

Does Satan Exist Today?

by [Richard K. McPherson](#)

What happened in 70 AD?

Objective: Many articles prove the significance of Jesus' return in 70 AD. It has been proven repeatedly that the prophecies of the prophets and of Jesus came true. It has also been proven that the disciples taught only what they had been taught and left nothing out. In this paper, I am trying to point out other things that also happened in 70 AD. There are a lot more things that happened then that affect us today. One of these things is the existence of the devil or Satan. Trying to point out something that people want to hold on to is going to be hard. In this article, I will pose some questions to people who hold on the existence of Satan and say that he still has power and in doing so, believe the opposite of what the Scriptures teach. When one is first introduced to Preterism or eschatology, it goes against all that one has been taught. The same could be said about this topic. I hope you enjoy this article and it helps you in your continuing study of God's Word.

This study is about "the devil, Satan, the serpent" and his existence today. Back in the late 60's and early 70's, Flip Wilson had a saying: "The Devil made me do it". How true is that statement? Is the devil so powerful that we today, cannot resist him or is he powerless. Is he still alive or does he not exist in any way, form or fashion? I read in a book once that the devil is powerless. In that same book, it also stated that the devil has the power to deceive. Which one is it? How can the devil be powerless and still have power?

The only place to start is at the beginning. Let's consider Genesis 3:15:

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel."

In other versions, it may use the phrase "and he will bruise your head and you will bruise his heel." Bruise is even used in Young's translation. So, what is the problem? If you look at the text in Hebrew, you will notice that each "bruise" has a different meaning. The meanings fits very well with the meaning of "bruise" in the Greek. v In Goodwick # 8789, the first "bruise" or "he will bruise your head" means: to crush. In Goodwick # 8790, the second "bruise" or *"...you will bruise his heel"* means: to strike. One will notice the next two texts and how they are translated. In looking at this text, one needs to look at the whole picture and know who will do what to whom to correctly interpret the text.

Who is the "he" in this text? We all know that this text is talking about Jesus. Most Bibles refer one to Romans 16:20 and Hebrews 2:14. Let us start with Romans 16:20.

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."

The KJV and YLT again use the word "bruise". The Greek-English Interlinear translates it like this:

"And the God - of peace will crush - Satan under the feet of you soon."

The Greek meaning of the word "bruise or crush" in this text is: Strongs # 4937 or Goodwick

5341: to break, destroy, dash to pieces. So far, the meaning of the word "bruise" in the New Testament and Old Testament is the same. Let us see if this meaning is carried throughout the Scriptures.

Hebrews 2:14

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-that is the devil."

What does the phrase mean, *"he might destroy him..."*? In Strongs # 2672 and Goodwick

2934 destroy means: to nullify, abolish, to cease, pass way, to make void, to do away with, put an end to. Now I ask you, did Jesus do that or did he fail?

In 1 Corinthians 15:26 it says, *"The last enemy to be destroyed is death."* In verse 24, it tells us that the end will come after everything has been destroyed and death was that last thing. The word "destroy" has the same meaning as in Hebrews 2:14 and Romans 16:20.

Both in 1 Corinthians 15:26 and Hebrews 2:14, death, Satan or the Devil go hand in hand. I ask again. Did Jesus destroy death or not? Look at the time frame in Corinthians 15:24, *"Then the end will come..."*. Let's look at 2 Timothy 2:10:

"...but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Again, the meaning of "destroyed" is the same as the others. Now that we have seen that Jesus destroyed death at his appearing or coming in 70 AD, what kind of death was destroyed and what kind of life was brought? Was it physical death and physical life or spiritual death and spiritual life?

In Revelation 12:12b *"But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."* What does "his time is short" mean? Could it mean that Satan knew his time was running out? His number was being called up. Or could it mean in a futuristic sense that "soon" meant 1000 plus years. In Revelation 20:10, you have the Devil or Satan or the ancient serpent, the dragon (all names meaning the same person Revelation 20:2) being thrown into the lake of burning sulfur. In addition, death and Hades were thrown into the same place and here it is called the "lake of fire". (verse 14)

(See appendix 1 for the name "Lucifer".)

Here are some questions to the ones who believe that the devil still exists after 70 AD.

1. If the devil was "judged" and cast into the lake of fire in Revelation 19 and still survived, would that make him more powerful than the Almighty God?
2. How can someone that has been dashed in pieces or put an end to, still exist, today?
3. If the devil still exists today, what is his purpose? What does he do? Does he just roam the earth with nothing to do, because he is powerless?
4. Do you believe Scripture or not?

Max King, in his book "The Cross and the Parousia", page 9 puts it this way, *"...the primary aim of Christ's Messianic reign (His pre-end-of-the-age reign) was the resurrection of the dead by means of the age-consummation defeat of sin and death."*

The law + Sin = Death

Let us go into this a little deeper. I am not going to go into detail about the eschatological matters. Many articles prove that Jesus has returned and the resurrection & judgment has happened in 70 AD. However, I would like to pose a question. The law passed away and death, Satan, Hades have been destroyed, all in the same time period, 70 AD. Where does that leave "sin"? In Romans 6:23 it says, "The wages of sin is death." So, if sin still exists, what is the result from sin since death has been destroyed?

Again, let us start in the Old Testament. Go to Daniel 9:24.

"Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy."

What does it mean, "...to put an end to sin..."? In Strongs # 8552 or Goodwick # 9462, the word is "Taman", which means to be finished, to completely destroy. Some say that it is talking about animal scarifies. That cannot be, because it talks about that in verse 27. You will also notice that it is using the same phrase, "...will put an end to sacrifices and offerings...". This phrase has a different Hebrew word and meaning. The word is "Sabat", which means to rest or cease. Josephus tells us that this did happen around February 67 AD. This is from "Works of Josephus", volume 1, and page 430.

In Hebrews 9:26b it says. *"...But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by sacrifice of himself."*

Turn to 1 John 3:4-9. I want to put this into context so I will quote the whole text.

"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away [or remove] our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. Dear children do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him, he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." [NIV]

The phrase "...appeared to destroy the devil's work" means this: # 3395 Goodwick or # 3090 Strongs: to demolish, to loosen its obligation of a law or institution, or making void, doing away with... From this meaning, it is talking about the law and sin.

The Greek-English Interlinear puts verse 8 like this: *"For this was manifested the Son - of God, in order that he might undo the works of the devil."*

Look at [Romans 7:7-11](#):

"What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed, I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment deceived me and through the commandment put me to death." [NIV]

What does the phrase, "...apart from law, sin is dead..." mean?

Romans 5:12-14, 20

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all have sinned—for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account (or not charged to one's account) when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come." [NIV]

(20) "The law was added so that the trespass might increase..."

Romans 4:15

"... because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression."

Are we living under the "law"? What does "...where there is no law there is no transgression," mean? What is the "law"? The "law" is the rules and regulations that God gave Moses. The "law" also includes the "Ten Commandments". The "law" has prophecies about Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and many others. The "law" is no more. We are not even under the "Ten Commandments". You might say, "Wait, just one minute". We follow the "Thou shall not's..."

James 2:10 puts it this way.

"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it"

Do we, today *"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy..."* Exodus 20:8. There were around 613 separate commandments in the entire Law of Moses. Today we are living under the results of the promises that were giving to the first century Christians. While they lived under "hope", we live under "assurance". The "law" was only a shadow of what was to come. The whole book of Hebrews explains this by comparing the Old Covenant with the New Covenant.

Max King puts it this way in his book "The Cross and The Parousia of Christ", page 644-645.

"The fact that Paul is dealing with the 70 AD consummation of the Jewish age is brought out clearly by the manner in which he expresses death's ultimate defeat (1 Corinthians 15:55-57). "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law" (verse 56) Paul is conscious that death's defeat hinges upon sin's defeat, and that the defeat of sin is tied to the annulment of the old aeon of law, which is sin's strength. Many interpreters are puzzled by the presence of "the law" in a passage where the law would seem to have no relevancy if it were removed at the cross. Nevertheless, the law is in verse 56, and Paul sees its annulment in connection with the consummation of the age very much a part of the defeat of sin and death."

If sin, death and the law are, in Paul's treatment of salvation-history, interlocking realities, how can these powers be defeated in Christ's death and still remain to be defeated in the 70 AD consummation of the age?

However, if one already is free from the strength of sin (the law), and from the sting of death (sin), where is death's power? For Paul, death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished. The state of sin, the law, and consequently death are abolished when the old Covenant aeon is consummated, giving place to the New Covenant aeon of life and righteousness."

Did the Second Coming affect everyone, both the saved and unsaved? Did the Kingdom only come for a certain group of people or everyone? Was the judgment for everyone? Did the passing of the law and the destruction of death affect everyone? If we are living in the results of promises made to the first century Christians, then the law, sin, death, Satan (the devil) no longer exist.

One may ask "Why is there evil in the world?" The answer is very easy. It is because of our own desires. We always want to blame someone else for our problems. That is why we want to hang on to the existence of Satan. We do not want to have personal responsibility for our actions. The world keeps telling us the reason we act the way we do is, because of experiences in our childhood or parents mistreated us, or we had some terrible event happen while we were young and it has affected us. There are some that even blame God for the pickle they are in. How fast we forget what James says in James 1:13-14.

"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed."

We just do not realize that our beliefs have consequence. Our ideas affect our beliefs and also the way we view ourselves.

Our reason for living is found Revelation 5:9-10. This text is talking about us today.

"...You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

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Other articles include: Is Jesus Yahweh, God Almighty? , Why the "Church" is not the Kingdom, Under the New Covenant, What is "Worship". E-mail me if you would like to ask any questions.

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P.S. (1) I would like everyone's help for some projects. I think it is about time that Preterists unite and put together a Correspondence Course for people that would like to study God's word and I mean really study and help their relationship with God grow. I have some ideas, but I would like your input.

(2) I would like to see the Bible reprinted with the words that the other translations leave out, for example: (1) Mello-about to

(2) Earth-when it should mean land or dirt, and others,

(3) Phrases that are in the original Hebrew or Greek that were taken out and words that are not in the original Hebrew or Greek that were added.

(3) I would like to see a list of Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillment in the New Testaments. Not only from a biblical, but also historical standpoint.

If you would like to help me in completing 1 and 3, please let me know. You do not have to be an expert writer. I am not one, but God can work wonders. Number 2 will be another matter. It will require years and a lot of prayer.

APPENDIX 1 Footnote on the name of "Lucifer". This name is given to the devil by many denominations today. They quote Isaiah 14:12. v *"How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, (Lucifer is used in the KJV), son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!"*

They stop there and make their point. The verse is taken out of context. One has to go back to chapter 13 and continue through 14:23 to understand what it is talking about. It is talking about the king of Babylon and its destruction. It tells us that in Isaiah 3:13,14 and 14:22.

They quote Revelation 12:7-9, which is also taken out of context.

"And there was in heaven Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him."

The denominations say that this is how the origin of the devil started. At the same time they teach that the book of Revelation is all future. If they would just read on. Verse 10b gives the reason why for this action. To understand this you need to go to Job and read chapters 1-2:7. Satan could go into the presence of God and talk with God face-to-face, as Job chapters 1 and 2 states. You will notice that in the New Testament how the devil could enter people and make them do things to themselves, not bad things to other people as people today think. You can notice as the time came closer to 70 AD, the devil tried one more thing to destroy Christianity around 65-70 AD. Satan knew that his time was running out and he was willing to try anything. So Satan knew that his time was short and with one blow "...and he will crush his head..". The final day was upon Satan.

The Bible says NOTHING on the origin of the Devil. Personally, I really do not wonder about his origin. The big thing is that he is defeated, destroyed and is no more. Where did the devil start? Who really cares, because he is no more.