you have fallen from heaven". This describes Lucifer's fall **from heaven**. Before his fall he was known as the **star of the morning** (Latin *Lucifer* – shining one; light-bearer). After his fall he is known as Satan (Gk. *satanas*), the devil (Gk. *diabolos*), the serpent, the dragon, the god of this age, the god of this world, the evil one, et. al because he diabolically usurped earth from Adam and Eve. This was his first step toward universal domination (cf Matt 4:1ff and Luke 4:1ff).

"You have been cut down to the earth". A phrase that jumps forward in Satan's career all the way to the middle of the Tribulation. Thus, the phrase *"you have been cut down to the earth"* describes Satan being kicked out of heaven down to the earth at the middle of the future Tribulation. This is parallel to Rev 12:9-10.

You who have weakened the nations! A phrase that describes a chief strategy of Satan; that of weakening *"the nations"*. Satan has a very strategic role in human governments. If he can control the human leader of a government then he can control the people under that government. For example, in Ezek 28:2, Ezekiel is commissioned to "say to the leader of Tyre". While in Ezek 28:12, Ezekiel is commissioned to "take up a lament over

the king of Tyre". The "leader of Tyre" is the human ruler while the "king of Tyre" is Satan who stands behind the leader, influencing him to make certain political decisions and gestures (also cf Dan 10:13, 20). The princes and kings of these nations or cities are demonic powers behind these human governments.

Five-Fold Sin of "I Will". Verse 13 describes Satan's five-fold sin of "pride". Each is prefaced by the words "I will".

1. I will ascend to heaven
2. I will raise my throne above the stars of God
3. I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north
4. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds
5. I will make myself like the Most High

I will ascend to heaven. In verse 12 he had fallen from heaven and been cut down to the earth. His original fall from heaven happened between Gen 2:25 and 3:1. After this he continued to have access to the 3rd heaven to ask permission to tempt believers and to accuse the brethren. He will continue to have this access until he is "cut down to the earth" in the middle of the Tribulation. Once he is cut down to earth he will attempt to take a position higher than he originally had, he will attempt to take the only higher position, God's throne.

I will raise my throne above the stars of God. The stars are a symbol of the angels. Satan wished to raise his throne above all the stars of God. The highest angel is Michael the archangel. So, but this, Satan is wishing to raise his throne above the throne of Michael and rule all the stars of God.

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. This is millennial kingdom language (cf Ps 48). Satan knows that it is God's purpose for the Messiah to rule over Israel in the kingdom, but Satan wants to rule over Israel himself.

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. This expresses Satan's desire to claim the Shechinah Glory as his own while it belongs to God alone.

I will make myself like the Most High. The title "Most High" is a title used of God to emphasize that He possesses the heavens and the earth (Gen 1:1; 14:18-20). Thus, what Satan desires here is to become as God and be the possessor and ruler of the heavens and the earth.

The closest Satan will get to accomplish his plan will be near the end of his career when he is kicked out of heaven down to earth. Once present on earth and the Antichrist is killed, Satan will come and possess the body of the Antichrist (a counterfeit resurrection). Then he will desecrate the Temple and will exalt himself as God and receive worship in the Tribulation Temple (2 Thess 2:3, 4; Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15; Rev 13:4-8).

It is interesting that Satan's desire to be as God is the same desire he pitched to Eve in the garden. He said to Eve, "...in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God..." (Gen 3:5). Satan wanted Adam and Eve to become self-centered autonomous creatures, estranged from God, as he was. When Adam took the bait by disobedience he acquired a new nature that was sinful. This sin nature (aka original sin, inherited sin) is passed on to all his posterity so that we are all "children of wrath" (Eph 2:2) and must "be born again" (John 3:3). Even after we have been born again there is only a desire to do the good, but the doing of it is not present (Rom 7). The doing of the good requires the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8).

III. FALSE CONCEPTS ABOUT SATAN

A. The existence of Satan

In the 1970's and 80's there was a lot of debate between creationists and evolutionists on the question "Does God Exist?" These arguments often boil down to a question of the existence of the immaterial; things beyond the physical world (metaphysics). And in this respect an equally valid question would be "Does Satan Exist?"ⁱ Both questions relate to one another in that they question metaphysics (beyond/after physics).ⁱⁱ Of course, proving that Satan exists would not prove that God exists but nevertheless, both questions involve the existence of the immaterial. And both of these questions must be answered the same way. Both must be answered on the basis of the authority of Scripture. Neither can be answered by the use of the natural man's autonomous reason and spirit which is anti-God. The natural or carnal man's autonomous reason and spirit are contrary to God and cannot be subject to Him. Interestingly both questions involve allegiance to the existence of one or the other (i.e. God or Satan). It is also interesting and enlightening to realize that the laws of logic which must be used to debate either of the questions are themselves "immaterial". Maybe we should be debating the question "Does Logic Exist?" Only Scripture does not separate meaning from knowledge and only Scripture can account for the existence of logic and why it works

In the same way, only Scripture can account for the existence of any immaterial thing and Scripture claims that all immaterial things, whether persons or logic, were created by God who Himself is not created but the Creator. Therefore, because of the limitations of man (spiritual, mental, physical) any knowledge of the immaterial realm requires the word of God. We must have information that comes from outside our limited experiences. If we don't we can't know anything certain about anything beyond our experiences. And our experience is so limited both in space and time that we could know nothing beyond our own personal sensory perception. In this case, what you heard on the news would not be something you knew but something that may or may not be true based on the truthfulness of the reporters. Yet you all along get to choose whether or not what they say is true and you do so on the basis of your experience.

B. Satan is the direct cause of sin in every person

Again, this notion is contradicted by Scripture. These people don't have a problem with the existence of Satan, they have a problem with responsibility for their sinful actions. There have been court cases where it was argued that Satan "made me do it". For example,

United States ex rel. Gerald Mayo v. Satan and His Staff
54 F.R.D. 282 (W.D. Penn. 1971)

A Real Devil of a Litigant. Plaintiff filed suit against Satan and his staff for violation of his civil rights. Among the allegations were: (1) that Satan had on numerous occasions caused him misery and unwarranted threats, all against his will; (2) that Satan had placed deliberate obstacles in his path that caused Plaintiff's downfall; and (3) that by reason of the foregoing acts, Satan had deprived him of his constitutional rights...Case dismissed as frivolous.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Biblical concept is that "sin" and "righteousness" are totally exclusive categories (1 John 2:28-3:10a). All "righteousness" ultimately finds its source in God and all "sin" ultimately finds its source in the devil. God is never the author of "sin". Only a regenerate person has the ability to do "righteousness", and that not of himself but by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, both regenerate and unregenerate people "sin". And all "sin", regardless of the one who commits it, is ultimately sourced in the devil because the devil has sinned from the beginning (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:11-15). In other words, Satan's career of sinning goes back all the way to the beginning sometime between Gen 2:25 and 3:1. Therefore, 1 John 3:8 says that the one doing sin is "of the devil". This means that anyone who sins is, at that time, participating in the devils work. This means regenerate and unregenerate people because even regenerate people sin (1 John 1:8, 10). Of course, a regenerate person's sin cannot be the result of demon possession, but it can and often is

the result of demon influence. Whenever a person sins they are performing the work *of the devil*. 1 John 3:10a even says that all who sin can be called children of the devil. How is that? This is not a positional statement but an experiential statement. Whenever a regenerate person sins he can be called a child of Satan in experience because sin is the fruit of the father of sin, Satan. Sin can have no relationship to God (1 John 5:20). The relationship therefore, in John's writings, is that the one who does the work of the devil is considered a child of the devil whether they are saved or not.

Thus, it is a fallacy to think that Satan is the direct cause of sin in every person. We can't go to court and expect people to take us seriously when we say "the devil made me do it." The devil never made anyone do anything. What he does is heavily influence people either through possession or counterfeit, confusion, and false doctrine.

Nevertheless, the all-important point for this misunderstanding is that humans are always responsible for their sin even though **the devil** is the ultimate source of sin. Satan may be said to be the *ultimate* source but humans are said to be the *immediate* source (or Satan is the indirect source and humans are the direct source). Also, it's not wrong to be tempted to sin; what's wrong is to fall to the temptation and actually sin (covertly or overtly). Responsibility for the action does not fall on the one who tempts but on the one who chooses to fall to the temptation and sin.

Chafer says,

Satan is not aiming to promote sin in the world...he is not aiming to destroy so much as he is to construct and to realize his own ambition for authority over this world-system with its culture, morality, and religion (2 Cor 11:13-15).^{iv}

While I agree with him it seems to me that Satan's ambition is inherently sinful. I would say all of Satan's aims are characterized by sin so that they two are inseparable. They are two sides of the same coin.

ⁱ However, both of these questions are illegitimate. For example, if we grant the question "Does God exist?" then there is the possibility that He does not exist in which case possibility is back of God. And if possibility is back of God then God certainly cannot exist but chance certainly does exist. The real issue should be stated as, "God cannot possibly not exist". He is the necessary presupposition and interpreter of all reason, logic, language and existence (Gen 1:1; 3:1-15; John 3:12; 1 Cor 2:2; 2 Cor 10:3-5; Col 2:8).

ⁱⁱ At this point I would much rather question "Do I exist?" which is a question of the existence of the material world (aka Descartes dilemma solved by his slogan *cogito ergo sum* "I think therefore I am." which is *a* solution but not *the* correct one). In my view material existence is totally dependent on the immaterial existence of God. Thus, physics presupposes (therefore, requires) metaphysics. Metaphysics therefore precedes physics contrary to the meaning 'after physics'. A discussion of

physics as separated from metaphysics separates meaning from knowledge and lacks impetus in giving any “real” motivation for students to learn.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.re-quest.net/g2g/humor/cases/>

^{iv} L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974), 161-162.

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