



Considerations
Regarding
the
Demonic

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Considerations Regarding the Demoniac

And Jesus asked him,
“What is your name?”
He replied,
“My name is Legion,
for we are many.”

Cover: Spicules on the sun.
Biblical Texts: American Standard Version(Olive Tree)
The New Jerusalem Bible Online

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The Devil seems to have squirmed out of the “detail” and wound up abroad— as they say. Word Web says the Devil is “an evil supernatural being”. Judeo-Christian and Islamic religion says he, she or it, [to be fair] is the chief spirit of evil and the adversary of God; tempter of mankind and master of Hell. The Devil is evil with a capital D.

Evil according to a Christian worldview is any action, thought, or attitude that is contrary to the character or will of God. This is shown through the law given in both the Old and New Testament. There is no moral action given in the Bible that is contrary to God's character or God's will. (Wikipedia)

The question that comes to mind is how can God have an adversary since the all good; all powerful, all knowing God; Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ; Creator of heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible have an adversary, or even an enemy unless he created evil, as an opposite power to himself. Which, of course, he did not.

Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (James 1:13-15)

“In Judaism, the theological importance of Genesis centers on the covenants linking God to his chosen people and the people

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to the Promised Land. Christianity has interpreted Genesis as the prefiguration of certain cardinal Christian beliefs, primarily the need for salvation (the hope or assurance of all Christians) and the redemptive act of Christ on the Cross as the fulfillment of covenant promises as the Son of God. Tradition credits Moses as the author of Genesis, as well as the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and most of Deuteronomy, but modern scholars increasingly see them as a product of the 6th and 5th centuries BC.” (Wikipedia)

The writer of Genesis had God make one hard and fast rule for his presumably happy-go-lucky creature Adam in the garden he had planted for him in the East called Eden.

“The Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” I guess God felt sorry for the guy taking care of the garden and naming all the animals by himself, so he made him a wife to help him, and they became “one flesh.” (Genesis 2: 15-25)

Enjoying this wonderful mythology literally, we have to assume that Adam must have told his wife about the unique tree when eating of its fruit they would get to know what God knows, the difference between good and evil and as a result become wise— like God. As the narrative continues, there seems to be no existing evil except by eating the proverbial fruit with its accompanying warning. Surely God wasn’t evil, after all, it was he who created everything; the tree isn’t evil; the first couple aren’t evil, the only critically important thing was God’s command not to eat of that particular fruit. It appears as though God wanted them to remain innocent so as not to be victimized with knowledge other than which is good, the good which they had so far only known.

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Now, along came the Serpent, the text continues:

“More subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, ‘Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’ And the woman said unto the serpent, ‘Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die’. And the serpent said unto the woman, ‘Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil’. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons”. (Olive Tree) ASV

If you are a believer in physiological evolution, as most of us are, we surely must have come out of the “animal kingdom”. No need to suppose any further back than that. In an animal state sexual attraction is pretty cut and dried, as far as we know.

“Animal sexual behavior is reproductively motivated, it is often termed mating or copulation; for most non-human mammals, mating and copulation occur at oestrus (the most fertile period in the mammalian female's reproductive cycle), which increases the chances of successful impregnation. Some animal sexual behavior involves competition, sometimes fighting, between multiple males. Females often select males for mating only if they appear strong and able to protect themselves. The

male that wins a fight may also have the chance to mate with a larger number of females and will therefore pass on his genes to their offspring.” (Wikipedia)

“Human sexuality is the way people experience and express themselves sexually. This involves biological, erotic, physical, emotional, social, or spiritual feelings and behaviors. Because it is a broad term, which has varied over time, it lacks a precise definition. The biological and physical aspects of sexuality largely concern the human reproductive functions, including the human sexual response cycle. Someone’s “sexual orientation” can influence that person’s sexual interest and attraction for another person. Physical and emotional aspects of sexuality include bonds between individuals that are expressed through profound feelings or physical manifestations of love, trust, and care. Social aspects deal with the effects of human society on one’s sexuality, while spirituality concerns an individual’s spiritual connection with [God] and others. Sexuality also affects and is affected by cultural, political, legal, philosophical, moral, ethical, and religious aspects of life. (Wikipedia)

It is interesting to note that at the end of the Eden episode, our illustrious couple were aware of the difference in their sexuality, rather than their former “boss-helper” situation. We have often thought that the modern “feminist movement” is meant to even the score. Once their “eyes were opened” innocence was gone. God again feeling sorry for them may have played Oscar De La Renta and helped dress them more comfortably.

Was the anthropomorphic serpent who God made, the “devil,” the literal adversary of God? Or was he a literary symbol representing the inclination in our “original parents” to override God’s command not to eat of the forbidden fruit. The woman

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said she was “beguiled” by him. That surely indicates she might have been on the fence in terms of the choice she herself was faced with in terms of God’s restrictions and simply tempted by the “subtile beast.” Maybe she was more free than God gave her credit for. Her determination to eat the fruit and give some to her husband was entirely her decision, as was his to accept and eat it too. The serpent could not force their “eye opening” judgement, their will had to have been already “free”. In mythological terms then, the “original sin” was committed by the couple after being tempted by a latent desire to be great, if not greater, than their Creator. They may have preferred to forget the fact that there were Godly restrictions even in Eden. Amazing what too much of a good thing can do to the children of God..

To the “tempter,” according to scripture, God said: “Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou 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: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*”(Olive tree)

“Christian theology speaks of “enmity” with regard to the tempter as connected with the Incarnation of Jesus, the “Virgin Birth.” Enmity meaning: “An enemy or a foe is an individual or a group that is verified as forcefully adverse or threatening. The concept of an enemy has been observed to be ‘basic for both individuals and communities’. The term ‘enemy’ serves the social function of designating a particular entity as a threat, thereby invoking an intense emotional response to that entity. The state of being or having an enemy is enmity, foe-hood or foe-ship.” (Webster)

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“The protevangelium is God's statement to the Serpent in the Garden of Eden about how the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head: Protevangelium is a compound word of two Greek words, *protos* meaning ‘first’ and *evangelion* meaning ‘good news’ or ‘gospel’. Thus the protevangelium in Genesis 3:15 is commonly referred to as the first mention of the good news of salvation in the Bible.”

“Strictly speaking, the protevangelium refers to the last part of Genesis 3:15, ‘it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.’ According to H. C. Leupold, this passage uses a *zeugma* in the word ‘bruise’, which may be translated ‘it shall crush thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.’

Because of the grave nature of the context, the fall of man, this passage describes more than just a man stepping on a snake's head. The reference to the seed of the woman as Christ is believed to relate to the Virgin birth of the Messiah, as well as the Hypostatic union of the Divine nature with the Human nature of Christ.”

“Old Testament scholar Derek Kidner (1913-2008) describes the Protevangelium as ‘the first glimmer of the gospel.’ Several of the early Church fathers, such as Justin Martyr (160 AD) and Irenaeus (180 AD), regarded this verse ‘as the Protoevangelium, the first messianic prophecy in the Old Testament.’ (Wikipedia)

We should finish the story from Genesis before getting into further considerations:

“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for

thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them."

"And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever—therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."(Olive Tree): American Standard Version)

Now that man had become an image of God or like God of sorts, knowing the difference between good and evil attributed to the lies of the tempter, he and his wife were kicked out of Eden before they could become more "like God" by taking and eating the fruit of the "tree of life" allowing them "eternal life". A promise Jesus would make seven or six hundred years later states the case. They were to be baptized; love God and one another; keep the Commandments; and by the grace of God in faith avoid temptation regardless of their own propensities towards the "evil" which they all now knew from understanding evil as opposed to good which would gain them everlasting life, a prospect God blocked them from earlier.

*"You are from your father, the devil, and **you prefer to do what your father wants.** He was a murderer from the start; he was never grounded in the truth; there is no truth in him at all.*

When he lies he is speaking true to his nature, because he is a liar, and the father of lie” (John 8:44) NJB

In his public ministry, Jesus helps clear up our understanding of “original-sin”. Those who have tasted of the fruit of the tree of good and evil were prone to believe the lies they were told by the “tempter”—personified by the anachronistic serpent, and other forms of evil which Jesus himself experienced as a man after his baptism. Most often God’s creatures preferred evil as opposed to God’s proto-commandment; Moses’ ten commandments; love for one another with no exceptions; and the love of the Father through himself, Jesus in the Spirit. We were to be made heirs of heaven with Baptism; gain God’s mercy by the remission of sins with Penance, and maintain God’s grace by following Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist enjoined with the Spirit of Truth. This is our faith.

It is probably a good idea to tap Wikipedia once again to fill us in what we may vaguely know about the other religious beliefs contemporaneous with the Israelites in ancient times. A couple of pages should tell the story:

Ancient Mesopotamian Religion:
Morality, virtue, and sin.

“Although ancient paganism tended to focus more on duty and ritual than morality, a number of general moral virtues can be gleaned from surviving prayers and myths. It was believed that man originated as a divine act of creation, and the gods were believed to be the source of life, and held power over sickness and health, as well as the destinies of men. Personal names show that each child was considered a gift from divinity. Man was believed to have been created to serve the gods, or perhaps wait on them: the god is lord (belu) and man is servant or slave (ardu), and was to fear (puluhtu) the gods and have the

appropriate attitude towards them. Duties seem to have been primarily of a cultic and ritual nature, although some prayers express a positive psychological relationship, or a sort of conversion experience in regard to a god. Generally the reward to mankind is described as success and long life.”

“Every man also had duties to his fellow man which had some religious character, particularly the king's duties to his subjects. It was thought that one of the reasons the gods gave power to the king was to exercise justice and righteousness, described as *mēšaru* and *kettu*, literally ‘straightness, rightness, firmness, truth’. Examples of this include not alienating and causing dissension between friends and relatives, setting innocent prisoners free, being truthful, being honest in trade, respecting boundary lines and property rights, and not putting on airs with subordinates. Some of these guidelines are found in the second tablet of the *Šurpu* incantation series.”

“Sin, on the other hand, was expressed by the words *hitu* (mistake, false step), *annu* or *arnu* (rebellion), and *qillatu* (sin or curse), with strong emphasis on the idea of rebellion, sometimes with the idea that sin is man's wishing to “live on his own terms” (*ina ramanisu*). Sin also was described as anything which incited the wrath of the gods. Punishment came through sickness or misfortune, which inevitably lead to the common reference to unknown sins, or the idea that one can transgress a divine prohibition without knowing it—psalms of lamentation rarely mention concrete sins. This idea of retribution was also applied to the nation and history as a whole. A number of examples of Mesopotamian literature show how war and natural disasters were treated as punishment from the gods, and how kings were used as a tool for deliverance.”

“Sumerian myths suggest a prohibition against premarital sex. Marriages were often arranged by the parents of the bride and

groom; engagements were usually completed through the approval of contracts recorded on clay tablets. These marriages became legal as soon as the groom delivered a bridal gift to his bride's father. Nonetheless, evidence suggests that premarital sex was a common, but surreptitious, occurrence. Outside Sumerian society, Mesopotamian religion and culture were highly sexualized, more so in Babylonia than Assyria, where free sexual expression was viewed as one of the natural benefits of civilized life—same gender attraction, transgender individuals, and male and female prostitution were tolerated, and in some cases considered sacred. The worship of Inanna/Ishtar, which was prevalent in Mesopotamia could involve wild, frenzied dancing and bloody ritual celebrations of social and physical abnormality. It was believed that ‘nothing is prohibited to Inanna’, and that by depicting transgressions of normal human social and physical limitations, including traditional gender definition, one could cross over from the ‘conscious everyday world into the trance world of spiritual ecstasy.’”

Afterlife:

“The ancient Mesopotamians believed in an afterlife that was a land below our world. It was this land, known alternately as Arallû, Ganzer or Irkallu, the latter of which meant ‘Great Below’, that it was believed everyone went to after death, irrespective of social status or the actions performed during life. Unlike Christian Hell, the Mesopotamians considered the underworld neither a punishment nor a reward. Nevertheless, the condition of the dead was hardly considered the same as the life previously enjoyed on earth: they were considered merely weak and powerless ghosts. The myth of Ishtar's descent into the underworld relates that ‘dust is their food and clay their nourishment, they see no light, where they dwell in darkness.’ Stories such as the Adapa myth resignedly relate that, due to a

blunder, all men must die and that true everlasting life is the sole property of the gods.” (Wikipedia)

It's not difficult to see some of the similarities and major differences between Abraham, our father in faith and his contemporaries. To make some sense in our conclusion we need to pick up a few thoughts again from Wikipedia. Although not perfect, they seem to be less biased and more erudite than many others which we have scanned and books we have read with DRM restrictions that can't be swiped. This gyp is from Wikipedia under the titles of “Demonology” and “Demon.”

Demonology

“The study of demons or beliefs about demons, especially the methods used to summon and control them is called Demonology. The original sense of ‘demon’, from the time of Homer onward, was a benevolent being, but in English the name now holds connotations of malevolence. Demons, when regarded as spirits, may belong to either of the classes of spirits recognized by primitive animism. That is to say, they may be human, or non-human, separable souls, or discarnate spirits which have never inhabited a body. A sharp distinction is often drawn between these two classes, notably by the Melanesians, several African groups, and others. The Islamic jinn, for example, are not reducible to modified human souls. At the same time these classes are frequently conceived as producing identical results, e.g. diseases.”

Prevalence of demons

“According to some societies, all the affairs of life are supposed to be under the control of spirits, each ruling a certain ‘element’ or even object, and themselves in subjection to a greater spirit. For example, the Inuit are said to believe in

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spirits of the sea, earth and sky, the winds, the clouds and everything in nature. Every cove of the seashore, every point, every island and prominent rock has its guardian spirit. All are potentially of the malignant type, to be propitiated by an appeal to knowledge of the supernatural. Traditional Korean belief posits countless demons inhabit the natural world; they fill household objects and are present in all locations. By the thousands they accompany travelers, seeking them out from their places in the elements.”

“In ancient Babylon, demonology had an influence on even the most mundane elements of life, from petty annoyances to the emotions of love and hatred. The numerous demonic spirits were given charge over various parts of the human body, one for the head, one for the neck, and so on.”

“Greek philosophers such as Porphyry, who claimed influence from Platonism, and the fathers of the Christian Church, held that the world was pervaded with spirits, the latter of whom advanced the belief that demons received the worship directed at pagan gods.”

Modern interpretations

“Psychologist Wilhelm Wundt remarked that ‘among the activities attributed by myths all over the world to demons, the harmful predominate, so that in popular belief bad demons are clearly older than good ones.’ Sigmund Freud developed this idea and claimed that the concept of demons was derived from the important relation of the living to the dead: ‘The fact that demons are always regarded as the spirits of those who have died recently shows better than anything the influence of mourning on the origin of the belief in demons.’”

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“M. Scott Peck,(1936-2005) an American psychiatrist, wrote two books on the subject, *People of the Lie: The Hope For Healing Human Evil* and *Glimpses of the Devil: A Psychiatrist's Personal Accounts of Possession, Exorcism, and Redemption*. Peck describes in some detail several cases involving his patients. In *People of the Lie* he provides identifying characteristics of an evil person, whom he classified as having a character disorder. In *Glimpses of the Devil* Peck goes into significant detail describing how he became interested in exorcism in order to debunk the myth of possession by evil spirits – only to be convinced otherwise after encountering two cases which did not fit into any category known to psychology or psychiatry. Peck came to the conclusion that possession was a rare phenomenon related to evil and that possessed people are not actually evil; rather, they are doing battle with the forces of evil.”

“Although Peck's earlier work was met with widespread popular acceptance, his work on the topics of evil and possession has generated significant debate and derision. Much was made of his association with (and admiration for) the controversial Malachi Martin, a Roman Catholic priest and a former Jesuit, despite the fact that Peck consistently called Martin a liar and a manipulator. Richard Woods, a Roman Catholic priest and theologian, has claimed that Dr. Peck misdiagnosed patients based upon a lack of knowledge regarding dissociative identity disorder (formerly known as multiple personality disorder) and had apparently transgressed the boundaries of professional ethics by attempting to persuade his patients into accepting Christianity. Father Woods admitted that he has never witnessed a genuine case of demonic possession in all his years.

According to Professor S. N. Chiu, a Hong Kong baptist God is shown sending a demon against Saul in 1 Samuel 16 and 18 in order to punish him for the failure to follow God's instructions, showing God as having the power to use demons for his own

purposes, putting the demon under his divine authority. According to the Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, demons, despite being typically associated with evil, are often shown to be under divine control, and not acting of their own devices.”

Our favorite example of divine control of the devil is from the Book of Job written about the sixth Century BCE Job 1:6 says:

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘**From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.**’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?’ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.” (NJB)

So here is God making a deal with Satan obviously knowing more about Job’s persistence than did the “Prince of Darkness.” The writer of Job uses the devil to prove his scriptural point to us.

Jesus also used the devil to reiterate what the Old Testament had already said. The gospel of Luke tells the story of the temptations of Christ just after his agreeable baptism by John in the Jordan.:

“Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for forty days being put to the test by the devil. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry.”

“Then the devil said to him, ‘If you are Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.’ But Jesus replied, ‘Scripture says: Human beings live not on bread alone.’”

“Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, ‘I will give you all this power and their splendor, for it has been handed over to me to give to anyone I choose. Do homage, then, to me, and it shall be all yours.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘You must do homage to the Lord your God, him alone you must serve.’

“Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on a parapet of the Temple. ‘If you are Son of God,’ he said to him, ‘throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: ‘He has given his angels orders about you to guard you’ and again: ‘they will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’

“Having exhausted every way of putting him to the test, the devil left him, until the opportune moment.”

“The story of the Temptation of Jesus is the Lucan way of explaining the importance of steadfastness and obedience to God. If you are somewhat superstitious, and take the words of Luke literally you can imagine a wily, animal-looking character, finding a hot and bewildered Jesus stumbling around in the desert looking for shade and comfort. Knowing of his weakness, Satan offers him what would be more than satisfying to his physical needs. Making quick-spirited trips to a high mountain" then a parapet in Jerusalem, the devil is thwarted in

his attempts to coerce the Son of God to pay homage to him. The story is complete in its emphasis on being faithful, and doing diligence to God by using references to the words of Psalm 91, Deuteronomy 8, v-J, and Deuteronomy 6, vv 13 and 16.”

If you are more curious than superstitious and tuned to the workings of your own mind, you are fully aware of the dynamics between good and evil as being a condition of human development through evolution.”

“Both Luke and Matthew take you to situations in the Old Testament which emphasize God's revelations to the Israelites. (Deut, 8:3) has us intelligently understand that God is known by human beings (a priori) and we do not simply live by (bread alone), that is, physically eating, but also by the spirit which is our life, our soul.

In Deut. 6: 13, we are taught that to love our Creator God is the essence of all law, and that we should not treat the love of ‘earthly’ possessions as a substitute for the love of God.

In (Ps. 91) the story tells us of God's promise of protection for those who seek him, even under the most trying natural circumstances. Finally, Deut, 6: 16 admonishes us not to test God's goodness by refusing his grace. It warns that our stubbornness and laziness could be the cause of our own spiritual suicide.”

“Whether or not this wilderness event ever historically took place is irrelevant, as with Job. What is most relevant is that the teachings of Jesus, the man; and Christ the Son of God, are made known to those who read the texts either literally or metaphorically. To paraphrase the famous saying of Walt Kelly’s “Pogo”: “We have met the enemy and he is us.” One can say, whichever way you read the texts the message is loud and clear. Psalm 95 dumps it right in our laps when it says:

‘If only you would listen to him today.’” (*Wrestling Grace*, an essay: F Arundell) <<http://renovabis.com>> Library.

The Lord fashioned human beings from the earth, to consign them back to it.

He gave them so many days and so much time, he gave them authority over everything on earth.

He clothed them in strength, like himself, and made them in his own image.

He filled all living things with dread of human beings, making them masters over beasts and birds.

He made them a tongue, eyes and ears, and gave them a heart to think with.

He filled them with knowledge and intelligence, and showed them what was good and what evil. He put his own light in their hearts to show them the magnificence of his works, so that they would praise his holy name as they told of his magnificent works.

He set knowledge before them, he endowed them with the law of life.

He established an eternal covenant with them, and revealed his judgements to them.

Their eyes saw the majesty of his glory, and their ears heard the glory of his voice. He said to them, ‘Beware of all wrongdoing’; he gave each a commandment concerning his neighbor. Their ways are always under his eye, they cannot be hidden from his sight

(Sir 17:1-15): (NJB)

This wonderful passage from Ecclesiasticus tells us the whole, concise story of God’s involvement with his earth and his creatures. Based on the order in creation, in our opinion, it would be difficult for even the most secular physicist or erudite philosopher to categorically deny the veracity or perhaps the “latency” of these words in scientific terms.

“The Book of the All-Virtuous Wisdom of Yeshua ben Sira, [commonly called the Wisdom of Sirach and also known as the Book of Ecclesiasticus] is a work of ethical teachings, from approximately 200 to 175 BCE, written by the Jewish scribe Ben Sira of Jerusalem, on the inspiration of his father Joshua son of Sirach, sometimes called Jesus son of Sirach or Yeshua ben Eliezer ben Sira.”

“In Egypt, it was translated into Greek by the author's unnamed grandson, who added a prologue. This prologue is generally considered the earliest witness to a canon of the books of the prophets, and thus the date of the text is the subject of intense scrutiny. The book itself is the largest wisdom book from antiquity to have survived.” (Wikipedia)

We will gyp a few more verses from the gospels where Jesus is “conversing” with demons:

Matt. 8:28 “And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, ‘What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?’ Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, ‘If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.’ And he said to them, ‘Go.’ So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.”(NJB)

Luke 4:33 “In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean devil, and he shouted at the top of his voice, ‘Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.’ But Jesus rebuked it, saying, ‘*Be quiet! Come out of him!*’ And the devil, throwing the man into the middle, went out of him without hurting him at all. Astonishment seized them and they were all saying to one another, ‘What is it in his words? He gives orders to unclean spirits with authority and power and they come out.’ And the news of him travelled all through the surrounding countryside.(NJB)

Trusty Word Web tells us that a demon is a “supernatural evil spirit.” Cambridge dictionary leaves out “supernatural” and just says “an evil spirit.” There is a list of over a hundred demons from Aamon to Ziminiar in Wikipedia, you may be amused at their pedigree.

Vatican II Post Conciliar Documents

Vatican II is very well documented and in this computer age mostly everything is available online. The two volume Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents by Austin Flannery OP, Revised Edition 1992, was published before the New Catechism (1994). In volume II, Section 5, Current Problems, 108, is *Christian Faith and Demonology*. It is beautifully written and easy to read. We can’t give you the whole thing, but we will swipe a few pertinent paragraphs:

INTRODUCTION:

“The many forms of superstition, obsessional preoccupation with Satan and the demons, and the different kinds of worship of them or attachment to them have always been condemned by the Church. It would therefore be incorrect to hold that Christianity, forgetful of the universal Lordship of Christ, had

at any time made Satan the privileged subject of its preaching, transforming the Good News of the Risen Lord into a message of terror. Speaking to the Christians of Antioch, Saint John Chrysostom declared: “It certainly gives us no pleasure to speak to you of the devil, but the teaching which this subject gives me the opportunity to expound is of the greatest use to you.” In fact it would be an unfortunate error to act as if history had already been accomplished and the Redemption had obtained all its effects, without there being any further need to conduct the combat spoken of by the New Testament and the masters of the spiritual life.”

“Satan, whom Jesus had confronted by his exorcisms, whom he had encountered in the desert and in his Passion, cannot be simply the product of the human faculty of inventing fables and personifying ideas, nor can he be an erroneous relic of a primitive cultural language”.

“Paul never identifies sin with Satan. In fact he sees in sin first of all what it essentially is, a personal act of men, and also the state of guilt and blindness which Satan seeks effectively to cast them into and keep them in. Thus he makes a clear distinction between one and the other, between Satan and sin”.

“It is in effect the Book of Revelation which by revealing the enigma of the different names and symbols of Satan in Scripture definitively unmasks his identity. He is active in all the centuries of human history, under the eye of God”.

...“The Fathers of the Church, convinced from Scripture that Satan and the demons are the adversaries of the Redemption, have not failed to remind the faithful of their existence and activity”.

“Patristic teaching substantially and faithfully echoed the doctrine and directives of the New Testament”.

“The existence of demonic reality and the affirmation of its power are based not only on these more specific documents, but they find further expression, in more general and less rigid

terms, in Conciliar statements whenever they describe the condition of man without Christ.”

“It is to faith in fact that the Apostle Saint Peter leads us back when he exhorts us to resist the devil, “strong in faith”. Faith teaches us that the reality of evil “*is a living spiritual being, perverted and corrupting*”. Faith can also give us confidence, by assuring us that the power of Satan cannot go beyond the limits set by God. Faith likewise assures us that even though the devil is able to tempt us he cannot force our consent. Above all, faith opens the heart to prayer, in which it finds its victory and its crown. It thus enables us to triumph over evil through the power of God.

“It certainly remains true that the demonic reality attested to in the concrete by what we call the mystery of Evil, remains an enigma surrounding the Christian life. We scarcely know any better than the Apostles knew why the Lord permits it, nor how he makes it serve his designs. It could be however that, in our civilization obsessed with secularism that excludes the transcendent, the unexpected outbreaks of this mystery offer a meaning less alien to our understanding. They force man to look further and higher, beyond the immediate evidence. Through their menace which stops us short they enable us to grasp that there exists a beyond which has to be deciphered, and then to turn to Christ in order to hear from him the Good News of salvation graciously offered to us”.

“Christian teaching makes no concessions in vigorously defending the freedom and the greatness of man and in emphasizing the omnipotence and goodness of the Creator. *It has condemned in the past and will always condemn the too easy use of temptation by the devil as an excuse. It has forbidden superstition just as much as magic.* It refused to capitulate doctrinally in the face of fatalism or to diminish freedom in the face of pressure. What is more, when a possible demonic intervention is suggested, the Church always imposes

a critical assessment of the facts, the same as in the case of miracles. Reserve and prudence are in fact demanded. It is easy to fall victim to imagination and to allow oneself to be led astray by inaccurate accounts distorted in their transmission and incorrectly interpreted. In these cases therefore, as elsewhere, one must exercise discernment. And one must leave room for research and its findings”. (Vatican II Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Austin Flannery OP, 1982)

The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church

On April 23, 1993 The Pontifical Biblical Commission presented a report to Pope John Paul II titled: The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church. In its preface it stated: “The study of the Bible is, as it were, the soul of theology, as the Second Vatican Council says, borrowing a phrase from Pope Leo XIII (*Dei Verbum*, 24). This study is never finished; each age must in its own way newly seek to understand the sacred books.”

“The church, as the people of God, is aware that it is helped by the Holy Spirit in its understanding and interpretation of Scripture. The first disciples of Jesus knew that they did not have the capacity right away to understand the full reality of what they had received in all its aspects. As they persevered in their life as a community, they experienced an ever-deepening and progressive clarification of the revelation they had received. They recognized in this the influence and the action of “the Spirit of truth,” which Christ had promised them to guide them to the fullness of the truth (Jn. 16:12-13). The Church today journeys onward, sustained by the promises of Christ”.

“The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will make you recall all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26).

What it possibly comes down to is that demons may be names or personifications given to every Anti-God i.e. (“against the good”) sentiment that human beings can imagine. Evil with a capital “D” stands for Devil. That doesn’t mean demons or devils don’t exist, it simply means “demon” may be synonymous with the evil that is perceived, *the anti-good*. An evil person could very well be a “devil” unto himself or herself. In case you haven’t noticed, our spirit, (our life), is pulled in two directions, to do “the good” and the temptation to do the not-good. We can be either virtuous or sinful because our will is always free. The original sin, or should we say the original *lie* which beguiled Eve can easily beguile us all if we are continuously acting against the will of God. A habitually evil person may very well be demonic, a real live demon. Hitler and Stalin come to mind. Most of us know we are not perfect beings. When we crossed the threshold from brain to mind we began to understand pure Perfection lies beyond ourselves. The Perfection many of us are trying to unite with. Without that Perfection life would be teleologically hopeless. This only became graciously available after the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, through the grace of God in the Spirit.

“You must therefore be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matt 5:48)

The “believer” must at least make an effort. The “unbeliever” must, in good conscience, seek the whole truth against an ever increasing relativist tide of a lie infested weltanschauung. We are seeing it every day in the common life all over the world. Much of the world is at war with the Perfect, and particularly with Christ Jesus. It was to be expected, it was prefigured in Genesis.

John 15:18 *“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would*

love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. (NJB)

The Northam Affair

“[Third trimester abortions are] done in cases where there may be severe deformities. There may be a fetus that's nonviable. So in this particular example, if a mother is in labor, I can tell you exactly what would happen,” “The infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired. And then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother.” (Governor Ralph Northam D: Virginia)

One wonders what made the Governor not complete this statement? [If the mother decides in the negative, the infant would be euthanized] by agreeing physicians like himself we presume. Perhaps it made him a bit uncomfortable that an imperfect infant was too troublesome for its mother to care for. It is also possible that his Christian faith (Southern Baptist) may have resulted in a guilty conscience. Though the bill did not pass (by a slim margin) in the Virginia assembly, as it did in New York (to applause), the reality in our opinion, may be looked at in only two ways after the baby has left the birth canal: As “infanticide” or as premeditated “murder of a person”

Physician-assisted death or “aid in dying,” not infanticide, is legal in eight jurisdictions in the United States: California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington, But is not lawful in the state of Virginia, so far. In 2009, A Texas representative Jessica Farrar, proposed legislation that would define infanticide as a distinct

and lesser crime than homicide. Under the terms of the proposed legislation, if the jurors conclude that a mother's "judgment was impaired as a result of the effects of giving birth or the effects of lactation following the birth" they would be allowed to convict her of the crime of "infanticide" rather than murder. The maximum penalty for infanticide would be two years in prison.

As for Governor Northam, he may be called out for racial transgressions by appearing in "black-face" in his younger days, an indiscretion which is not illegal; but for all intents and purposes, he is a pillar of the community.

He graduated from Onancock High School, where his class was predominately African American. In high school, Northam was voted "Most Likely to Succeed" and graduated as salutatorian. He was a member of his school's basketball and baseball teams. He graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1981, where he served as president of VMI's honor court and received a bachelor's degree in biology. He went on to Eastern Virginia Medical School, earning his MD degree in 1984. From 1984 to 1992 he served as a United States Army medical officer. During his Army service, he completed a pediatric residency at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, followed by a child neurology fellowship at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC and Johns Hopkins Hospital. During Operation Desert Storm, he treated evacuated casualties at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Northam left the US Army in 1992 at the rank of major, having completed eight years of service. Since 1992 Northam has been a pediatric neurologist at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Norfolk, Virginia. On November 5, 2013, Northam was elected as Virginia's 40th Lieutenant Governor. Northam was the first Democrat since Tim Kaine in 2001 to be elected

Lieutenant Governor of Virginia. Just over a year into his term as lieutenant governor, Northam confirmed his interest in running for Governor of Virginia in 2017. Northam held campaign rallies with former President Barack Obama and former Vice President Joe Biden during the general election campaign.

He was elected 73rd Governor of Virginia on November 7, 2017, with a larger-than-expected margin of victory.

We have not calculated how many people in America favor “late term” abortions or even infanticide (killing) of a newly born human being imperfect or perfect. There seems to be quite a clear distinction between those who favor unlimited abortion and those who are willing to accept *Roe v Wade* as “settled law,” because it has not been overturned. The divide, for the most part, shows up in our party politics. Many of the Progressives and Socialists favor abortion without limits. Most Conservatives do not. In fact many wish to see *Roe* overturned. Governor Northam is obviously one of those governors favoring unrestricted access to abortion.

This situation gives us an opportunity to appraise the governor’s character regarding the subject of this essay. Most of us know that to be a politician one needs to be a master of subtlety. We’ve often thought maybe that’s why most politicians are lawyers. They often seem to be “walking on eggs.” Care is always taken never to appear to be manipulating the law, yet doing that, “subtly,” is usually a mark of their success. As a physician, the governor took the Hippocratic oath. It requires a new physician to uphold specific ethical standards.

“Though abortion is a divisive issue, more than half of US adults take a non-absolutist position, saying that in most – but not all – cases, abortion should be legal (34%) or illegal (22%).

Considerations Regarding the Demonic

Fewer take the position that in all cases abortion should be either legal (25%) or illegal (15%). About six-in-ten white evangelical Protestants (61%) think abortion should be illegal in all or most cases.”

“By contrast, 74% of religiously unaffiliated Americans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, as do two-thirds of white mainline Protestants” (67%)”.

“Catholics are somewhat more divided; 51% say abortion should be legal in all or most cases and 42% say it should be illegal”.

(Pew Polling Organization: 2018)

“Writing for the majority in *Roe*, Justice Harry Blackmun claimed to find in the 14th Amendment an *implicit right* to abortion, when it said the state must not deprive a person of liberty without due process of law. That argument has been soundly refuted many times. But Blackmun’s most egregious errors occurred when he addressed the fetus’ personhood and humanity.”

“Texas (the defendant in this case) argued that the human fetus is a person and so deserves equal protection of the law, provided by laws banning abortion. Significantly, Blackmun admitted, “*If this suggestion of personhood is established, then the case against striking down the abortion laws collapses.*” However, he then argued that the word “person” is neither defined, nor used to refer to fetuses as persons in the Constitution, and so human fetuses are (he concluded) not persons in the Constitutional sense”. (Dr. Patrick Lee: *Legatus Magazine*, Sep. 2016)

The question that must be asked is this:

Considerations Regarding the Dæmonic

Is the “newly born,” a person outside of the birthing process *alive*, perfect or imperfect, **a person**?

For thinking, reasonable people, forgetting about religious convictions the answer is irrevocably YES! The constitution immediately follows with:

...nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law;...

We grant that a state could make a law that states: a mother and a few doctors legitimately could determine the life or death of a helpless, legitimate person if the people and their politicians agree, such as the “infanticide” bill suggested by Rep.Farrar of Texas. We would still tend to call that act premeditated murder, but are not equipped to recommend a sentence. Even if Roe is overturned as constitutional law under the fourteenth amendment, it will be up to the states to pursue banning the barbaric practices which have grown up around the original mistake in Roe.

The Summa Theologica delineates St. Thomas Aquinas’s opinion on the moral status of the embryo or fetus and the act of abortion. His discussion of sin, morality, and murder indicates his views on the development of life within the womb. These sections show that Aquinas believed in the progression of life from a “vegetable”-like, unanimated state to an animal life and finally to a human, animated state. Summa Theologica offers no defense of abortion as a permissible act at any stage in the pregnancy, but it does specify that once the fetus has become animated (when he believed ensoulment of the living human being took place), it is homicide to kill it. This measure of ensoulment or delayed hominization (the belief that the embryo or fetus was not a human life with a soul until a particular event after conception) is typically equated with the stage at which quickening took place—defined by

Aristotle as forty days for boys and eighty days after conception for girls.

It is the concept of delayed hominization that seemingly pits these comments of St. Thomas Aquinas against the modern Roman Catholic Church; when it comes to ensoulment, the Church now defends the position that an embryo is infused with a human soul upon fertilization,(Pius IX) making any intentionally procured abortion a sin of murder (because it kills a living being with a human soul). St. Thomas Aquinas's opinion on abortion and fetal development receives much attention from people on both sides of the debate over abortion. Typically, pro-choice advocates claim that Aquinas's position shows an inconsistency in Church belief throughout history on the topic and a defensible option for pro-choice Catholics, while pro-life advocates point out that Aquinas never discusses abortion as an acceptable option and furthermore would most likely not have maintained his delayed hominization theory had he been privy to the marvels of modern science.

Perhaps before he had a chance to clarify his writings on the matter, St. Thomas Aquinas declared he would write no more. On 6 December 1273 he reportedly experienced a long episode of ecstasy during Mass, and later said that such things had been revealed to him that his previous writings seemed nothing in comparison. He immediately began preparing himself for his death, which took place on 7 March 1274. Aquinas was canonized on 18 July 1323 by Pope John XXII. Pope Pius V declared him a Doctor of the Catholic Church in 1567 and his importance to Catholic Church doctrine was cemented during Pope Leo XIII's reign, when St. Thomas Aquinas was celebrated in Aeterni Patris and named the patron of all Catholic educational institutions worldwide.

(The Embryo Project Encyclopedia: Arizona State University: By Katherine Brind'Amour Published: 2007-11-11)

Pope Pius IX challenged the canonical tradition about the beginning of ensouled life set by Pope Gregory XIV in 1591. He believed that while it may not be known when ensoulment occurs, there was the possibility that it happens at conception. Believing it was morally safer to follow this conclusion, he thought all life should be protected from the start of conception. In 1869 he removed the labels of “animated” fetus and “unanimated” fetus and concluded that abortions at any point of gestation were punishable by excommunication. While excommunication was used to punish those who procured abortions, it was not extended to those who used contraception. (*The Embryo Project Encyclopedia*: Arizona State University:

Conclusion:

We have used Governor Northam in this writing as representative of more than fifty percent of the American public who believe with Northam’s views (more or less) that some sort of abortion is acceptable in today’s relativist, worldwide culture. It is possible in this post-modern scientific age that *the lie* has become the most handy tool for much of society in which God is replaced by a “reasonable” facsimile such as Secular Humanism, Atheism or Cultic Individualism, giving people *the right* to feel secure *only* in their personal judgements. The mistaken idea of absolute personal freedom for every single individual loosens any ties to a Deity whom they believe can never be proven empirically or plainly does not exist. This tends to have like thinkers form collectives, (birds of a feather) where their talented, powerful, and lie oriented members become the leaders based on fanciful philosophies such as Karl Marx and others have proposed. This we believe is what has happened to most of the democrat-party in the United States. Generally, it seems to foster a monolithic government and authoritarian-unionism which belies the claim

of the falsified “freebee” individualism they promise. Has anybody ever thought this lie infested generation could be diabolic?

It is entirely possible that this constitutional government “of the people” could relinquish their sovereign power to a huge central government which lies by promising anything to stay in power but rarely delivers on what it promises. In fact, to keep growing a monolith of elites it can’t deliver. It needs victims to stay in power so it can keep promising. The illegal entry of more and more victims from corrupted foreign states gives them the perfect opportunity to politic for open borders and by lying, call it American charity. Many on the left have finally told the truth. What they have sought since Eugene V. Debs (1855-1926) is Socialism. Depending on how many victims the lie can encourage, the republic of the founders could easily become a Democratic-Socialist State in which the lie would have triumphed along with the destruction of the Constitution.

To show how deep into the lie we’ve gone, from zygote to birth, and lately even after birth, Dr. Northam and more than half of the American public prefer to believe that what has been fertilized with the gift of life is an “unperson” and may be destroyed at will, even for convenience This is demonic!

“If someone asks whether the devil is a person, we would probably have to answer more accurately that he is the Unperson, the disintegration and collapse of personhood, and that is why he characteristically appears without a face and why his being unrecognizable is his real strength. In any case, the fact remains that this ‘in between’ is a real power, or, more precisely, a collection of powers and not just the sum of human selves. The category of the ‘in between’, which thus helps us to understand in a new way the nature of the devil, performs yet another, parallel service: it enables us to explain better the real

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contrary power that has likewise become ever more foreign to Western theology: the Holy Spirit. From this perspective, we could say: He is that “In between” in which the Father and the Son are one as the one God; in the power of this ‘In between’, the Christian confronts that demonic ‘in between’ which ‘interferes’ everywhere and obstructs unity.”

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, (Benedict XVI) in his book written in 2005 and re-issued in 2011 by Ignatius Press: *Dogma and Preaching*, Ch. 15, pg. 204: Farewell to the Devil?

Ash Wednesday: Psalm 50(51):3-6,12-14,17

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.
Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
And cleanse me from my sin.