

## Does Satan Really Exist?

I don't believe that Satan is real. My view is that the writers of the Bible needed a way to explain the presence of evil in the world without blaming God, so an adversary, or Satan, was created (actually borrowed from the surrounding Babylonian culture). Much of the Old Testament was written and revised during the period of the Babylonian exile and soon afterwards. Jesus accommodated the popular beliefs in the Jewish culture. He may have believed that Satan was a separate entity. He was not omniscient.

In the various NDE (Near Death Experience) and OBE (Out of Body Experience) accounts, and from past-life and between-lives hypnotic regressions, we have learned that you are your own accuser. During the life review, your eyes are opened and you are able to see your actions from a Godly perspective and from the perspective of people you may have harmed. But no one is judging you. You are at the same time experiencing unconditional love from God and from your friends in the spirit world. If Satan or evil spirits do exist, I seriously doubt they would be God's adversaries. In some way, they would, perhaps unwittingly, be serving the loving purposes of God. The experience of separation from God, and sin & evil in their various forms, are an important and necessary part of God's plan for all of us. They are necessary for our spiritual growth.

In some of the NDE's and OBE's we do see evidence, not of a single entity called Satan, but of evil spirits or entities. I am not at all sure that these entities have a real existence external to the experiencer's own "creative" thoughts. The effect is the same, however, whether they are real or just imagined. Are demons real external entities or just thought projections? I don't know. When Jesus cast out demons, the result was a freeing of the subject's mind from these negative influences. I believe that our entire human existence is a thought projection of sorts, an imagined reality created and shared by the collective consciousness of which we individually are tiny parts. Is Satan real? Only to the extent that we believe he is real. Is he able to negatively influence us? Only if we give him permission to do so.