

Satan
Christianity's Other God

Satan

Christianity's Other God

Legend, Myth, Lore, or Lie

**Historical and Biblical proof of how man created Satan
and made Satan to be a god.**

VOLUME I

By James R. Brayshaw

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PREFACE

For many of us, the teachings of man that we have received have become so much a part of our lives that we believe our beliefs are truth, at the very depth of our being.

At any point in our lives any one of us could be deceived, however, a person who is deceived does not know they are deceived, otherwise they would not be deceived.

If we think that our own heart cannot deceive us then God would not have had His prophet Jeremiah say;

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

Jeremiah 17:9 KJV¹

When I was a child and was taught about Satan, I always wondered, as many of us have, how an all-powerful God can allow such an evil being as Satan to exist. If God is sovereign, why doesn't He just wipe Satan out? How can this loving God allow an afflicter to continue to exert his cosmic powers upon the faithful and the innocent to bring destruction, chaos, and harm? Today I would like to share some answers to those questions and others about the existence of Satan. The answers shared in the following pages are able to free people from fear, confusion, and misunderstanding about Satan and evil. The following is a work intended to prove that Satan does not exist as a cosmic

¹ Throughout this work the letters KJV after a Scripture verse identify that verse as taken from the King James Version Bible. Where required to indicate which Strong's Dictionary number has been assigned to a specific word the Strong's numbers will be incorporated into the verse after each word. This is known as "inline Strong's". Here is an example of that practice; *In the beginning⁷²²⁵ God⁴³⁰ created^{11254 (853)} the heaven⁸⁰⁶⁴ and the earth.⁷⁷⁶* Genesis 1:1 KJV+

supernatural being, who is intent on destroying humanity and thwarting the plans of the Most High God.

In arriving at a clear understanding of the non-existence of a Satan, I have learned from many teachers on the subject. The problem with the existence of a Satan is that the sovereignty of the Creator is in question. The question has long been asked; If God is sovereign then why does Satan have so much power to harm humans? I agree that is a question needing to be answered and in short, it can be answered by saying there is no Satan and that man is the primary purveyor of evil in this world. The subject becomes even more serious when one considers that ascribing supernatural power to anything elevates that thing to the status of a God.

Yahweh is God and He claims that there is no other supernatural force in the universe, saying there is none like Him. Thus, we are left with the problem of trying to remove the other God, Satan, from the throne that he has been given by the heart and mind of humanity. If Satan truly does not exist, then those who believe he does have a conflict of interest with the concept of believing in One God. So consider the following very carefully.

INTRODUCTION

Whether “Satan” exists or not is an issue that has huge implications for humanity and religion today. If “Satan” does not exist, then you and I have been taught a very ancient and complicated lie, at the hands of the religious institutions of this world. From the time the Israelites left Persia until today, those who are the leaders and teachers of these religious institutions have almost unanimously heralded the message that there exists a cosmic being that is like God but is not the One God who is sovereign over the entire Universe.

Probably the most serious repercussion of a culture coming to terms with the non-existence of a cosmic Satan is the impact this information will have on the individual when they fully realize what it is they are responsible for. By there being no “Satan”, you and I are then left as the party who must take the full responsibility for sin. We can then dismiss the idea that an evil influencing force has secretly introduced sin to us and we are not hapless participants in behavior that is not approved by the Almighty.

The fault for evil then is not to be laid on a supernatural, mind controlling, satanic spirit; the fault lies with the individual who submits to the original propensity to choose sin, which is a potential that is inherent in the human psyche. Sin changes the human mind and there are many theories and hypotheses as to how the actual neurological wiring is altered when a person continually chooses to sin. The change in our brain physiology becomes the primary factor why sin gets easier and easier. The liar finds it easier to lie, the rager finds it easier to rage and the porn addict finds it easier to choose to look at porn. Eventually the brain and emotions control the person because of the cellular changes to the areas in the brain, which have been continually stimulated by whatever sin has persistently occurred.

Admittedly, we all sin regularly but many who are in a cycle of habitual sin may be there because of the first time they justified their actions. Now that

person no longer has to work to justify their action because that “principlality,” is the driving force of their choice to sin. A principlality here is the primary drive or original impetus to choose to disobey, it has taken over, and the person has effectively “lost” control in areas of their life where sin becomes an almost automatic behavior. I will not use such a broad brush as to paint every person, without exception, as being able to have lost control to his or her propensity to sin. It is true that some of us have a propensity to commit one sin or another because of things that may have happened in our childhood. Trauma changes us and is particularly efficacious on the brain of a child, as are various forms of negative programming that might be foisted on a child in one way or another. For excellent teaching and understandable scientific explanations in this area, you may want to look at the work of Dr. Paul Hegstrom.² He is a premier researcher and teacher in the way our brains have been changed by situations and stimulus from our early years as well as how neurological changes occur from repeated sin choices.

Admitting that there is no cosmic “satan” is only one step in the journey of faith which leads us to a true monotheism that fears God only. Imagine how safe we will feel instead of feeling fear when we are able to dismiss the concept of being inhabited by a demon as is portrayed in certain movies. Or when we concretely embrace the fact that a midnight walk on a pagan high holy day will not place us at risk of being attacked by a demonic spirit who wants to drag a soul to hell. Let me testify to the freedom that comes from knowing there is only One God and no evil, cosmic force that has any power to affect your life in any way. There is amazing freedom that comes with learning that all ideas of demonic, transient spirit beings are the fabrications of men’s minds, which find their origins in ancient mythology. For others, you can expect peace to be found in the area of fear that may come in the night, thinking a horned beast with fangs and breath of sulfur is going to appear when you awake from a bad dream.

When we learn there is no Satan we can begin to help our children more when they awake from a nightmare or we find them emotionally trapped in an irrational fear of being separated from Mom and Dad at a sleep over with friends. When parents are able to see these fears as not coming from a demonic source, they will be liberated to begin meeting the real emotional needs of the child by a proper logical and intuitive assessment, leading to true emotional support for that child. The benefits of recognizing that there is no Satan are multiple. Western nations would no longer have to think

2 Dr. Hegstrom’s work can be accessed through his organization called Life Skills International. www.lifeskillsintl.org

of Mid East terrorist groups as working for Satan and the terrorists could be free to no longer believe that the West is being driven by Satan. All who are parties in a situation where one country is against another, would then be able to recognize the source of evil is the wicked hearts of man in the conflict and perhaps come to the realization that their own heart is equally as wicked. A conflict that brings pain and death is driven by human desires and although many blame “satanic” influence for these conflicts, great benefit will be realized by seeing man is the source of the evil perpetrated against another people group. The list of freedoms we get from changing our belief in a cosmic Satan can go on and on, but the bottom line in all this is that he does not exist, so we humans are going to have to take responsibility for all the evil in the world.

Some state that if you say there is no Satan then you are in danger of hell yourself, I say; “If you say *there is a Satan*, then you are in danger of having two Gods.” The greatest danger one faces by saying there is no Satan is the danger that comes with taking full responsibility for their sin and evil. To embrace a “One God” mindset frees the mind from the subtle trap which always wants to find someone or something to blame for the evil in the world. One only stands to benefit, by once and for all taking full responsibility for the sin in their life which so easily deceives the mind.

In the following pages, we will find many thoughts and concepts that would have been difficult to arrive at had we used the Scriptures alone. I have tried to be thorough in the explication of this idea and yet the entire study of this concept is far from being exhausted. We will look at mountains of Scripture, assess the words of the Apostles and the Messiah as recorded in the “New Testament”, and we will receive testimony and instruction from many sources to add to our historical and cultural understanding. Ahead I will claim some really difficult ideas to be true and will deny and dismantle some of the most commonly accepted beliefs in the Christian religion, citing evidence, logic and the fact that our perspective is not even close to the Hebraic thinking of those who were the first and earliest hearers of the words in the Bible. Concepts that are considered include; if there is a Hell, and what is Heaven for. Another concept that is addressed is the question of where the dead go.

The concepts shared in this work are flexible and a life-long learning process will continue for me long after I have signed off on this book. That stated, It is entirely possible that an understanding which I have provided, for a particular verse or passage may not be the only and complete understanding. I thoroughly enjoy hearing other interpretations of the material I have covered in this work. You will see however, it would be unlikely an interpretation

that includes a Cosmic Satan would be accepted as correct, based on the information shared in the arguments of the two volumes of *Satan, Christianity's Other God*. I will present a plethora of arguments however, I do understand that more could be added in some instances to the thoughts and information I have shared. Even when faced with one interpretation of a passage there undoubtedly are other ways the passage could be explained to illuminate the truth of a non-existent Satan.

Men such as Origen, Plato, Philo, and Augustine have come to accept that sin is from an internal drive in man and is driven by the pleasure of the senses. These men are just a few of the historical figures who make allusions to the “serpent in the Garden” as being an allegory for man’s potential to choose sin, called by some the *yetzer ha ra*, or the evil inclination. In Augustine’s work titled, *Confessions*, we are given this comment regarding how we are able to fall into sin;

For first comes a suggestion, whether through thought, or through the bodily senses, by sight, or touch, or hearing, or taste, or smell. When the suggestion is made, if our cupidity does not move us to sin, then the cunning of the serpent will be excluded. If this movement happens, however, then we will be persuaded, just as the woman was.

Augustine recognized sin was from the internal drive of man but he could not find a way around the Greek mythology of his day to disclude Satan from his theology. Many men have identified the inborn ability to choose sin as an internal influence that comes because of the “pleasures of the senses”. Some have tried to place a cosmic Satan in the picture while others have tried to minimize Satan and show that underneath the surface is rebellion bent humanity itself.

In chapter 12 and 13, we will discuss the thought that the “serpent” in the garden is not Satan nor is it a real serpent that was inhabited by Satan. What we have found is that the writer of the garden story was capable of using current mythological images, in a type of mytho-poetic language, to instruct the hearers as to what man’s fall from perfect obedience looked like. It is possible that the events said to have transpired in Eden are somewhat of an allegory, intended to teach the Israelites how wonderful life could have been without sin. I would be fooling myself if I was to claim that all the images and stories in the Scriptures are either literal or all allegorical. They cannot all be either or. If the Scriptures are true and we serve a God who transcends the natural, then some of what appears to be symbolical imagery may in fact end up being real and true in a physical sense. It is likely that many of the

elements of numerous stories are allegorical but other elements will actually prove to be literal. Logic and diligent study can assist in forming a conclusion on at least some of these components of the Scriptures.

We will see some history related to the development of the common idea of a cosmic Satan. It is realized that this idea truly flourished in the 6th century BC exile of the Hebrew people under Persia and Babylon. The concept grew in the minds of the generations in exile and was then added to the belief system of certain “religious sects” that came out of exile in about 539 BCE. It was there, as we will discuss, that the dual-God philosophy of the Zoroastrian cult was embedded in what was to be the exclusively monotheistic faith of the Israelites. The thought of there being a good god and an evil god took root at that time and was filtered through the Parsi, who were Persian Magi, down through the Pharisees who developed Rabbinic Judaism. The two-God thinking traveled on into the first century, past the advent and ascension of Christ and into the cult of Christianity. This concept has had almost 3000 years of development and is so deeply embedded that we now see millions of dollars spent on information and amulets which are designed to keep “demons” from getting close enough to humans so that they can affect their lives. The multi-billion dollar media industry now drives this false idea deeper into the mental, emotional and spiritual fibers of all who drink in the high action high graphic demonstration of the powers of Satan. These intense, mind numbing portrayals are displayed in literally thousands of movies, TV shows and video games. All the while the innocent user of said media is left to believe that forces such as they are seeing on screen, actually exist and do the things that “Hollywood” has them doing.

In these pages we will note how there is only One God and if you or I profess there is another supernatural being performing humanly impossible tasks, then we are ascribing to a dualistic, two-God philosophy. This is a philosophy that is against the God of the Scriptures and Universe, because He claims to be the only God. In the Torah this God teaches that all the other Gods, yes this would include “Satan,” are nothing and do not even exist but are fabrications from the minds of men. As a way of emphasizing their non-existence, the Revelation of John says “they neither see nor hear nor walk.”

We will discuss how the writer also called the angel who prevented Balaam from proceeding to curse the Israelites “Satan”. Also in the Torah, (1 Kings 22) we will see how Yahweh sent a “satan” to Ahab to be a “lying spirit” so that Ahab would decide to go to war and suffer destruction. In the vision had by Jehoshaphat, a satan was clearly recorded but does this vision of a “spirit”

have to be taken literally or is it symbolic of human messengers that came to Ahab? Both of these examples show us that “the Satan” is simply an adversary that has been sent by Yahweh and the “lying spirit” was dispatched by Yahweh as well. This type of adversary can be either human or some manifestation of a divine presence from the Creator. We see clearly in the Torah that the “adversary” is not an archenemy of Yahweh but in these instances it is a tool of Yahweh’s.

Another privilege we have by studying the words of the Torah is to see that it is man’s heart which is continually inclined to choose evil. There is no recognition of a fallen spirit being who has caused man to choose evil in the Scriptures. Man makes choices out of the wickedness that is in his heart and if man chooses righteousness, he will overcome that inclination to do evil. Along with that instruction from the Torah, we find in the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy that devils and demons are simply man-made, hairy goat-idols. Again if one looks carefully at the context, the history, and the language, it is clear the false gods made by men’s hands, were believed to be supernatural forces that were being worshipped by the Israelites. The syncretizing (combining faith practices from varied religions) of Israelite worship took place because of the seductiveness of the varied gods of the pagan nations around them. The nation of Israel often took on these false gods as “lesser gods.” Yahweh accused them of idolatry because they acknowledged these gods and He said they are impotent and amount to absolutely nothing. The only power they had is what is believed to exist as power in the minds of those who engaged in false worship and acknowledgment of these worthless idols.

Together we will look at the supposed appearance of “satan” in the book of Job. You will be shown that the term “before the LORD” is a term describing an Earthly Temple environment and the word “Satan” seen in Job, is speaking of a human adversary. Job’s troubles were brought on by a few jealous men who found ways to influence the human forces around them so that Job was the recipient of great suffering. True Yahweh allowed this to happen, but it happened by the hands of humans, not by supernatural agents who can beg Yahweh to let them harm a human and Yahweh allows the attacks to happen. Job himself attributes all the evil that befell him, to Yahweh.

The problem with most commentators accepting the “Satan” in Job as a literal being; is that they reduce the writing to a mere historical account when it has been written as a separate genre of writings called “wisdom literature.” Wisdom literature is designed to express deep concepts using metaphor and

allegory, while still employing the elements of humanity which would be familiar to the hearer. Job had recognized that the men, who brought evil upon him and the natural events which rendered Job a victim of circumstance, all occurred at the permission of Yahweh. Of course Yahweh could have supernaturally subverted the evil will of Job's "adversaries" but we serve a God who operates at times by allowing one man's evil choices to affect another man who may be righteous.

After looking at the concepts of the "adversary" as found early on in Scripture, light will be shed on the identity of "Lucifer" in Isaiah 14. It will be shown that "Lucifer" was not the name of Satan prior to his fall, as scholars have claimed for years. The term "son of the dawn" also said to be equivalent to "the bright and morning star" was what was originally meant by the Hebrew term "*helel*." The phrase was a well know appellation for the Kings of Pagan nations. This speech against the king of Babylon by Isaiah is set in a series of words against pagan nations, know to be; *The Oracles Against the Nations*. The fact that the context of this passage clearly identifies this "Lucifer" as a man and that the term itself had no fallen angel meaning until after it arrived in Jerome's Latin translation of 346 CE, indicates strongly that Isaiah 14:12 is about a man who thought himself to be God, was given power and authority from the Creator, but abused it in thinking he answered only to himself. The subsequent "fall from heaven" is a reference to this pagan king's fall from power. The idea of this person being the actual "satan" of common religious thought, never entered the realm of theological scholarship until sometime after Jerome translated the Hebrew word for "morning star," in the fourth century, with the Latin word *Lucifer*, a word that means light bringer.

The Book of Isaiah also revealed that Yahweh is the one who creates evil and calamity. Isaiah had been given the charge by God to speak to the people coming out from exile. He was to inform them that Yahweh is the one responsible for the evil which has befallen them. The exiled Israelites were incorporating ideas they had adopted from Persian theology into their faith system. The idea which came from Persian, Zoroastrian religion claimed that good came from one God and the evil came from another God who was constantly at odds with the supreme God. George Knight, a past professor of Old Testament in McCormack Theological Seminary speaks about this two-God religion in his work on *The Prophets of Israel*;

Zoroastrianism at that time was a fine new religion spreading out of Persia over all the East. Faced with the complexity and mystery of human life, it sought to present man with a clear and

logical explanation of the problem of evil and of pain. There are two powers, two Gods, this faith proclaimed, a God who is good, and a God who is evil. In the end however, after the long struggle between the two is over, Light will win over Darkness, so that man can look forward to a glorious future.³

This two-God system is probably the most subtle form of dualism that is present in Christianity and other religions today. It forces the believer to attribute things that only Yahweh can do, to another source, even though the other source does not really exist and was made up in a "vision" by an ancient Persian man. Perhaps God sees the belief in that source as idolatry and for this reason, He stated over and over again that He is God and there is none else.

A great deal of mythological lore has been used by writers of the Scriptures and subsequently misunderstood by interpreters of those same Scriptures. As we look at the prophetic books, we will begin to see signs of mythology sewn into the fabric of numerous stories. Many of the characters from myths are seen in visions had by the prophets. A major mythological connection will be found in the Serpent in the Garden story however, we will become familiar with the use of mythical imagery by the prophets before we embark on our study of the Genesis 3 serpent. Our study of the Ezekiel 28 passage, which is about the human King of Tyre and not a cosmic being, will reaffirm to us the importance of being careful to not interpret the visions of all prophets, as literal. True some visions have literal application for parts or individual components of the vision. But out of what almost seems to be instinct, we interpret most of the content of most visions literally. This practice has hamstrung the typical student of the bible by, inhibiting them from receiving the message the prophet intended to send through articulating his vision. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia relates how visions in the Scripture should be recognized as containing elements that are familiar in daily life;

The objects of vision, diverse and in some instances strange as they are, have usually their points of contact with experiences of the daily life. Thus Isaiah's vision of the seraphim ([Isa 6:2](#)) was doubtless suggested by familiar figures used in the decoration of the temple at Jerusalem; Paul's "man of Macedonia" ([Act 16:9](#)) had its origin in some poor helot whom Paul had seen on the streets of Troas and who embodied for him the pitiful misery of the regions across the sea; and "Jacob's ladder" ([Gen 28:12](#)) was but a fanciful development of the terraced land which he saw sun-glorified before him as he went to sleep. Among the recurring

3 Bible Guides, Prophets of Israel (1) Isaiah, page 75

objects of vision are natural objects - rivers, mountains, trees, animals - with which man has daily and hourly association.⁴

Much will be gleaned from exploring the reasons that 2 Samuel 24 tells us Yahweh caused David to number the tribes of Israel, while the same account of the story in 1 Chronicles 21 reveals “Satan” as being the inciter of David. This apparent contradiction can be seen by some as a reason to discount the writings of Scripture. However, a closer examination reveals that the writer of Chronicles was writing the story about 300 years after the return of the Israelites from the Persian exile. The perspective that the writer spoke from was one of understanding that Yahweh was acting as an adversary; therefore, the writer used the Hebrew word for adversary, *sawtawn*. This term was subsequently translated into English as “Satan” and given a capital letter at the start to seemingly identify it as a proper noun as the name of the mythical, cosmic evil one. The occurrence of terminology that would have been understood by the ancient hearers but misunderstood by hearers today is a common situation and one that has led to many misunderstandings of the meaning of Scripture.

As we look on in the Scriptures, we will be presented with a more plausible understanding of Zechariah’s vision of Joshua the High Priest being accused by the “satan.” This situation seems to smack of a real life Satan, but turns out to be, first of all, a vision. A vision which when viewed along with the remainder of the Book of Zechariah is not to be taken literally as not one of the visions he had was to be taken literally. Zechariah’s visions are as much metaphorical as any of the visions in the Scripture. It will be shown that once again the Hebrew word used for “Satan” means adversary. The use of this term for an adversary, or one who opposes the will of Yahweh, helped to express the fact of Zechariah not seeing a cosmic satanic being, but was receiving a vision of adversarial men trying to keep Joshua from acting as the High Priest.

Our overview of the inter-testamental period will shed light on the development of the supernatural Satan concept. This period is understood to have been the three or four hundred years before Christ came on the scene. Many religious and apocalyptic documents were penned during this period and the Hellenized thinking of the writers was widely sown into religious thought. From a couple of hundred years after the release of the Persian exiles, the formation of a “living spirit entity concept,” as the counter-Yahweh force in the cosmos, became popular. This ideology influenced Judaism in numerous

⁴ From the article, Visions, in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

ways and became part of first century religious life. Some believed that if you spoke of a demon you were talking about one of the evil minions of a very real, evil cosmic leader; while others were able to maintain the understanding that to speak of a person having a demon, meant they were sick, insane or entertaining false beliefs. In its simplest form, the theory of a supernatural being at odds with Yahweh became a concrete belief, causing passages like Isaiah 14:12, about a human man, to be infused with mystical interpretations. None of the commonly identified passages about Satan was interpreted as such until the Hebrews left Persia and apocalyptic literature flourished in the inter-testamental period. The inter-testamental period played a huge role in the history of developing theology. It was a period that was largely influenced by Greek thinking and had been given a huge launching pad by expanding on the borrowed concepts of Persia. Many of the dualistic concepts that are deeply woven in the fabric of religion today were still strongly embedded in the spiritual psyche of the people who came out of the Persian Empire.

Another deeply embedded belief in the spiritual hard drive of today's culture that was not present until well into the fourth century CE, is the belief that says the New Testament is Scripture. Our forthcoming discussion will bring to light many reasons why the "New Testament" is not Scripture and is not to be given the same authority as the Old Testament. One of the most convincing arguments for that theory is the absolute lack of internal evidence for that body of Apostolic literature. The New Testament never calls itself Scripture and only refers to the Hebrew Scriptures as Scripture. Being considered Scripture has brought men to raise the "New Testament" to a status that parallels the Hebrew Scriptures. Because this has been done by religious leaders for thousands of years does not make it right. The passage of time does not turn an error into a truth, so we have the privilege of considering how the writings of the Apostles were used in the first centuries of the Common Era. Yeshua and Paul never used the "New Testament" as Scripture and they only ever affirmed the authority of the ancient Hebrew canon as Scripture. Though the Apostolic Testimony is not Scripture used for designing doctrine, it is a body of literature that helps clarify numerous difficult issues and concerns within the early assemblies of believers. We have in the New Testament a valid witness to the happenings of the first century apostles and certain believing communities. Honestly assessing the value of this personal mail for what it is quickly diminishes it as words that have authority to develop new doctrine, particularly on such as a doctrine of a cosmic "satan." These documents were at best, written by various men who would be mortified to hear their letters that were intended for assemblies and friends, are raised to equality with Torah and being used for defining

and designing doctrines. The evidence against some of these letters being written by the alleged authors whose names appear as the title of the “book,” is manifold and should be considered when we stake our faith on these letters as words which are said to show how to live a life of faith in the God of the Universe and His Messiah. One major issue with the writings of the New Testament is how to reconcile the apparent contradictions it has with the writings of the Old Testament. When the writings are studied through the lens of their correct historical, cultural, and linguistic context, any apparent contradiction that surfaces can soon be explained so that the writings are not held in contrast to each other any longer.

I will say however, we are fortunate to have the Apostolic writings as a witness to major happenings in the development of the Faith of Israel during and after the Messiah’s appearing. Using these documents as a means to comprehend some of what happened in the first century as it pertains to the Messiah and His followers has been of great value to the believing community, the Israel of God. The difficulty with using these documents is that unless one sees them through the eyes of a first century Hebrew believer in Messiah, they practically have their hands tied to correctly understand and apply the precepts and instruction contained in this body of literature. Many will claim that you are throwing out the Messiah if you refuse to believe the “New Testament” is Scripture. The fact is, Messiah is not going to be using this body of literature as His textbook in the millennial age; is He therefore guilty of the same charge? I am reminded that the present format and order of the New Testament that we have today was only put into one compendium in the year 367 by the Bishop Athanasius, who was a right hand man of the pagan Christian Emperor Constantine.

The handlers of these early Apostolic documents had long been divorced from a Hebraic heritage. Had these Greco-Roman philosopher-theologians been properly trained to rightly divide the word of Yahweh, they would have interpreted and used these documents in a proper context. They then would have had much success at making use of these documents which were intended to be aids to assemblies of those with faith in Yeshua. Quite the contrary though, they set off a stream of erroneous teaching based on their incorrect understanding of much of this literature. Their teaching brought millions into the false religion of Christianity, and the Gnostic flavor of their system of religion was sent throughout the world. In Volume Two of *Satan, Christianity’s Other God*, the issue of the New Testament not being Scripture is dealt with thoroughly.

Our journey then will take a different turn, as we carefully look at all the passages in the Apostolic Testimony, which pertain to sin, evil and “satan.” If there is no “satan,” as I posit, there then has to be a comprehensive explanation for all the verses where it appears Satan is being spoken of. The personification of sin, evil, sickness, and insanity was related to the hearer using the words, demon, devil, Satan, and unclean spirit. Interpreting and understanding the Apostolic Testimony through the eyes of the Hebrew Scriptures is essential to perceiving these terms correctly. Each New Testament use or instance of “Satan” must draw on the “Old Testament” precedents for this so called Satan. The Old Testament Satan was almost always an adversarial force sent by Yahweh. At times, this force might have been inspired of itself to go but it was typically a human force with the infrequent exception of the force appearing as some manifestation of the celestial workings of the Creator Himself. The frequency with which commentators and scholars have not correctly understood a passage in the Apostolic Testimony has grown to epidemic proportions due to almost a complete lack in seeing the verses in the Apostolic testimony through “Old Testament” glasses.

Many of the potential understandings of most passages that will be shared with you are just that, “potential”. I will not claim to be the final authority on these words because we are all still learning and the distance in time that we find ourselves from the workings of that culture is vast, thus making it difficult to state a hypothesis as final authority. I will say though, the correct path is one similar to the one I have taken you on and not a path that points the modern reader to the existence of a cosmic Satan. The path presented in Volume II of *Satan, Christianity's Other God*, where the New Testament is surveyed and expounded on as it pertains to Satan, is a path that indicates that Scripture must define Scripture. All Apostolic Testimony must completely support the words of Scripture or else it is the words of false prophets. I encourage you to continue exploring the meaning of the difficult words of the Apostolic Testimony beyond that which is presented in this book. You will find the pieces of the puzzle falling into place the more you commit to ask yourself, “*I wonder what the original hearer understood these words to mean.*”

Even with correct hermeneutics and a mind that thinks more in the manner of an ancient Eastern person rather than a present-day, Greco-Roman thinker, we still arrive at a slight problem. What are we to do with all the experiences? Experiences of credible people who claim to have made “contact” with the evil spirit realm. Many will say that they have seen demons and watched people fly across the room during an “exorcism.” Some will tell of experiences they have had with ghosts and others will swear they have

encountered “satan” himself. All these are difficult to explain, but if we start with the foundational concept that is taught in the Holy Scriptures which can be called the Torah, that there are no other living Gods except Yahweh, we will then be prepared to not force the Bible, which is the teaching and instruction of God, to fit into one’s experiences. That is to say, if I have an experience of seeing a seven-headed dragon, I don’t force that vision to define what the Scriptures could possibly mean. I try with my entire mind, to understand that experience through the eyes of Torah. The Torah is specifically the first five books of the common Old Testament and according to some, can loosely refer to the entire Christian Old Testament. Letting our experiences be the thing that defines Torah and truth is a backwards manner of living one’s faith. If the Torah says there is no supernatural evil being in existence and I see a supernatural evil being, I must try to comprehend how that can be understood without building a dualistic theology.

If I accept the truth of Torah and I have an experience that seems to oppose a truth of the Torah, then I might have developed that experience out of my own mental and emotional resources. Many people follow their experiences thinking that because they have had a certain experience; they then are in the truth. The possibility of being deceived is a very real possibility for all of us as we wander through life trying to make sense of what is truth and what is lie. Often experiences that seem very real are only tangential images and when taken too literally, they will lead one into deception. The challenging thing though is that the deceived do not know they are deceived unless they realize that it is possible their beliefs are inconsistent and possibly wrong. We only need one wrong belief to enable a whole bunch of opportunity for future deception in our lives. That is why Paul the Apostle suggests we prove all things and hold fast those which are good. Dr Margaret Singer has made many aware, that because we think our minds are invulnerable to wrong thought, does not make it so.

“Just as most soldiers believe bullets will hit only others, not themselves, most citizens like to think that their own minds and thought processes are invulnerable. “Other people can be manipulated, but not me,’ they declare.” -- Margaret Singer, Ph.D.

We are all “other people,” to someone and we all have the potential to be deceived. To see someone who is manifesting signs which suggest “demon possession,” is usually thought to be a sure representation that there exists a cosmic “satan” who is able to inhabit a person’s psyche in a similar fashion to one being inspired by the Holy Spirit. What appears to be spiritual possession

by a netherworld resident, is only an activity which is brought about by certain mental conditions, postures and positions one places themselves in via some form of self induced hypnosis or hysteria. In his book, *Occult and Supernatural Phenomenon*, D. H. Rawcliffe tells of the ancients experiencing what is probably one of the earliest forms of ecstasy, which brings on a state likened to the common pattern thought to be “demonic possession.”

There is little doubt that the Dionysiac frenzy and similar forms of “ecstasy” were hysterio-epileptoid in character. Such ecstatic states manifest themselves in rigidity of the body, contortions, tremors, frothing at the mouth are often accompanied by visual and auditory hallucinations and extreme euphoria. The hallucinations and euphoria provide the component of visions and exaltation, which in Thrace, used to take the form of mystical union with the god and which in later times, was followed by wild sexual orgies. The soul of the ecstatic was supposed to leave the worshipper's body and hold communion with distant gods and daemons.⁵

We can come to terms with the fact that ecstatic behavior, such as is mentioned of the Dionysiacs, is a state of instability that is self-induced as a response to a hysterical environment. The person today who enters such a state, perhaps not even quite as pronounced as what is told of the Dionysiacs, is no less guilty of self-induction of the desired state which they themselves developed and then believe is a sign they are connecting with God's Spirit. There is much to be said of those who today might manifest the signs of being out of control and therefore controlled by another entity. This is commonly thought to be a demonic possession but is more likely a form of dissociation, hysteria or self-hypnosis.

As a former Pentecostal “prayer warrior”, I have been involved in a number of situations where a person is said to be under the influence of a satanic spirit, defined as “a spirit of anger” or “a spirit of jealousy.” In these situations, I had been part of the “deliverance” team and we began the prayers and anointing with oil, to cast out this “demon”. The engagement was placid, not eliciting the manifestation that would have affirmed “possession” and thus would have indicated we were making a serious dent in the hold this “demon” had on an individual. With success not yet in our grasp, our intensity and fervor would increase. These manic deliverance sessions would often bring us to the point of being fully embroiled in a frenzied situation that was fueled by our beliefs that there existed a real “demon” and this person would eventually be liberated from the clutches of it because of our spiritual authority. None could

5 *Occult and Supernatural Phenomenon*, D H Rawcliffe, pg274

deny that we truly thought that what we were experiencing was real. So we pressed on until the subject, or perhaps I should say victim, was lying on the floor grimacing as if he or she were trying to pass a gall stone and then finally would become calm once again. In our minds and the mind of the innocent victim, there was a “demonic spirit” which had now been removed. We had accomplished what we had set out to accomplish and our belief system was affirmed and made still stronger by the experience. I now understand this and other situations like it, to be cases of hysteria where the participants caused some type of physical manifestation to occur. Both the deliverer and the deliverer were giving themselves over to the experience and had such a deep belief as to how things should go, that they unwittingly cooperated with each other to produce a faux deliverance on a person who came to believe that he had a “demon” and subsequently brought on all the manifestation that he truly accepted to be part and parcel with being “demon possessed.”

These types of experiences are not uncommon. Our culture is prone to the power of suggestion and to becoming a slave to our beliefs. So much so that some actually “experience” such impossibilities, as seeing a “demon” or “spirit.” Perhaps the experience a person has is that they sense a presence or feel a touch of the “spirit,” somewhere on their body. In Volume One, we will mention the work of the great illusionist Harry Houdini. I am not referring to his masterful illusions and feats of escape but to his work that found him investigating the spirit realm. Houdini discloses that people are extremely prone to the power of suggestion and the paranormal becomes the normal which is magnified and pronounced in their mind. Houdini had the privilege of exposing numerous famous and internationally renowned paranormal charlatans. Many of these deceivers of men exposed themselves by their own admission at the end of a long career. Houdini could find absolutely no evidence of actual paranormal activity during the entire 30 years he investigated this art. It is a fact though, that the power of suggestion, such as has been utilized in indoctrinating various religious groups for thousands of years, has amazing power to become reality in the minds of the initiate. What the subconscious accepts, it will act on and forms a belief which becomes a reality in the mind of many. It may be that a person truly believes they see a certain demonic representation or perceives a convincing spiritual presence, and I believe they are sincere in what they have seen. This sight or sense is real to them and they may actually visualize it in the mind's eye. It is no more real though than if I say to someone, “Look, a fire truck just went by!” You see a fire truck, your mind processes the words I have spoken and you, on some level, picture a big red, shiny Fire Apparatus but in fact one had not just driven by. The mere suggestion of something will generate an image in the mind of most people. This is the case for someone

who doesn't even have an intense desire to witness the said fire truck. Imagine how strong this process would be for the person who is told there are ghosts in their house or that a certain part of their town is under control of demonic forces. Most hyper-spiritual people will actually see that which is suggested and when shared by another person of the same persuasion, they often have corroborating stories as they fuel each other's tales by emphasizing the vague similarities to what each person has seen in the mind's eye. By conforming the elements of their story to correspond to the other person's story, as a way of confirming that what they saw is real, they then are able to feel affirmed as truly "spiritual" persons; both "seeing" the same apparition. This type of phenomenon of the mind is plentiful in our over stimulated culture where images of ghosts, demons, gargoyles and witches unceasingly bombard us via the medium of motion pictures. This same mental phenomenon occurs for untold thousands who seek the skills of a "medium" to contact a dead relative or friend. Rawcliffe tells of the amazing deception performed by mediums who are commissioned by sincere seekers of contact with the dead. The tricks are very difficult to detect by the uninformed and the medium provides no assistance for one to uncover his or her charade. Rawcliffe says;

Men as well as women have been known to recognize a dead father, mother, sister or cousin in the figure of a thinly disguised medium....

Many descriptions have come from observers who have looked on aghast at the success of the most flagrant deceptions: before their eyes stands the most patently disguised figure of the medium, and with each insignificant change of apparel a bereaved mother or daughter or wife cries out a heart-rending greeting to one long since dead and buried. The illusion brought about by frustrated longing and the overwhelming will to believe, is complete. One is inevitably reminded of the collective hallucinations that have occasionally occurred at moments of religious fervor.⁶

Rawcliffe's words ring true for the belief of Satan and demons as well. If we would completely accept the teaching of Scripture that declares convincingly, "there is only one God and none else," we could more properly address the tricks of the mind that are able to fool even the intellect into believing something exists when it actually doesn't. If we could dampen down our overwhelming "will to believe" in Satan and demons, which we too often couple with "religious fervor," I am certain that we would come to the correct conclusion that we humans with an unchecked potential to choose evil, are

6 *Occult and Supernatural Phenomenon*, D H Rawcliffe, pg 312

the only force of evil in this world. We would then understand that as long as man rebels against good, that evil men will wax worse and worse.

The Apostolic Testimony, known as the New Testament, ultimately identifies the “Satan” with three main bodies of apostates who are adverse to the truth. They are; the leaders of the Jews who oppose Yeshua, the false brethren who oppose Yeshua’s true followers and the false religious systems and institutions who oppose Yeshua’s system of faith. Many principles can be gleaned from the Apostolic Testimony as to what the metaphorical terms, “devil and satan” are intended to mean. These can be stated as declarations which are found in various letters of the Apostles and Prophets. They are;

1. THE SOLE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION IS THE LUSTS OF MAN - James 1:12-17
2. ALL LUSTS ARE ORIGINATED BY THE WORLD - 1 John 2:15-17
3. THE SOLE SOURCE OF SIN IS THE PASSIONS OF MAN’S FLESH - Romans 7:5-25
4. THE THINKING OF MAN’S FLESH IS THE ENEMY OF GOD - Romans 8:7
5. THE HEART OF MAN IS THE SOURCE OF ALL WICKEDNESS - Mark 7:18-23
6. MAN’S HEART IS THE MOST DECEITFUL OF ALL THINGS – Jeremiah 17:5-11
7. THE DRIVE TO CHOOSE SIN HAS BEEN CANCELLED OUT THROUGH YESHUA’S DEATH - Hebrews 2:14

For all the time spent fighting Satan and all the prayers spoken against the “work of satan” it is amazing that the supposed “satan” still has any power at all to affect humanity. I heard one man when told that the concept of “satan” not existing was thousands of years old said; “Well what is going to happen to my prayer life if there is no Satan?” The reason that Satan has not gone away in response to the millions of prayers against him, is because it is the satan inside us that we must battle against, not a cosmic external force that was dreamed up in the mind of some mystic.

It doesn't have to be difficult to simply eliminate Satan from your life. Just remove him by thinking of him now as an old dog that passed away. Like the memories of the dog you've lost, you may have lots of memories about Satan being a part of your past life, but when held up to the light of Scripture and History, "Satan" holds no power anymore to be a part of your life, from this moment on. In many ways Satan is like an imaginary friend from childhood that never existed anyway.

As you read this book I hope that you will be able to truly believe in One God and become the responsible citizen of His kingdom that you were created to be. Ultimately, we will be able to lift our head high, look in a mirror and see ourselves as people who are sometimes satan, like the Apostle Peter was when he opposed the plan of God and was rebuked by the Messiah. It is my hope that every individual who cares to believe in the One Creator, can boldly claim that there is One God and no Satan.