

Know Your Enemy!

A Commentary On Genesis 2,3; The Devil, and The Fall Of Man

Why did God call the Devil a serpent? Serpents are typically well-camouflaged, possess forked tongues, are venomous, and wrap tightly around their prey to stop the heart—to kill, not to love. *As such, the serpent serves as an ideal symbol for the Devil, who camouflages his intentions, speaks with a forked tongue by mixing truth with venomous lies, and kills while pretending to love.* If the Devil was able to deceive Adam and Eve, our first parents, **what chance do we have?**

The Devil was originally an angel of light named Lucifer (light). After his fall, he became known as Satan. Now, he uses his intelligence and foreknowledge of divine matters to oppose God and His creation.

How was the Devil able to deceive our first parents? Below is a simplified dialogue between **God, Adam, Eve, and the Serpent (the Devil):**

The Serpent (Devil) Said:

1. "You will **NOT** surely die" Gen. 3:4
2. "your eyes will be opened" Gen. 3:5
3. "you will be as gods" Gen. 3:5
4. "knowing good and evil." Gen. 3:5

God Said:

1. "you **WILL** surely die" Gen. 2:17
2. "the eyes of them both were opened Gen. 3:7
3. "the man is become one of Us (God)" Gen. 3:22
4. "to know good and evil" Gen. 3:22



From the parallel structure above, we can see that out of the four things the Devil said, one was a lie and three were true (forked-tongued). It's like choosing between two cups of coffee, where one has one drop of poison in it. **Looking at the similarities,** they are almost the same, but looking at **the difference, it can kill us!** That is how the serpent deceives us. So next time you are tempted to say, **"What's the difference between your religion and mine?"**, **remember that the poison is in the difference!**

The same can be said about religions today: almost the same, exist side by side, all good and prayerful people, but deceived nevertheless.

How to defend against the Devil, and errors: 1) Revisit premises; it is easy to be wrong, but difficult to be right. 2) Compare different models; the model that best fits the pieces is the better model. 3) Consult experts in different fields, as acquiring knowledge takes years of study and experience. 4) Use the scientific approach: theory and evidence, the two legs of science. Walking on one leg is difficult and prone to stumbling; **"stay away from blind faith, if you do not want to fall into a pit."** Even Jesus said, **"The signs are done to prove my word"** (Mark 16:20), where the **word** is the **theory** and the **signs, the evidence.** 5) **Ask God for help. Always love:** Jesus says, **"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."** (Matthew 5:44-45).

THE EXPLANATIONS OF THE 12th. CHAPTER OF REVELATION; (From Venerable Maria Of Agreda 1662-1665; The Mystical City Of God; The Conception; Pages 116-124):

120. (P-116) "Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." Woe to the earth, where so many sins and such wickedness shall be perpetrated! Woe to the sea, which refused to pour forth its floods and annihilate the transgressors at the sight of so great offences against its Creator, and to avenge the insults against its Maker and Lord! But more woe to the profound and raging sea of those that follow the demon, after he had descended in their midst in order to war against them with great wrath and with such unheard of cruelty! **It is the wrath of the most ferocious dragon,** and greater than that of the devouring lion (1 Pet. 5, 8), **who attempts to annihilate all creation** and to whom all the days of the world seem a short time to execute his fury. Such is his hunger and thirst to do damage to the mortals, that all the days of their life do not satisfy him, for they come to an end, whereas he desires eternal ages, if possible, in order to wage war against the sons of God. But incomparably greater than against all others is his rage against that most blessed Woman, who was to crush his head (Gen. 3, 15). Therefore the Evangelist says:

121. (P-117) "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the Woman, who brought forth the Man-child." When the ancient serpent saw the most unhappy place and state to which he had fallen, and that he was hurled from the empyrean heaven, he broke out in so much the greater rage and envy, **like a wild beast tearing its own entrails. Against the Mother of the Word incarnate he conceived such a furious rage, as no human tongue or intelligence can ever describe or understand.** But to a certain extent this anger can be surmised from that which followed immediately after that dragon found himself hurled with his hosts to the infernal regions. I will describe this event, as far as I can, and as far as it has been made plain to my understanding.

122. During the whole first week of the creation of the world and its contents Lucifer and the demons were occupied in machinations and projects of wickedness against the Word, who was to become incarnate, and against the Woman of whom He was to be born and made man. **On the first day, which corresponds to Sunday, were created the angels;** laws and precepts were given to them, for the guidance of their actions. The bad ones disobeyed and transgressed the mandates of the Lord. By divine providence and disposition then succeeded all the other events, which have been recorded above, up to the morning of the second day, corresponding to Monday, on which Lucifer and his hosts were driven and hurled into hell. The duration of these days corresponds to the small periods, or delays, which intervened between their creation, activity, contest and fall, or glorification. As soon as Lucifer with his followers entered hell, they assembled in general council, which lasted to the morning of Thursday. During this time Lucifer exerted all his astuteness and diabolical malice in conferring with the demons and concocting plans to offend God so much the more deeply, and to obtain (P-118) revenge for the chastisement, to which he had been subjected. **They came to the conclusion and resolved that the greatest vengeance and injury against God would be to impede the effects of the love, which they knew God bore toward mankind. This they hoped to attain by deceiving men, and persuading them, or even, as far as possible, compelling them to neglect the friendship of God, to be ungrateful toward Him, and to rebel against his will.**

123. "This we must strive to do," said Lucifer, "toward this end we must apply all our forces, all our solicitude and knowledge. We will subject the human creatures to our influence and will, in order to destroy them. We will persecute this race of men and will deprive them of the reward promised to them. We will exert all our vigilance, to prevent them from arriving at the vision of God, which was denied us unjustly. I will gain great triumphs over them; I will destroy them all and subject them to my designs. I will sow new sects and errors, and set up laws contrary to those of the Most High in all things. **I will raise up from among men false prophets and leaders,** who will spread these doctrines (Act 20, 30) and I will scatter this seed through them and afterwards I will assign to them a place in these profound torments. **I will afflict the poor, oppress the afflicted, and persecute the timid.** I will sow discord, excite wars, and stir up nations against each other. I will raise up proud and haughty men to extend the dominion of sin and after they shall have executed my designs, **I will bury them in this eternal fire,** and in so much the greater torments, the more faithfully they followed me. **This is my kingdom and this is the reward which I will give to those who follow me.**

124. (P-119) "I will wage fierce war against the incarnate Word, for although He is God, He is also man, and therefore of a lower nature than mine. I will exalt my throne and my dignity above his; I will conquer Him and will humble Him by my power and astuteness. The Woman who is to be his Mother shall perish at my hands. What is one Woman against my power and greatness? And you, ye demons, ... (continued on back page)

who were injured together with me, follow me and obey me in the pursuit of this vengeance, as you have followed me in disobedience! **Pretend to love men, in order to destroy them; serve them, in order to ruin them and deceive them; help them, in order to pervert them and draw them into these my hellish regions.**" No human tongue can explain the malice and fury of this first council of Lucifer and his hosts against the human race, which although not yet in existence, was to be created. In it were concocted all the vices and sins of the world, thence proceeded lies, sects and errors; all iniquity had its origin in that chaos and in that abominable gathering, and all those that do evil are in the service of the prince of this assembly.

125. Having closed this meeting, Lucifer sought permission to speak with God, and his Majesty, for his own exalted ends, gave him permission. This was allowed in the same manner in which satan spoke to God when he asked permission to persecute Job (Job 1, 6), and it happened on the day which corresponds to our Thursday. He addressed the Most High in the following words: "Lord, since Thou hast laid thy hand so heavily upon me in chastising me with so great cruelty, and since Thou hast predetermined all that Thou desirest to do for the men whom Thou art to create; and since Thou wishest to exalt and elevate so high the incarnate Word and enrich the Woman, who is to be his Mother, with all thy predestined gifts, be now equitable and just; (P-120) as Thou hast given me permission to persecute the rest of men, **give me also permission to tempt and make war against Christ, the Man-God and the Woman, who is to be his Mother;** give me freedom to exert all my powers against Them. Other things Lucifer said on that occasion, and, in spite of the great violence occasioned to his pride by the humiliation, he humbled himself nevertheless in order to ask for this permission. His wrathful anxiety to obtain what he desired was so great that he was willing to subdue even his arrogance, thus forcing one iniquity to yield to another. He knew too well that without the permission of the omnipotent Lord he could attempt nothing. In order to be able to tempt Christ our Lord, and his most holy Mother in particular, he was willing to humiliate himself a thousand times, for he feared the threat, which had been made, that She should crush his head.

126. The Lord answered: "Thou must not, satan, ask such a permission as due to thee in justice, for the incarnate Word is God and Lord most high and omnipotent, though He is at the same time true man, and thou art his creature. Even if the other men sin and subject themselves to thy will, this will not be possible in my Only begotten made man. **Though thou mayest succeed in making men slaves of sin, Christ will be holy and just,** segregated from sinners. He will redeem them, if they fall. **And this Woman against whom thou hast such wrath,** although She is to be a mere creature and a true daughter of man, **is to be preserved by my decree from sin.** She is to be altogether mine forever and on no account or title shall any one else be allowed to have part in Her."

127. To this satan replied: "But what wonder that this Woman should be holy, since no one on this earth (P-121) will be allowed to draw Her to the contrary, or persecute Her and incite Her to sin? This cannot be equity, nor just judgment, nor can this be proper and praiseworthy." Lucifer added yet other blasphemies in his arrogance. But the Most High, who disposes all things with wisdom, answered him: **"I will give thee permission to tempt Christ, so that He will be an example and a teacher in this to all the rest of men. I also give thee permission to persecute the Woman,** but thou must not touch Her in regard to the life of her body. **It is my will, that Christ and his Mother be not exempt from temptation,** and that **They be tempted by thee like the rest of men.**" This permission was more pleasing to the dragon than that of being free to persecute all the rest of the human race. In this he resolved to use more care than in the pursuit of any other project, as afterwards really happened. To no one else than himself was he resolved to confide its execution. Therefore the Evangelist proceeds to say:

128. "He persecuted the Woman, who brought forth the man-child." For with the permission of the Lord, he waged unheard of war and persecution against Her, whom he thought to be the Mother of God incarnate. But since these persecutions and battles will be described later (No. 692-697, Part II 340-71; III 451-528), I will only say here, that they were beyond all conception of man. Equally admirable, was her glorious resistance and victory over them. Therefore in order to describe the manner in which She defended Herself, he says: "There were given to her two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the desert unto her place, where she is nourished for a time and times." These two wings were given to the most holy Virgin before She entered upon the combat, for She was prepared by (P-122) special gifts and favours.' The one wing was an infused science, which revealed anew to Her vast mysteries and sacraments; the other was a new and sublime humility, as will be explained in its place (Part II; 335-339, Part III 448-450). With these two wings She took her flight to the Lord, her proper habitation, for in Him alone She lived and in Him was centred all her attention. She flew like the royal eagle, without ever directing her flight towards the enemy, being alone in her flight and living in seclusion from all earthly things, solely in communion with her last End, which is the Divinity. In this solitude She "was nourished for a time and times," for though this nourishment lasted all her life, yet it was more abundant in the times of her great battles with satan. In those times She received favours more proportioned to the greatness of the conflict. By "time and times" is also understood the felicity, by which her victories were rewarded and crowned.

129. "And half a time from the face of the serpent." This half a time was that, in which the most holy Virgin was free from the persecution of the dragon and far from his sight during this life; for, having conquered him in her battles, She was, by divine providence and as Victress, freed from them. This freedom was conceded to Her in order that She might enjoy the peace and quiet, which She had merited after having conquered the enemy, as I will describe farther on Part III, 526). Concerning the time of the combat the Evangelist says:

130. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman, water, as it were, a river, that he might cause her to be carried away; and the earth helped the woman and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the (P-123) river, which the dragon cast out of his mouth." All his malice and all his forces Lucifer exerted and directed against the Mistress; for all those, who were ever tempted by him, seemed to him of less importance than most holy Mary. With the same force as the current of a great swift river, so the malice, and the lies, and the temptations flowed from the mouth of that dragon against Her. But the earth helped Her; for the earth of her body and of her inclinations was not cursed, nor did the sentence and punishment, which God hurled against Adam and Eve, touch Her in any way. **For in it our earth is cursed and produces thorns instead of fruit. It is wounded in its very nature by its inclination to sin—"fomes Peccati"** (Gen. 3, 17), which continues to assault us and causes opposition. **The devil avails himself of these inclinations for the ruin of men, for he finds within us arms for his offensive warfare;** and catering to our evil inclinations **by his false representations and apparent sweetness and delight, he draws us toward sensible and earthly things.**

131. But the most blessed Mary, the holy and sanctified earth without touch of bad inclinations or evil dispositions, was free from all danger of corruption arising from the earth. On the contrary, since all her inclinations were most orderly, composed and obedient to grace, the earth of her body was in perfect harmony with her soul.

Thus this earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the stream of temptations which the dragon raised up for Her in vain; for he found that material indisposed and unfomented for sin, unlike the other offspring of Adam. Their terrestrial and disorderly passions are more adapted to produce the floods of temptation, than to absorb them, since our passions and our corrupt nature are always in opposition to virtue. (P-124) On account of the futility Of his efforts against this mysterious Woman, Scripture says:

132. "And the dragon was angry against the Woman: and he went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The dragon, having been gloriously overcome in all things by the Queen of all creation and dreading the furious torments of his own confusion and the ruin of all hell power, fled from Her, **determined to make cruel war against the other souls belonging to the generation and race of the most blessed Mother.** These are the faithful, who are marked with the Testimony and the blood of Christ in Baptism as keepers of his commands and constant witnesses. For all the wrath of the demon turned so much the more toward the holy Church and its members, when he saw, that he would be unable to gain any advantage over Christ and his most holy Mother. Especially does he war against the virgins of Christ, and with a more particular hatred does he seek to destroy the virtue of virginity or chastity, this being the seed And the inheritance of the most chaste Virgin and Mother of the Lamb. On account of all this the Evangelist says:

133. "And he stood upon the sands of the sea." This is the contemptible vanity of the world, **on which the dragon feeds and which he eats like hay.** All this passed in heaven and many mysteries were made manifest to the angels in the decrees of the divine Will regarding the privileges reserved for the Mother of the Incarnate Word." I have been short in describing what I saw; for the multitude of the mysteries has made me poor and halting in the words needful for their manifestation.