

Allan Wright

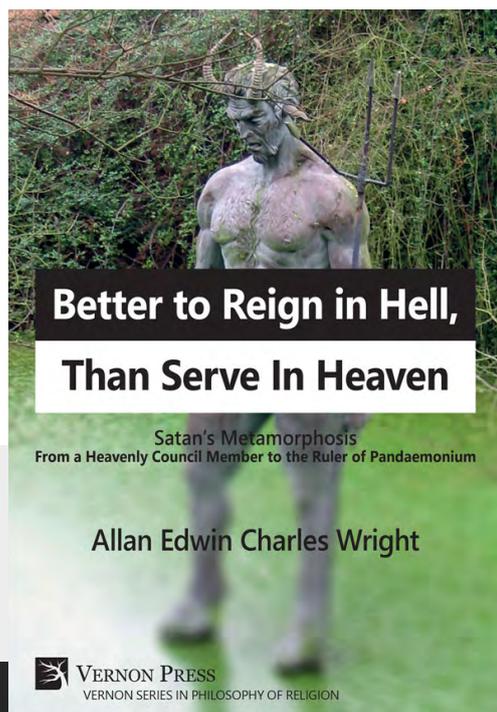
Better to Reign in Hell, Than Serve In Heaven

Satan's Metamorphosis From a Heavenly Council Member to the Ruler of Pandaemonium

SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

About the author

I am currently a PhD candidate at the University of Alberta in the academic study of religion. I completed my undergraduate degree with High Honours and my Master's degree at the University of Regina, both specializing in early Christian and New Testament studies. My main area of focus is early Christianity and theoretical studies. I have been teaching various religion classes (Ex. Introduction to Western Religions and Introduction to Eastern Religions) for the last four years. I have LAO attended and participated in various academic religion conferences.



Summary

In this monograph, I argue that Satan was not perceived as a universal malevolent deity, the embodiment of evil, or the “ruler of Pandemonium” within first century Christian literature or even within second and third century Christian discourses as some scholars have insisted. Instead, for early “Christian” authors, Satan represented a pejorative term used to describe terrestrial, tangible, and concrete social realities, perceived of as adversaries. To reach this conclusion, I explore the narrative character of Satan selectively within the Hebrew Bible, intertestamental literature, Mark, Matthew, Luke, Q, the Book of Revelation, the Nag Hammadi texts, and the Ante-Nicene fathers.

I argue that certain scholars' such as Jeffrey Burton Russell, Miguel A. De La Torre, Albert Hernandez, Peter Stanford, Paul Carus, and Gerd Theissen, homogenized reconstructions of the “New Testament Satan” as the universalized incarnation of evil and that God's absolute cosmic enemy is absent from early Christian orthodox literature, such as Mark, Matthew, Luke, Q, the Book of Revelation, and certain writings from the Ante-Nicene Fathers. Using Jonathan Z. Smith's essay *Here, There, and Anywhere*, I suggest that the cosmic dualist approach to Satan as God's absolute cosmic enemy resulted from the changing social topography of the early fourth century where Christian “insider” and “outsider” adversaries were diminishing. With these threats fading, early Christians universalized a perceived chaotic cosmic enemy, namely Satan, being influenced by the Gnostic demiurge, who disrupts God's terrestrial and cosmic order. Therefore, Satan transitioned from a “here,” “insider,” and “there,” “outsider,” threat to a universal “anywhere” threat. This study could be employed as a characterization study, New Testament theory and application for classroom references or research purposes.

October 2017 | Hardback 236x160mm | 169 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-62273-287-6
Also in Paperback (\$49/€41/£36) | ISBN: 978-1-62273-469-6

SUBJECTS Religious Studies, Philosophy of Religion, History

VIEW/ORDER ONLINE AT vernonpress.com/book/343

12% DISCOUNT ONLINE
USE CODE AT CHECKOUT

FLYPR12



VERNON PRESS
www.vernonpress.com

\$ 57

€ 54

£ 47