

A landscape painting showing a range of brown, rocky mountains under a sky with soft, yellowish and greenish clouds. The foreground is filled with dry, golden-brown grass and some small trees.

WHERE DID EVIL COME FROM?

A COSMIC CONFLICT

TRY JESUS COURSE BOOK 05

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve their existence. The other is to believe and feel an unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors.”

C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*



“THRILL KILLING” IN QUEENSLAND

05 — WHERE DID EVIL COME FROM?

Two teenage girls selected and stalked a New Zealand tourist in Noosa’s National Park, Queensland, Australia, to carry out a carefully-planned “thrill killing”. They bashed and stabbed a 59-year-old grandmother as she walked the park’s tracks. One of the girls had had a long-held desire to kill someone and was surprised and disappointed that she hadn’t succeeded. When she was told by the police that she had stabbed the lady more than 22 times, she replied, “Cool”. The girl said she thought it was “cool” watching blood spurt from the victim. It’s alleged that they were involved in some sort of satanic cult. This is just one of many similar bizarre stories that have been appearing in our news media over the years.

Social analyst **George Barna**, in a recent USA study

among **self – described Christians**, found that almost six out of ten (59%) believe that Satan “is a symbol of evil,” not a real person, while 8% weren’t sure.

Yet surprisingly, 64% believe that a person can be under the influence of demons or evil spirits. This included about half (47%) of the Christians who believed that Satan is merely a symbol of evil. Barna considers Hollywood has made evil accessible and tame.

Although not translated into lifestyle change, 76% believed that “a person must either side with God or with the devil – that there is no in-between position.”

The Bible very clearly teaches that the Devil is a real person in a cosmic conflict with Christ, involving us, that will influence our destiny for eternity.

Three Groups Involved in Satanism

Dr Edward Ogden, a police forensic doctor, said he sees three broad groups involved in satanism, with some overlapping.

1 First, those who are playing satanic rituals as a part of their extended play fantasies. “They read some books about medieval sorcery and witchcraft and have ceremonies with black candles, not as a result of deep conviction. This is kid’s play - pseudo cults.” (continues next page)

Others warn that many of those who do dabble in this type of behaviour find more than they anticipated.

Teenager John Birdo was one such person. He borrowed some books from the library, set up a witches cult and almost sacrificed his mate in a witchcraft initiation ceremony. "I would've only done it in one action," he said. "I would've knifed him without even thinking about it." What started as a bit of fun with ouija boards and seances, ended with witches, satanic cult rituals and eventually a horrific sacrifice of sheep and a suicide. It doesn't always stay as kid's play.

2 The second group are people who are inherently either evil or criminal whose primary interest is abusing children, not the worship of Satan. They use some magical satanic-type ceremonies, which are borrowed from a book or film.

Sergeant Ray Carrol, who investigates child exploitation cases, said there was "extreme danger" in teenagers being drawn into the occult and devil worship as they became easier prey for "manipulators." He said these people were "expert" in manipulating teenagers.



who are "committed satanists philosophically, as a lifestyle. These people actually worship Satan as the antithesis of good." It is this group, Dr Ogden said, that "is of real concern.... What I don't know is the dimensions of the problem."

Ritual Abuse

The great concern is ritual abuse. Dr Ogden says United States evidence shows that perpetrators are respectable people - doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, businessmen, priests. The "cults don't want drop-outs or criminal types who are going to increase the chance of their exposure."

A psychiatrist, who treats abused children, says that most perpetrators are not psychotic, but they have no conscience about hurting others, particularly children. Both Dr Ogden and the psychiatrist said they became concerned because of their contact with victims of ritual abuse.

"These are some of the most hurt and devastated people I've ever seen," said Dr Ogden.

He said that criminal cults are providing an environment for "evil" people to carry out disgusting, bizarre and unacceptable acts. "One of the obstacles in pursuing the leaders of these cults in court was that the offences were often so bizarre, people had difficulty believing them," he said.

If God made only good beings, where did evil come from? If God is who He is, why does He allow such things to happen? Someone has said: "God is either all powerful and uncaring or He is caring but not all powerful."

While in this life we'll never fully comprehend the problem of evil, God has told us enough to show that it wasn't because He didn't care, or because He wasn't powerful enough to do anything about it.

(Revelation 12:7-9, page 873; Genesis 3:1-6, page 2), tempted Eve and caused all the evil in this world. The question is, from where did the devil come? This Bible guide is about the origin of evil and what God has done and is doing about it.

When God created this world it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31, page 1). But the serpent, the devil

Rebellion in Heaven

1. What picture do we get from the book of Revelation about a revolt in heaven? Who rebelled and was thrown out of heaven? Revelation 12:1-9 (page 873 in NIV Bible: International Bible Society, 00195)
That ancient serpent called the _____, or _____, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his _____ with him.
2. The title "Morning Star" [translated "Lucifer" in Latin Vulgate] was the name of the devil before he rebelled in heaven. What position did the prophet Isaiah (about 750 BC) say he wanted? Isaiah 14:12-15 (page 493)
I will make myself _____ the _____ High [God].
3. Ezekiel, a prophet of God (about 600 BC), used the king of Tyre to symbolise Lucifer. What position did Lucifer have in heaven? Ezekiel 28:11-14 (page 607)
You were anointed as a _____.

Moses, after the Exodus out of Egypt, was told by God to make a sanctuary (like a tent) so God could dwell among the Israelites. It had two rooms—the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Inside the Most Holy Place was a wooden box covered with gold, named the "ark". On top of it there were two images of angels called **cherubim** (the 'im' ending is plural in Hebrew). The glory of God's presence above the ark lit up the sanctuary. The ark went missing at the time Babylon conquered Jerusalem in 605 BC. The movie *The Raiders of the Lost Ark* was a fictitious account of the search for this ark. The Most Holy Place represented the throne room of God in heaven. Lucifer, as an anointed cherub, had a place next to God before he rebelled.



4. What was the SIN of Lucifer? Ezekiel 28:15-17 (page 607)

Your heart became _____ on account of your beauty, and you _____ your wisdom because of your splendour.

In Ezekiel the anointed cherub is pictured as becoming proud of his beauty. Lucifer, given free will, chose to turn his affections inward upon himself rather than outward upon the Creator. The gift of free will would have been meaningless if it were impossible for any of the millions of angels to abuse this gift.

5. What do the names “Satan” and “devil” mean?

“**Satan**” means “**adversary**” or “**enemy**”, and “**Devil**” means “**slanderer**”. Instead of making God first in his affections, Lucifer centred them on himself. Pride led him to want God's position, and thus Lucifer, “the Morning Star,” became Satan, “the adversary.”

The only way he could attempt to win the throne of God was by misrepresenting God. This was his strategy in Eden and also in his temptations of Jesus in the desert (Genesis 2, page 2; Matthew 4, page 682). This gives us insight into what must have been his method in heaven. He implied that God was unjust and was keeping good things from the angels.



Why Didn't God Destroy Satan?

6. How do you feel about the fact that God didn't destroy Satan straight away? How does the following text help us understand why He did not? 1 John 4:7-12 (page 863)

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is _____.

Imagine a good king whose general is jealous of him. He spreads vicious rumours around that the king is really a tyrant who wants to enslave all his subjects. The king finds out about this. What do you think the king's subjects would think if the king immediately executed the general? Wouldn't they be tempted to think, "Maybe the general was right" and to serve the king from fear? God wants us to serve Him because of love, not because of fear.

Cosmic Conflict

7. Christians during the first century suffered a lot of persecution. In what way does the Bible suggest that this is a cosmic or universal conflict? 1 Corinthians 4:9 (page 808)

For it seems to me that God has put us apostles [messengers] on _____ at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the _____. We have been made a _____ to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men.

The illustration is that of a Roman amphitheatre where prisoners were led out to die in the arena. Men had to fight against wild beasts, or to cut one another to pieces, as spectator sport for the people.

The apostle Paul pictures all the world and even angels looking on while the apostles, a feeble band, are brought in last to fight to the death. Our world is a lesson book for the universe of the great conflict between good and evil - between Christ and Satan.

8. How does the death of Jesus on the cross reveal to us the character of God in contrast to Satan? John 3:16 (page 752)

For God so loved the world that he _____ his one and only Son, that _____ believes in him shall not _____ but have _____ life.

Satan wanted God's position—his motivation is to "GET". God's motivation is to "GIVE"—that we might receive eternal life.

9. In warning about false messengers who pretend to be followers of Christ, what does Paul say about Satan's deceptions? 2 Corinthians 11:13, 14 (page 821)

... for Satan himself _____ as an angel of _____.



A Defeated Foe

10. What was accomplished by Jesus' death? Hebrews 2:14, 15 (page 847)

... by his [Jesus] death he might _____ him who holds the power of death - that is, the _____.

When Jesus died on the cross, Satan appeared to have triumphed. But Jesus was the innocent dying for the guilty, therefore He conquered death, rose from the dead, tasting "death for everyone" (verse 9), defeating the devil at his own game and winning the victory for us.

11. The Bible pictures the devil like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8, 9). What does it say the devil will do when we resist him? James 4:7 (page 856)

Submit yourselves, then, to God. _____ the devil, and he will _____ from you.

12. Satan is really a defeated foe. It is just a matter of time before he is destroyed. How do the followers of Jesus gain the victory over Satan? Revelation 12:10, 11 (page 873)

They overcame him by the _____ of the Lamb and by the word of their _____; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from _____.

While Satan is a defeated foe, many don't know or believe this, so he still has influence in this world. We will finally be delivered from Satan and evil when Jesus comes the second time to take us to heaven. (Titus 2:13, 14, page 844; Revelation 21:1-5, page 878)

Resist the Devil

Two men worked in a lion park in Africa. Inside the fence the lions were tame. They could walk among them, pat them and feed them by hand without fear. Outside the fence the lions were wild and dangerous.

One day one of the men was outside the compound. While sitting on a log a lioness came out of the jungle and grabbed him by the shoulder and began to drag him off. His friend, hearing his screams, came running out of the compound, only to see his friend being dragged into the jungle. What could he do? All he had was a stick.

Without hesitation he ran towards the lioness, waving his stick and shouting at the top of his voice.

What would happen? Would he become the second victim? When the lioness heard him and saw him running towards her she dropped his friend and ran off into the jungle.



When we resist the devil in Jesus' name and strength he has no power over us. He is a defeated foe – defeated by Jesus on the cross. Jesus' victory over Satan is our victory when we accept Jesus as our Saviour.

Would you like to accept Jesus as Saviour and claim His victory?

- Yes
- I have accepted Jesus already.
- I'd like to look more into what it means to have Jesus in my life.

Now I understand where evil came from and how Jesus has defeated the devil. This helps me

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