

Chapter 7

Satan and the Devil

Although they won't admit it, Judeo-Christian theologians teach a form of dualism. They don't teach that two gods are competing with each other but they do teach that Satan and God war against each other, which is just a twist on the concept and Satan is made godlike because of his power. This concept of warring powers in the heavens has paganism as its origin. This doctrine also creates a perverted form of "sovereignty" for God and leaves Him helpless to work out His plan. The only alternative would be to believe that God allows Satan to do his work since God is also omniscient and knows all things before they happen and doesn't want to interfere with the "free will" of man. So, Satan offers man pleasure and tries to convince him he can do as he pleases while God pleads for man to turn from his wicked ways. If this were true, no one would be saved now or ever.

Paul makes it very clear in his epistles that man is a slave to sin and as such there is nothing he can do to free himself from its hold. And God makes it clear that no man has ever sought after God of his own "free will." This leads me to conclude that there's something wrong with this picture.

One of the first startling discoveries I made when I began studying this subject is that the word, satan, is not a proper noun and therefore should not be capitalized. I also discovered that lucifer is not a proper noun. Lucifer is a transliteration from the Latin. Satan is a noun that means, adversary, and a more accurate translation of the Hebrew noun for lucifer would be phosphorus or brightly shining. These are not proper names and should not have been translated as such. I also discovered that the phrase, **the devil**, never appears in the Old Testament. The plural, devils, appears 4 times and twice it means a he goat and the other two times it refers to *daemons*. (whatever that is) Was Satan a new invention after 4,000 years of history? I challenge anyone reading this to go to your Bible and cross out the word Satan and replace it with, adversary. You'll come away with a different understanding of this concept. Satan appears in 49 verses of Scripture and lucifer appears once.

Christians do not use a concordance when they study Scripture and they miss a great deal of understanding in not doing so. You don't have to be a scholar in Hebrew or Greek but it is immensely helpful to look up definitions when studying God's word. Even some words used in many of the translations had a different meaning than how we define those words today and that is especially true of the King James translation. I use the King James Bible because of its ease of checking words with Strong's concordance, but it was written in the 1500's and some words now have a different meaning.

Two glaring examples are the words Gentile and Jew. Gentile is a word that should never have been used in the translation because it is not a translation but a transliteration. It is from the Latin, *gentilis*, and since the translators of the King James Bible were supposed to be translating from the Greek and Hebrew, it was very improper of them to use a word from the Catholic Latin Vulgate Bible instead of the original text. It should have been translated as, nations. The word, Jew, can mean either one who was a Judean or one who was born in the tribe of Judah and only the context of the Scripture wherein it is used can clarify its translation.

It is also improper to translate a word as a proper noun in one instance and then as a common noun in another.

By these were the isles of the **Gentiles** divided in their lands; everyone after his tongue, after their families, in their **nations**. Gen. 10:5

The same Hebrew word is used in this verse for both Gentiles and nations. How is it possible to translate the Hebrew word, *goy*, as a proper noun and then change it to a common noun? The very same thing is done with the word, *satan*.

And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an **adversary** against him....." Num. 22:22

The Hebrew word used in this verse for adversary is *satan* but we can't have the Bible saying that the angel of the Lord is Satan. So, they translated it as adversary.

Another example of how confusion is wrought by translating the same root word differently is found in comparing 2 Sam. 24:1 to I Ch. 21:1. In the verse in 2 Samuel, the Scripture says that **God** moved David to number the people. In the verse in I Chronicles, it says that **Satan** moved David to number the people and it's referring to the exact same incident. The Hebrew word used in I Chronicles is the noun, *satan*.

If Satan and Lucifer are not proper nouns, then what is the name of this super-natural being with seemingly unlimited power to make war with God? I don't think anyone can deny that the Judeo-Christian concept of Satan affords him with greater power to destroy than Jesus' power to save which is a direct contradiction of Scripture.

But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be dead, **much more the grace of God**, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Rom. 5:15

The Scripture says the power of grace is much more than the power of the offense and yet Satan is made more powerful than God's grace according to Judeo-Christian theology.

The Hebrew word, *satan*, pronounced, sawtawn, should have been translated as, adversary, in all instances and it cannot be magically changed to a proper noun. I'm aware that words like spring, meaning the end of winter, could conceivably be used as a girl's name and thereby become a proper noun but once again we must look to the context. You cannot properly interchange, Spring and spring. In the case of *satan*, there is no instance that I have found that justifies changing it to someone's name. Using *satan* as a proper noun leaves it always to the discretion of the interpreter. The translation of *satan* as, an adversary, fits all cases of Scripture and does not change the context, but making it a proper noun forces one to pick and choose when and where it should be used as a name or a common noun and just adds more ambiguity, inconsistency and confusion. (Babel) A good example that demonstrates how using a proper noun form of a common noun is at the discretion of the translator is found when Jesus rebukes Peter and calls him, Satan. Obviously the translators should have chosen accuser instead of using the proper noun form of Satan. (See Matt. 16:23)

The use of the word, Satan, in the New Testament is likewise a noun changed to a proper noun. The Chaldean word, *satanas*, means, the accuser and it is basically the same as adversary.

So, who is this adversary? The easiest way to understand the adversary is to stand in front of the mirror. The adversary is and always has been the carnal nature of man. If you are a Christian, it is your carnal nature that is your worst foe. The "serpent" in the Garden of Eden

was nothing more than the carnal nature of Adam and Eve speaking to their minds and attempting to justify their actions. Paul describes it well.

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another; Rom. 2:15,

You don't have to worry about some external being tempting you. The temptation comes from your own lusts. There is no need for a "tempter" called Satan when we have all of the power of sin within us. Man does not want to admit that within himself is the very nature that is the adversary of God. God personifies this nature by referring to it as, **the adversary**. Satan is anyone who opposes God in any way or fashion; by word, by deed or by thought.

The book of Job is a glaring example of how God explains His thoughts and His ways by using parables to describe His doings. The parable states,

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. Job 1:6,

In Barnes Notes concerning this verse he says,

(1) That it is no more so than the parables of the Savior, who often supposes cases, and states them as real occurrences, in order to illustrate some important truth. Yet no one was ever led into error by this.

(2) It is in accordance with the language in the Scripture everywhere to describe God as a monarch seated on his throne, surrounded by his ministers, and sending them forth to accomplish important purposes in different parts of his vast empire.

It is not absolutely necessary, therefore, to regard this as designed to represent an actual occurrence. It is one of the admissible ornaments of poetry; - as admissible as any other poetic ornament. To represent God as a king is not improper; and if so, it is not improper to represent him with the usual accompaniments of royalty, - surrounded by ministers, and employing angels and messengers for important purposes in his kingdom. This supposition being admitted, all that follows is merely in "keeping," and is designed to preserve the verisimilitude of the conception. -

Surely Christians realize that God does not literally sit on a throne and that such expressions are used to describe His majesty and rulership. It is also interesting to note that in the last chapter of Job it is stated that God brought all of the evil upon Job.

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and **comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him**:... Job 42:11

I was taught it was Satan that had brought all of the evil and plagues upon Job. To those who would say that this verse simply implies that God allowed Satan to do his evil upon Job I would reply; Does it make sense to think that God needs some other being to do His work? Does it make Christians feel better to think that God keeps His hands clean by not doing evil deeds? In Isaiah we are told,

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. Isa. 45:7

And again in Amos it is said;

Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it? Amos 3:6

The big mistake that most people make is to equate evil with sin and they are not the same thing.

The Grecian empire had tremendous impact on the entire civilized world nearly 400 years before Christ. Their legends, myths and stories permeated every civilized nation on the face of the earth. As noted earlier, their concepts of the underworld, demons and devils was pretty much believed by everyone. After Christ there may have been a tapering off of this influence because of the Gospel that was increasing in acceptance throughout the Middle East and Europe. But this would only last for about 4-5 centuries and then the Catholic Church would start its teachings of hellfire, demons, exorcism, devils, the devil and Satan. For century after century these beliefs were pounded into the average person's mind and soul. Even with the Reformation, the Protestants did not dispel many of these teachings. But in these last days there are thousands of Christian men and women who have immediate access to different versions of the Bible and the many concordances and dictionaries of the ancient languages. The result is that the truth of Scripture is being found out by more and more people. It has a lot to do with technology but God is simply using technology as a means to reveal Himself in a way not seen for millennia. It is God who brought the technology in order to awaken His people. Those Christians who will not take the responsibility of studying and learning the truths of Scripture and who want someone else to tell them what the Bible says will be left in their deceit.

Paul admonished us to press on to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and not be content with just a "feel good" experience. God also holds us each responsible to search out the truth in His word and not to rely on being told what to believe by someone else. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul described Satan and shows that it is you and I.

[1] This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. [2] For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, [3] Without natural affection, trucebreakers, **false accusers**, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, [4] Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; [5] Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. [6] For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, [7] Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. [8] Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood

Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 2 Tim. 3:1-8

Did you notice how extensive the list was that Paul comprises? Man has no need to have some external force influence him; he has enough evil in his own character to fill the earth.

Paul also tells us in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans that God excuses no man because God's presence and glory is seen everywhere throughout creation. God does not blame the horrible condition of this sinful planet on demons or devils, He holds man responsible. I would be justified to stand in the presence of God and say that, "the Devil made me do it" if that were the case, but that is not the case. All of the ideas about demons and devils causing people like Ted Bundy or Charles Manson to do the things they did would be a justifiable argument if the Judeo-Christian concept of Satan were true. If some demonic spirit being were to enter into a person and force him to commit crimes and sins, how could God hold that person responsible for his actions?

There is no need to believe in demons and devils causing all of the chaos in the world. Man is sufficiently evil to have no need of anyone coaxing him to follow his own lusts. We've all heard of the man or woman who blames a "rough childhood" for his or her unacceptable behavior. There are certainly many people who become bitter or cruel because of things that happened to them in their childhood but God says they are without excuse. There are too many examples of people who rose above adversity and became overcomers.

It is our sinful nature and our own personal sins that cause the suffering and horror that is in the world. A child who is abused or unloved is suffering unnecessarily because of the sins of those who do such things, but for the child to grow up and use his childhood abuse as an excuse to commit his own sins is only adding fuel to the fire. You cannot use other people's vile acts as an excuse to do the same thing. Jesus said it well in Matthew.

[19] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: [20] These are the things which defile a man: Matt. 15:19, 20

It is not demon possession or the Devil's influence that causes men to sin, it is their own carnal nature. Because God personifies our adversarial nature into the devil in order for us to see how He deals with it does not mean there is a "being" having all of our evil nature incarnate. What would be the need? The "man of sin" expression used by Paul is in reference to the same thing. That "man of sin" is you and I when we exalt ourselves above all that is called God. The son of perdition is the carnal nature of man which Jesus shall reveal at His coming. The devil is the personification of evil and Satan is the adversarial nature of man.

The world is rapidly approaching the time of the unveiling of the sons of God and with that event shall also come the unveiling of the man of sin and all things evil shall be exposed and dealt with. There is nothing hidden that shall not be brought to light. It is time for Christians to grow up and stop believing in fairy tales and the bogey man and accept responsibility for their actions and thoughts. Satan is not orchestrating what is happening in the world, God is the conductor and is sovereign over all. He places whom He will in high places to do his bidding and accomplish his purposes just as He said of Pharaoh,

And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. Ex. 9:16.

God sat Pharaoh on the throne just as he sits all others in places of authority and it is to bring about His will that His name may be declared throughout the earth.

Believing in a spirit being called Satan, who wars against God and wins the bulk of humanity for destruction, creates theological complications that are massive and unanswerable. The concept makes God helpless and weak and shows that the plan of salvation is a complete failure. It isn't some spirit being that is at war with God, it is you and I. Even as Christians, we still must struggle with our carnal nature (adversarial nature.) The new man that Christ has birthed in us will someday win this struggle when God gives us of His Holy Spirit in full measure. Until then, we must each continue to fight against our own demons and devils and rely completely upon God and His mercy.

Note: I've underlined the first letter of Satan and Lucifer when used as a proper noun to indicate they are improper usages and should not be capitalized.

Suggested reading, audio and video:

Pastor Dave Barley's 8 part video series: "Satan and his Kingdom"

http://www.amprom.org/index.php?option=com_virtuemart&page=shop.browse&category_id=4&Itemid=62

Pastor Richard Kirsh 15 part video series: <http://ccbspokane.org/>