

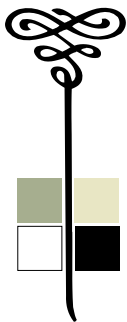
And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Revelation 12:7-9

Merry: How can we know this Strider is a friend of Gandalf's?

Frodo: I think a servant of the enemy would look fairer, and feel fouler.

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring



BRIGHT RED LONG JOHNS, a swaggering dragon tail, horns, and a trusty pitchfork. That is the customary, if absurd, image of the Devil. Satan. Lord of the Flies. Beelzebub. He dances through graveyards on Halloween, makes little girls vomit pea soup and spout language that would make a sailor blush, and whenever someone does something they shouldn't it is he who "made them do it." Satan and his minions come in all shapes and sizes. They are the objects of fascination, revulsion, and worship. Hollywood rhapsodizes over them, and churches warn against them.

In truth, no one living today has the slightest clue what demons look like. But

everyone living today has copious evidence of what it is they do, for we all dwell in the lap of their domain.

Again, the devil took [Jesus] to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

Matthew 4:8-9

Satan and his fellow dark angels are powerful and ubiquitous, but remain utterly invisible to humans on this side of eternity. We cannot photograph them, paint their picture, or describe with certainty their

wearing apparel. We know only that they are possessed of an evil that would make the triumvirate of Hitler, Stalin, and Pol Pot seem like a Sunday School class. They are so consumed by evil that they—who know Scripture as well as the finest biblical scholar—will not repent of it, even knowing the end God has planned for them.

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:10,14-15

Stages

Satan and his minions remain invisible, but their work here on earth is plain to see, for it is written not just in the bowels of today's nauseating popular culture, it is written in the heart of every child of Adam's race.

Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. The Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done."

Genesis 8:20-21

People do not *learn* evil; they are *born* with it. Contrary to the Church of Political Correctness, there are not three stages to man. The CPC doctrine states that man is born pure, learns evil from his elders, then learns good from those who are "enlightened." No, there are only two stages of man—at best. He is born with evil in his heart, and if nothing changes, he will die with that same evil heart. The adorable face of that baby cuddled into her mother's arms masks a heart born in sin. Except for Jesus Christ, there have been only two people *not*

born in sin, and their decision that fateful day in the Garden blew it for the rest of us. From that point on, beginning with their first son, Cain, man would be born with a nature derived from the enemy of God: Satan.

For man to have a second stage to his life, there is but one way: The Holy Spirit must change the heart. The Spirit does not expunge evil from the human heart, but He comes into that grimy apartment to dwell there, and thus begin the process of cleansing that will proceed in fits and starts until bodily death. Only at that point—when the believer's spirit exits the flesh, and not before—does the human heart change completely from evil to good. Only then is Satan eradicated from the human condition.

Bread Crumbs of Wrath

"For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

Revelation 12:12

If we were to distill down the essential character of Satan and his demons, it would be a character of anger. That describes the enemy. He is consumed by a visceral, blinding fury toward God, and toward those who call Him Lord. And perhaps that, more than anything, is the easiest way to identify his presence on earth. Want proof that Satan, though invisible to us, is alive and well on planet earth? Follow the trail of anger he leaves in his wake.

Examples abound, but one need not look further than popular culture—that most effective tool in Satan's arsenal.

There is no neutral ground in the universe: every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.

C.S. Lewis

...even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:14

His plan is one of subtlety and insinuation. Little by little, a word here, an image there. Each progression perfectly reasonable

and innocent, of course. Did we not all, even at the time, think it silly that Rob and Laura Petrie—dutifully wed—could not share the same bed? Did we not think it perfectly reasonable the first time we watched a program in which a married couple did? "Of course. That's the *real* world. Nothing wrong with that." Little by little. All perfectly reasonable. Until now we have television programs in which casual acquaintances, not even sure of each other's name, bed each other in full, naked glory.

Thus is expressed Satan's anger against God's best for man and woman.

During the same time period, teenage anthems were all about school proms, bonfires on the beach, souped-up hot rods, unrequited puppy love, and the latest dance step. Most songs on the Hit Parade were soft, bouncy, papered with flowers and sunshine. Even when response to the Vietnam war injected a darker spirit into teenage music, it was anger directed not at individuals, but at policy, at government, at war. But then the darkness became more horizontal, more intimate, more profane. "But that's how people really talk. Just being *real*, man." Little by little. All perfectly reasonable. Until now even the titles of some songs cannot be printed here, and their lyrics are drenched with vile imagery, sexual misogyny, and a putrid, violent anger that curdles the blood.

Thus is expressed Satan's anger at God's righteousness.

Satan and his disciples are consumed by their wrath—an anger born in a lust for power, and fueled by the realization of their ultimate end. They are not cute, mischievous sprites, but beautiful angels that have as their goal to hold onto as many souls as possible. Their aim is the eternal destruction of mankind, and the embarrassment of God. They begin the war with everyone on their side; man is born into Satan's ranks. Every soul claimed by Christ is one more soldier who has gone over to the other side.

And with every soul that leaves his ranks, Satan's rage increases.



(Next Week: "Angels")