

Power Struggle #6 – Where the natural and supernatural collide?

10-13-18

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- The church had a victory yesterday – Renovation at Kirk’s – Tim, Karianne, Cheyenne, Austin, Jeff, Francine, Mary, Jaime, Cindy, Cleetus (85 year old plumber), Roger, Steve, Brinda, Luke
- Congratulations to Pat and Joyce getting through wedding season (2 weddings – yesterday Sean Moses and Sydney Holmes were married and about 1 month ago, Lindsey & Troy House were married)
- S’mores at the Barth’s tonight at 5:30 – all welcome
 - Offering
 - Video – Power Struggle Intro

Review of series:

#1 – Creation – Authority of God – Provision of God

#2 – Image of Man in the Image of God

#3 – Fall of man – The Deceiver – Sin to all man through the one sin, for all sinned

#4 – The Dead Man Float – God’s judgement is pure and holy – His love saved us

#5 – Say What?? – Tower of Babel – self focus and self-sufficiency

This morning – the power struggle is going to get both personal & spiritual

Introduction:

We actually leave Genesis and engage a story, out of a book in the Bible believed to be the first one written and about a guy believed to have lived amongst the earliest ... Job

We will return next Sunday to Genesis for a four-part series we are calling ... Promise (a focus on Abraham and Isaac)

As we open the book of Job, we find a story infamously associated with some of the worst in human suffering and loss.

Our texts to observe: Job 1, 2, & 42

Introduction to Job

Job 1:1-5

There once was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil. 2 He had seven sons and three daughters. 3 He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 teams of oxen, and 500 female donkeys. He also had many servants. He was, in fact, the richest person in that entire area. 4 Job’s sons would take turns preparing feasts in their homes, and they would also invite their three sisters to celebrate with them. 5 When these celebrations ended—sometimes after several days—Job would purify his children. He would get up early in the morning and offer a burnt offering for each of them. For Job said to himself, “Perhaps my children have sinned and have cursed God in their hearts.” This was Job’s regular practice.

This morning, we are going to be avoiding focusing on Job himself, though the story has him at the center.

- We have touched on suffering in recent weeks and I do not wish to labor this too much
- Job is quite a hero in the story and I do not want to elevate him today too much, thus heaping on greater works-based-motivation on you to be something great yourself, within your own power

Rather we are going to be focusing on the point where the supernatural and the natural collide, not only in this Bible instance, but in our lives too.

- The Heavens engage in power struggle, but are absolutely submitted to God the Father

Job 1:6-12 - One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. 7 "Where have you come from?" the Lord asked Satan.

Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on."

8 Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil."

Funny illustration (my dad likes to surprisingly put me on the phone with someone) (don't notice me)

9 Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. 10 You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! 11 But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!"

12 "All right, you may test him," the Lord said to Satan. "Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don't harm him physically." So Satan left the Lord's presence.

In Job 2 – we there is a second conversation between God and Satan and in this conversation, Satan convinces God to allow him to inflict the health and body of Job.

- Heavenly court (or Sons of God) regularly gather to present themselves before God
- At this time, Satan also followed along and came to this gathering too. (you get a sense that this did not happen all of time)
- In order for us to get a sense on this power struggle in the heavens, it be good to understand Satan a little more (an article from Active Christianity states it well regarding Satan)

Who is Satan?

Satan is a horrible creature. He is repulsive to look at, horns, tail, pitchfork etc. This is the picture of Satan that we are most familiar with. If we actually look into what the Bible says about him, we see that nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact this is a very dangerous misrepresentation. In Ezekiel 28:12-19 we have a true picture of Satan. "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty . . . You were the anointed cherub . . . I established you . . . you were perfect in your ways from the day you were created."

This sounds nothing like the typical image of Satan that many people have. He was in fact an anointed cherub. He sat in heaven, a being of the highest rank and exalted position. Created by God as the "seal of perfection."

Satan's fall

But Satan turned his eyes away from his Creator and began to admire the creation; himself. "You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor." (Ezekiel 28:17) He became proud and exalted himself; a desire to rule was born in him. He wished to put himself in God's place. He whispered lies until he had a third of the hosts of heaven on his side.

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” Isaiah 14:12-15.

The problem began with this “I will”. Satan turned from hearing God’s voice and began to seek his own will. To put another will over God’s is to say that His will is not perfect. When Satan said, “I will”, sin began. (What is sin?) God calls Himself by name, saying, “I AM.” (Exodus 3:14) He does not give this name to anyone else. The one who wants to be something in himself is therefore in conflict with God, and is expelled.

How did Satan’s expulsion happen?

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7-9

When did or will this war happen?

There are approximately 10 scripturally viable options in trying to figure out when this war in the heaven did or will happen. I have landed in my thoughts that it happened at the time of the resurrection or the ascension and the birth of the Church.

This heavenly war spoken of in Revelation 12 is spoken of in the context of the work on the cross ... vs. 10-12 - And 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 brothers[b] has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

Jesus says, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like a lightning flash” (Luke 10:18). Later, as He predicts His crucifixion and listens to the Father’s booming voice from heaven declare that His name was and will again be glorified, Jesus says, “Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out” (John 12:31).

Other New Testament authors confirm that Jesus accomplishes a great victory over Satan through His death, burial and resurrection. The apostle Paul writes that because of His finished work on the cross, Jesus “disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; He triumphed over them by Him” (Col. 2:15). And the writer of Hebrews points out that Jesus added to His deity sinless humanity “so that through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death – that is, the Devil – and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death” (Heb. 2:14-15).

So it is best to understand this war in heaven as contingent upon the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, through which He defeats Satan and his works, reclaims the title deed to earth, and seals the doom of Satan and his minions for whom hell is created (Matt. 25:41).

- The Natural and the Supernatural collide

In Job's day, it is obvious that Satan had access to both heaven and earth and let's return to the story of Job to see how the natural and the supernatural (spirit realm) collide.

13 One day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting at the oldest brother's house, 14 a messenger arrived at Job's home with this news: "Your oxen were plowing, with the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans raided us. They stole all the animals and killed all the farmhands. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

16 While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived with this news: "The fire of God has fallen from heaven and burned up your sheep and all the shepherds. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

17 While he was still speaking, a third messenger arrived with this news: "Three bands of Chaldean raiders have stolen your camels and killed your servants. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

18 While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived with this news: "Your sons and daughters were feasting in their oldest brother's home. 19 Suddenly, a powerful wind swept in from the wilderness and hit the house on all sides. The house collapsed, and all your children are dead. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

20 Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. 21 He said, "I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The Lord gave me what I had, and the Lord has taken it away. Praise the name of the Lord!" 22 In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.

Job 2:7-10 - So Satan left the Lord's presence, and he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot.

8 Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. 9 His wife said to him, "Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die."

10 But Job replied, "You talk like a foolish woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?" So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.

So Satan was cast out of heaven and has some temporary freedom wreaking havoc here on earth:

- Jesus calls Satan, "the ruler of this world." John 12:31.
- The Apostle Paul calls him "the god of this age." 2 Corinthians 4:4.
- "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter 5:8
- Most of the world is not aware of the fact that they are "under the sway of the wicked one." 1 John 5:19. He uses their inherent pride to occupy them with themselves and their greatness, and this has affected every aspect of humanity. His goal is for mankind to be so sure of their human abilities that it precludes all need for God. He is not interested in making the world evil, only in bringing everyone under his sway. He still whispers his lies into every ear, sowing pride and doubt, just as he did while he was in heaven.
- Satan masquerades as an angel of light ... he is attractive and what he offers is attractive.

Yet, God keeps stretching out His hand and preventing Satan from carrying out his plans completely.

- He sent Jesus to open up another way for mankind to follow (the gospel)
- He sent His Holy Spirit to empower every believer in their faith
- He sent His Holy Spirit to anoint them with Spiritual gifts combating the works of the deceiver and his fallen army

Ephesians 6:10-12 - Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh

and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

We are not powerless – just as the spiritual realm affects the natural, so does the natural realm impacts the spiritual realm. – “The prayers of the righteous avail much”

- **God knows what He’s doing**

Conversation between Job & his friends – Job 3-41

Job 42:10-17 - 10 When Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes. In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as before! 11 Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the Lord had brought against him. And each of them brought him a gift of money and a gold ring.

12 So the Lord blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning. For now he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. 13 He also gave Job seven more sons and three more daughters. 14 He named his first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. 15 In all the land no women were as lovely as the daughters of Job. And their father put them into his will along with their brothers.

16 Job lived 140 years after that, living to see four generations of his children and grandchildren. 17 Then he died, an old man who had lived a long, full life.

The Lord did not give Satan this freedom to inflict Job for no cause and without an end plan in mind:

- Attributes of God in all matters:
 - All-knowing, Ever-present, Outside of the restraints of time and All-loving
 - This is God’s plan to provide full proof of the deceitfulness of sin. It must be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that Satan’s pride (and our pride) will only lead to death and destruction.
- God is in the restoration business
 - He restored Job’s fortune and doubled it
 - His greatest joy is to watch our lives be restored in full measure and more!
- We can always operate with the absolute assumption that in Christ, we win!!
 - Satan also operates with the knowledge that he lost, loses and will ultimately lose.

Conclusion:

Stand for a special opportunity for prayer – lead the congregation in a prayer declaring our trust in His sovereignty.

Authentic Discussion Guide

- What comes to your mind by the word ... “supernatural?”
- Is the supernatural something to be feared, or is there another emotion attached for you?
- Can you share about a time when you believe you brushed up with or “collided” with the supernatural realm?
- What “side” of the supernatural realm has a greater influence in your life ... the evil (or fallen) side or the holy side? Why do you answer the way you do?
- Do you agree with Pastor Joe when he says, “God knows what He’s doing?” Why or why not?