



About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>



ISSN 2278-9529

**Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal**

[www.galaxyimrj.com](http://www.galaxyimrj.com)

## Satan, the Anti-God Functionally the Fourth Person, Supervising the Spiritual Progress of Humanity: William Blake's Views from the Holy Bible

**P. Parthiban**

Assistant Professor in English,  
Govt. Arts College, Karur- 5.

&

**Dr. S. Alexander**

Associate Professor in English,  
Govt. Arts College, Karur- 5.

*“The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell,  
a hell of heaven. What matter where, if I still be the same....”*

— Satan —

The poetry of Blake echoes The Bible in several places. Blake considered “The Holy Bible” a source of his greatest pleasure. The way he read his scriptures was different. It was in a diabolical sense that he read The Bible, as if he read it in the company of the devil. For him, Satan, the devil is a friend, not an adversary, because wisdom is reachable only through reason, not just through faith. Wisdom is a compound of the knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge of good alone cannot be called wisdom. Innocence must be fused with experience. This is an attitude of skepticism.

He tried, unsuccessfully, to resolve the problem of evil, the empirical approach to the meaning of life, the relationship of God with man. Man's choice of disobedience is for autonomy. Wisdom according to Blake is achievable through a journey of contraries via good and evil. So, Satan also is useful. He takes one through reason, doubt and autonomy to wisdom. It is worthwhile to examine Blake's *The Songs of Innocence* and *The Songs of Experience* in the light of his understanding of the Holy Bible, in the light of his experience as an unorthodox Christian. With Trinity, Satan forms the fourth divine person, supervising the spiritual progress of humanity. Yes, it is evidently shown from the following discussion.

William Blake is widely recognized as the earliest and wildest of the English Romantic poets. He mastered the literary and visual arts as a professional engraver and classically trained painter. During a golden age of European civilization, he studied literature, philosophy, and the classics on his own initiative. Blake also lived in a

world of political and cultural transition. A corrupt aristocracy and a newly rich industrialist class manipulated national affairs to suit their own business, by means of public policy, courts, and the established church. But they held their position tenuously as violent political radicalism, inspired by the American and French Revolutions, threatened to overwhelm the country in a torrent of blood. Blake looked forward to that prospect.

Blake's place in the canon of English poetry is undisputed today, but for well over a century his work was simply too difficult for Christian commentators to approach. He drew upon mythic elements of Christianity, the occult systems of Swedenborg and others, and the legends of northern Europe, as well as inventing a whole pantheon of his own gods and goddesses (he called them "emanations"), rehashing them at will in order to articulate a bold and dizzying vision of the human being's relationship with oneself, one's peers and one's world. He believed the sacred and infinite could be experienced in this life, here and now and by one's own power, not in an after-life or at the dispensation of a controller-god.

Blake also described visions in which he would see the dead, or angels and devils. His contemporary critics gave superficial praise to Blake's less provocative works, and ignored as best they could his more fiery "prophecies" suggesting the destruction of church and empire. Later critics would write him off as a schizophrenic, or claim that his "visions" and "fancies" were hallucinations or delusions. Blake's work would only come into its own during the modernist cultural revolution of the twentieth century of the Common Era, when he would influence artists like William Butler Yeats, Aldous Huxley, and Jim Morrison. In other words, as the influence of Christianity over our culture waned, Blake was re-discovered as an important thinker for those who craved to stimulate their spiritual impulse, but who were uninterested in myths.

He was arguably the most innovative artist in the English language. When prevailing genres chafed him, he integrated poetry, philosophy, calligraphy, graphic design, and painting to render his vision and when existing technology disappointed him, he invented his own mechanical technique, "illuminated printing", to commit everything to a material form. As a person he was also remarkable: a freethinker, a recreational nudist, a radical federalist, tried for sedition (and acquitted) — Blake delighted in flouting political establishment and cultural mores.

As a young man, he watched with rapture the fires of democratic revolution spread across two continents, and hoped that this event would free people to enjoy their own pursuits and respect one another's differences without being judged by a repressive church or an oppressive state. When the revolutions failed to make changes

as radical as he'd hoped, he sought the cause in men's psychology — in the little god-dictator that the church and state had fostered at the center of our self-conceptions.

If any thinker can be said to really anticipate the real spirit of Satanism, it's Blake. He celebrated worldly pleasures and encouraged people to find meaning and satisfaction in their present lives. He saw devils and demons as symbols of this psychological and spiritual liberation, and God as a figure of artificial constraints that were about to be outgrown. But his psycho-mythological system, drawn piecemeal from so many influences, can be difficult for the casual reader to understand.

Blake believed that human beings invent gods in their art, and this means that the holy spark is in humans, not in mythic characters themselves. Humans exercise their divine powers when they create art, and they celebrate their divinity when they indulge in sensual pleasure. Blake believed that civilization can only thrive when there is a sustained critique of the morals and opinions that the common man takes for granted. A critique that will always necessarily unnerve the great mass of humanity but which nevertheless fascinates them because it gives them a vicarious glimpse of real freedom. So the majority is drawn to consume the iconoclastic outpouring of a spirituality emancipated elite, simultaneously their enemy and their complement. Lasting social evils, however, are created by fundamentalist repression, which is self-righteous hatred masquerading as paternal love.

All of these propositions are found within the covers of *The Satanic Bible*, and together they define the core dogmas of modern Satanism. He considered devils to be the perfect symbol of the rebellious hellfire that fuels the dynamic genius. On all of these counts, Blake can only be described as a true de facto Satanist of the most reprobate character.

### **The Trinity**

God is a trinity of persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is not the same person as the Son; the Son is not the same person as the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the same person as the Father. They are not three gods and not three beings. They are three distinct persons; yet, they are all the one God. Each has a will, can speak, can love, etc. These are demonstrations of personhood. They are in absolute perfect harmony consisting of one substance. They are coeternal, coequal, and co powerful. If any one of the three were removed, there would be no God.

Jesus, the Son, is one person with two natures: Divine and Human. This is called the Hypostatic Union. The Holy Spirit is also divine in nature and is self-aware and the third person of the Trinity. There is, though, an apparent separation of some

functions among the members of the Godhead. For example, the Father chooses who will be saved; the Son redeems them and the Holy Spirit seals them.

A further point of clarification is that God is not one person, the Father, with Jesus as a creation and the Holy Spirit as a force. Neither is He one person who took three consecutive forms, i.e., the Father, became the Son, who became the Holy Spirit. Nor is God the divine nature of the Son (where Jesus had a human nature perceived as the Son and a divine nature perceived as the Father. Nor is the Trinity an office held by three separate Gods.

The word "person" is used to describe the three members of the Godhead because the word "person" is appropriate. A person is self-aware, can speak, love, hate, say "you," "yours," "me," "mine," etc. Each of the three persons in the Trinity demonstrates these qualities.

Therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity is arrived at by looking at the whole of scripture--not in a single verse. It is the doctrine that there is only one God and not three, and that the one God exists in three persons: Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. An analogy would be time. Time is past, present, and future; but, there are not three times and only one. Satan is a real spiritual being, not a myth or figment of the imagination. Created by God as an angel, he rebelled against God and fell from heaven, bringing many other angels with him. Satan also plays a vital role in many of God's activity throughout biblical documents.

From Isaiah 14 one can gain vitally important information about Satan which is most helpful in understanding His activities throughout history. He is a created being, who was without sin in the beginning. He is an angel, a cherub. He was created wise, beautiful, and powerful. His beauty, splendor, and power led to his downfall, because he did not receive these as a gift from God. Instead, he took pride in what he was given. Ambition grew in the soil of pride, and Satan was no longer content with what he had. He wanted more. He wanted that which rightly belonged to God. Because of this he was cast down, and his position was taken from him. So it would be for those kings who walked in his steps. They too began to develop a "god complex," puffed up with pride and ambition because of the position and power given them.

### **Satan in the Old Testament**

Satan is not a prominent person in the Old Testament. He is introduced early in the Scriptures and consistently represented as both the adversary are of God and of men. The four Old Testament passages, which depict Satan as the adversary. The following chapters contain important truths concerning God, Satan, and man.

### **Satan in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5)**

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.’” And the serpent said to the woman, “You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:1-5).

Man was put in charge of the garden. So far as it can be told, Satan had no authority, no part in the rule of God over the creation. The chain of command indicated in chapters 1-3 is Adam, Eve, and then Satan (as a creature). Satan, in true form, manages to turn this order of authority upside-down. He takes charge, gets to Adam through Eve and brings about the fall.

The one who wanted to be “like God,” and who was cast down because of his pride and ambition, now convinces Eve that disobedience to God’s command will make men “like God”. Satan begins with a question, raising doubts about the goodness of God, and ending with a flat denial of God’s words which imply that God is a liar. He changes Eve’s perspective, so that the God who graciously forbade eating from the forbidden tree is viewed as a God who withholds what is good from man for His own selfish reasons. In the final analysis, Satan seems to achieve a total success by bringing about in men the same rebellion for which he was condemned. Satan approaches Eve as an ally, but in the end he is exposed as her adversary. The fall of man, and its resulting curses are a direct result of Satan’s deception.

The Book of Job introduces Satan as an adversary, in the context of suffering, early in the history of mankind. While Job is not among the very first books of the Bible, many scholars believe Job lived during the patriarchal times, before Moses. While Satan may not be prominent in the Old Testament as a whole, he is clearly introduced early on as God’s enemy and man’s adversary. Satan is counted among the “sons of God” and is thus still included among the angels. Satan has freedom to go about the earth and even has access to heaven and the throne of God.

Satan assumes that men are like him--that they strive for success and shun suffering. Satan’s words reveal his belief that men only serve God when it serves their own fleshly interests, and that they will turn from God when suffering comes into their lives. Satan cannot imagine anyone worshipping God for who He is, rather than for

what He gives. He thinks men must be bribed to worship and to serve God. His view is: "Take away the success, replace it with suffering, and saints will turn from God."

Unwittingly, Satan serves God's purpose. Satan's efforts produced the opposite of what he hoped to achieve by inflicting Job with adversity and suffering. While Satan is rebellious toward God and an adversary of Job, the suffering God imposed ultimately resulted in a deepening of Job's faith and brought greater blessings to Job.

Satan's role in the Book of Job is a kind of microcosm, illustrating the place Satan plays in the overall plan of God. The role Satan plays in Job's life illustrates the role Satan plays in the overall plan of God for creation. Satan is the enemy of God. He is neither humble nor submissive to God. He challenges God, thinking that afflicting Job will result in Job's desertion from the ranks of those who worship God. But God is sovereign in Job's sufferings. Satan can only afflict Job with God's permission--and only within the limits God Himself has established. Job's sufferings, while inflicted by Satan, are ultimately from the hand of God. Job may be asking the wrong questions, but he is asking the right person.

After two chapters, Satan passes off the scene. When the story ends, Job's faith has been deepened, and he is worshipping God. Job's final condition is far better than his first. In spite of and because of Satan's opposition, Job has been blessed, and Satan's purpose has been frustrated. In the end, Satan learns nothing and gains nothing. God gained a more intimate relationship with Job, an opportunity to instruct the angels, and an occasion to teach us about Satan, the spiritual war, and the gracious role of suffering in the life of the saint.

As described in the Book of Job, what happened through Satan's opposition to God and Job is exactly what always happens in the plan of God. Satan is allowed to manifest his rebellion and bring about that which he supposes will hinder God's people and His plan. Satan is allowed to do only that which God has planned for His glory and our good. He does nothing apart from divine permission. He does nothing contrary to God's plan. Through Satan's opposition, God's purposes are fulfilled, and Satan's purposes are frustrated. In spite of his failures, Satan never learns. Instead, he hastens on in his rebellion.

### **Satan as the Adversary of Job (Job 1 and 2)**

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From roaming about on the

earth and walking around on it.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Does Job fear God for nothing? Hast Thou not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Thy hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse Thee to Thy face.” Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord (Job 1:6-12).

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.” And Satan answered the Lord and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to Thy face.” So the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life” (Job 2:1-6). The above taken conversations evidently prove that the Satan as the adversary of Job.

### **Satan as the Adversary of Israel**

Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel. So David said to Joab and to the princes of the people, “Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, and bring me *word* that I may know their number.” And Joab said, “May the Lord add to His people a hundred times as many as they are! But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord’s servants? Why does my lord seek this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt to Israel?” Nevertheless, the king’s word prevailed against Joab. Therefore, Joab departed and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the number of the census of *all* the people to David. And all Israel were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword; and Judah *was* 470,000 men who drew the sword. But he did not number Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king’s command was abhorrent to Joab. And God was displeased with this thing, so He struck Israel. And David said to God, “I have sinned greatly, in that I have done this thing. But now, please take away the iniquity of Thy servant, for I have done very foolishly” (1 Chronicles 21:1-8).



Now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and it incited David against them to say, “Go, number Israel and Judah” (2 Samuel 24:1).

These two parallel passages tell of the same event from two very different perspectives. The account in 1 Chronicles informs of Satan’s role in the numbering of Israel’s men. It also tells Satan who worked through David and that his purpose was to oppose Israel. The account of 2 Samuel takes back a step further to the ultimate explanation. God was angry with Israel and allowed Satan to attack Israel through David.

This text tells what one has already learned from the Book of Job: God uses Satan in His plan to achieve His sovereign purposes and to fulfill His plan. But it takes one step further, teaching that God not only employs Satan to bring about the blessing of His saints, but that God also uses Satan to bring about divine discipline.

### **Satan in the New Testament**

Satan’s character and conduct do not change in the New Testament; they only intensify. A clear view can be shown in the New Testament that how God has permitted Satan to oppose Himself and men and to fulfill His eternal plan.

Satan’s purpose is always the same: he seeks to exalt himself above God by opposing God and men. While his goals are always the same, his methods differ greatly. In the way Satan opposed Almighty at the time of His first coming.

Satan directly opposed God through the temptation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘He will give his angels charge concerning you’; *and* ‘on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘You shall not put the lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took Him 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 will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the lord your God, and serve Him only.’” Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and *began* to minister to Him.

Satan himself was a “son of God” rebelled against God and was cast down. In the wilderness, Satan opposed God through the Lord Jesus. The issue was clear: Jesus’ sonship. And thus the repeated challenge, “If you are the Son of God . . .”. In the past, Satan was quite successful in tempting men on the basis of his own fallen perspective, ambitions, and values. Satan’s temptation of Jesus reveals much about himself, as well as something very important about Lord. The temptations which found a responsive chord in the hearts of fallen men had no appeal to Lord Jesus Christ.

Unlike Satan, Jesus was intent on doing the will of the Father and not acting independently. Jesus, unlike Satan, was willing to humble Himself, even to the point of death, to fulfill God’s purpose of providing the only means for man’s forgiveness and eternal life. Lord’s submission to the will of God was the basis for Lord’s victory in the wilderness, as well as His victory at the cross over Satan, sin, and death.

The inclusion of Satan in God’s plan raises a problem which must be considered. Simply stated: How is it that a holy God would purpose the existence of Satan, and therefore of sin? Or, “If Satan is in the plan of God, then surely sin must be in the plan as well. How can a holy God include sin in His plan?”

This question can only be answered in relation to the purpose for which the plan was designed. The answer is given early in the Bible in the Book of Exodus. The text which answers the question follows immediately after Israel’s “fall” in the wilderness, while Moses was on the mountain with God. The Israelites persuaded Aaron to fashion a golden calf which they worshipped with much immorality. God sent Moses down to the people and threatened to destroy them. When Moses appealed to God, He withheld complete destruction and promised that Israel would possess the land of Canaan as He had promised. But God refused to go up with His people.

### **Concept of Unitarianism**

This dichotomy that Blake instills between the vengeful Old Testament God and the peaceful New Testament God was manifested into two animals: the tiger and the lamb. In William Blake, His Philosophy and Symbols, Foster Damon explains the metaphor behind Blake's popular poem 'The Tyger'. "The problem of 'The Tyger' is, quite simply, how to reconcile the Forgiveness of Sins (the Lamb) with the Punishment of Sins (the Tyger)." The burning that radiates from the Tyger's coat comes from the flames of judgment, which Blake dubs wiser than the Horses of Instruction in his Proverbs of Hell. The dark forest it walks through is the Forest of Experience, whose dead trees (errors) conceals the path and dims the light. The Tyger's intention is to consume Error and destroy what the Horses of Instruction

cannot subdue. Blake ends the poem asking 'Did He that make the Lamb make thee?'- a very real question on the compatibility of the Jewish and Christian God.

One of the most endearing concepts of Blake's Unitarianism is the idea of the Brotherhood of Man, a stark contrast to the classic concept of Priestly or Christian brotherhood. The Brotherhood of Man, which Blake believed to be the only solution to all problems, was made possible by Jesus' great revelation concerning the mutual forgiveness of sins, which differentiated Christianity from all other religions. Blake denied that Jesus died for the forgiveness of sins on the basis that it was a contradiction in terms: How can a debt be forgiven if someone else has to pay for it? To Blake, Jesus came to abrogate the inferior system of Judaism by being crucified under that system. He took Paul's "God of this World" and represented him as a fiery wheel- the cherub's revolving sword of flame, which guarded Man's return to paradise. Its name is Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest under which Jesus was crucified in the Gospel of John, and Jesus was killed by walking against its rotation.

Blake saw Heaven and Hell not as real extra-dimensional locations but as representations of the human heart. Angels represented the conservative voice of tradition while devils acted as the rebels, providing the flames of inspiration for change. In this axis, Blake saw himself as a devil. But in other instances, Blake used the concepts of Heaven and Hell for his own polemic against the materialistic philosophies of Locke, Bacon and Newton. To him, they were the infernal Trinity of Justice: Accuser, Judge, and Executioner.

But, at the same time, he believed that one must learn to distinguish between the sin and the sinner. To Blake, it was the sins of mankind that were going to be thrown into hell, not the sinner. "All Act is Virtue. To hinder another is not an act; it is the contrary; it is a restraint on action both in ourselves and in the person hinder'd, for he who hinders another omits his own duty at the same time. Murder is hindering another. Theft is Hindering Another. Backbiting, Undermining, Circumventing and whatever is Negative is Vice". To Blake, the happiness of man is the glory of God, a kind of spiritual humanism. "The churches of Satan try to impress the fear of death in men; to teach trembling and fear, terror and constriction: abject selfishness."

The last element of Blake's spirituality is his conception of God. Blake's four-fold God consisted of Imagination (Urthona), Body (Tharmas), Reason (Urizen), and Emotion (Luvah), whose many associations were faithfully graphed by Damon in A Blake Dictionary. Each of these Blake associated with the four creatures that are mentioned in Ezekiel and Revelations, and associated with the four Gospels.

## Moses' request in Exodus 33 and 34

The Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight, and I have known you by name." Then Moses said, "I pray Thee, show me Thy glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

Now the Lord said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. And no man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain." So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand. And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord.

Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." And Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. And he said, "If now I have found favor in Thy sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate; and do Thou pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Thine own possession" (Exodus 33:17-34:9).

Moses appealed to God to see His glory. God consented to at least a partial display of His glory. The important thing to note is what is identified as God's glory. The radiance and splendor is but a reflection of that glory--not the glory itself. The glory is what God is--His attributes:

"I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and

will show compassion on whom I will show compassion” (Exodus 33:19). God told Moses that His glory was to be seen, in part, in His grace and compassion, sovereignty bestowed on men. When God’s glory was revealed to Moses, it is identified by this divine declaration:

Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness and truth; who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations” (Exodus 34:6-7).

The glory of God is declared here in two aspects of God’s dealings with men: (1) His mercy toward some necessitated and occasioned by their sin, and (2) His wrath toward others, due to their sin. Few would challenge that God’s grace is glorious. But many would question the wrath of God as a manifestation of His glory. The explanation is not that difficult. Is a police officer praised for letting a murderer free? Police are expected to deal kindly with law-keepers and severely with law-breakers--unless the people are the law-breakers. Since all men are law-breakers and would all rather be let free by God. But this would not be right. A righteous God cannot overlook sin. He must deal severely with sinners. For this very reason it is often found men protesting when the wicked seem to be prospering.

God’s wrath is justified when men break His laws. Even more, God’s wrath is justified when He provides for man’s forgiveness and men reject it. God is not severe just in His dealings with sinners; He is also gracious, compassionate, and long-suffering with sinners. Graciously, God sent His own Son to the cross of Calvary. There, Jesus bore the wrath of God. He was punished, not for His sins, but for the sins of the world. The gospel is the good news that anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation will be saved from God’s wrath, forgiven their sins, and assured of eternal life. Those whom God condemns to an eternal hell are those for whom Christ died, those who rejected His offer of salvation. God is truly glorified by His punishment of sinners and His grace to all who repent and believe in Jesus Christ.

### **Paradise Lost’s Hero**

Although *Paradise Lost* was written by John Milton more than three centuries ago, it remains an important fixture in the Western literary canon, and its central subject continues to be a cause for scholarly debate: Is Satan a heroic figure and more importantly, how can Satan be described as an epic hero? While this question has occupied literary critics and scholars for generations, this question remains

controversial, for it provokes responses that arise from closely held religious or moral values, on the one hand, and a commitment to strict literary interpretation, on the other. In biblical and mythical texts, as well as in popular culture, Satan is consistently portrayed as an evil and antagonistic figure in *Paradise Lost* who attempts at every turn to undermine the true hero of the story. In such texts as *Paradise Lost*, Satan is objectified and demeaned; he seems to have no redeeming qualities and is painted as a completely unsympathetic figure.

Yet in *Paradise Lost*, Milton plays with this tension that the character of Satan in "*Paradise Lost*" provokes, thereby forcing the reader to consider the possibility that Satan may actually be a hero, or at the very least, a character worth seeing in a more complex light. As the plot unfolds, there are moments when the reader can identify with Satan's desires and his disappointments. At the same time, Milton introduces a God in *Paradise Lost* who is wrathful and distanced, which makes Satan even more appealing and heroic, if not something of an "everyman" heroic figure that the reader has the possibility of identifying with. When one applies Aristotle's notion of *Hamartia* to a reading of *Paradise Lost*, it seems entirely reasonable to interpret that Satan, having been a good person who fell from grace, is indeed a hero.

What makes the debate about Satan as a hero in *Paradise Lost* so charged for many readers is that the traditional image of a hero is a figure, generally a man, who is a fundamentally good person confronting challenges and overcoming them successfully. In *Paradise Lost*, however, this hero archetype is challenged completely, especially by the character of Satan. All of the characters are complex, containing contradictory dualities. Perhaps what is even more notable is that in *Paradise Lost*, even God himself cannot be classified as a hero according to the traditional definition. In fact, He may be the most anti-heroic character of all in this epic and is presented in a way that makes the reader fear (or even resent) him rather than see him in the traditional religious way one is expected to see God.

Therefore it is concluded that Satan will never die, he is immortal. This is another characteristic of angels that Satan possesses. Therefore there is nothing that one as a believer can do to destroy him. God created him as an immortal being. To science the existence of Satan is an open question; it neither can deny nor affirm it. Satan's existence and personality can be denied therefore only on purely *a priori* grounds. The Bible, however, is very clear and positive in its teaching regarding the existence of a personality of evil called the devil. It is popular in some circles today to spell devil with the "d" left off, thus denying his real existence. The Bible ends with an account of Satan's final doom. From beginning to end, Satan's existence, his fall, and his opposition to God are all a part of God's eternal plan for His creation.

### Works Cited:

Altzier, Thomas. *The New Apocalypse: The Radical Christian Vision of William Blake*, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1974.

Botrall, Margaret(ed.). *William Blake: Songs Of Innocence And Experience* (Casebook Series), London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1970.

Charles Gardner, *Vision and Vesture: A Study of William Blake in Modern Thought*, revised edition, New York: Dutton, 1929.

Daiches, David. *A Critical History of English Literature* (Volume four), London: The Ronald Press Company, 1960.

Martin K. Nurmi, *Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell: A Critical Study*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1957.

Pinto, Vivian De Sola(ed.). *The Divine Vision: Studies In the Poetry and Art of William Blake*, London: Victor Gollanez, 1957.

Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.