

CHAPTER 11

DEMONS, A GREEK GIFT TO CHRISTIANITY

DEMON/DAIMON/DAEMON

We have already spoken briefly of the use of the word “demon.” The word “demon” was at one time a word that referenced to malevolent and benevolent spirit beings. It was believed that this word referred to a supernatural variety of spirit beings that had the ability to act in kindness on the physical human world and to affect the individual human mind. Demons were also thought to affect nature in ways such as causing rain to fall on crops that needed moisture or causing herds and flocks to thrive. The malevolence of these beings was understood as a negative force that was exerted on any or all of the areas where a “good” or benevolent demon could exercise their powers.

Most people are not aware that demons were not always thought to be only evil. In the ancient world there were two forms of demons. They were known as *eudemons* and *kakodemons*; meaning good and evil respectively. History is well documented to show how demons were not believed to be exclusively evil, as is thought today. One writer (quoted below) describes the concept of demons as was common in the Greek period. As you read the information below take note of the second last sentence that indicates it was thought that a person was in a good state if they had a demon. This idea was prolific in the very nations that had the greatest effect on Judaism and Christianity.

The Greek translation of the Septuagint, made for the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria, and the usage of *daimon* in the New Testament's original Greek text, caused the Greek word to be applied to a Judeo-Christian spirit by the early 2nd century AD. Then in late antiquity, pagan conceptions and exorcisms, part of the cultural atmosphere, became Christian beliefs and exorcism rituals. The transposition has recently been documented in detail, in North Africa, by Maureen Tilley.

For Greeks and Romans, daemons ("replete with knowledge," "divine power," "fate" or "god") were not necessarily evil. Socrates claimed to have a *daimonion*, a small daemon that warned him against mistakes but never told him what to do or coerced him into following it. He claimed that his daimon exhibited greater accuracy than any of the forms of divination practised at the time. The Hellenistic Greeks divided daemons into good and evil categories: eudaemons (also called kalodaemons) and kakodaemons, respectively. **Eudaemons** resembled the Abrahamic idea of the guardian angel; they watched over mortals to help keep them out of trouble. (Thus *eudaemonia*, originally the state of having a eudaemon, came to mean "well-being" or "happiness.") A comparable Roman

genius accompanied a person or protected and haunted a place (*genius loci*).⁶⁷

The *daemon*, which is often spelled *daimon* in the Septuagint, came to be the “demon” of postexilic Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Demons were beings of either good or bad influence. As Platonic thought came to receive more and more acceptance, the idea of anything bad coming from God became more and more unacceptable. The demon came to be known as the harbinger of evil and eventually all attributes of good were removed from the concept of demons early in the Common Era. Seeing the mindset that came through in the inter-testamental writings makes it easy to see how the idea of demons and a “Satan” was to be passed along to Christianity and then enhanced by the Hellenized and Greek theologians of a state religion in the first century.

Was Satan Revealed By Progressive Revelation?

Some claim that the teaching and concept of demons came about in the “New Testament” because of what they call, “progressive revelation.” This claim is made in an attempt to neutralize the clear biblical and history of the meaning of the terms. Quite clearly, the history and meaning reveal demonology was a post-biblical fabrication. Progressive revelation is not a sound method to introduce brand new doctrines that are not found in or proven by the Hebrew Scriptures. Some seem to think that through progressive revelation, God reveals information that has not been available in the realm of humanity before this time. This is thought of as a dispensation for a specific time when humanity is prepared to receive it. The thinking is that Yahweh gives unique secrets to certain people and they then are to share this information with the

⁶⁷ From entry titled “daemon” at the Answers .com website
<http://www.answers.com/topic/daemon-mythology>

unenlightened in order to convince them of God's revealed plan. Overall, the predominant theory behind "progressive revelation" is one that has been found in Gnosticism for thousands of years.

When considering that concept a more balanced description of progressive revelation may be entertained. Perhaps one might see it is a valuable tool used to bring a more clear understanding of an already established or prophesied event or concept. Revealing what might have been meant by an older statement in the Scriptures that was difficult to understand when it was spoken. Perhaps progressive revelation is the correct term for the Hebrew people being told they would go into captivity by Yahweh's prophet, then, hundreds of years later they did end up in captivity. The captivity was a fulfillment of prophecy. Perhaps that is progressive revelation. It is only at the point the people realize they are in captivity that the historical statement of their eventual captivity makes sense. Progressively revealed! This would be similar to the Hebrew people being told the Messiah will visit them, and then in the first century AD, Yeshua did appear. Now the historical promise makes sense only when the factor of progressive revelation comes into play. Nevertheless, one thing "progressive revelation" is not, is that it is not reliable to reveal a concept that does not exist in the Hebrew Scriptures. As the word "revelation" has the meaning of "unveiling" it is possible that a message of importance that has been somewhat obscured to the human intellect for a time, is "unveiled" in order to allow the human intellect to understand and apply it to life. Puzzle pieces that were previously unrecognized do not magically appear from God; they simply come into view and are considered. The doctrine of Satan cannot be found in the Hebrew Scriptures so then it cannot be unveiled in the Apostolic Writings. God does not introduce any new doctrines through the writings of the Apostles. And if it appears He has introduced something new, such as the involvement of a demonic force in humanity, then we are misunderstanding the New Testament writings.

If someone claims to have a doctrine that is not found in the Hebrew Scriptures, then they are fabricating a doctrine on a false

basis. If the doctrine is not found when the Hebrew Scriptures are looked at critically to determine if the progressing concept actually appears, then someone has contrived a man-made doctrine. To say this more simply, one could say; the Hebrew Scriptures are good for doctrine and the New Testament, the Apocalyptic literature, the Apocrypha, the Talmud, or any historical literature, are not good for doctrine. Paul tells this to Timothy and in so doing, the maxim is implied by Paul's statement that all Scripture, meaning the Old Testament, is good for doctrine. That maxim is; the Hebrew Scriptures are for doctrine and are the only Holy documents used by Paul for teaching and preaching. Even Paul showed the doubters that Yeshua was the Messiah from the Scriptures. This is mentioned in one of Luke's memoirs called the book of Acts

*Acts 18:28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and he did so publicly, **shewing by the scriptures** that Jesus was Christ.*

The Scriptures must contain everything; that is every doctrine, which is spoken of in the Gospels and Letters. The implication by Paul that doctrine does not come from the Gospels and Letters is strong. Paul's stand is simple He teaches it is every concept that can be found taught in the "Old Testament," which fully prepares a man of God. That is why Paul was able to show from the "Scriptures" that Yeshua was the Messiah. Paul was a man who was "fully prepared," that is thoroughly furnished, because of his intimacy with and understanding of the "Old Testament." In 2nd Timothy Paul clearly states the Old Testament is the document to be used by a man of God.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2Timothy 3:16-17 KJV

Those who state it is possible for brand new doctrine to be revealed as a result of reading the “New Testament” have then suggested Paul is a liar. Perhaps they suggest Paul is a liar in their ignorance and are simply misunderstanding the construction of the Gospels and Letters. There are a growing number of scholars who so ashamedly misunderstand Paul because of their disconnection to Hebraic manners, customs, and thinking that they decry Paul, considering him to be one who spoke against the Messiah on certain issues. All the while, these same scholars fail to reconcile every word of the apostolic testimony with the words of the Scriptures. Or perhaps those who believe they have been given a brand new doctrine or that new doctrine was given in the New Testament are simply receiving revelation from their own mind. Undoubtedly a reservoir that is full of false ideas handed down by lying church fathers and other pseudo-messianic leaders and teachers. The prophet Jeremiah spoke about the people of God being victimized in a sense because of the lies that were handed down to their “fathers.”

O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.

Jeremiah 16:19 KJV

This is often the case for the one who teaches a doctrine such as the existence of “Satan” and “demons” and then profess it as progressive revelation, revealed in the “New Testament.” After all, as was thoroughly displayed in *Satan Christianity’s Other God Volume 1*, a supernatural Satan cannot be found in the Old Testament. The existence of evil has been explained via numerous inventive descriptions and definitions. These definitions are far from original concepts because they have come about through an unbroken chain of mystic and pagan philosophies. Many thoughts and ideas have flowed from the tributary system of pagan nations into the collection pond of Judaism and Christianity. Although the acceptance of the cosmic dualistic theology has not been passed

down with the specific intent to deceive the masses, the acceptance of a false dualistic philosophy has occurred. Regardless of the intent the deception flourishes in Christianity and in culture. It is probable that due to a lack in maintaining purity in the Faith of Israel as was asked of the Children of God by their God, the doorway to self-deception was opened. Just as Adam and Eve opened the doorway to self-deception in the beginning when they decided to alter the word and command of the Creator, so too has Christianity and Judaism been filled with deceptive teachings because they have changed the word of the Almighty. Once the doorway is open, it seems that other false thoughts and ideas are able to take on life. The life that deception takes on in man is as if spores had settled on the proverbial flower garden of the mind and grew into an unsightly fungus. The flower is still present but as the spores multiply, the “flower” becomes less and less recognizable as what it was intended to be.

In *The History of Magic*, Ennemoser makes note of the divergent philosophies that came to thrive in Christianity as a result of state run religions amalgamating heathen gods to unify the masses and thus giving the appearance that the pagan gods were disappearing, when they in fact were only being incorporated into fewer “gods.”

All the different descriptions of the existence and influence of evil spirits, as they have come down to us, have been modified by Christianity. The devil is altogether Jewish, Christian, heathen, idolatrous and spectral. As the heathen gods disappeared Christianity stooped to dualism, and the gnostic philosophy endeavoured to establish the universal principal of good and evil.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ennemoser, “The History of Magic,” pg132 - *University Book*,1970

All the influences and input from sources as far back as the Egyptian and Persian encounters had made their inroads into the Christian religion. The Christian religion, although today believed to be a religion that in some ways depicts the theology of the Messiah Yeshua, is a woeful representation of what the Biblical Faith in the God of the Bible is supposed to encompass.

The Roman system of governance became the Universal Church, which means Catholic. Roman and Greek philosophies of faith were almost identical and as the Romans led the world, including Jerusalem, their religion flowed into all aspects of mainstream society. Much of the syncretism of the Christian faith was further cemented by the Greek thinking Romans. Rome would never have admitted they thought like Greeks as far as religion and philosophy were concerned, but historical records clearly show although Rome was the captor of the Greeks, Rome was seduced by the ways of the captive and became very much like Greece in thought and philosophy. As the Roman writer Horace observed;

“Captive Greece captivated her conqueror.”

False ideas were fed to the masses and propagation of half-truths, if there exists such an animal, and ideas adopted from pagan cultures fuelled the development of a Christianity polarized from the Hebraic origin and style it was intended to be. The evolution of Christianity included cosmic demonology, which was a tapestry of falsities that worked its way through a handful of centuries where the concept was completed by Christianity. The distinguished physician who held the chair at the University of Bonn, Germany in 1819 and was an esteemed lecturer on pathology and medico-philosophical subjects can be heard again on the subject as it pertains to the “Christian” attitude which brought a winding, unbiblical, pagan philosophy to a stage of completeness within the faith of the Christians; Joseph Ennemoser writes;

We will now see how the belief in spirits and in sorcery gradually shaped and completed itself in Christianity, till

it finally issued in superstition and unbelief in the witch-period of the Middle ages.

In the early period of Christianity, men made little difference between the natural and the supernatural. Everything extraordinary was to them magical, or everything miraculous was a demoniac or theistic event. The laws of nature were not understood, and almost everything unusual, therefore, belonged to the sphere of miracle, which everyone explained according to his own ideas. The chief opposition of the heathen, however, originates in the fact that the Christians represented the heathen gods altogether as evil spirits, who occasioned trouble and crime, and indeed, asserted that the devil, enraged that his kingdom was overthrown by Christ, endeavoured to revenge himself by stirring up all the demon hosts and all the heathendom in hostility to it. See Munschers History of Dogmas; Meyer's *Historia diaboli, seu comment. De diaboli malorumque spirituum existential,*" etc. Tubingen 1780.⁶⁹

Beliefs About Satan and What He Can Do

Some of the beliefs in the first century and beyond that were propagated about demons were beliefs such as;

- Demons are the founders of idolatry and because of their pride allow themselves to be worshipped as gods.
- Miracles proceed from devils for the authentication of idolatry
- Oracles of newly styled poetic language and structure, originates from them and is done with the intention to mock men.

⁶⁹ Ennemoser, *The History of Magic*; pg 138-139

- The magical arts are maintained by them.
- They work to do harm and injury to men in every possible way.
- They are responsible for public calamities, diseases, failure of crops, famines, poverties, and all manner of disastrous accidents.
- They are inexorably inducing humans to sin and unbelief.
- They are so well organized that they can act on the body and the soul
- They hate the Christians the most because “Christians” refuse to flatter their pride.
- A demon or legion of demons was appointed to each soul at birth.

The above brief list was gleaned from concepts that were espoused by early Christian Giants in the Universal church. These ideas became commonplace in the culture that grew up under Roman rule and embraced the Roman religion. Tatian, Tertullian, Justin, and Clement of Alexandria, all convincingly delivered their ideas, which were taken from Greek concepts and then expanded on. Shrouding their teachings in the piety, which comes with knowing much Scripture, they were able to adequately comfort themselves and the masses by propagating descriptions and mystic ideas that did not come from the earliest Apostles or from the Holy Scriptures.

Hebrew Scripture Is Interpreted By Greek Philosophers

These men, known as the Early Church Fathers, seduced multitudes by their intellect and influence. They were so revered as having authority that they decided to extract meanings from the Gospels and Letters that were not the original intent of the first Apostles. The fact that they had long since been divorced from understanding the Faith of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from an ancient Hebrew perspective is undisputable. This separation from Hebraic thought gave room for them to re-

interpret most of the writings that were said to be handed down from the apostles. Not to mention the manipulation of the interpretation of much of the Hebrew Scriptures, this manipulation was done in the name of Rome by Hellenized theologians. Rome was a religious governing body, believed to have ecclesiastical authority. The belief in the authority of Rome was not because of a prophecy exalting Rome to such a lofty position with unchallenged authority. No such statement from God existed. Scripture had not been written so as to give Rome the authority of God to be able to alter Scripture or make decisions as to how Scripture should be interpreted and applied. The only authority Rome received was the authority she gave herself.

Brilliant Non-Hebraic Leaders Complicated The Common Demonology

The concept of *daimons*, which represented a pagan idea of good and bad spirits, was adopted by Rome. Alternatively, perhaps it is better said that it flowed into Roman thought after the Grecians were defeated and revised Greek demonology was developed by the great thinkers of early Roman-Christian rule. The fact that there is no other god beside Yahweh strongly indicates “*daimons*” had no actual force or physical attributes. This fact was clouded by the belief in some other force. As an idea though, the belief in “*daimons*” took flight and was not kept to a small esoteric idea of a few. Due to the deep desire to cast “God” as only good and to find another force that could be cast as the originator of evil, the pagan belief in “demons” continued to migrate virtually unabated, deep into the thinking of those present in the first century. The Apocalyptic and the Hellenized Jews, who carried the authority as a result of them being the intellectual segment of society, were appointed positions of influence by the Greek government.

As the Empire switched to the hands of the Roman government, the “leaders” influence was proven. The religious

leaders were so convinced themselves of the demonological origins of evil and wickedness that they continued to turn a misunderstood idea of “bad” into a cleverly written anthology of fiction. The fictitious story of who caused evil was accepted as fact in a very broad way. The idea of demons, as the unseen spirit bad guys, was all but unrecognizable as once being the pagan philosophy that touted daimons were both good and bad.

Today in the English language, we have the word “demons” from the ancient word *daimon*, which became *daemon* in Latin. The two vowels of *daemon*, “ae” are a diphthong. A diphthong is simply two vowels together but producing only the one vowel sound. As the diphthong “ae” was dropped, we were left with the single vowel “e” in the word and today whether one writes, *daimons*, *daemons*, or *demons*, the word means the same things. No matter what religion constructs demons to be, in reality, according to the early use of the concept, a *daimon* was simply a good or bad experience. On a website dedicated to explaining the etymology of words, we are told of the beginnings of the words *demon* and *daemon*.

Demon and daemon were once used interchangeably. The former came to English from medieval Latin, while the latter was from classical Latin. The earliest use appears to have been in the phrase daemon of Socrates, which was his "attendant, ministering, or indwelling spirit; genius." That was in the late 14th century. It was a short time later that the term demon came to refer to "an evil spirit" by influence of its usage in various versions of the Bible. The Greek form was used to translate Hebrew words for "lords, idols" and "hairy ones (satyrs)." Wycliffe translated it from Greek to English, fiend or devil. This is how the evil

connotation arose. By the late 16th century, the general supernatural meaning was being distinguished with the spelling *daemon*, while the evil meaning remained with *demon*. Today *daemon* can mean "a supernatural being of a nature intermediate between that of gods and men" or "a guiding spirit."⁷⁰

Can A Demon Give You A Blessing?

If a Greek citizen of the early BC era had something good happen, they would believe a *eudaimon* caused it. Perhaps it was as simple as being given a beautiful piece of fabric to make an article of clothing. In a case such as that, it was thought a good demon was responsible for it. Today we can see such an occurrence as just a pleasant blessing that came with being alive and existing in God's world.

Conversely, if a person burned himself or herself on a hot stone stove, they would attribute the negative experience to a *kakodaimon*, which is a bad demon. The *daimon* was not so much seen as a tangible entity, but as an incident that happened to someone. As far as the Greeks considered it, it was not expressly a "being" trying to oppose "God" and trying to harm man. A demon could be an entity that brought good for a person too. Even amid the highly syncretistic religion of Judaism and the intense power of assimilation, which I suppose should itself be called a demon, many true Hebraic thinkers were able to use the terms borrowed from the Greco-Roman culture and apply the metaphorical sense to them. Understanding the term metaphorically as was taught by the many philosophers, the Hebraic thinker connected the word "demon" to a person's behaviour or attributes, not to an autonomous creature bent on destruction. For instance; when of the Messiah it is said, "He has a devil!" the speaker, in all

⁷⁰ From *Take Our Word For It*, <http://www.takeourword.com/TOW129/page2.html>

probability does not mean the man is inhabited by a supernatural spirit being, but is likely meaning the man is speaking lies and deceit, or is believed to be crazy. In subsequent volumes we will discuss the personification and metaphorical uses of the words *devil*, *demons*, and *satan*, which are found in the “New Testament.” For the moment, it is imperative that we recognize the discernable differences between those people who maintained a Greek concept of *devils* and *daimons* (*demons*) and those with the Hebrew understanding of *devils* and *daimons* (*demons*).

Although correctly perceived by many as a descriptive phrase identifying a behaviour or an attribute of a person, often when a Greek thinker spoke of someone as “*having a demon or devil*” they believed the person to actually have a spiritual entity within or about them. They quite possibly accepted the mystical concept of the term. When a Hebrew thinker spoke or heard of someone having a demon or a devil, he or she recognized the statement was to be heard as a metaphor. If the reference to a person having a devil were connected to a physical or mental malady, the Hebraic hearer would understand the speaker was enlisting the method of personification that was common to the day. This next point is important for us to understand. ***The hearer then understood that the malady, be it physical or spiritual, was being referred to as a “devil.” The meaning contained therein was that whatever illness had befallen a subject was an unwanted illness and was that which went against soundness of mind and/or soundness of body.*** For the Hebrews who were attempting to stay true to the faith of Israel as was handed down to Moses, they did not reject the cultural use of terminology borrowed from a Greek system. Rather they endeavoured to understand and use it in accord with a monotheistic faith that did not teach the existence of any other “God-like” being. They therefore, managed to make use of the language of the Greco-Roman culture but limit the meaning of it in their use and thought, to mean what it truly meant based on their understanding of the spiritual world. To the Hebraic thinker the spiritual world consisted of the Creator and only His agents.

When I Say *Demon* Does It Always Mean *Demon*?

Is it possible for two people groups to use a word in two different ways but still live in the same culture? Could the Greeks and Romans have understood the term “demon” to mean an evil spirit with a discernable personality while the Hebrews for the most part understood “demon” to refer metaphorically to a behaviour or attribute of a person? I think so. An example might be seen in using the word “God.” When a Christian sits down with a Muslim, they may begin a conversation about their respective faiths. Both are descended from Abraham, both believe they are practicing a true and correct expression of faith in God. As they dialogue, both the Christian and the Muslim are using the word “God” in their discussions. But are they both meaning the same thing? Generally speaking, the Christian is referring to the creator of the Universe who sent His son “Jesus” to die for the sins of the world. Their God is called Yahweh in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Christian believes that admission of this act of benevolence by “God” and subsequent submission to God by attending a Bible believing church on Sunday, along with keeping the Christmas and Easter festivals, is part of serving “God.”

Meanwhile in the same conversation, the Muslim uses the word God to refer to Allah. To the Muslim, this Allah was the one who sent and inspired the prophet Mohammed in the 7th Century CE. The prophet Mohammed is believed by Muslims to be the last prophet of God. As the Muslim individual uses the word “God,” he or she is recognizing it to be referring to a Creator who asks them to follow the teaching of the prophet Mohammed and to pray five times a day at the prescribed times, in the prescribed manner, with the prescribed words. The “God” which the Muslim has in mind when he speaks of his faith is one who asks that Thursday at sundown to Friday at sundown be set aside as the Muslim “Holy Day.” In our example both of the parties are using the same word and both have diametrically opposed views. The use of the word “God” by a Muslim means something different from the meaning

and character of that contained in the Christian use of the word “God.”... Same word, different understanding. It is clear we can have two different cultures co-existing, using the same word, yet both meaning drastically different things. Therefore, yes, it is possible to use a word in any culture and have it hold unique connotation for separate groups or individuals.

The connotation a word holds is typically based on the following factors. It is based on what the user has been taught to believe the word means; and on what the user has decided for him or her self what the word means. The factors are often amplified when a user of a term decides to investigate the original meaning and intention of the word or term, and then try to apply it more correctly in a culture that has already fixed solidly its application of the word.

To many Christians the word “God” is believed to be the name of the Creator. For many, that then means to say “*God-damit*” is considered to use “the Lord’s name in vain.” If saying “God-damit” is in fact taking the Creator’s name in vain, then it should be easy to determine that the Creator’s name is in fact “God.” Well, putting it as simply as I can, the name of the Creator is not “God.” If we believe the Scriptures, which are said to be “God’s Words,” then we are taught that the Creator gave His name to Moses at the burning bush. At that time and as it is written in the Hebrew through the entire Scripture, His name is Yahweh. I won’t try to tell you that you have to say “*Yode Hay Vav Hay*” every time you say the name of the Creator, you may want to try Yehovah, or Yahweh, as I spoke of in Volume One of *Satan Christianity’s Other God*. However, the word “God” is definitely not the name of the Creator. “God” is a title more than anything, and is a long way from being classified as the English counterpart for the Hebrew name of *Yahweh*. Yahweh is God. In short, “God” is not the name of the Creator Yahweh who is found in the Scriptures and “God” is not the name of the Muslim God “Allah.”

I will say though, the Christian who is engaged in dialogue with the Muslim, may be comfortable with the Muslim using the word “God” while discussing faith, but dare I say that when the

word “Allah” is used, a good many Christian folk already believe that the false God of the Muslim is actually a demon who has deceived them? Still today, many adhere to the Neo-Platonic concept that teaches that a heathen nation’s Gods are the demons of their nation. It may be that Allah is nothing according to the Scriptures, and therefore, like all “demons” and “devils,” Allah is completely impotent and non-existent.

The origin of “demons” has somewhat of a mysterious trail and is difficult to concretely determine the precise etymology in every culture the term has been used in. Below I provide excerpts (rather lengthy) from an article that sheds some more light on the development of the word *demon*.

The New Testament's Demons/Daemones/Daimones (The Pre-Christian Origins of)

Hornblower on Daimones:

"daimon. Etymologically the term *daimon* means 'divider' or 'alloter'; from Homer onwards it is used mainly in the sense of operator of more or less unexpected, and intrusive, events in human life. In Homer and other early authors, gods, even Olympians, could be referred to as *daimones*...

... A lucky, fortunate person was *eudaimon* (with a good daimon), an unlucky one was *kakodaimon* (with a bad daimon, from the 5th century BCE).

Plato used all the earlier meanings of the term and introduced a new one...he describes guardian-daimones who accompany man during his life and after his death function as prosecutor or advocate...Completely new is Plato's concept of daimones as beings intermediate between god and

men. This notion was adopted by all subsequent demonologies. A pupil of Plato, Xenocrates, argued for the existence of good and evil daimones...

... They[demons] now acquired the status of (good) daimones (see angels). All three solutions were gratefully adopted by Christian theologians: the angels from their biblical heritage took over the positive functions of good and beneficent intermediaries; all daimones, now revealing the true nature of the pagan gods, were interpreted as both the embodiment and the cause of evil and sin against the will of God."⁷¹

Ferguson on Demons/Daimones:

"The word daimon ('demon') underwent important changes in meaning. In general, it referred to a power that accompanies persons and dispenses destiny. In Homer it is used of impersonal power or of the gods collectively and indefinitely ("the divine") as the dispenser of individual events. Hesiod classified rational beings as gods, demons, heroes, and people; by demons, he meant men of the golden age translated to blissful immortal life. His classification prepared the way for demons to be considered lesser divinities (cf. Acts 17:18) or heavenly intermediaries between the gods and human beings. Socrates referred to a demon that warned him against certain actions (Plato, *Apology*

⁷¹ (p.426, "daimon," Simon Hornblower & Antony Spawforth, Editors. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Third Edition. Oxford & New York, Oxford University Press, 1996, ISBN 0-19-866172-X hdbk)

31D, 40A), thus giving to the demon a function almost like the conscience...

Xenocrates, Plato's student, systemized demonology. He and later philosophers listed three classes of demons: permanently disincarnate beings, souls of the deceased, and the soul "in" or intelligence accompanying us. He ascribed human passions to them and made the distinction that some demons were good and some bad. From this came the idea that each person has two demons, one good and one bad.

By the fourth century BC, the word was deteriorating into use only for unlucky happenings. Since one avoided putting the blame for evil on the gods, they were attributed to the demons.

... Plutarch [50–120 CE] most developed the idea. He and Apuleius [born ca. 123 CE] provide us with the developed demonology of early Christian times. Demonic forces were everywhere and were constantly affecting life...

... The admission that the gods of polytheism were "demons" played into the hands of Christian apologists. Also, to the demons could be transferred everything that philosophy regarded as unfitting in the gods. The apologists' claim that pagan religion was inspired by demons, who had a gross enjoyment of animal sacrifices, corresponded to the later Greek philosophical view that attributed the sacrifices of popular religion to the demons but reserved a rational worship for the immaterial gods (see Porphyry and Iamblichus).

Pre-Christian Judaism had already begun to take over the word demon in that sense of intermediate evil beings which is so evident in the Christian gospels. Belief in demon possession of individuals was widespread and led to the practice of exorcism to expel demons– by pagans, Jews, and Christians."⁷²

Demons Weren't Always Bad

To recap the above information, I would like to draw your attention to a few points made in the article. We are shown that from Homer the Gods could be referred to as demons. Plato used all the previous meanings of the term and introduced that these demons function as prosecutors or advocates after a person dies. Plato still maintained the concept that the demons were either good or bad. Subsequent demonologies adopted Plato's philosophy of demons being intermediaries between god and men. Then a student of Plato's, Xenocrates, systemized the demonology defining three classes of demons. It was believed that a person had two demon spirits to guide them, a good and a bad, but we saw that by the fourth century BC the word began to be used only in reference to unlucky happenings. After Xenocrates, Plutarch carried the idea of good and evil demons being present in the life of each person to new levels and then in the early 2nd Century, Apuleius played a major part in developing the Christian demonology that spiraled out of control. To those influential theologians, demons were literally present everywhere. Pre-Christian Judaism readily took over the word as a term to depict an evil intermediary being and then the word entered Christianity.

From what we have learned so far, we see the word "demon" came to be understood by the mystically minded "Christians" as a

⁷² (pp.220-221, Everett Ferguson. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Edition, William B. Eerdmans Publishing company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, [1987], 1993, ISBN 0-8028-0669-4 pbk)⁷²

term for a malevolent being. A being once perfect that had fallen from Heaven in a rebellion that was led by “Satan.” As was stated above, the thoughts of **Plato on demons was adopted by all subsequent demonologies**, including Christianity. The “demon” was then to become a core belief in the minds and practice of the more Gnostic variety of thinkers of the first century CE and beyond. According to the evolved belief, this “Satan” or his demons were able to manifest themselves in many forms and in many behaviours. To be demonized meant to some that you were under the influence of a real spirit being who was led by the “Evil One,” Satan. The form and figure of these demons was diverse.

Graphic Images of Satan Tell Their Own Inconsistent Tale

Interestingly, the diverse appearance and form of the supposed prince of demons could in fact be a testimony not that he is a spirit with an identifiable form, but to the fact that he is a character born in the minds of men and not existing in reality at all. “Satan,” as portrayed in art throughout history has a common theme but is conspicuously absent of a single concrete depiction. The graphic images of said Satan or a particular demon are generally combinations of attributes and characteristics which are believed to be contained in many of the gods of the pagan or heathen nations. The god Pan for instance, seems to lend some imagery to the construction of a Satan character. Pan is the Greek god who watches over shepherds and their flocks. He has the hindquarters, legs, and horns of a goat. Satan and demons are often cast in the same manner as a satyr or Pan. We see a satyr being spoken of in the book of Isaiah, this satyr would be a man-goat image constructed with the hands of the pagan worshipper. Which of us is not familiar with the common image of “Satan” as a horned creature? Many of us surely have been exposed to images of the supposed Lord of Darkness as having hoofs instead of feet. In *The Epic History of Good and Evil* the writer provides insight into the

Pan-like fabrication of those exhorted by Isaiah in chapter 8 of Isaiah. Here are some comments from that article;

In Isaiah, 8: 21, regarded as exilic or later, the reference is to the desolate site of Babylon; where repulsive creatures and dancing se'irim are to abide. The conception is evidently that of hairy goat-like creatures, not unlike the satyr or Pan of Greek myth. Some variations of the rabic jinn are also represented as having something along the lines of the same form (Wellhausen, Heidentum, pp. 151-152). This representation is a parallel reflected in Isaiah 34: 14, also exilic or postexilic, in which the sa'ir cries "to his fellow," in Edom, which has become a waste inhabited by wolves and by the night monster, the literal translation amounting to a "Night-hag." Traces of ancient demon worship are found by the passage Leviticus 17: 7, which forbids sacrifice to the se'irim, here mentioned as the objects of worship.⁷³

The testimony we receive from the abundance of inconsistent images that portray a being believed to be Satan, express to us that he is not a real being. Even some of the visions of the Scriptures where "Satan" is said to be seen, provide little by way of description for this character. Does he have horns, is he red, is he a beast, or a dragon, or a sea creature like Leviathan? What about his teeth, does he have incisors that are capable of tearing flesh off

⁷³ The Epic History of Good and Evil, found at <http://www.satan4u.8m.com/history/history.html>

of a human or does he have a nice smile so better to deceive you with my dear? How does he smell, if he smelt of sulfur then he would not be able to go undetected, if he smelt of spring flowers then he now has a good attribute. Is he shaped like a snake or a celestial body such as a star, as would be inferred by believing him to be the “bright morning star?” Just as one child’s imaginary friend is apt to “look” different from another child’s imaginary friend yet neither really exist, so too do the depictions of this imagined character vary greatly, thus maintaining the attributes of something that is not really existing.

What Does Satan Look Like?

Satan is portrayed to humanity in ever changing and numerous graphic images. The diversity of the images is notable, the varied forms “Satan” has taken on through history as is depicted by the images which have been catalogued is not coincidental. Either these varied pictures are all true to some extent and represent the “Satan” creature’s ability to morph like some kind of “shape shifter,” or there is no truth to his being a real entity. All the images of Satan are just many different depictions of many different imaginations that are based on imagery borrowed from ancient mythological creatures such as Pan. These graphic depictions can only be mental fabrications with no real model to base them on. So too is “Satan” himself a mental fabrication.

The medieval period has been the most profound period of artistic depictions of what it is believed “Satan” looked like. The graphic images played a huge part in the consciousness of the citizens throughout that period and forward to establishing a belief that “satan” was a concrete being with a concrete form. In the book *The Devil*, by Amelia Wilson, we are given an illuminating tour of the history of the Devil and the images that were developed to express what he looked like. As for the horned version of the “wicked one,” Wilson tells us that the horned God may well be the oldest deity recognized by humankind. Just like the fabrications of creative pagans and superstitious Christians of the past, the

demons of the present day and of the New Testament period were nothing and in fact did not exist. Although every culture put images to their concepts of their evil god, the truth of the matter is that the heathen nations each had their own Gods to worship, but that doesn't make them real. The Scripture teaches that these are non-existent, powerless fabrications of men's minds and were often made into statues and idols by the hands of men. It is these "Gods" who were known as *diamons* by the Greeks.

Although not specifically good or bad, they were believed to be "spirit energies" as is told by Elaine Pagels in her book, *The Origin of Satan*. Pagels tells of the born again Justin having a reversal of belief as it pertains to the Gods of Greece and Rome. Justin began seeing the panoply of Greek gods such as Appollo, Aphrodite, and Zeus, as "*foul daimones*." Justin used to believe in the gods of other cultures as competing deities who were daimons that resembled the God of the Christians in many ways. But he came to renounce that any good was found in them and that all the gods of others were not in any way good but were to be seen as "demons." Pagels accounts the tranformation of thought and writes of the Christians rejecting the concept of "good spirit energies" and concluding they were evil demons.

By the time the Christian movement had swept across the Western world, our language would reflect that reversed perception, the Greek term daimones, "*spirit energies*," would become in English, *demons*.

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Many Are Trapped By Their Belief In A Lie

The lack of "demons" in the Hebrew Scriptures was changed by the Apocalyptic thinkers and the Christian theologians. Through their input Satan has become a phenomenon of Christendom. Demons

⁷⁴ The Origin of Satan, Elaine Pagels page 120, Vintage Books 1996

were now given legs so to speak, and because of the development and dissemination of the complex demonologies that taught of “real” demons, they became real for many of the citizens of the first century and are still real for many of the citizens of the present day. If you are told demons are real long enough, then I guess they become real, that is, real to you. What is believed by the mind cannot easily be disproved by facts, truth, and logic. One who is convinced of a belief in their mind is trapped by their own will to believe the lie that they see as truth.

In the New Testament writings, we will see times when *demons* or some derivative of the word is being used in different situations and different manners. In some of these cases the user is doing so because they believe in demons, and in other cases the user is using the term from an ancient Hebraic perspective to indicate a lie or a sickness or an adverse social or governing group. In our forthcoming survey of the Gospels and Apostolic Letters (Volumes 3 and 4) we will look at many cases of the use of the word *demon* or its derivative.

For the person who is caught up in battles against demons where he or she is continually casting out and cutting off the forces of the enemy, I would suggest he or she begins by dealing with their own “demons.” Those would be the “demons” a psychotherapist would label as such when referring to the inner turmoil and issues you might have that are adverse to healthy emotional and psychological growth. These demons are the only demons that you and many should consider fighting. Fighting “demons” is a battle you can’t win. Fighting an opponent that doesn’t exist is futile. You have to know your enemy to defeat him and in the case of Satan and demons; you cannot know that which does not exist. We can no more fight Santa Clause, The Tooth Fairy, or the Easter Bunny for the nasty effect they have had on children wanting more presents at Christmas, hoping for money to arrive under their pillow, or consuming far too many chocolate bunnies during the seasonal festivities of Easter, than you can fight Satan and the demons. In the same way as it would be foolish to make fairytale characters responsible for childhood behaviours, it

is foolish to make demons responsible for the evil choices of man. The meaning wrapped up in the term “demons” simply depicts the evil actions of men and is used to explain the bad that occurs in men’s lives.

Demons, as evil “spirit energies,” were never shown in Scripture to be a cosmic force able to engage in and interact in the lives of humanity or affect nature in any way. The propensity to believe “demons” are affecting the life of a person is a belief that was introduced by the ancient pagan nations of the world. This belief grew to be a lie of epic proportions because of the influence of great thinkers throughout history. The profound lack of personal study to see what the Scriptures teach and a lack of research into how history has affected theology is a negative factor that has kept people from learning the truth about Satan. The truth that Satan and demons don’t exist seems impossible to millions. Millions who accept without proof that there is another God in the universe who is able to perform supernatural acts that only Yahweh is privileged to perform.

Yet today, we can thank the Greeks for their gift of demons to Christianity. And those who cling to the idea that Satan and demons are real will continue to degrade the sovereignty of the One Creator as a being who is limited by a secondary lesser God. If removing Satan from the belief system of a culture is impossible, it is not because millions of people believe in Satan; it is because millions of people refuse to honestly assess their belief to determine if it is accurate according to Scripture and history.

CHAPTER 12

IS SATAN REVEALED IN REVELATION?

Revelation is the most provocative book in the entire collection of Apostolic writings. In it we see all the familiar demonology terms like *Satan, the serpent, the dragon, the beast, the false prophet*, and of course *the devil*. On first blush it appears these characters rise to the surface as foreboding end-time monsters trying to assert themselves one last time before the end of the world as we know it. It also seems these heinous monsters are soon going to be burned up in a sulfuric lake when the Messianic King finally gets his hands on them. Satan is not depicted in any other book as having more intensity and more power than he has in Revelation. This group of letters, called Revelation, is placed in its own literary category. The reason being is because it is so mystical. Even amid such apparent mystical tones, New Testament loyalists propound that the images of Satan in the book, such as a multi-headed beast, and many other elements, are real. To so many Christians today these elements of John's vision are as real as when they look in a mirror. So now we must look at the book of **Revelation**. Can Satan be found in this book and is this book Scripture?

We will discuss the individual passages in the book of Revelation that pertain to the non-existence of "Satan" in Volume 4 of *Imagine There's No Satan*. For now though, we will try to liberate ourselves from the error in thinking that Revelation is Scripture and has the authority and intent of Scripture. We must decide if these apocalyptic letters are good for doctrine, correction, instruction, and training in righteousness. If we let the book of

Revelation testify of itself, we are able to conclude that Revelation is a deeply symbolic set of writings, which were intended to go out to groups of believers. And just as with each of the other writings contained in the New Testament, these letters were not considered to be Scripture by the writer or the hearer.

The adamant claim the book of Revelation is “Scripture” is a common declaration for many. But it is a declaration made without truly examining the claim. They who make this claim have decided their ideological box has been closed. Few have left room for questioning if the revelation of John is Scripture or not. It is prudent to allow ourselves to think outside the box and explore the question of what, if any, of the New Testament writings are Scripture. It is good to not place our beliefs in a box declaring they are completely set and cannot be changed. If we resist having a box that is closed, then we are able to receive information and insight that allows us to see exactly what we believe and why we believe it. After that we can decide if what we believed is still an absolute truth when exposed to the light. I am asking if you can do this with me yet for one more book in the Bible. Can you go a little further with me and explore the writings of John the revelator? I agree, it’s possible that Revelation may be an amazing God inspired text, but is it possible that Revelation may not be Scripture? Remember, just because someone writes something that is inspired by the Creator does not mean it is Scripture. And if we can find that the Revelation is not Scripture then the doctrine of Satan takes a great fall.

Revelation is literature with some of the most potent images and descriptions of the Satan of Christianity. Therefore, if we can determine this surreal book of vision is not Scripture then all the images in the document will need to be assessed through a different perspective than that of Christianity. The elements of Revelation have been so profoundly distorted by the literal interpreters of Christianity that a refreshed perspective when examining these elements will undoubtedly bring much needed understanding. The Satan of Revelation can be understood. But we must understand what the Revelation is and how the writer

intended the hearer to understand his message. Once clarity is restored then the false doctrine of Satan will take another fall. The fall of false doctrine may have been the meaning of Christ saying he saw the adversary fall like lightning upon the return of the 70 disciples. We will see things come clear as we go through an examination of this marvelous literary work that so many have claimed identifies the casting to Hell of a Dragon called Satan.

When Was Revelation Written?

Revelation was believed to be written by the apostle John while in exile on the Island of Patmos. Most scholars place a date on this writing in the early 90's CE. It is probable though that this book was written prior to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem of 70 CE. The content of the letter makes specific allusion to the Temple service still operating in Jerusalem. These allusions would be misleading if the writing of this book occurred in the 90's. As a book that has encouraged eschatology, "the study of last things," for centuries, Revelation is often seen as the document with the most significant predictions of when the "end" will come. This document has also been instrumental in prognosticators attempting to describe not only what will happen in the "last days" but also how it will happen. The visions that come to John in some parts of his writing are dramatic and explicit, or so it seems. But in reality, these letters are still a collection of visions that are intended to be taken as allegorical.

The sheer number of mytho-poetic and mythological images used in John's vision testify to the non-literal aspect of this writing. Such vivid imagery is common in apocalyptic writings such as John's revelation of Yeshua the Messiah. We are told about the appearance of a messenger who is sent to John to "signify" these things. What does signify mean? Well quite simply it means John would be shown symbolic elements. John's vision is not one of new images and occurrences; in fact, what John has seen in visions can be read about in the Hebrew Scriptures that were written by many of the Prophets of Israel. We must try to view the Revelation through the eyes of understanding using the Hebrew

Scriptures to define the terms and events used by John, instead of thinking that John is privileged to see inexplicable events and world ending situations which cannot be understood by today's reader. Many who are eager to see the images in this writing as literal descriptions of actual occurrences fail to recognize the amount of "Old Testament" text and allusion to text that John has placed in his letters. John is seeing things in his mind that were spoken of by many of the prophets of old. Throughout the entire document, one can see the content has been taken from *Daniel*, *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Jeremiah*, and *Zechariah*, with employment of terms and images already seen in an identical or very similar manner in other books of the Hebrew Scriptures. *Vincent Word Studies* understands this concept and explains it well; as does the book, *"Invention of the Bible and Talmuds"* citing Norman Cohn;

The symbolism of Revelation is Jewish, and not Greek or Roman. It is pervaded with the style and imagery of the Old Testament, and is molded by its historical and prophetic books. "The book," says Professor Milligan, "is absolutely steeped in the memories, the incidents, the thoughts, and the language of the Church's past. To such an extent is this the case that it may be doubted whether it contains a single figure not drawn from the Old Testament, or a single complete sentence not more or less built up of materials brought from the same source.... It is a perfect mosaic of passages from the Old Testament, at one time quoted verbally, at another referred to by distinct allusion; now taken from one scene in Jewish

history, and now again from two or three together.”⁷⁵

Akenson writes about this topic and says;

The book of Revelation turns the whole Christian narrative into an apocalyptic one. The book forces us to read the entire text of the “New Testament” as an apocalypse, one which starts with the birth of Jesus and ends with Christ’s kingdom in eternity. Norman Cohn notes that Revelation, though a profoundly Christian work is a document wherein “the Jewishness of the work is everywhere apparent. Not only is it influenced by Jewish apocalypses – many passages are simply translated from the Hebrew Bible and in addition **there are more than three hundred references to Daniel, Isaiah, Second Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah**”⁷⁶

Two poignant statements in the above quotes are;
“... *it may be doubted whether it contains a single figure not drawn from the Old Testament.*” And the second is; “...**there are more than three hundred references to Daniel, Isaiah, Second Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah.**”

Those statements are so telling that I highlighted them above and thought it necessary to repeat them so that they might be properly

⁷⁵ [VINCENT'S WORD STUDIES](#), Marvin R. Vincent, D.D- emphasis added

⁷⁶ Page 227 *Surpassing Wonder, The Invention of the Bible and Talmuds*, by Donald Harmon Akenson. The above quote contains reference to Norman Cohn work *Cosmos Chaos and the World to Come, The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith* - emphasis added

digested. If a vision that is experienced by a biblical writer makes its way to a written composition shall we take this as reason to see the images and symbols in his vision as things that are literal? Daniel's visions were not literal, Joseph's dreams were not literal, and Jacob seeing a ladder going up to Heaven was not literal. Neither were the visions of any biblical character we have record of known to be literal, at least that I have seen so far. I am not saying the one who had the vision did not see what they claimed to have seen in their vision. I am saying the things seen in the vision are not to be thought to be literal but are symbols representing other things.

Does A Two-Edged Sword Really Come Out Of Christ's Mouth?

Of course my "box" of interpretation is not sealed on this one as I always want the opportunity to have light of truth shine in if there need be. John's writings describing his visions are no different than the visions of the Prophets of Israel and the things he has seen are not to be seen as literal images. Here is an example of the importance and simplicity of seeing symbolism as symbolic. One cannot expect that the two-edged sword John saw proceeding from the mouth of Yeshua was actually a cold, steel blade with razor sharp edges on both sides coming out of the oral opening in the Messiah's face. Rather, the symbol that the hearer of John's letter would have likely equated it with is a reference to the Torah and or the Holy Scriptures. A two-edged sword refers to the words of truth that proceed from Messiah's mouth.

Revelation 1:16 KJV And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

John is not saying Yeshua is some type of a sword expectorator by imaging a two-edged sword coming from His mouth. Nor is John stating in this verse that Yeshua is physically

hanging on to 7 suns from different solar systems in saying he held seven stars in His hand. Perhaps Yeshua could do these things, but here, in the Book of Revelation, John is providing us with fantastic imagery and symbolism. These symbols are intended to teach about a past or future event through painting a picture in mythical images. To help us realize they are symbols, one can find a clue in the first verse of the “book” where we are basically told they are symbols. In Revelation 1:1, the text tells us, that as for the things yet to happen, they are being “*signified*” by an angel that was sent. The Greek word in Revelation 1:1 translated as *signified*, carries the meaning of something that is representing another thing. Hence it speaks of a symbol that is not literal but does stand for something else. If I draw you a picture of a garbage truck and say it signifies something... like let's say the eventual removal of all the negative stuff in your life...then you would not think a literal garbage truck is coming around. Rather you would understand the picture I gave you signifies something else. Notice the wording in the verse below. John is told the things that will come to pass are signified by the angel.

Revelation 1:1 KJV The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

This angel may be cosmic or may be human and there are clues written in John's document that suggest the messenger is another man. One such clue is that John is told by the messenger to not bow because he, the messenger, is a servant like John.

And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Revelation 19:10 KJV

We also see in that verse John is shown the messenger is from among his brethren, which would indicate the messenger

might be another Israelite male, who in this case would have been sent by Yahweh to provide some insight to John. After all, John wasn't the only spiritual man in the period wherein he had his visions. John's messenger may well have been a prophet who was knowledgeable about the writings of the Torah the Psalms and the Prophets. If this is the case, it is little wonder there are so many references and allusions in the Revelation to prophecies and occurrences from the Hebrew Scriptures. So, it is possible either John was sent an angel/messenger from Heaven or it is possible Yahweh sent a human being with a tremendous message as the messenger/angel. We discussed the very distinct possibility of "angels" being human men in Volume I, so I will not elaborate at this time. If it were a man, the messenger would have been one who was capable of teaching certain mysteries found in the Hebrew Scriptures and passed them on to John to be written down in the apocalyptic fashion we have today.

What Does Apocalyptic Mean?

Interestingly enough, the writing from John is seen as "apocalyptic" in style. The word "*Apocalypse*" means something which was hidden. And Certainly there are numerous things which seem hidden in the book of John but the title given the document is "The Revelation," and all uses of the Greek word *apokolutos* in the "New Testament" are in a context of something being made known or revealed. John is having some things revealed to him and it seems that part of this message is being given to him by a human messenger and part of the message John receives appear to be visions from Yahweh presented by an angelic entity or manifestation.

To briefly recap what Apocalyptic literature is, I will give you some thoughts from the ISBE;

A series of pseudepigraphic works, mainly of Jewish origin, appeared during the period

between 210 bc and 200 ad. They have many features in common. The most striking is the resemblance they all bear to the Book of Daniel. Following this model, most of them use “vision” as a literary device by which to introduce their conceptions of the remote future.

John’s revelation also seems to speak of things in the distant future, which is a characteristic truly like most other apocalyptic literature. The preamble to the Book of Revelation in the *Zondervan Encyclopaedic Reference Bible* also agrees with the text of Revelation being a whole bunch of symbolism;

Apocalypse is the Greek title (meaning “hidden”) and refers to the kind of writing which emphasizes prediction of future events, using symbols and imagery to interpret the actions of God in both present and future times....

...It is likely that John deliberately chose the form of “apocalyptic” writing **with its strange and mysterious symbols** to communicate a message to these churches while **effectively concealing its meaning from any Roman authorities who might discover the book.**⁷⁷

By coming to the realization that symbolism was the literary tool of choice for John as he wrote the revelation, we will be equipped to understand his vision about the dragon and other beast references in his letters.

⁷⁷ Zondervan Encyclopedic Reference Bible, King James Version. Pg 1069 (emphasis added)

New Testament Literature Is Unique Compared To Other Writings

A couple of points I ask that you would remember from the above statement to be called to mind later in our discussion on who or what “satan” is in the book of Revelation, are these;

- John used mysterious symbols to communicate.
- The message was to be concealed from the Roman authorities.

I admit that acknowledging the prolific use of “Old Testament” concepts and ideas by John, and stating that John’s writing is replete with mysterious symbols, does not preclude Revelation from being given the same level of authority as we see given the Hebrew Scriptures. It does however help us to understand that this literature is unique from all the other “New Testament” literature. It may be unique compared to the other writings but is it still simply letters that were not intended to be viewed as Scripture by those in John’s generation or by future generations?

In chapter one, we learn John is clearly writing letters to the “angels” of the seven assemblies in Asia. It is clear there were more than seven “churches” in Asia during that period, but John was exercising his right to literary symbolism in addressing the letters to “Seven” called out assemblies.

Revelation 1:4 KJV John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Who Was This Angel John Wrote His Letter To?

Some have tried to claim the “angels” John wrote to are cosmic beings who work as agents of God. However, it is clear in history that there was an officer in the assemblies who would take on a form of leadership in helping to organize and inform the assembly

of what was going on in their own community. This person was called “the angel.” Another major role of the “angel” was to read letters that came to the community, which is why John addresses his letters to the “angel.” This angel was called the *Methurgeman* in early Hebrew communities or perhaps the *Chazan* by some. Either officer could be in view here. The Methurgeman was the one appointed to interpret the words of the Rabbi or preacher into the language of the people. He was also called upon to elaborate on the teachings of the Rabbi in some instances. Alfred Edersheim explains the term in his book *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*;

When a great Rabbi employed a *Methurgeman* to explain to the people his sermon, he would, of course, select him for the purpose. Such an interpreter was also called *Amora*, or speaker. Perhaps the Rabbi would whisper to him his remarks, while he would repeat them aloud; or else he would only condescend to give hints, which the *Amora* would amplify; or he would speak in Hebrew, and the *Amora* translate it into Aramæan, Greek, Latin, or whatever the language of the people might be, for the sermon must reach the people in the vulgar tongue. The *Amora* would also, at the close of the sermon, answer questions or meet objections.⁷⁸

As for the *Chazan*, this officer still exists in Jewish synagogues today. He has a scaled-down role in comparison to the role in the early part of the Common Era. The *Chazan* was responsible for the order of the gatherings and also to ensure the proper person was performing the scheduled readings on a

⁷⁸ The entire book by Edersheim can be read at http://philologos.org/__eb-lat/book310.htm

particular Sabbath. The role of the *Chazan* in the first century was one of the primary leadership roles. Again we can hear from Edersheim about this office;

Thus, encircled by his pupils, as by a crown of glory (to use the language of Maimonides), the teacher, generally the Chazzan, or Officer of the Synagogue [i For example, Shabb. 11 a.] should impart to them the precious knowledge of the Law, with constant adaptation to their capacity, with unwearied patience, intense earnestness, strictness tempered by kindness, but, above all, with the highest object of their training ever in view. To keep children from all contact with vice; to train them to gentleness, even when bitterest wrong had been received; to show sin in its repulsiveness, rather than to terrify by its consequences; to train to strict truthfulness; to avoid all that might lead to disagreeable or indelicate thoughts; and to do all this without showing partiality, without either undue severity, or laxity of discipline, with judicious increase of study and work, with careful attention to thoroughness in acquiring knowledge, all this and more constituted the ideal set before the teacher, and made his office of such high esteem in Israel.⁷⁹

The *Chazan* and the *Methurgeman* are two different titles indicative of slightly varied roles but the general concept is the

⁷⁹ Taken from ; CHAPTER IX ,THE MANGER IN BETHLEHEM TO THE BAPTISM IN JORDAN
THE CHILD-LIFE IN NAZARETH

same. The structure that employed the use of this officer existed in the early assemblies. It was recognized by the people of the period and we are informed of its existence in the New Testament writings. A clear instance of the leader, *Chazan*, being mentioned can be seen in the writing of Luke mentioned as the minister. The following commentary by John Gill affirms the concept of the Chazan being the one whom Yeshua returned the book to after reading from it.

Luke 4:20

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

the Chazan (g), who was the minister, or servant of the congregation, who had the affairs of it upon him, to let in, and bring out, and to order all things; and particularly to take care of the book of the law, and the chest, or ark in which it was.⁸⁰

Therefore, to make sense of John's actions in writing letters to "the angels," it is important to understand he was writing to men in leadership positions in the assemblies throughout Asia. What logic is there in thinking John is writing an actual paper letter to a cosmic Angel to tell it of the shortcomings of some and the laudable position of others in the body of believers? If Angels in this instance were cosmic beings then wouldn't an Angel be more aware of the situation with the assembly than John would? It is not sensible to think that John would send these letters to cosmic angels by the hand of a messenger as if the "angels" are able to be located at some physical geographic location.

A couple of statements by Joseph Ennemoser as to how he understood the meaning of "angels" in the New Testament are

⁸⁰ John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, Dr. John Gill (1690-1771)

found in his work, *The History of Magic*” Volume II. Ennemoser writes;

Amongst the Jews the chief person in the synagogue was called the angel of the congregation.

By an evil angel is understood a wicked man, a false prophet: for instance , Alexander the coppersmith – I Tim. iv. 14.

A Prisoner Of Rome Must Write In Code So The Guards Let Him Send His Mail

I do concede, this writing of John’s is closer still to Scripture in its content than many of the other books of the “New Testament.” However, keep in mind that an actual written document, sent from a prisoner of Rome, to the believers in Yeshua, was intended to encourage persecuted believers of the day and to tell them what trials the future holds for the faithful. This letter was composed in such a way so as to not bring down greater persecution from the oppressive Roman government on the already battle-weary believers. The Roman mail censors didn’t have a clue that all the talk about beasts, dragons, false prophets, and satanas was about Rome. But the recipients of John’s letters knew.

John knew the war against the believers was due to the fact that they kept Yahweh’s commands and testified that Yeshua was the Messiah. I am not yet ready to discourse on all that is wrapped up in John’s imagery of a dragon persecuting a woman and her children. But it helps to understand that John was keeping himself from being found out as one who continued to oppose the Romans and the Roman persecution of believers under the hand of the Romans. John was clever enough to avoid using terms that the “Big Brother” would be able to figure out, so he spoke of the

Roman oppressor as “the dragon” or “the beast” so that his letters would make it off the island of Patmos and into the hands of the eager believers in their respective cities and towns.

If we are careful to recognize John's need to speak in a simple coded language, we can begin to see that John is not speaking of a supernatural creature better known as “Satan” in his vision. Our discussion on this topic will go into depth later on but for now, it starts to come clear that the Roman system of governance and religion is the “dragon” John speaks of. He tells us that the ones Rome is persecuting are those who keep the commands of God and have the testimony of Yeshua. The dragon that made war with the saints is the Imperial Roman government and her allied religious institutions. Most Christians of today don't meet the description that deems them to be recipients of Rome's heavy-handed tactics, yet many readily claim they are the persecuted ones because of their choice to be Christian. The vision John had was relayed to the “angels” of the assemblies, using the imagery of a dragon being “wroth” with the woman and those who keep the commandments found in the Torah and who have the testimony of Yeshua. Rome was the “dragon” that opposed the first century believers spoken of in Revelation chapter 12.

*And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which **keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

Revelation 12:16-17 KJV (emphasis added)

John's letters were not thought of as Scripture by John nor would the recipients of the letters of John's revelation have even come close to thinking of the writing as an addition to the Holy Scriptures, no matter which man or group of men decided to venerate the words of John. The Holy Scriptures were set and could not be added to or taken away from. John gives this warning in the final chapter of his document and unless John was raising himself up to a position where he would be seen as a heretic, it is

likely he was referring to all the words of prophecy that he presented in his writing, which came from the Hebrew Scriptures. John would not have been so arrogant as to apply to his letters the same rules as were placed on the Torah in the book of Deuteronomy. The rule that prohibited adding to or taking away words from the writings. Had he done so, he would have been setting his words up as being equal to Scripture. His letters were addressed to a handful of persecuted groups of believers, and even though they contained large amounts of prophecy from the Scriptures; no one receiving them would have thought that one day they would be called "Scripture."

At one point John delivers a warning against adding to or taking away from this book. We should not get confused to think that John is referring to his own writings. John uses two slightly different words that are both translated as "this" when referring to what is in the writing. Notice the different Strong's numbers assigned to the word "this" in the following verse.

Revelation 22:18 KJV+ For¹⁰⁶³ I testify⁴⁸²⁸ unto every man³⁹⁵⁶ that heareth¹⁹¹ the³⁵⁸⁸ words³⁰⁵⁶ of the³⁵⁸⁸ prophecy⁴³⁹⁴ of this⁵¹²⁷ book,⁹⁷⁵ If¹⁴³⁷ any man⁵¹⁰⁰ shall add²⁰⁰⁷ unto⁴³¹⁴ these things,⁵⁰²³ God²³¹⁶ shall add²⁰⁰⁷ unto¹⁹⁰⁹ him⁸⁴⁶ the³⁵⁸⁸ plagues⁴¹²⁷ that are written¹¹²⁵ in¹⁷²² this⁵¹²⁹ book:⁹⁷⁵

In using a different word to speak of "this" book, John may more likely be saying any who alter the *words of prophecy written about in this book* will have the plagues that are written about in this scroll brought upon them. Another way to look at what John is saying can be seen in the structure of the Greek. He may be saying, "Anyone who alters the words of the Bible, the Hebrew Scriptures, that this is what Yahweh will do to them." God will bring upon him the plagues that are written in that same book that he has altered." The scribes who have translated John's words out of Greek and into English have decided that when John used the Greek word for "this" and "the same," that they should place it before the word *biblion*, thus indicating that John was warning the hearer not to change the words of his writing. However, John was only

interested in upholding the Holy Scriptures and was therefore warning against the alteration of the same Holy Scriptures. A text that his work repeatedly quoted from and borrowed imagery from.

Looking into the Greek structure of John's warning you will see for yourself that the Greek does not say "*the words of prophecy of this book*" meaning John's writing. Rather, it says, "the words of prophecy of the *biblion*," meaning the words John has written that are from Scripture. The Greek then goes on to say, removal from the book of life will happen if any man shall add to or take away from the words John has shared. John has provided words from Scripture to the readers of his letters so he reiterates the message of the Torah from Deuteronomy 4 and 12 prohibiting adding to the words of the Torah. To any who do so, will come the same plagues that are written about in the letters John has composed.

Deuteronomy 4:2 KJV Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deuteronomy 12:32 KJV What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

For John to consider his documented vision as equal with the Holy Scriptures would be seen as blasphemy. A claim so brash would have caused him to be rejected as a true messenger of Yahweh. False prophets were seen to add to the Scriptures and John was not about to declare he was in the process of writing Scripture. The Torah, of which not one jot or tittle had passed away, had already taught that it is the Scriptures that are a document protected from addition or deletion of any of its contents. John is not saying his document is Scripture as much as he is saying the prophecy within his document that comes from the Hebrew Scriptures is not to be added to or altered in any way.

Whether it be by some ridiculous interpretation or by physically altering the words. Anyone known to have added to or taken away from the words of the Torah was given the dubious distinction of being called a false witness or false prophet. John was not interested in doing something that would reduce his credibility as a prophet of the Most High.

Was John A Greek Minded Writer Or A Hebrew Minded Writer?

I cannot neglect to mention that the earliest manuscripts of this letter are found in the Greek language. John however, was a Hebrew man and a Hebrew writer, yet because all we have is a Greek text as the source of all the translations of Revelation, we are limited to accept a Greek philosophy when one reads the letters. We are however not completely limited because the Jewish style of the document is undeniable and can be seen to underlie the message John delivers. The Apocalypse of John is an unquestionably Hebraic document. Its tone, structure, and message are clearly from a Hebrew mind. The Hebraisms, idioms, Temple references, and language structure, all point us in a direction of perceiving that this document may have been originally a Hebrew or at least Aramaic language composition. If this is the case then the argument of being limited in understanding the Revelation becomes stronger. It is understood that translating language from Hebrew to Greek will often cause the nuance of the text to be concealed or in some cases, altogether lost. For those who received John's writing, it was clear to them what he was trying to tell them and they gained the encouragement that was intended by John as he obediently did as he was asked to do by Yeshua. Those hearing the original letters were capable at comprehending the meaning of the words from a Hebraic perspective. The role of John was not overly complicated nor was the message he was to bring supposed to be difficult for the hearers to interpret. All that John would see in visions was to be written down and to be given to the seven assemblies.

Revelation 1 tells us of the nature of what John would be seeing in his vision. The things seen were things that had happened in the past, things that were current with the time of John's writing, things yet to happen.

Revelation 1:18-20 KJV I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

*Write the **things which thou hast seen**, and the **things which are**, and the **things which shall be hereafter**;*

The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.(emphasis added)

After this instruction, we see John is obedient to his call and he proceeds to write all that he has seen in visions. The compelling and encouraging letter sent throughout Asia would be read by all the groups it was addressed to. At this time, the groups reading from the letter of John's Revelation of Yeshua would have known only the Hebrew Scriptures are "Scripture." There was no New Testament to rely on at the time. John's inspired and symbolically charged letter would add to them a great deal, and add to them precisely what was needed and intended for them by the Messiah, yet all would recognize that it was just an inspired letter full of Scriptural concepts and quotations yet was not Scripture. The believers who received this document would have had little trouble using it for its intended purpose so why does Christianity, which is 1900 years removed from the situation, have so much trouble using the letter correctly? It seems the answer is because Christianity has been told this letter is Scripture for so long, that in the deepest recesses of their belief, Christians genuinely believe it is Scripture. However, believing something is so does not make it so.

So Should We Throw Out The Book Of Revelation?

Am I saying I think we should toss the Book of Revelation and continue in a walk of faith without it? Definitely not! But I think we should eliminate it as a source of doctrine, correction, instruction, and training in righteousness. I do think we should recognize it as words that were inspired by the Creator. Given to John to embolden us as we perceive the end of days is near. I suggest we hold it as a valuable document that Yahweh wanted the original recipients to hear because of their present persecution and forthcoming tribulations. We ought not to consider Revelation is Scripture in the same way we should not consider a letter, full of Old Testament passages from a mother to her drug-addict son in prison as Scripture. Nor would we consider a letter of encouragement, with analogies and symbols that spoke of an upcoming day of liberation as the son is released from prison to be Scripture.

Revelation may be seen as a letter, encouraging us to realize that we do not have to suffer unceasingly, because the system that fights to hold us captive will not prevail. I suggest we accept Revelation as a letter of testimony that tells how the evil forces of this world that prevent worshippers of God from full expression of their faith, will not overcome the faithful forever. Accepting it as that type of a document instead of a document that has added words to Scripture places us in agreement with Yahweh who said, the Scripture cannot be broken. It seems clear Revelation was not written as Scripture, was not received by the recipients as Scripture, and will not be used in the future Kingdom of God as Scripture. Why then would anyone believe the claims of men from the second, third, and fourth centuries, who took it upon themselves to call Revelation and the Apostolic writings Scripture? And why then should we mistake the symbolism and imagery that includes a beast, a dragon, a serpent, and a devil for elements that are real and literal? Why should we presume these symbolic elements are intended by the Hebrew writer to depict a literal cosmic force of supernatural evil? Well, we shouldn't.

We would do well to move past the error in thinking Satan can be found in Revelation and move towards understanding John used terms that pointed toward the Imperial Roman oppressor. When John wrote about a beast or a dragon he did not have a cosmic minor deity in his thoughts nor did he have a supernatural evil being on his mind. When John wrote about a beast and a devil, or a dragon and a serpent, he had thoughts about the politico-religious system that brought false doctrine to the masses and acted in the role as adversarial oppressor of the people of God.

The Satan Of Christianity Cannot Be Found In The Book Of Revelation.

There was no cosmic Satan in the minds of John or of any of the biblical writers. You and I have been handed an ancient myth that was constructed by man. When we stumble on the English words in this ancient Greek document that was written by Hebrew thinkers, we should be careful to honor the intent of the author. The authorial intent is known to be a whole lot different and a whole lot less mystical than the intent of those in Christianity who have taken it on themselves to interpret these ancient writers. They have mistakenly interpreted writers like John through their own Greco-Roman, 21st century, pre-determined perspective that Satan is real. This is a claim that goes against the message of the God of the Bible that states; He is God and there is none else...not even a supernatural, god-like being known as Satan.

CHAPTER 13

WHERE WOULD SATAN BE WITHOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT?

What Can We Learn From The New Testament?

It seems that the doctrine of Satan is fully developed in the New Testament. But logic, evidence, and reason, show that Satan is not found in the Old Testament and according to Christ and the Apostles, the New Testament has no authority to introduce this doctrine. What then should we do with the New Testament if in fact it is not Scripture? Is there then no reason to use the “New Testament” to benefit in understanding the cultural and religious period of Messiah and the Apostles? Is it against the plan of the God of Israel to have an adjunct such as the Gospels, the Epistles, the Pastorals, and Revelation along side the Hebrew Scriptures? Does the “New Testament” contradict and in cases change what has been received as doctrine, based on the “Old Testament”? Surely it is beneficial to use the Apostolic writings to find out about the Messiah’s appearance in the world and the ministry He had in His adult life that led Him to death by crucifixion and His subsequent resurrection. One might question, if we don’t use the “New Testament,” how can we know the Messiah is planning to return again? How can we know that he is coming not as a suffering servant but as a roaring lion that will restore righteousness and do an end of wickedness? All of these questions need to be answered. I think they can be answered by saying this. The Torah the Psalms and the Prophets all teach things most of Christianity thinks are only taught in their New Testament. Paul