

CONTRADICTIONS

When we take a good look at the subject of the Devil and Satan, we discover that there are several **contradictions and inconsistencies in the traditional view.**

If there really were a supernatural being called the devil, the scriptures that are related should all be in harmony with this concept. This is certainly not the case.

Following are a list of issues that we owe it to ourself to resolve, before we make any final conclusions on the subject:

- ◆ When did the devil fall from heaven? Was it before the Creation as is commonly taught? (See Isa. 14:12, Luke 10:18, Rev. 12:7.)
- ◆ How did the serpent (devil) survive the flood?
- ◆ How do we explain Isa.45:7, where God is said to create evil?
- ◆ If God spares not angels that sin, then how did the devil survive? (See 2 Pet. 2:4.)
- ◆ If the serpent was sentenced to crawl on his belly, why is he said to walk about like a lion in 1 Pet. 5:8?
- ◆ Why would God use a messenger of Satan to help Paul to grow spiritually? (2 Cor. 12:7-9)
- ◆ Read Acts 5:3-4. Was it Satan that tempted Ananias, or was it his own deceitful heart?
- ◆ Why would the devil cast someone into prison? (Rev. 2:10)



- ◆ Why did Jesus refer to Peter as Satan? (Matt. 16:23)
- ◆ If Christ destroyed the devil through his death, then why would he still be around? (Heb. 2:14)
- ◆ In Luke 20:35-38 we learn that angels are immortal. We are told in Heb. 2:14 that the devil will be destroyed. How could an immortal angel fall, or be destroyed?
- ◆ In 1Tim. 1:20 we read that two brethren were delivered to Satan to "learn not to blaspheme." Would not this be inconsistent with the role of the devil?
- ◆ In 1 Cor. 5:5 the Corinthians are exhorted to deliver an erring brother to Satan, to help to save him. How do we explain this?
- ◆ Why does James teach that a man is tempted by his own lust if there is a devil? (James 1:14-15)
- ◆ Isaiah 14:12 is commonly applied to the devil. Why then is this proverb actually spoken to the king of Babylon, who is clearly referred to as a man? (see Isaiah 14: 4,16)



“That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.”(Rev 12:9)



The world has long been deceived by **“That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.”** This subject is one of the most confusing in the Bible. The traditional view has been greatly influenced by ancient superstitions. Today, most Christians have been led to believe that there is a supernatural evil being who is the enemy of God. This view is not only incorrect, it is also distorts our understanding of the Bible message and may jeopardize our hope for salvation. If we believe that an outside tempter is responsible for all of our sin, then how can we truly repent from the sin that we are responsible for?

To understand the Bible teaching on the subject of the Devil and Satan we must start at the beginning, when the serpent tempted Eve by lying about God’s commandment. For punishment, *“the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”* (Gen 3:14-15) These words of prophecy outline the entire plan of redemption. This enmity still is present within us today and we still look for the final bruising of the serpent and the destruction of the sin and death that he introduced. **Symbolically speaking, the serpent was the father of all lying and deceit and his offspring is sin.** Christ was the offspring of the woman who would overcome and destroy sin in his own body, to redeem mankind.

The sin of Adam and Eve left mankind in a state of separation from the Creator, living in constant struggle with the sin influence of the serpent. The Apostle Paul describes this as a battle that is being waged inside of us. (Romans 7:18-25.) Jesus taught that the desire to sin comes from within our own minds. *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”* (Mark 7:21-23)

Knowing these Bible truths, we can begin to understand how that the words **Devil and Satan** actually describe **sin in all of its manifestations.**

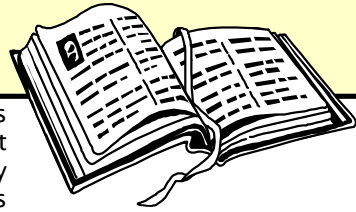
When we “resist the devil”, we are overcoming the **sin in ourselves** (James 4:7). When Jesus told Peter to *“get thee behind me Satan”*, the sin was being manifested **in another person.** In the example chosen at the top of this page, (from Rev 12:9) the sin was manifested **in the Roman government**, which was an adversary to the saints.

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Hope and Comfort from the Scriptures



As we learn more about the way that sin is presented in the Bible, we understand that words such as the Devil and Satan are only representative of the various manifestations of sin.

The curse of sin - One of the significant effects of the sin of our first parents was that we have inherited a nature that is cursed. We are therefore subjected to suffering, sorrow, sickness and pain, as we endure our few days filled with trouble, leading us all back to the dust of the ground. (See Gen. 3:19, Job 14:1-2)

Suffering and disease were more than a punishment. Such adversities are also intended to instruct us and lead us to repentance. Paul's "**thorn in the flesh**" is an excellent example of the way that God may use an affliction to lead us to the humility that He desires from us. Paul expressed it this way: *"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* (2 Cor 12:7-9 NIV)

This account demonstrates the way that symbolic language is used in the Bible. Paul's adversity (which many believe was very poor eyesight) was called a messenger of Satan. It is obvious from the context that this thorn was under God's control and it was applied for Paul's benefit. The popular superstitions about Satan would find no support in this story.

The Destruction of the Devil - When we consider the redemptive work of Christ, we are told in Heb. 2:14 *"that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."* What was it that Christ actually destroyed when he died on the cross? He died for our sins, and "**the wages of sin is death.**" (Rom 6:23) It was the sin that dwelled in his own body that he destroyed by his death.

The destruction of the Devil (sin in the flesh), was accomplished first in Christ, as promised in Gen. 3:15. Christ will soon return to the earth to bruise the serpent on the head and with this victory, **sin in all of its manifestations** will be removed. All of the affliction, all suffering, sorrow, sickness and pain, will no longer be remembered, *"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."* (Rev 21:4)

Our comfort from the scriptures is in the knowledge that all of the effects of sin will be removed. (Including the confusion in the terms and the superstitions about the Devil and Satan that have deceived so many). Sin, the serpent's descendent, will be destroyed and there will be no more death. *"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* (1 Cor 15:26-28)

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?"



"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." (Prov 8: 1- 4)

There are **two women** who have a prominent role in the instruction found in the book of Proverbs. The first is called **WISDOM** and the other is a **HARLOT**, a strange woman that leads young men astray.

When we read the language about these two women it might seem logical to conclude that there are two literal, supernatural, women out there in the streets. One woman is calling for men to be wise, to avoid evil, and the other is tempting them to sin. Does this sound any more far fetched than the idea that there is a literal tempter called the devil? To my knowledge however, no one is actually promoting these women as reality. In fact it seems silly to think that they are any more than a "**personification**" of the opposing influences in our lives. Strange as it is however, the same sinful influence that is personified by the harlot is believed to be a real creature when the word *devil* is used.

In the book of Revelation, (which is a book that is filled with symbols) we find the term **harlot** as a symbol or personification of sin; in this case the sin is manifested in the apostate church.

We are told in Revelation 17: *"Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

This "great whore" represents a system of false worship that has been influential in deceiving the people with lies about the "old serpent, the Devil and Satan". (See Rev. 17:18) By promoting hell (which is a word that should be translated as the *grave*) as a place of eternal torment, ruled by their fabricated "Devil", the parishioners of this false system are coerced into paying tithes, in the hope of being saved from this terrible end.

The true servants of God are warned not to be deceived by the "wine" (teaching) of the harlot. They are instructed to *"come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."* (Rev 18:4)

Do not be deceived. The "devil" is only a word used to personify sin. It is the sin itself that leads to eternal death. If we resist this "devil", we can hope for the gift of eternal life, through Jesus Christ. (See Rom. 6:23).