

THE GREAT
AMERICAN
BACKSLIDE AND
OUR SILENT
PARTNERSHIP
WITH
DARKNESS

Living in Opposition to Evil's Influence

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This document is a PDF sample of excerpts from Chapter 1 of the title:
The Great American Backslide and Our Silent Partnership with Darkness -
Living in Opposition to Evil's Influence

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CHAPTER 3

The Devil in the Details

The opposite of blind faith is adopting a mindset that is neither accountable nor responsible. Some Christians go to “*the devil did it*” blame game much too often, which is an easy copout as far as personal accountability and taking ownership for your own sins and errors is concerned. That said, merely acknowledging that the devil exists starts you out with a distinct, secular disadvantage in this world as a believer. Going even further, like believing that not only does Satan and his evil army of fallen angels exist but that they also exert very substantial influence on this world will subject believers in Christ to additional ridicule, contempt, and automatic disrepute. But we must go to the Word and understand what is written in plain language.

Satan can influence people. I did not always believe that. He does this as prince of the power of the air, prince of this world, spirit of the age, and leader of the dominion of darkness on this earth to gain control of various systems through people. Only through the corruption of people and the separation of people from God does Satan even stand a chance to influence us. The battleground is individual, yet the battlefield is of the mind. This is where *sarx* is able to overcome the conscience of God and produce results that yield outcomes that don’t just suck, they suck supernaturally.

I learned about Satan’s ability to enter one’s thoughts from Bible verses when Christ was ministering to the apostles while predicting

his betrayal in his teaching known as the Upper Room Discourse. In John 13, verses 26–27, it reads, “So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.”

Without question when you are under spiritual attack of the mind, it can be a quite frightful and confusing time for the Christ follower. We often just want to try something to make it stop or will rationalize a motive to push back against the advancement of evil. We are told to be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. And do everything in love.¹³

Unfortunately, evil encounters and even routine, temporary entanglements with the cancel culture paradigm don’t often result in a loving response. There is great evil in this world, and the truth reveals that it can enter people and make them do unspeakable things. Deliverance ministries and exorcisms attempt to remove evil spirits that take up residence within and continue to torment people. We know this from Christ’s own miraculous demon-vanquishing activities. On this side of heaven, documentation associated with the phenomenon of human possession and abject human evil are not difficult to find.

Although reading about these possessions is very interesting, abject human evil is not something that most people will ever encounter or understand. It is the less obvious problem of widespread, subtle, systemic, and structural evil that has the greatest destructive potential upon all of humanity. Being able to recognize when evil is infiltrating societal systems in order to render the greatest possible damage and destruction on society is a much greater concern than the curiosities associated with individual possession.

As rules of the race are modified and morality becomes relative, systemic evil becomes unnoticeable in today’s society, and that is a much more dangerous situation. That leaves us with a couple of preliminary assumptions that require verification before even journeying down such a deep and dark rabbit hole. Answering questions about the existence of evil led to many more questions. Here are

some questions and findings researched from the truth of the Bible regarding the heady topic of the devil and his dominion of darkness:

1. *Does the devil exist?* According to one source, the term Satan is stated in the Bible some fifty-two times,¹⁴ although that source did not disclose from which version of the Bible the figure came from. There are many other terms for Satan that I won't get into at this time, so I'll focus on the terms *Satan*, *devil*, and *evil*. When I queried my Concordance of Nerdness (KJV Excel database of Bible verses) for *Satan* and then for *devil*, these terms came back a combined total of 173 times (Satan=56; devil=117). The term *evil one* came back once in the KJV but *evil* by itself resulted in 768 hits. The term *love* came back 645 times.
2. *Does the devil command a force of demons and how many of them are there?* Yes, millions. Scripture is consistent in that the number of angels is "innumerable" (Hebrews 12:22). This means that the one-third of the demons who rebelled against God¹⁵ by joining Satan had to be a vast number. Given that one-third of the angels of heaven apparently joined Lucifer in his revolt¹⁶ against God and were cast to earth as demons, the number of demons can be calculated algebraically. We know that there were at least 100 million angels remaining in heaven based on the multitude in the vision described in Revelation 5:11, which reads "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." With a third previously cast out of heaven and at least 100 million of God's angels still remaining in heaven, the number of angels who became demons in Satan's revolt would have been roughly 50 million.
3. *How are the demons organized and what power or authority do they have?* The organization of Evil Inc. is only described in bits and pieces. Only God knows how they are organized, but as a mimicker of God, one may expect that Satan would adapt the structure, means, and methods he learned as Lucifer when part of God's inner circle.

Consulting sources created by experts like David Jeremiah, R. C. Sproul, and Tony Evans, one thing that is clear is there is more influence upon human authority structures than mere human beings. There are spiritual influencers all around us.

The spiritual authority of the demonic world is not spelled out in the Bible; however, some people assume that the evil that is often exhibited by people is a result of certain powers and authorities. Through the power of Supernatural Suck, even whole communities can be brought down. Regardless, any power or authority as far as the type of influence and/or the geography or political systems that evil is granted control of must come through God, the ultimate authority in the universe. The Apostle Paul makes several lists of spiritual opponents that may be either demonic or under demonic influence. He refers to rulers, authorities, principalities, thrones, dominions, powers, names, and world forces (Romans 8:38; Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16).¹⁷ My favorite explanation from these glimpses into the spiritual battleground's organizational structure is from Tony Evans who writes:

- A *throne* is a chair of authority. Kings and queens sit on thrones.
- A *dominion* is the territory that is ruled by the authority on the throne.
- A *ruler* is a specific person who occupies a place of authority. Rulers sit on thrones to rule their dominion.
- *Authorities* are the rules, laws, traditions, or sanctions that legitimize the throne.
- Government was instituted after the fall; it is subject to the same spiritual disorders as the rest of creation. Evil people are still responsible for the evil they do; however, we cannot remain blind to the fact that institu-

tional, structural evil is not just accidental or random. There's a plan operating behind the throne.

- Satan seeks to control a community through its institutions. Therefore, human institutions have a spiritual dimension to them. This is why there can be structural evil, systemic evil, corporate evil, as well as individual evil.¹⁸

4. *What is a stronghold and what is a principality?* Not only Evans, but many other spiritual experts agree on what scripture offers. The prince of darkness, Satan, the devil, sometimes has a stronghold on people and sometimes has control of systems and the people in them. Satan builds his strongholds in a community through people and institutions that are influenced by the evil one.¹⁹ We can glean additional information on princes and principalities from the book of Daniel, chapter 10. In that chapter, we learn about the Prince of Persia and the Prince of Grecia. They are powerful. The Prince of Persia succeeds in hindering the advancement of God's plan for Christianity during the time of Daniel by standing in the way of an angel who must be fortified with help from the Archangel Michael.

Daniel 10 indicates the Prince of Persia had at least some significant authority in that principality, especially if he could hinder one of God's angels who gets help from the head angel, Michael. The dark prince over that dominion had spiritual authority to hinder the arrested angel such that reinforcements were needed to overcome the arresting dark powers. They had been hindering the angel's response to a spiritual warfare battle that the prophet Daniel had undertaken. Based on the hermeneutical exegesis of John MacArthur, I agree that the description starts with a Christophany, an encounter with the preincarnate Christ. And that another angel is with Christ, who was hindered

until the Archangel Michael assisted. The angel's assigned purpose was to help Daniel in his spiritual battle, specifically, touch Daniel, strengthen him from the weakness and near-death caused by his fasting and visitation by Christ so that Daniel may complete his prophetic assignment to provide the revelation of the impact of prayer upon the great angelic conflict in the spiritual realm.²⁰

The Prince of Persia had authority in his dominion until the Archangel Michael's additional power and authority released the angel who had been assigned to help Daniel and then return to the battle in the heavenly realms. The biblical evidence indicates there are principalities (overseen by a prince) for which Evil Inc. sometimes has significant authority as determined by God. The logic follows that the Prince of Persia had or has either (or both) a physical territory (a dominion) and possibly certain control over God's rules and laws (an authority) as God so determines. Such limited authority is consistent with how God limited Satan from killing Job as detailed in the book of Job. Greece is mentioned as having another prince in the same chapter, so it makes sense that there are numerous dark princes throughout this world.

According to Gotquestions.com,²¹ the phrase principalities and powers occurs six times in the Bible, always in the King James Version and its derivatives (NKJV, MKJV). Other versions translate it variously as "rulers and authorities," "forces and authorities," and "rulers and powers." In most places, where the phrase appears, the contexts make it clear that it refers to the vast array of evil and malicious spirits who make war against the people of God. The principalities and powers of Satan are usually in view here, beings that wield power in the unseen realms to oppose everything and everyone that is of God.

The one thing I learned from the Book of Truth and what I feel all experts in the faith seem to agree on is *there are demons in this world and lots of them*. There are also