

The background of the image is a dramatic, high-contrast photograph of dark, swirling storm clouds. The clouds are dense and textured, with some lighter areas where light breaks through, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall tone is somber and intense.

THE INVISIBLE WAR AGAINST SATAN



Part 4: The Power of Death and Satan's Defeat



Introduction

“What happens to a person at death?” is the fifth of James Sire’s seven basic questions which can act as guides for us as we seek to understand our own worldview – the lens through which we see the world. Many avoid the subject of death altogether, like Malcolm Forbes (1919-1990), former publisher of *Forbes* magazine, who formulated his own personal philosophy about it: “Since it’s life’s only certainty, and since being against it isn’t apt to affect the result, dwelling on death strikes me as a woeful, wanton waste of time.” Woody Allen, resisting a common perspective on death, said, “I don’t want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve immortality through not dying. I don’t want to live on in the hearts of my countrymen. I would rather live on in my apartment.”



Introduction

Through the eyes of theologian James Montgomery Boice, death is understood much differently: “Death is not only an enemy; it is the *ultimate* enemy, the greatest enemy there is. I think we sense this in our fear of death. All are afraid of death, even Christians, though death is transformed for them, and fear is often conquered.” In his continuing remarks, Boice also reminds us that “Death is an encounter – an encounter with God.”

Considering these and other views on what awaits us after death, it is not surprising that there is much confusion about what the Scriptures teach us about Satan’s role in leading our first parents into sin and death and how he was ultimately defeated by Jesus Christ so that we may live for all eternity in the presence of God.

The Origin of Death

- “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die**” (Gen. 2:15).
- God’s word to Adam: “Because you listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you....By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you **return to the ground**, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and **to dust you shall return**” (Gen. 3:17-19).

Death As a Punishment for Sin

- “For since **by a man came death**, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead” (I Cor. 15:21).
- “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and **death through sin**, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12).
- “For if by the **transgression** of the one (Adam), **death reigned through the one**, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17).
- “For **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).
- “For the **wages of sin is death...**” (Rom. 6:23).

Death As a Punishment for Sin

- “For the mind set on the flesh is **death**” (Rom. 8:6).
- “...when **sin** is accomplished, it brings forth **death**” (James 1:15).
- “And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the **second death**, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:14-15).
- “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the **second death**” (Rev. 21:8).

The Final Enemy

- “For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death” (I Cor. 15:25-26).
- “The sting of death is sin...” (I Cor. 15:56).
- “...our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (II Tim. 1:10).



Père Lachaise

Paris

110 Acres - The Most Visited Necropolis in the World
Opened in 1804

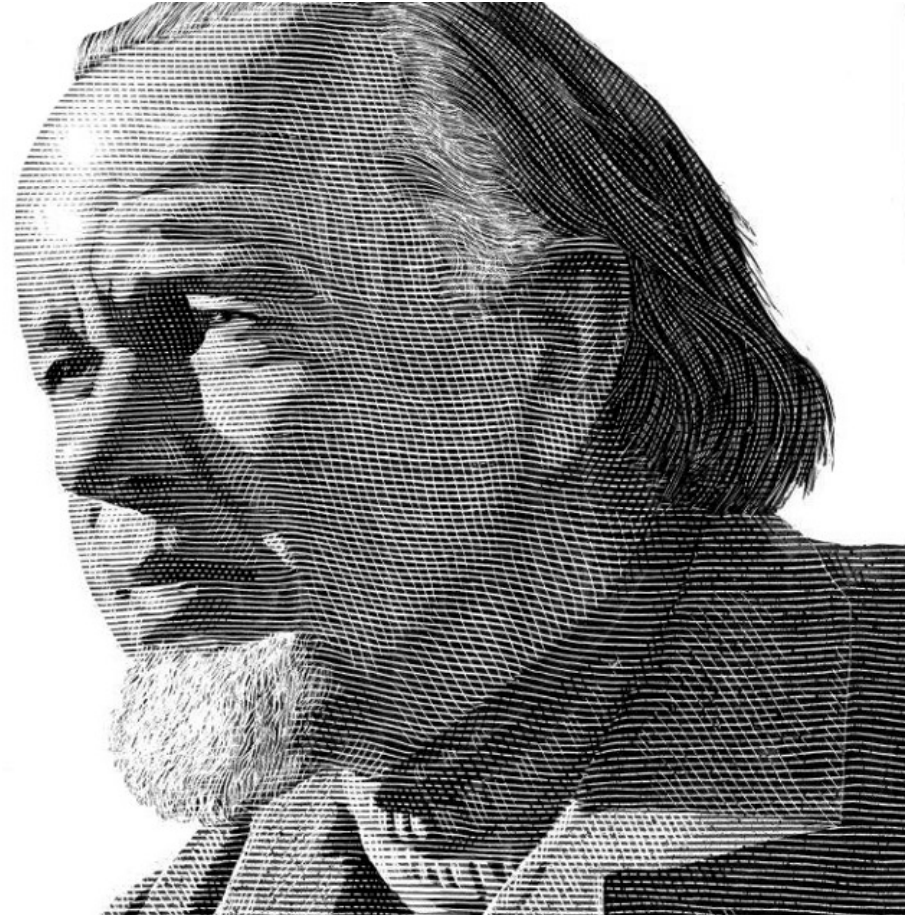


The Two Stings of Death

- “**The fear of non-being** is a constant fear in man...For man, as he knows himself as an individual personality, death has two stings: The first is the loss of individuality and the second is the loss of future orientation, both of which are basic to the human psyche” (Os Guinness).
- “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades” (Rev. 1:17-18).
- “He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death” (Rev. 2:11).

Sin and God's Wrath

“There *is* a moral absolute. I *am* significant. I *have* deliberately sinned. I *am* under that wrath of God. Note it well: unless by God's grace I have taken advantage of this unexpected and totally surprising answer to the dilemma, I am under the wrath of God.”



Francis A. Schaeffer

1912 -1984



Carl F.H. Henry: The Secular Man & Death

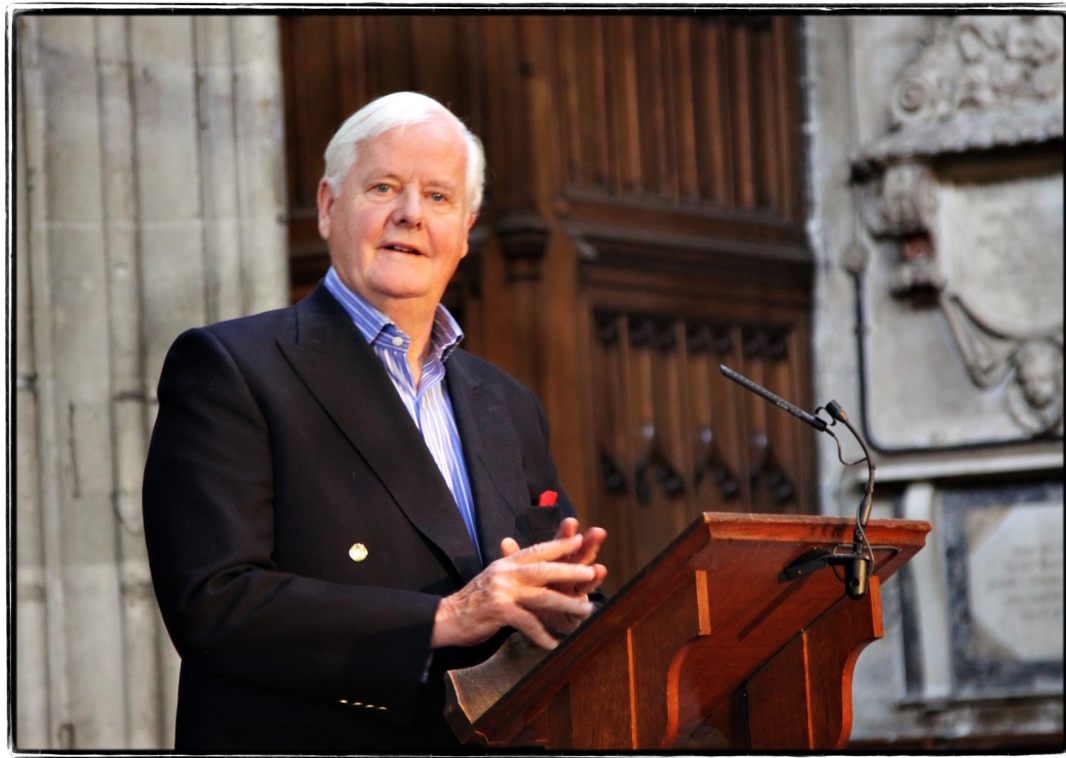
“Modern secular man refuses to be reconciled to his own professed nothingness. The prospect of personal death is one to which he, like other men, seems least able to reconcile himself. Much as naturalistic theory characterizes him as a conditioned fleck of space-time energy, man seeks a link to the unconditioned, if not in respect to his origin, at least in respect to his destiny. He refuses to bow resignedly to the limits that secularism sets for his life, and continues to entertain the hope that he is something special. He thrusts out of mind the notion that he is helpless to reverse his rendezvous with nonbeing, and invests his existence with a secret conviction that he differs in kind and in fate from the range of other finite beings. He shunts (pushes aside) the relativizing of his energies in a way that would snuff out the sense of



Carl F.H. Henry: The Secular Man & Death

life's ongoing meaning and purpose. He declines both to ponder the sure prospect of death and to resign himself to be the cipher (a person who fills a place, but is of no importance or worth) that current theory computes him to be. He shares the almost universal refusal to look upon old age and personal nonbeing with equanimity. Unsuccessful as is the attempt, he tries nonetheless to anesthetize awareness of the inescapability of death, and when he buries his loved ones he even camouflages death's reality with the niceties of funereal trappings. Despite the threat of nonbeing he celebrates his own existence and searches for inviolable individual security; he seeks a singular meaning for his life, and settles for nothing less than a sense of lasting personal significance and worth."

Infinite Regret



Os Guinness

1941 –

English Author and Social Critic

“Often, the logic of modern man’s premise is hellish. But then, ultimately hell is nothing less than the truth known too late.”

Satan's Attempts to Get Rid of God's Solution

- Through Herod's murder of the Bethlehem children
- Through the wilderness temptations to avoid the way of the cross
- Through the crowd's resolve to force Jesus into a politico-military kingship
- Through Peter's contradiction of the necessity of the cross
- Through the betrayal of Judas, whom Satan actually "entered"



John R.W. Stott

1921-2011

Stott's Summary from *The Cross of Christ*

Satan's Defeat



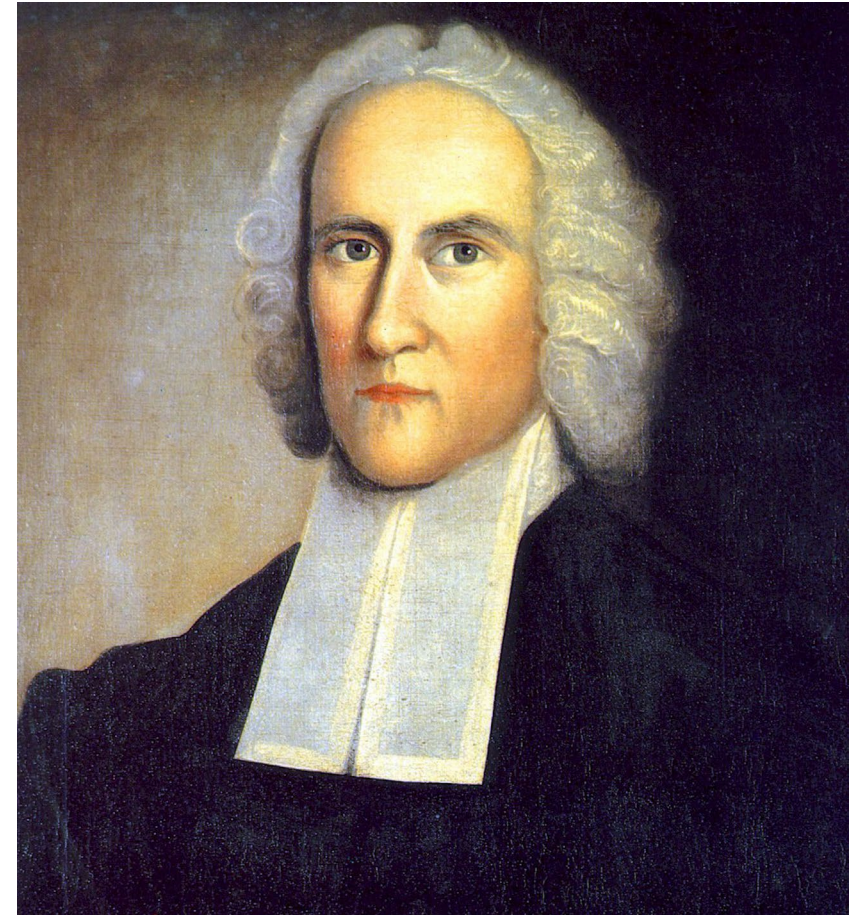


Satan's Defeat

- “The work of Christ, which is so central in our Christian faith, is essentially a work of destruction that terminates upon the power and work of Satan. This is not a peripheral or incidental feature of redemption. It is an integral aspect of its accomplishment.” (John Murray).
- “Through his cross and resurrection, Christ has defeated Satan” (John Frame).
- “The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ reversed the tide of war. The King appeared, single-handedly breaking the stranglehold of the oppressor....Jesus speaks of his cross as the definitive cosmic exorcism” (David Powlison).

Satan's Defeat

“Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. And this was the very thing that did it, *viz.* the blood and death of Christ. The cross was the devil's own weapon; and with this weapon he was overthrown.”



Jonathan Edwards

1703-1758



Satan's Defeat

“The result of Christ’s death is twofold: he conquered Satan and set his people free from the fear of death. Satan desired the destruction of God’s creation in general and man in particular. After the fall, Satan had the power of death over Adam and his descendants and used death as a weapon against us. He had the privilege of coming before God in heaven to accuse the believers and stood ready to execute the verdict pronounced upon the guilty and to destroy man, who was condemned to death....Jesus alone would be able to destroy Satan, and he could do this by means of his death on the cross. That is, Jesus defeated Satan by using the weapon of death....Jesus took the weapon of death out of Satan’s hands. Jesus took away the fear of death” (Simon Kistemaker).



Satan's Defeat

- “Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world (Satan) be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself” (Jn. 12:31-32).
- “Through the death of Christ, the power of Satan over the nations is broken. During the old dispensation, these nations had been under the thralldom (bondage) of Satan” (William Hendriksen).
- “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (Heb. 2:14-15).



Satan's Defeat

- “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:8).
- “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him” (Col. 2:15).
- “...and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged” (Jn. 16:11).
- “The explicit teaching of the Bible ‘reiterates the truth that Satan and his hosts came to judgment, even being spoiled, unveiled, triumphed over, judged and cast out by Christ in his death’” (Carl F.H. Henry).



Stott: The Language of Satan's Defeat

- The Death-Blow of Satan's kingdom
- The Great Deliverance
- The Destruction of Evil
- The Cosmic Overthrow of the Principalities and Powers
- The Cross: The Victory Won
- Satan: Defeated and Dethroned
- The Decisive Victory of the Lamb

God's Triumph on Our Behalf

- “We had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope” (II Cor. 1:9-10).
- “He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away. And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true” (Rev. 21:4).

Living with Two Truths



John M. Frame

American Philosopher and Theologian

1939 -

“There is a balance to be kept. Satan is defeated, but he is still doing harm...But we can also look at him in this way: he is still doing harm, but he is defeated.”



10 General Principles and Warnings

1. **Do Not Revile or Mock Satan:** “But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you’” (Jude 9). “If the mightiest archangel Michael refuses to rebuke Satan, how much more should sinful man refrain from reviling him” (Kistemaker).
2. **Submit and Resist:** “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7; 1 Pt. 5:9).
3. **Be on the Alert:** “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pt. 5:8).

10 General Principles and Warnings

4. **Do Not Lose Consciousness of Angelic Beings:** “On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:6-7). The angels were present at creation and still exist today.
5. **Develop a Larger Cosmology:** There are a vast number of angels, both good and evil, in the invisible world.
6. **Do Not *Underestimate* the Difficulty of the Invisible War:** “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world-forces of darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).



10 General Principles and Warnings

7. **Do Not *Overestimate* the Difficulty of the Invisible War:** We have been given spiritual weapons with which to fight (Eph. 6:10ff.).
8. **Be Strong in the Lord:** “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might” (Eph. 6:10). “With undaunted courage march on, and be strong in the Lord, on whose performance lies the stress of the battle, and not on your skill or strength” (William Gurnall).
9. **Be Holy:** “Say not thou hast royal blood running in thy veins, and art begotten of God, except thou canst prove thy pedigree by this heroic spirit, to dare to be holy in spite of men and devils” (Gurnall).

10 General Principles and Warnings

10. Use the Authority Christ Has Given to You: “And He said to them, ‘I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightening. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you’” (Lk. 10:19).

Concluding Insight from Spurgeon

“When Satan opens his mouth, he gives me an opportunity of ramming my sword down his throat.”



Charles H. Spurgeon

1834-1892