

# “Bound Over To Satan’s Tyranny”—Sin and Satan in Contemporary Reformed Hamartiology

Philip G. Ziegler

University of Aberdeen

## ABSTRACT

What might be the shape of a Reformed account of sin which does justice to the soteriological necessity of conceiving of salvation as a “three agent drama” involving God, the human, and those powers inimical to God of which the Devil is a synecdoche? What role ought the figure of Satan play in contemporary hamartiology and what is at stake in asking and answering such a question? In conversation with recent work in Pauline apocalyptic as well as the work of G.C. Berkouwer as a developed example of the treatment of Satan in modern Protestant soteriology, this paper explores these questions with a view to discerning possibilities for constructive restatement.

## KEYWORDS

Sin, Satan, Apocalyptic, Redemption, Berkouwer, Apostle Paul

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*“Christ himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear were subject to lifelong captivity.”*

—Hebrews 2:14b-15

*“Never, my brethren, forget, when you hear enlightenment vaunted, that the neatest trick of the devil is to persuade you that he does not exist.”<sup>1</sup>*

## **I/ Introduction**

Is it essential that we think and speak of Satan if we are to think and speak of sin in accordance with the demands of the gospel? Does interest in the figure of Satan in Christian soteriology reflect a properly dogmatic imperative? Or is it symptomatic of mere obscurantism, or perhaps more generously, of a persistent psychological and rhetorical reflex to want to represent important “spiritual ideas in drastic allegories”?<sup>2</sup>

Impressed by the fact that the New Testament witness thoroughly entangles talk of human sin with talk of Satan, early Reformed theology adjudged that hamartiology had to deal directly with the devil. The *Scots Confession* places sin and Satan in direct apposition when it declares that in Adam all “became by nature hostile to God, slaves to Satan, servants to sin”.<sup>3</sup> To the question as to why Christ is called “Lord”, the *Heidelberg Catechism* answers that it is because he claims and delivers sinners out from under “the power of the devil” whose property they have become.<sup>4</sup> Calvin elaborates a similar view when he writes that in virtue of the “the fact that Adam willingly bound himself over to the devil’s tyranny”, fallen humanity continues to be “held captive by the yoke of sin”, being “bound in servitude to the

devil” such that the sinner “seems to be actuated more by the devil’s will than by his own”. Indeed, sinners are subject to and captivated by the devil’s power to which they “of necessity obediently submit” having been abandoned “with just judgment, to Satan’s action”. In short, Calvin says, “Satan reigns in a reprobate [person]” because sin *is* “Satan’s kingdom”.<sup>5</sup> Salvation, if it is come, must primarily take the form of deliverance, as “it is necessary that Satan be violently driven out in order that God may establish his Kingdom among [us]”.<sup>6</sup>

This sensibility continues to appear from time to time in modern Reformed theology: a leading 19<sup>th</sup> Scottish theologian could, for example, contend that the “doctrine of a personal power of evil is of the utmost importance to dogmatics as a foundation of the true doctrine of sin and redemption”.<sup>7</sup> And well within our own lifetimes, the Principal of a leading American Presbyterian seminary argued that it was simply impossible to preach the Christian gospel with full force and joy apart from a frank admission that, in the “biblical view of the human situation”, we are oppressively enslaved by the powers of sin, death and, indeed, the devil.<sup>8</sup>

Of course many, indeed most, modern Protestant theologians demur, including famously F.D.E. Schleiermacher whose firm judgment on the matter has been influential:

There is still no reason for our accepting this notion [of the devil] as a permanent element in Christian doctrine . . . . Since that from which we are to be redeemed remains the same (as does also the manner of our redemption) whether there be a devil or no, the question as to his existence is not one for Christian Theology but for Cosmology . . . . In Christian Dogmatics we . . . are just as little concerned to dispute the concept of the devil as to establish it.<sup>9</sup>

At a minimum here, the idea of the devil is adiaphorous; at most it is categorically misplaced. Downstream from Schleiermacher’s pronouncement, contemporary treatments of the doctrine of sin by leading Reformed theologians very rarely afford the devil any real role in relation to

their theme.<sup>10</sup> Commonplace is the view that the devil is simply a feature of a passé worldview and the rational integrity of the modern “buffered self” keeps such troublesome spirits at bay.<sup>11</sup> But we do well to take specific note of Schleiermacher’s own declared motivation in coming to his own position: he suggests that we dispense with the Devil—and idea at once “incidental” and “hazardous” as he says—because it is irrelevant to our grasp of both “that from which we are to be redeemed” and “the manner of our redemption”. He sees, rightly I think, that while the topic of the devil is often treated—when treated at all—within the doctrine of creation generally, and angels in particular, its proper and decisive *locus*—if it has one at all—is *soteriology*. If the devil is to have any place in Reformed doctrine, Schleiermacher discerns, it must be because Satan in fact proves supremely relevant to our understanding of the *ratio* and *modus* of redemption. Schleiermacher could not see his way to such a judgment; perhaps we can.

In this article I venture to argue for the dogmatic necessity of the devil as a feature of Reformed hamartiology. The burden of my case is that the idea of Satan while undoubtedly “hazardous” is anything but “incidental” to the saving gospel of God. We only win a full appreciation of that vicious and misanthropic captivity from which we are saved—and so best discern the reality into which we are delivered—when our theology “gives the devil his due”, as it were. The claim that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim 1:15) wins its deep, evangelical meaning, only when synonymous with the claim that “the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the work of the devil” (1 John 3:8). As Scottish divine James Stewart rightly observed half a century ago, “however we may interpret it, we must recognise that [in this matter] we are dealing, not with some unessential apocalyptic scaffolding, but with the very substance of the faith”.<sup>12</sup>

The case is developed in three concise steps: first, we reflect briefly on the place of Satan as a formative feature of the New Testament witness to the reality of salvation. Second,

we critically analyse the modern dogmatic effort of G. C. Berkouwer to “place” Satan in relation to the doctrine of sin. Third, we move to suggest that a doctrine of sin that “gives the devil his due” serves to secure the evangelically basic point that the problem of sin far overreaches the problem of human moral weakness, malfeasance and guilt.

## **II / The Three-Agent Drama of Christian Salvation**

Amongst the provocations to renewed theological responsibility arising from recent scholarship on the apocalyptic character of the New Testament generally, and of Paul’s witness in particular, is fresh recognition that the drama of salvation attested there has three, rather than merely two, principal actors.<sup>13</sup> The gospel tells of the saving advent of (1) God for the sake (2) human beings and against those (3) supra-human powers which have ensnared and depleted them. These antithetical powers of “Sin, Death and the Devil”—sometimes named together, sometimes interchangeably, and sometimes deployed as synecdoches—are arrayed against both God and humanity, and actively so, being the recurrent subjects of transitive verbs.<sup>14</sup> Common to them all is fundamental enmity against God and so also against God’s good creatures. Common too, is the ascription of pervasive power, power enough to have turned the world into “death’s cruel empire”—as Cyril of Alexandria once remarked—and to render the human self a “body of death” in virtue of its invading presence (Rom 7:21, 24).<sup>15</sup>

The situation upon which divine salvation comes in Christ is thus not merely one of human disobedience, but of universal human captivity and enslavement “*under the power of*” the adversarial “cosmic forces of this present darkness” (Eph 6:12) themselves in service to the “God of this age” (2 Cor 4:4).<sup>16</sup> This situation constitutes the comprehensive environment within which human beings are found: “*this world*” with its “prince” (John 8:23 and 14:30; Cf. Rom 12:2, 1 Cor 3:19), and “*this present and passing evil age*” with its “rulers” (1 Cor

2:6; 7:31b). The synoptic gospels attest this in that—having set Jesus’s temptation in the wilderness at the head of his mission and ministry—they make confrontation with demonic forces a “hallmark” of his work, (Mt 4:1-11 and parallels).<sup>17</sup> The recurrent Johannine invocation of the condition, captivity and antagonism of “darkness” bespeaks the same reality of powerful opposition to Christ.<sup>18</sup> As J. Louis Martyn observes, we hear “repeatedly and emphatically of the universal and terrifying state of enslavement under the might of anti-God powers, the curse of the Law, Sin, and the elements of the cosmos”, the “stark reality” of which is manifest in that “its power has been broken *only* by the atoning death of God’s Christ” who comes to “seize us out of” their grasp and “redeem us from slavery” (Gal 1:4, 3:13).<sup>19</sup> Across a range of notable differences in detail and emphasis, the New Testament authors together “depict the defeat of such powers as lying at the heart of Jesus mission”.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, for this reason it has been suggested that Christ’s saving work—of which the advent of the Kingdom of God is the controlling image—is unintelligible apart from being seen “in terms of opposition to the devil”.<sup>21</sup>

What should follow from renewed recognition that salvation is originally rendered as a three-agent drama of this kind? How should our soteriology express the contours of the drama of salvation as one in which the grace of God in Christ contests the powers of “Sin, Death and the Devil” under whose mutinous and misanthropic reign humanity is bound, suffers and serves? One consequence is to suggest that our fundamental soteriological category must be that of our *redemption* from this manifold captivity that also ends human complicity with it. In short: “the world’s salvation lies in its being recaptured for the sovereignty of God” by the effectual power of divine grace that overthrows the *regni Satanae* which is Sin.<sup>22</sup> Other soteriological motifs can and must then find their place and their meaning within this controlling vision of divine liberation and rescue from evil.

### III/ G.C. Berkouwer on Sin and Satan

The twentieth century Dutch theologian G.C. Berkouwer offers an unusually extensive discussion of Satan in the opening pages of his substantive study of the doctrine of sin in his *Studies in Dogmatics*.<sup>23</sup> For present purposes, we look to Berkouwer's treatment in order to identify the preoccupying concerns that orient and constrain how the question of the place of the devil within hamartiology is approached in a modern Reformed theology.

Berkouwer's discussion is marked by three principle concerns. The first is to rule out from the outset any monism that would make God the author of sin, as well as any fundamental dualism of origin that would suggest that the devil is eternally coeval with God.<sup>24</sup> The second is to ensure that the power of the devil is only conceived in an ordered relation of inferiority to God's sovereignty, i.e., as a power that is always "subject to God's own *dynamis* and *exousia*".<sup>25</sup> Demonic power is only known to faith precisely in the disclosure of its subordination to divine authority such that "the revelation of these powers is itself an indirect witness of the majestic glory and salvation of God".<sup>26</sup> In both these cases, Berkouwer's interest is to display and affirm the traditional grammatical limits within which discourse concerning the devil will move if our hamartiology is to remain Christian and orthodox by eschewing fundamental dualism and refusing to make God the author of evil.

His third and predominating concern has a different focus. He is anxious that appeals to demonic power and agency should never serve in any way to exculpate human guilt for sin. It is true, Berkouwer admits, that theology must attend to "the demonic and seditious forces of which Scripture so emphatically speaks", dark powers that are "evident ever since the beginning of [human] sin"; it is also true that this power is the power of evil, an "absolute antithesis" which "sprang forth and found its place within the structure of creaturely reality".<sup>27</sup> Yet, crucially he argues at length that these forces in no way constitute an *explanation* or *mitigation* for the guilt of human sin: we must not think of the human being as

a “victim”—as if “of a treacherous coup”, he says—overwhelmed by the devil as by an “irresistible” or “inexorable” force or a “catastrophic” and “fatalistic power” which is the *origin* of our sin.<sup>28</sup> Any and all such appeals amount to a desperate effort to “self-excuse” and to find an “exculpation *from evil*” because they illegitimately invoke a fateful, overwhelming agent in order to efface human moral responsibility and so also human guilt.<sup>29</sup> In fact, Berkouwer argues, the relationship between sin and Satan runs the *opposite* way. As he explains:

Being “of the devil” does not mean that one is bound by the categories of sheer fate; rather, the word *of* should be seen as a wholesale indictment of [human] guilt. No satanic *force majeure* is apparent here in opposition to the good gift of God’s sonship: for only *in and through one’s guilt* does the power of the evil one take hold. A demonological explanation of sin’s origin is therefore impossible.<sup>30</sup>

For this reason, no doctrine of sin should look to “affirm an objective state of affairs in which a place is assigned to the power of demons” for ultimately, “we may never trace back our guilt to causes other than *our guilt*”.<sup>31</sup>

The intensity and extensity with which Berkouwer presses this third line of argument bespeaks just how important he perceives to be. He is anxious to deny sinners any device by which to avoid or deflect the judgment of their sin and the reality of their personal guilt. To claim that we are helpless victims of sin’s superlative power—to plead that “the devil made me do it”—is therefore inadmissible. Concomitantly, he is committed to a vigorous defence of human will and agency as the first principle and mainspring of our conduct, and so the true and ultimate *origin* of our human situation. We are guilty *of* and *in* our “subjection to the realm” of the devil, having in fact brought it upon ourselves. In short, it is because we have actively willed and made our own bed of sin that we must sleep beneath its demonically



ironed sheets. It bears repeating that on this view the sole originary cause of our guilt is *our guilt itself*.

Human sin, Berkouwer emphasises, must remain “unreasonable and unexplainable” even as its source and reality are fully and rightly imputed to the human heart.<sup>32</sup> Here concern for human culpability and human dignity are closely intertwined: the announcement of salvation discloses the “senseless and even ridiculous” temptation falsely to overrate the devilish power of evil, for in God’s pardon—i.e., in “a *real forgiveness of sins*”—the “demonological explanation finds its definitive rebuttal”.<sup>33</sup> In other words, Berkouwer adjudges that from the fact that salvation takes the form of the “*forgiveness of sins*” we learn that the problem to which salvation is the solution is the guilt of such sins: and if the problem of sin is moral guilt, then the root of the problem is human willing. This is what motivates Berkouwer’s overarching concern to ensure that nothing in our hamartiology compromises the claim that human sins find their “sufficient cause exclusively in the spontaneity of the human will”.<sup>34</sup>

#### **IV/ Observations and Remarks**

While Berkouwer’s concern is keenly felt, his argument might be thought to overreach, leaving him unable to account adequately for the “three agent drama” of salvation rendered in the New Testament of which we spoke above. For the scriptural witness to the inimical powers of “Sin, Death and the Devil” enjoins precisely what he argues must be excluded, namely the idea of the sinner as overcome, enthralled, captive and subject to exogenous powers, the very demonic *force majeure* of which he speaks. It seems that if it is to keep company with this witness theology must speak of human beings as not only agents of sin but also, and even more fundamentally, as its *victims*, something Berkouwer disallows. Allow me to venture some brief observations on this tension and its significance.

First, we might worry that Berkouwer's treatment of the devil effaces an important qualification of human sin that distinguishes it from "satanic sin". Hendrikus Berkhof draws attention to the matter when, in reflecting on the difficult saying of John 8:44—"You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."—he observes acutely that while the devil's sin is essential ("according to his own nature") human sin is acquired ("from the devil"). At stake is the thought that human beings are not the absolute originators of their own antipathy and rebellion against God, but first its victims and only then its recruits. As such, and only as such, can they be the objects of divine salvation. As Hermann Bavinck had previously remarked in this regard, "belief in the devil maintains simultaneously the awesome seriousness of sin and the saveability of [humanity]".<sup>35</sup> Seen in this way, any account of sin that does not see human beings as both a victim of *Sin* as well as perpetrators of sins, imputes to them a purity and power of evil of devilish proportions. A proper doctrine of the devil would serve then to insist that for all that it is real and total, human depravity is adventitious and not in any way natural or essential.

Second, central to Berkouwer's account of the problem of sin, as we have seen, is a decision to treat it as a distinctively, even exhaustively, moral problem. Kant's argument concerning the nature of "radical evil" in part one of *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* perfectly distils the focal concern with human responsibility and guilt that animates Berkouwer's critique of the demonic within the doctrine of sin. Unless our sinful evil acts have at their root an originary act of human willing—a spontaneous and transgressive choice—Kant argues then evil is not *moral evil* and thus cannot be imputed to us. Even if other proximate causes in some sense crowd in, ultimately sin must be understood to originate from unimpeded human freedom, otherwise the moral realm as such becomes

irrational.<sup>36</sup> Kant's own aim in making such an argument is to effect a philosophical translation of the Christian doctrine of sin into a "pure rational faith" fit to meet the "needs" of practical reasoning.<sup>37</sup> Berkouwer's proper ambition is to display and defend the internal logic of Christian doctrine as such. Yet, in both cases the problem of sin and evil reduces to the problem of morality: to hold the matter of sin firmly within the moral register we must cash out the logic of sin fully in the language of human agency, freedom, responsibility, culpability and guilt. And in this register, fundamental hamartiological reasoning must be channelled into the narrow task of rendering the logic of a universal case (an "Adam", if you will) in order to analyse the conditions of possibility under which any human act can rightly be considered "sinful".

Much drops out here which we might think essential and evangelical: preoccupation with the moral logic of the generic "adamic" case is textureless by design, and excludes any more socially, structurally, historically or politically inflected considerations of the manifold forms, patterns and consequences of sin which might properly elicit theological attention and analysis. Such considerations can only but be set aside when we refuse the propriety of talk of the demonic as an "objective state of affairs" and delimit its scope to the bounds of individual moral psychology. But even there, Berkouwer's sinner is a particular kind of self, a well "buffered" modern self, making its own meanings, fashioning its own future, finally free from heteronomous influence. Notably, Berkouwer's account in fact restricts the genuine threat of the devil—at least of the idea of the devil—to the human "will to excuse and exculpate": it is in the refusal of moral responsibility alone that temptation really lies. On such grounds and for these reasons, the talk of the devil here can only be indirect and poetic talk the self-chosen and achieved situation of culpable moral catastrophe into which we willingly deliver ourselves.

But do we have the true measure of sin on such terms? When we have conceived of sin solely as vice, have we not left unplumbed or even obscured the scope and depth of our all-too virtuous unbelief and all-too moral bewitchment by “mutinous untruth”?<sup>38</sup> The rectification of all things in Christ Jesus confronts human moral transgression to be sure, but only within a much wider concern to see a world usurped by Sin “set to rights”, to see women and men redeemed out from under the oppressive anti-God and misanthropic powers which grind, deplete and distort humanity in ways which certainly aid and abet moral failure, but undoubtedly also energise and aggravate social, political, aesthetic, intellectual as well as religious corruption. A doctrine of sin must be capacious enough to include not only wilful human acts which incur moral guilt, but also the reality of the degradation of human personality, the corrosion of trust, and the distortion of identity and estrangement suffered under subjection to the dehumanising power of evil in its manifold forms: in short, to address the reality of our sin-distorted being. Perhaps it is precisely the function of the satanic—of appeals to the pervasive enslaving power of “Sin, Death and the Devil”—within a Christian doctrine of sin to resist the reduction of the problem of sin to the problem of morals by insisting that theology acknowledge that sin, no less than grace, is an exogenous power that we first *suffer*, because it befalls us *ab extra*. Moral and non-moral sin—both faithlessness and “estrangement”<sup>39</sup>—can be grasped within the overarching situation of captivity in Sin and the annihilating effects of this satanic tyranny.

Talk of our “sin-distorted *being*” in these ways holds the problem of sin in a register beyond and more basic than the merely moral, namely the ontological. Though the effort is fraught with difficulty and liable to misunderstanding, Karl Barth’s analysis of *das Nichtige* does attempt to bring out the virulent, aggressive and parodic character of that power of which human sin is a dark fruit and testimony. This power has the character of an “*antithetically anhypostatic being*” inimical to God’s grace and “bent solely upon destruction

and disaster” and Barth takes the figure of the devil and the demonic to represent the dynamic forms such evil assumes “in action”.<sup>40</sup> This ontological register, absent by design in Berkouwer’s account as in others, crucially communicates the depth and nature of the problem of sin as well as vastly expanding the catalogue of havoc and woe rightly associated with it. The deflection of the moral will turns out to be symptom rather than disease on this score: for the devil’s proper work is the deprivation and dissolution of human personhood and human being as such. It is against this “power and malignity as the alien force which dominates, seduces and deceives [humanity]” that divine grace comes when on the cross of Christ it triumphs over and “drives out” the “God of this age” (cf. Col 2:14).<sup>41</sup>

This we may learn well from attending to the militant action of sovereign saving divine love in Christ. In his theological commentary on question thirty-four of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Barth aptly concludes with these words:

Human beings are *sinner*s. They have become the offenders and enemies of God. But as sinners, they are *lost*, prisoners of death. God will not be mocked. Sinful humanity falls into the power of Satan, into the hands of a *foreign* power . . . But in Jesus Christ this violated human dignity is restored, for Christ has *freed* us from this power.<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps then we must now adjudge the matter differently than did Schleiermacher, and suggest that our grasp of that from which we are redeemed and the manner of our redemption are both affected—fundamentally and decisively—by what is made of the devil in our doctrine of sin.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen: Little Poems in Prose*, translated by K. Waldrop (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2009), 60.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase is from Paul Carus, *The History of the Devil* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2008), 402.

<sup>3</sup> *The Scots Confession*, article 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism*, question 34. See *The Heidelberg Catechism, in German, Latin and English* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1863), 67-68. The original Latin and German verbs are *redemo* and *erlösen*.

<sup>5</sup> Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559), edited by J. T. McNeil, translated by F. Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), II.v.1; II.iv.1 and 5. Calvin's language of God's 'abandoning' echoes Paul in Romans 1:24, 26 and 28, on which see Beverly Gaventa, 'God Handed Them Over', in *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2007), 113-123.

<sup>6</sup> John Calvin, comment on Matthew 12:28-29, in *Commentary on the Harmony of the Gospels*, volume 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 42-43

<sup>7</sup> John MacPherson, *Christian Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1898), 220.

<sup>8</sup> Donald G. Miller, 'Preaching the Gospel' in *Intergerini Parietis Septvm (Eph. 2:14): Essays presented to Markus Barth on his sixty-fifth birthday*, edited by Dikran Y. Hadidian (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Monographs, 1981), 205-226, especially 211-19. Miller was the founding editor of *Interpretation* and sometime principal of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

<sup>9</sup> F.D.E. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, translated by H. R. Mackintosh (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), I §§44-45. The full passage in §45 runs: 'But even if we could regard some or, indeed all of the above quoted passages of Scripture as referring to the devil, there is

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still no reason for our accepting this notion as a permanent element in Christian doctrine and defining it accordingly so accurately that everything attributed to the devil could be conceived as a consistent whole. For Christ and His disciples did not hold this idea as one derived from the sacred writings of the Old Testament, or in any way acquired through Divine revelation; it was drawn from the common life of the period just as it is still present more or less in all our minds in spite of our utter ignorance as to the existence of such a being. Since that from which we are to be redeemed remains the same (as does also the manner of our redemption) whether there be a devil or no, the question as to his existence is not one for Christian Theology but for Cosmology, in the widest sense of that word. It is exactly similar to questions as to the nature of the firmament and the heavenly bodies. In Christian Dogmatics we have nothing either to affirm or deny on such subjects; and similarly we are just as little concerned to dispute the concept of the devil as to establish it.' (167). In the thesis for §44 he claims simply that '*our Church has never made doctrinal use of the idea*' (161).

<sup>10</sup> For different kinds of examples, see the substantive chapter on 'Sin' by Oliver Crisp in *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic*, edited by M. Allen and S. Swain (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 194-215, the treatment of sin in Brian A. Gerrish, *Christian Faith: Dogmatics in Outline* (Louisville, KY: WJK, 2015), 77-106. Daniel L. Migliore's much used text, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup>. edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), only mentions the matter in the context of brief historical rehearsal of the features of the '*Christus Victor*' theory of the atonement, 89-89. Cf. Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, translated by S. Woudstra (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 200-202.

<sup>11</sup> Brian Gerrish speaks, for instance, of how it would be 'unwise' to track too closely with 'reports couched in the language of another time (e.g., in terms of the malevolent activity of

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demons)', *Christian Faith*, 237. The displacement of the idea of supra-human powers, including the figure of the devil, plays a notable role in the articulation of the distinctively modern 'buffered self' immune to 'exogenous' influence in Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 32-43.

<sup>12</sup> James S. Stewart, 'On a Neglected Emphasis in New Testament Theology', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 4:3 (1951), 300.

<sup>13</sup> On this see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday 1997); 'The Gospel Invades Philosophy' in *Paul, Philosophy and the Theopolitical Vision: Critical Engagements with Agamben, Badiou, Zizek and Others*, edited by D. Harink (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 13-36; 'Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-ethics', in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, edited by J. Barclay and S. Gathercole (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 173-83; Martinus De Boer, 'Paul, Theologian of God's Apocalypse', *Interpretation* (2002), 21-33. More widely, see the earlier works of G.B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956) and Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), and more recently, Derek R. Brown, *The God of this Age: Satan in the Churches and Letters of the Apostle Paul* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), D.G. Reid, 'Satan, Devil' in *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Downers Grove, IN: IVP, 1993), 862-867 and Richard H. Bell, *Deliver Us from Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Think in particular of the discourse of Romans 5, where 'Sin' and 'Death' are agents who 'come in', 'reign' etc. Commentators have long recognised the semantic and material overlap of these terms: so, for example, Ambrosiaster commenting on Romans 7 writes of 'sin, which is the devil' (on v. 4) and says that 'sin should be understood as the devil' (vv. 7-13)—See J.



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Patout Burns and C. Newman, editors and translators, *Romans Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators* (Grand Rapids, IN: Eerdmans, 2012), 157-59, 163-64.

<sup>15</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, 'Glaphyra' in *PG* 69, col 437 (Paris, 1864).

<sup>16</sup> Or the 'prince of the power of the air' (Eph 2:1-2); Cf. Rom 3:9, 6:6, 12-22; 7:11; Gal 1:3; Eph 6:12. See Jeffrey Burton Russell, 'Christ and the Power of Evil' in his *The Prince of Darkness: Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 43-55 for a concise survey and discussion.

<sup>17</sup> See J.R. Daniel Kirk, 'Powers and Principalities' in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin*, edited by K.L. Johnson and D. Lauber (London: T&T Clark/Bloomsbury, 2016), 408-11.

<sup>18</sup> John 1:5, 3:19, 8:12, 12:35, 12:46, not to mention the invocation of the devil and Satan as agents of intense antithesis to Christ's activity (John 6:70, 8:44, 13:2, 13:27). The two are connected in a parallelism in Acts 26:18: 'to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. . .'

<sup>19</sup> J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians*, 373.

<sup>20</sup> Kirk, 'Principalities and Powers', 411. Cf. also James Kallas, *The Real Satan. From Biblical Times to the Present* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), chapters 3 and especially 4: 'Jesus is the divine invader sent by God to shatter the strengths of Satan. In that light, the whole ministry of Jesus unrolls. Jesus has but one purpose—to defeat Satan' (60).

<sup>21</sup> He continues, 'That is the whole point of the New Testament.' – Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Prince of Darkness*, 51.

<sup>22</sup> The quotation is from Ernst Käsemann, 'The Righteousness of God in Paul', in *New Testament Questions of Today*, translated by W. J. Monague. (London: SCM, 1969), 182. The phrase *regni Satanae* is Calvin's, see above.

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<sup>23</sup> G.C. Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Sin*, translated by P.C. Holtrop (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), chapter 3 ('Dualism) and 4 ('Sin and the Demonic Realm'), 67-129.

<sup>24</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 67-98. Much of the discussion is concerned to forestall misunderstandings of *creation ex nihilo* that would suggest that comes forth from 'nothing' conceived as a kind of origin or material. He is concerned that Barth's exegesis of Genesis 1:2-3 runs off in this direction.

<sup>25</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 116.

<sup>26</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 115.

<sup>27</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 100, 99, 70.

<sup>28</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 100-01, 112.

<sup>29</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 101, 70.

<sup>30</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 104.

<sup>31</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 115-16.

<sup>32</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 111.

<sup>33</sup> Berkouwer, *Sin*, 114, 122, 128.

<sup>34</sup> Jan Rohls, *Reformed Confessions: Theology from Zurich to Barmen* (Louisville, KY: WJK, 1997), 72.

<sup>35</sup> Cited in Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 203.

<sup>36</sup> See Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 55-65. These latter concerns find classic articulation here where the requirements of moral freedom and culpability drive Kant's reworking of the doctrines of the fall and original sin in Part I, and erupts again in the discussion of 'miracles' later in the text where Kant writes, 'The judge (however credulous of miracles he may be in church) listens to the delinquent's claims to have been tempted of the devil exactly as though nothing has been said . . . . the judge cannot summon the tempter and confront each with the other; in a word,

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he can make absolutely nothing rational out of the matter. The wise clergyman will therefore guard himself well against cramming the heads and debasing the imaginations of those committed to his pastoral care with anecdotes from The Hellish Proteus', 101.

<sup>37</sup> On this see Christopher Insole, *Kant's Intolerable God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016).

<sup>38</sup> The phrase is Kierkegaard's from *For Self-Examination / Judge for Yourself!*, edited and translated by H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 19.

<sup>39</sup> Brian A. Gerrish, *Christian Faith*, 77, 88-89, 104-06 rightly presses the need for such an expansion, through for reasons quite different than our own. Note well that Gerrish makes *faith*, rather than God, the subject of 'victory' and 'faithfulness' in his discussion of the Christian 'answer' to the problem of evil. He is required at this just this point to reach for the gospels full-throated reference to Satan and his overthrow in the mission of Jesus, citing the exorcisms of 'the seventy' and Jesus' word to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning' (Lk 10:18), 105.

<sup>40</sup> Wolf Krötke, *Sin and Nothingness in the Theology of Karl Barth*, translated by C-M. Bammel and P.G. Ziegler (Princeton: Princeton Theological Seminary, 2005), 50-53; Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/3, 260-1 and III/3, 519f.

<sup>41</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/3, 261.

<sup>42</sup> Karl Barth, *The Heidelberg Catechism for Today*, translated by S. Guthrie (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1964), 31-32 (translation altered).