

**ORIGINS OF GOOD AND EVIL**  
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We have noted that this is a spiritual warfare between good and evil, so it leads us to the question of the origins of this war and the source of good and evil. This discussion leads us into two dramatically opposite arenas. One is the study of God or theology, and the other is the study of Satan and sin or harmartiology. God is the source of goodness and Satan the source of evil.

**GOD**

There are many systematic approaches to theology and the study of God. However, in as much as the Bible is God's revelation of Himself, we can turn to His Word as the authoritative sourcebook on Who God is and what He is like.

Before the Beginning

Genesis chapter 1 verse 1 tells us several things about God. The verse simply says: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is a short sentence and yet it yields a wealth of information about God.

First, *it tells us that before anything existed, God already was.* God is not limited to the created order. Before the first atom appeared, God already was existing. Before light or space, time or matter, God already was because God is the source of all that is. In the Gospel of John the point is made further:

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:1-4).

Again, "In the beginning," the Word who is God, was already there, and everything that was made, that is, everything that has been created, was made by God. So God exists independently of creation and is the source of everything that is created. This points to the fact

that God is eternal. God has no beginning because He is the Beginning. In fact, one of the revealed titles of God is, “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End” (Rev. 21:6; 22:13).

Only God has an eternal past because by definition, only God is eternal. So, “In the beginning, God. . .” God exists before anything else does or can exist. Even within the atheistic evolutionary model for creation, a creation where the existence of God is denied, they must admit that there had to have been a “First Cause,” or the “Prime Mover.” They acknowledge that something happened, and it is at that point that something caused something else to happen in a sequence of events that brings us to the present.

The problem with their paradigm is that when you run the movie backward, you come to a point where there is nothing. Some have concluded that the very vacuum of empty space pulled something out of nothing to create everything. The order of the universe, according to this model, is the result of chaos and creation came into being with no reason, no purpose, no creator, and no original matter.

The Christian model is that God had a plan, a purpose and a design. We believe that God existed before anything existed and that He called everything into existence that does exist and is the source of all matter, space, spirit, and time. He created everything out of nothing more than His own power and will. That is, He created everything *ex nihilo*, or out of nothing.

The writer of Hebrews declares in chapter 11 verse 3:

3By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. (Heb 11:3, NKJV)

So we see that the invisible, the things that existed only in the mind of God, spiritual things, preceded the material. The Word, that is the Preincarnate Jesus, was the method by which creation took place. Paul writes in Colossians chapter 1, verses 16 through 17:

16For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. NKJV

So we see first, that God is eternal and second, that He is the creator of *all* that is. This is important because it tells us that Satan is not eternal and does not possess the attributes of Deity. Satan is a created being and therefore inferior to and subject to God, but before considering Satan, let's continue to look at the attributes of God.

The fact that God the Father, through the agency of His Son, created everything that is created, informs us that neither Father nor Son (nor Holy Spirit [Gen. 1:2] for that matter) could have a point of beginning because they would have had to have created themselves. While evolutionists are willing to embrace such illogical propositions, Christians do not have to. There is an answer and He is God.

A third point to be made from Genesis 1:1 is that God, in some way that cannot be neatly captured in human intellectual or philosophical words, is both One and Corporate at the same time. Make no mistake, there is only One God. This is a point made repeatedly in both the Old and New Testaments. It is the Shema, or the statement of faith that was repeated by every good Jew at every prayer. "The Lord our God is One Lord" (Deut. 6:4; cf. also Mark 12:29). However, there is a plurality that is mysteriously present in the very first reference to God in the Hebrew and Christian Bible, and while some have tried to explain away this fact, it still remains.

The word for God used in verse 1 of Genesis chapter one is *Elohim*. This is the plural form of the singular *El*. This point is further advanced in verse 26 where *Elohim* said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." The first person plural pronouns are not grammatical mistakes in the text of Sacred Scripture, but they are the first phase in a progressive revelation of God that can only be understood in the *Logos*, that is, in Jesus Christ Himself.

This plurality that exists in the eternality of God is important because through this we can understand the statement that “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16). Love cannot exist in a vacuum. Love exists in relationship and between persons capable of loving and being loved. God the Father has eternally loved His Son, and love is expressed within the context of the Holy Spirit who is also a person with Father and Son. We could, perhaps, say that God the Father created the universe through the Son by the Holy Spirit. This is the nature of God, it [His nature] is eternal and it is indestructible, and it exists in the context of the presence and possibility of love. Further, this relationship is the ultimate source of love.

Love is universally held to be good, and as such, God also is good. If God were not good, then love would not exist. Therefore, we know that God is good, all the time. A fact that is expressed repeatedly in Scripture:

Psalms 34:8  
8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good;  
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Psalms 100:5  
5 For the LORD is good;  
His mercy is everlasting,  
And His truth endures to all generations.

Psalms 135:3  
3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good;  
Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant.

Psalms 145:9  
9 The LORD is good to all,  
And His tender mercies are over all His works.

Jeremiah 33:11b  
11b "Praise the LORD of hosts,  
For the LORD is good,  
For His mercy endures forever"-

Lamentations 3:25  
25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,  
To the soul who seeks Him.

Nahum 1:7  
 7 The LORD is good,  
 A stronghold in the day of trouble;  
 And He knows those who trust in Him.

So we see that God is good, and in as much as God is eternal, God is the source of all that is good. James writes in his Epistle, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

James tells us, therefore, that not only is God the source of all goodness, with God there is “no variation or shadow of turning.” God always has been good and He is not capricious, thus He always will be good.

Therefore, in this spiritual warfare, in the battle between good and evil, one can only be on the Lord’s side if he or she is on the side of that which is good and holy. This is why the Apostle Paul warns us to keep our thoughts and meditations centered on that which is good:

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. (Phil. 4:8)

It should be noted, further, that not only is God good, but all that He does and all that He created was good. In Genesis chapter 1 we are told that everything God created was “good” (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). In fact, the creative process is summed up in verse 31 with this statement: “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.”

God is love, and God is good, and God is the source of all that is good. Which begs the question of where evil comes from.

## ANGELS

To answer this, we need to consider the issue of angels. Angels are, by all accounts, created beings. They are spiritual beings (Heb. 1:7) and are called, “ministering spirits” (Heb. 1:14), but they are created beings.

Angels are the servants of God (Rev. 19:10; 22:9) sent to do His work in the spiritual realm upon the earth, and on behalf of redeemed humanity (Gen. 24:40; Heb. 1:14). They were created “good” along with everything that God created, but they, like man, were apparently created with freewill and the ability to choose. They could choose to obey or rebel.

Unfortunately, some chose to rebel, Jude tells that some of the angels “did not keep their proper domain” (6). God reserves these angels for final judgment, ultimately “the lake of fire” (Rev. 20).

## SATAN AND DEMONS

According to Revelation chapter 12 this rebellion was spearheaded by an angel (probably an archangel) referred to by several names” “the great dragon . . . that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan” (Rev. 12:9), but most commonly Satan (55 times in the King James Version of the Bible).

The rebellion of Satan is described as follows:

3And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. (Rev 12:3-4)

Satan, the “red dragon” drew away a third of the angels of heaven in a revolt against God. These fallen angels, who followed Satan in his rebellion, are now called demons. These demons are the lackeys for Satan and as such they carry out his orders.

The account in Revelation continues, telling us that as a result of Satan rebellion, there was war in heaven:

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-10)

It should be noted that demons are not the spirits of humans who were evil in this life. Nor do the spirits of good people become angels. The spirit of humanity and the spiritual beings called angels are two different things. Angels do not become humans and humans do not become angels.

What then, is the source of evil? Satan, through the exercise of the freewill that God created him and all the angels with, rebelled against the goodness of God and in so doing became the father of rebellion, sin, and evil. Jesus said to the Pharisees:

You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44)

So Satan is the source of rebellion, which is the source of evil, which is the root of sin. God did not create evil or sin, but God did create Satan, as He created humanity, with the power of choice. Satan chose rebellion and has, since the creation of humanity, tried to draw us into that rebellion. Satan knows that his defeat and his doom are certain. He knows that His destiny is set in stone and cannot be reversed, so his only pleasure is in trying to draw as many humans as he can into his rebellion, into evil and sin. He knows that we are the apple of God's eye—"for he that touches you touches the apple of His eye" (Zec. 2:8)—so his only satisfaction is in trying to bring us down with him.

This is the war. It is not waged on the physical stage (though the effects are evident in the physical), but in the spiritual realm. Satan set up a kingdom of darkness, a kingdom that is antithetical to everything the kingdom of God stands for. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of light (Matt. 5:14), while the kingdom of Satan is called the kingdom of darkness.

There are angelic spirits dispersed by God as His ministers on our behalf, and there are demonic spirits in the world sent by Satan to oppress and if possible to possess humans. As humans we are not merely passive objects in this struggle, but we have the ability, through Christ, to choose sides. Furthermore, to refuse to choose Christ is a choice. It is a choice to walk in darkness and, as such, become prey to the spiritual powers of that kingdom. It is possible to become so involved and integrated into that kingdom that demonic spirits can not only influence a person, but possess him or her, that is, to virtually control them to the point these people will sink into the lowest depths of evil and engage in thoughts and activities that are destructive to themselves and to everyone else around them.

What needs to be remembered, with regard to spiritual warfare, is that there is another kingdom that is organized and focused on destroying humanity in general and the Church in particular. A fallen angel heads it, Satan, who has more power than any human power ever imagined. However, Satan is not God and does not possess the attributes of God. Satan is subservient and inferior to God in every way. Satan is not omniscient, so he does not know all things. Satan is not omnipresent, he cannot be everywhere at the same time. Satan is not omnipotent, he is not all-powerful and therefore he is limited. Satan does have more power than humanity, but fortunately Satan still has to answer to God. God limits him in what he can do.

Furthermore, when Christ dwells in us we are no longer walking in the power of human ability, but in the power that is inherent in the Name of Jesus. Jesus promised us power over all the power of the enemy:

17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (Luke 10:17-19)

So while this is a war against a spiritual kingdom of darkness led by Satan, who has more power than any human, God is on our side and that makes all the difference. We do not have to live defeated lives. We make choices everyday about how we will live and move and have our being. We can choose to walk with Jesus and in the authority that He gives us, or we can choose to live weak and defeated lives.

Fear is the key that opens us up to the attack of the enemy, and faith is the key to victory. When we place our faith in God, and when we live our lives accordingly, trusting Him in every circumstance of life, then we can rest and possess a peace that passes understanding. In this place we find the joy that is our strength and enables us to live triumphantly over the devil and his kingdom. So, while we are in a war, and no war is without casualties, we do not have to be among those who fall.

## **LUCIFER**

At this point, I want to look at Isaiah chapter 14. Traditionally we have been taught that another name for Satan is Lucifer and that Isaiah chapter 14, verses 4 through 23, refer to Satan's fall. However, the text itself is addressed to the king of Babylon (v. 4). Chapters 15 and 16 are addressed to Moab, chapters 17 and 18 to Damascus, and chapter 19 to Egypt.

Few people argue that chapters 15 through 19 are addressed to anyone other than the one to whom they are addressed. Yet for some reason, some have chosen to separate chapter 14 from the other texts and draw a straight line to Satan from Lucifer. That is why so many people will refer to Satan as Lucifer. However, I'm not so sure that we can make that assumption.

Looking at the text we see first that this prophecy is addressed to "the king of Babylon." While I know that Babylon becomes a symbol in Revelation for a kingdom that is in rebellion against God, I do not think that "king of Babylon" in verse 4 is addressed to Satan, but to the proud and boastful king of the Babylonian Empire.

Further, notice the statement in verse 11:

11b The maggot is spread under you,  
And worms cover you.'

Satan is a spiritual being, maggots and worms could not cover him, but they could cover the king of Babylon who is but a man.

Notice as well, verse 16:

16"Those who see you will gaze at you,  
And consider you, saying:  
'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,  
Who shook kingdoms,

It speaks of the death of this king. People who once revered him will look at him in death and will say, "Is this the man who made the earth tremble?" He is called, in the text, "a man."

However, the argument has traditionally been that there are other statements in the text that could not be made of a mere man. For example, verses 12-14:

12"How you are fallen from heaven,  
O Lucifer, son of the morning!  
How you are cut down to the ground,  
You who weakened the nations!  
13For you have said in your heart:  
'I will ascend into heaven,

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;  
 I will also sit on the mount of the congregation  
 On the farthest sides of the north;  
 14I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
 I will be like the Most High.'

It clearly states that he had “fallen from heaven.” Further, he is said to have planned to “ascend into heaven,” to exalt his “throne above the stars of God,” and to “be like the Most High.” This couldn’t have been a man, because man has never fallen from heaven, and man cannot literally ascend to God.

Notice, however, that the people at the tower of Babel (which is believed by some to later have become the site of Ancient Babylon) declared, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth” (Gen. 11:4). These people said they were going to build a tower into the heavens. Likewise, the king of Babylon, in his arrogance and pride believed that he was a god and that his kingdom did not have to answer to any other god, but that others would have to answer to him.

There is no doubt that the spirit of Satan was motivating the king of Babylon in his rebellion and pride, and that in Revelation we see the influence of Satan at work in “mystery Babylon” (17:5), but the text of Isaiah chapter 14 is not primarily an address to Satan but to the man who sat on the throne in the Babylonian Empire.

Another argument is that there was never a king in Babylon named “Lucifer.” However, the name Lucifer is as much a descriptive title as it is a name. The word is from the Hebrew word *heylel*, which refers to a sense of brightness, or is a reference the morning-star. It is a derivative of the Hebrew word *halal*, from which we get the word “hallelujah.” As such, it

means to boast, to glory, to make a show, and certainly this was descriptive of the king of Babylon.

This is the only place in the Bible where the word Lucifer occurs, so it is somewhat curious that this term has become so popularly used as another name for Satan.

### **ASSURANCE**

Again, there is no doubt that the Satan influenced and manipulated the king of Babylon, but it is probably not the case that Lucifer is another name for Satan.

Having said all of that, however, we do see in Isaiah that God's kingdom cannot be challenged by any earthly kingdom and that when Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18), He wasn't exaggerating. Earthly kingdoms have risen and fallen over the last two thousand years, and yet the church marches on. When we are Born Again, we are born into an everlasting kingdom (Ps 145:13; Dan 4:3; 7:27; 2 Peter 1:11). Daniel writes:

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. (Dan 7:27, KJV).

Satan does influence kings and kingdoms, and there have been times when it appeared that entire kingdoms were against the people of God, but eventually they are cast down.

The Soviet Union, for example, was built upon a Marxist-Leninist philosophy that denied the existence of God. Yet without a shot being fired that kingdom fell and what we found behind that Iron Curtain was that there was still a church, a people who worshipped God despite the attempts of the godless government to deny the validity of God or His Church.

This is war, it is a spiritual war, and it is a war that the Kingdom of God will win. It is a war between right and wrong, good and evil. God is the source of all that is good and holy, and Satan is the source of the evil.