

Your Father, the Devil – I Peter 5:8-9

I. Introduction:

- A. I have a two part message for you today. We will finish up in tonight's service.
 1. This isn't one long lesson that I'm dividing for convenience's sake.
 2. It has two distinct sections, but they are obviously tied together.
 3. Our subject throughout the day will be Peter's reference to *"the devil."*
 4. Another word binding the two services together is the pronoun *"your."*
 5. Peter says to his Christians readers: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your ADVERSARY the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."*
 6. But as we read earlier in **John 8**, the Lord Jesus said to a hostile mob of Jews, *"Ye are of your FATHER the devil, and the lusts of your FATHER ye will do."*
 7. To one group of people, devil is an adversary, but to the other group he is their spiritual father.
- B. Something to notice at the outset, is that neither Christ, nor the apostle, try to define or explain their subject.
 1. They each assume that their audience knows who the devil is.
 2. The Jews were introduced to him through their Old Testament scriptures.
 3. And the New Testament saints knew of the devil apparently because Peter, Paul and other Bible teachers had taught them.
 4. Many of them had also clearly seen his handiwork, as in the demon-possessed woman in Philippi.
- C. **BUT we** live more than 2,000 years removed from the days of Christ and Peter.
 1. We have been raised in a Satanically inspired atmosphere of skepticism and Biblical denial.
 2. The culture of this nation's founding fathers – a culture with a Biblical basis – has long been dissolved.
 3. And it is necessary that we introduce our neighbors to the devil – to Satan.
 4. Whether recognized or not, the devil is a part of today's society, but he is working incognito.
 5. Without trying to sound like a conspiracy-theorist, I believe he plays a key roll in the downward spiral of our world.
 6. Most Americans don't realize this because they intellectually pick and choose what sort of mystical or spiritual things they want to recognize.
 7. But the people who claim to believe the Bible don't have that choice.
 8. We are obligated to accept the reality of the devil, because the Holy Spirit has pulled back the curtain, exposing his nakedness.

II. Satan, the devil, is an actual, evil creature.

- A. We can make that conclusion through the process of logic. But perhaps not in a common way.
 1. Let me show you what I mean. **Does GOD exist?** Certainly. Without a doubt.
 2. The fact that we live in a complex, organized universe demands a Creator. That Creator is Jehovah.
 - a. I saw a cartoon the other day with a mother snowman telling her little snowman child that a million snow flakes randomly fell from the sky into the shape of his little snow body.
 - b. Until we convince our heart to reject the obvious engineering of our body and our universe, that heart knows intuitively there is a God.
 3. The necessity of justice – the eventual punishment of evil men – demands a divine judge – God.
 4. There are other intellectual arguments for the existence of God.
 5. There are the **cosmological** argument, the **teleological**, **ontological** and the **anthropological** arguments.
 6. But the **most important argument** for the existence of God is that **the Bible** declares Him.
- B. Similarly, why do most cultures and societies believe in some sort of **hell** and an ultimate **heaven?**
 1. We could run through some of the arguments I just mentioned.
 - a. But the most powerful proof is found in the Bible.

- b. God declares in His Word that there is an eternal heaven for God's people, and there is a lake of fire and brimstone for those who live and die without the Lord's salvation.
 2. If someone is willing to admit to the existence of God, heaven and hell – logic demands that he also believe in the reality of an evil being – the one we call "*Satan.*"
 3. Because just as the Bible declares the existence of those other things it declares the existence of the devil.
 4. If we accept that the Bible teaches one truth, and we believe it, then we should accept its other doctrines.
- C. **Moses**, the biographer of the Old Testament saint **Job**, asserts the existence of the devil.
1. "*The Lord said unto Satan (one of the names for the devil), Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*"
 - a. That sounds very reminiscent of Peter's words from our text: he "*walketh about seeking whom he may devour.*"
 - b. Moses also suggests that Satan possesses the **characteristics of personhood**.
 - c. He has personal **will, observation, activity**, and he is **acquainted** with God and the people of God.
 2. In addition to **Moses** and **Job – Zechariah, Isaiah** and **Ezekiel** reveal more facts about the devil.
 - a. They describe his origination and his hopes.
 3. And as I said a few moments ago, the Jews of Jesus' day knew of the devil, because they possessed the Hebrew scriptures.
- D. And then we come to the New Testament.
1. All four of the gospel writers reveal things about the devil – **Matthew, Mark, Luke** and **John**.
 2. **John** and **Luke** also speak about him in their letters and in the **Book of Acts**.
 3. Then following them, others, like **Paul, Peter** and **James** teach us more about the devil.
 4. If someone claims to believe what **Paul** says about salvation from sin, then honesty demands that he also accept what Paul said about Satan.
 5. And finally there is the **Lord Jesus** who not only **spoke OF** the devil, He **spoke TO** the Devil.
- E. If Christ cannot be trusted when speaking about Satan, then Christ cannot be trusted at all.
1. If reason be taken to its logical conclusion: someone who does not believe in the reality of a literal devilish being called "*Satan,*" he probably is not a true believer in Christ – he is not a Christian.
 2. There should be no doubt about the reality and existence of the devil.

III. And what sort of creature is he?

- A. First of all, Peter tells us that he is an **adversary** to the Christian.
1. "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*"
 2. The apostle doesn't say, "*Satan, the devil, IS your adversary,*" as though it might be a new thought people.
 - a. No, he implies that everyone should know that he is the Christian's adversary –
 - b. "*As you already know, the devil is your adversary, but you should also know that he walks about as a roaring, devouring lion.*"
 3. That is all I'm going to say about the devil's adversarial character this morning, because it is more appropriate for our second message.
 4. Rather, I'd like you to focus on Peter's second thought: "*Be sober, be vigilant; because... as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*"
- B. Do you see the little preposition "*as?*"
1. It tells us that there is a **simile** coming up. Satan is not actually a lion – the king of beasts.
 2. I don't believe anyone has seen him in the form of a lion, and I doubt that anyone ever will.
 3. No, Satan only **displays** certain **characteristics** that are like a roaring lion.

- C. But why does Peter say, *“the devil, as a **ROARING lion**, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”?*
1. Picture a huge male lion with the flowing mane and the mannerisms and swagger of the boss.
 2. He weighs a hundred pounds more than the 400 pound females around him.
 3. He has a harem of twelve lionesses who generally kill the prey for their family, including for the big male.
 4. He sometimes hunts, but more often than he just waits for the females to fix dinner for everyone.
- D. Why does this big lion roar?
1. The short answer is: he roars in order to keep other male lions at bay.
 2. Most lion-vocalizing is done early in the morning and early in the evening.
 3. They roar to declare their presence and to declare their ownership of a particular patch of territory and their harem.
 4. Males roar to tell other males to stay away, and often, the louder the roar the more successful they are.
 5. They don't roar to terrify the antelope, because that would be counter-productive.
 - a. They hunt by stealth as much as possible.
 - b. And they don't roar after a kill.
 - c. They have no intention of sharing their meal with jackals and hyenas; they simply eat after reminding everyone that they are in charge.
- E. Satan, like a lion, roars to boast about who he is, telling God and others to stay away from his family.
1. And by the way, do you remember what a group of lions is called?
 - a. There is a *“herd”* of cows, a *“flock”* of sheep, and a *“murder”* of crows.
 - b. But a family of lions is called a *“pride.”* Isn't that an interesting use of the word?
 2. You could say that Satan is proud of his wives and his children.
 3. He roars to keep them in line and to warn other lions and creatures to leave them alone.
 4. Even though lions are the apex predator on the savanna, they lose members of the pride to other predators
 5. But woe unto the hyena who is attacked by the lion king – the pride male.
- F. Why does the devil roar? No one can definitely answer the question.
1. But trying to put myself into Satan's paws and voice, I'd say that it was out of pride.
 2. I'd say he roars as a challenge to God.
 3. Yes, his roar does sometimes frighten the saints, but if I had to guess, I'd say it wasn't primarily for them.
 4. His roar may increase their *“cares,”* but that is something for our second message.

IV. What does Satan actually intend to do?

- A. *“The devil, as a **roaring lion**, walketh about, seeking whom he may **DEVOUR**”?*
1. Satan is not the like the dog whose bark is worse than his bite.
 2. Clearly Satan's bite is more dangerous than his roar.
 3. He goeth about seeking whom he may *“swallow.”*
- B. How far should we stretch Peter's simile? How far should we apply the illustration?
1. For example, how and to what purpose is it that Satan devours prey?
 2. Does the devil need to eat in order to stay alive? Do spirit creatures have to have 2,000 calories a day?
- C. Assuming that you ate a meal or two yesterday, let me ask you why?
1. Don't we eat in order to sustain our lives? We know that we must eat in order to go on living.
 2. And sometimes we eat certain things because we enjoy those things; they taste good or they smell good.
 3. As we've heard, some people eat to live while others live to eat.
 4. I suppose that sometimes we eat because someone we love went to a lot of trouble to prepare that meal.
 5. In the Oldfield home, there is one cat (definitely not a lion) who often eats just to make sure the other cat doesn't get to eat.
 6. What is it that Peter might be saying about Satan and his eating habits?

- D. Keep in mind that Satan has been around since just before the first day of human existence.
1. Billions of people have been born, lived full lives and then died, while the devil just keeps going on.
 2. My point is: you are not Satan's primary concern; devouring us is not his objective.
 3. We are told in **Isaiah 14** that Satan's foolish goal is to unseat the sovereign God – Jehovah.
 - a. *“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:*
 - b. *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”*
 4. But Satan has learned over six millennia that a frontal attack upon the omnipotent God means sure defeat.
 5. For example, his temptation of the Saviour in **Matthew 4; Mark 1 & Luke 4** gave him a bit of an education.
 6. As a result, right now, rather than focusing his armies on Jehovah and God's armies of angels, he has his gun-sights set on you and me, the pinnacle of God's earthly creation and salvation.
 7. He feeds his personal pride on spiritually consuming the weak & sickly stragglers among the vast herds of humanity.
 8. He seems to think that by attacking and defeating the saints of God, he will ultimately defeat their God.
- E. But Satan is not a spiritual cannibal. He doesn't actually or physically eat anyone.
1. The Bible is not the script for a horror movie, depicting Satan with blood dripping from the fangs of a grotesque-looking devil.
 2. Peter uses the lion only as a simile.
- F. We will come back to **I Peter** tonight, but for the rest of our lesson we turn to **John 8**, which we read earlier.
1. There we see the Lord Jesus in one of the courts of the Temple, preparing to do some Bible teaching.
 2. Quickly, a handful of Satanically-inspired men brought a sinful woman before Him as a test.
 3. Ultimately, He told the woman to *“go and sin no more,”* disarming that group of enemy in the process.
- G. Following that there was a debate between Christ and another group of self-righteous Pharisees.
1. He said to them, *“Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world.”*
 2. They replied, pointing to their genetic relationship and their allegiance to Abraham, the father of Israel.
 3. Christ responded saying, *“If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father.”*
 4. When they uttered some despicable slander, *“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.*
 - a. *Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.*
 - b. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”*
- H. According to **Peter**, the devil is the **adversary** and **slanderer** of the children of God.
1. According to **Peter's Master**, the Lord **Jesus**, the devil is the **father** of those who reject Christ.
 2. But remember, the people to whom Jesus was speaking were among the most religious in the nation – in the world.
 - a. They vigorously defended what they perceived to be the ancient religion of Abraham and the patriarchs.
 - b. And personally, they could probably produce notarized copies of their genealogies.
 3. But the Son of God declared that they were children of the devil, Satan.
 4. There is a physical lineage and there is a spiritual lineage.
 5. Oh, and by the way, that declaration Jesus made essentially included all the rest of us as well.
 6. We don't have to be unbelieving Hebrews to be children of Satan.

- I. When Adam chose to rebel against Jehovah, the Creator, he forsook the family of God, so to speak.
1. Just as some American states are permitting children to divorce their parents, Adam divorced himself from the Lord.
 2. Just as God had forewarned, when Adam ate that which was forbidden his spirit instantly died.
 3. He became a child of the devil.
 4. Spiritually, Cain and Abel, along with all the rest of Adam's children and grand children have been born into the pride of the evil lion.
 5. And as a result, we live and behave like our lion king – we lie, we cheat, and we even murder when it is to our benefit.
 6. *“He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”*
 7. It wasn't this preacher who said that you, as an unbeliever, are a child of the devil, it was the Lord Jesus.
- J. Then Peter adds that *“the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*
1. How is it that Satan devours souls? Your soul?
 2. By striving with all his might to hunt you down and to keep you from acknowledging your spiritual ancestry.
 3. He works to keep his children from repenting of their sinful, leonine nature and character.
 4. The devil wants to hide you from the truth and to hide the truth from you.
 5. You are currently living and dying in the pride of the wicked one.
 6. And if you leave the world in that condition you will be cast into the eternal fires which have been prepared for this same devil and his angels.
- K. How can a child of the devil become one of the children of God?
1. How can sinner become one of God's saints?
 2. *“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?” – (Jeremiah 13:23).*
 3. No lioness can morph into a sheep. But with God all things are possible.
 4. God in His Word tells us that you can be born again.
 5. *“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” – (II Corinthians 5:17).*
- L. I implore you to acknowledge before God that you are a sinner.
1. Admit that you are hopelessly enslaved to things which God hates and things which Satan endorses.
 2. Repent before God.
 3. And at the same time, reach out by faith to Christ who gave His life on the cross to save sinners like us.
 4. Repentance and faith in Christ are found in God's sheep – creatures who were former children of Satan.
 5. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved”* from the same destruction as faces the devil.