



BUT YOU DO NOT REALIZE THAT YOU ARE “WRETCHED”

You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched

Revelation 3: 17

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the word “wretched” in the adjective form as:

- 1: deeply afflicted, dejected, or distressed in body or mind,
- 2: extremely or deplorably bad or distressing, “was in wretched health,” “a wretched accident,”
- 3a: being or appearing mean, miserable, or contemptible, “dressed in wretched old clothes,”
- b: very poor in quality or ability: INFERIOR.

If we look into the origins or etymology of “wretched” as an adjective, we learn:

WRETCHED

c. 1200, wretched, an irregular formation from wrecche “wretch” (see wretch). Also see wicked. Related: Wretchedly; wretchedness.

In order to understand “wretched,” we need to understand the two related words mentioned above, “wrech” and “wicked.” As we go, a few other related words will appear and we will need to also follow their trail.

The first related word we saw is “wretch,” or “wrecca” in Old English. “Wretch” is also related to “wreak,” and you will find both below:

WRETCH

Old English wrecca “wretch, stranger, exile.” It derived from “from Proto-Germanic *wraċjon “pursuer; one pursued” (source also of Old Saxon wrekkio, Old High German reckeo “a banished person, exile,” German recke “renowned warrior, hero”), related to Old English wreccan “to drive out, punish. (see wreak). “The contrast in the development of the meaning in Eng. and German is remarkable” [OED]. Sense of “vile, despicable person” developed in Old English, reflecting the sorry state of the outcast, as presented in Anglo-Saxon verse (such as “The Wanderer”). Compare German Elend “misery,” from Old High German elenti “sojourn in a foreign land, exile.”

WREAK

Old English wreca “avenge,” originally “to drive, drive out, punish” (class V strong verb; past tense wraec, past participle wrecen), from Proto-Germanic *wrekanan (source also



of Old Saxon wrekan, Old Norse reka, Old Frisian wreka, Middle Dutch wreken “to drive, push, compel, pursue, throw,” Old High German rehhan, German rächen “to avenge,” Gothic wrikan “to persecute”), from PIE root *wreg- “to push, shove, drive, track down” (see urge (v.)). Meaning “inflict or take vengeance,” with on, is recorded from late 15c.; that of “inflict or cause (damage or destruction)” is attested from 1817. Compare wrack (v.). Related: Wreaked; wreaking.

Before we continue on this trail, let’s take a moment to list a few meanings that stand out from “wretch” and “wreak.” From “wretch” we have “wretch, stranger, exile,” “pursuer, one pursued,” “a banished person, exile,” “renowned warrior, hero,” “to drive out, punish,” and “vile, despicable person.” From “wreak” we have “avenge,” “to drive, drive out, punish,” “to drive, push, compel, pursue, throw,” “persecute,” “to avenge,” “to push, shove, drive, track down,” “inflict or take vengeance,” and “inflict or cause damage or destruction.”

Now let’s look at the second related word to “wretched” which is “wicked,” and as before, we will also show it’s own related word, which in this case is “witch:”

WICKED

c. 1200, extended form of earlier wick “bad, wicked, false” (12c.), which apparently is an adjectival use of Old English wicca “wizard” (see witch). Formed as if a past participle, but there is no corresponding verb. For evolution, compare wretched from wretch.

WITCH

Old English wicce “female magician, sorceress,” in later use especially “a woman supposed to have dealings with the devil or evil spirits and to be able by their cooperation to perform supernatural acts,” fem. of Old English wicca “sorcerer, wizard, man who practices witchcraft or magic,” from verb wiccian “to practice witchcraft” (compare Low German wikken, wicken “to use witchcraft,” wikker, wicker “soothsayer”).

“Wicked” came from “wic” which meant “bad, wicked false” and is related to “wicca,” “wizard” and “witch.” As you can see, our investigative trail has led us straight into the the occult world of witchcraft, that is, to human beings who “have dealings with the devil or evil spirits” and who have at their disposal their demonic cooperation in order to perform supernatural acts.

Magicians, wizards, sorcerers, and sorceresses are simply mediums through which the Devil relays a message to the world regarding a very important element of his kingdom; nay, not a very important element, but the most important element of his kingdom, which we will soon disclose. And why does the Devil give witches, sorcerers and wizards such impressive supernatural powers? Could it be so that through a show of supernatural prowess his mediums may gain credibility? So that the world will accept, believe, and follow the teachings he sends through them?

Now, then, we are starting to see the true meaning behind the word “wretched:” it has to do with avenging, compelling, pursuing, tracking down, inflicting or taking vengeance, inflicting or causing damage or destruction, punishing. Furthermore, all these messages of vengeance, punishment and



destruction are relayed to the world through human agents who are in direct contact with demonic beings.

A picture is starting to emerge. Can you see its outlines and varied shades of color? Are you beginning to get a sense that these different words are all somehow related to a form or type of justice? But the serious Bible student will surely ask, what does this have to do with Laodicea's wretched condition? Is it biblical? If we follow the trail of this word in the Bible will it lead us to the same conclusions? Let's find out, then; but before we do, we would like to remind the reader the meaning of the word "Laodicea:" Laos+Dike, which means "the people's justice." Do you recall?

There are only two places in the New Testament where the word "wretched" can be found, but there is one also in the Septuagint Old Testament, found in the Psalms. We will look at this one last.

In the New Testament, besides Revelation 3: 17, "wretched" is used in the Book of Romans, in that place where the Apostle Paul exclaims in utter apparent despair:

O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
ROMANS 7: 24

The Albert Barnes says the following about this verse:

The feeling implied by this lamentation is the result of this painful conflict; and this frequent subjection to sinful propensities.
ALBERT BARNES COMMENTARY

What is the painful conflict that Paul and every human being struggles with? Paul himself answers this question a few verses before this desperate outburst:

If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
ROMANS 7: 16-24

Paul's lament seems to have to do with the fact that inside of him there is something that is in such conflict with God's law of agape love that he can barely take it. He knows the law of God—he writes about it everywhere. Take a look at 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter. There, Paul describes what agape love is. In Romans chapters 12-15 Paul describes how agape love looks like,



how it is to be lived here on earth. So Paul not only knows God’s law of agape love but he also delights in it—it is not as if he doesn’t! But sin, dwelling in him, does not allow him to practice God’s eternal law. The clutches of sin have taken such a hold of his body, flesh, heart and mind that he does not do what he wishes to do, but quite the opposite—he does what he does not wish to do. What is Paul’s conclusion, then?

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

ROMANS 7: 23

Paul wants us to know that besides God’s law, there is another law, a law that is embbed in our very members. This other law is in constant conflict with the law of God in our minds, and it fights continually to bring us back into captivity—this is the law of sin and death.

Paul’s lament about his condition is more, yay, so much more meaningful than a mere “Woe is me” venting! The word he uses is the word “wretched,” that same word with which Jesus described Laodicea’s condition. In fact, that is the first word Jesus used to describe Laodicea—wretched. Therefore, if Laodicea looked here to Paul, it would understand its own rebuke!

How then, does the Bible define the word “wretched,” talaipōros in Greek? Note:

WRETCHED: talaipōros

From the base of G5007 and a derivative of the base of G3984; enduring trial, that is, miserable: – wretched.

STRONG’S CONCORDANCE

Enduring trial, miserable; yes, that makes sense since Laodicea is living through very hard times. After all, it is the end of the world! When we have to endure trials it is very difficult, no doubt. Sometimes it can be quite heart wrenching and if it weren’t for the grace of God we would be crushed under their weight. However, we cannot appreciate the full meaning of the word “wretched” unless we take a look at where it came from, which is two separate Greek words. The first one is “G5007” and the second is “G3984:”

G5007: TALANTON

Neuter of a presumed derivative of the original form of τλάω tlaō4 (to bear; equivalent to G5342); a balance (as supporting weights), that is, (by implication) a certain weight (and thence a coin or rather sum of money) or “talent”: – talent.

G3984: PEIRA

From the base of G4008 (through the idea of piercing); a test, that is, attempt, experience: – assaying, trial.

STRONG’S CONCORDANCE

Are there any bells ringing at this time? Did you hear them? Can you see it? Did you notice that the word “talanton,” one of the bases of the word “talaipōros,” means not only “to bear” but also



“a balance?” A balance to measure what, weights? Or a balance to measure behavior in the system of works? A balance of merit and demerit? A balance upon which we judge who deserves a reward and who deserves a punishment? The balances of Good and Evil?

Examine yourself, Laodicea! How many times have you passed through this “weighing” process even this very day towards your wife, your husband, your children, your neighbor? How many times this very day have you judged, condemned and found a suitable punishment for them because of the balances of Good and Evil embedded in your soul? Are you wretched, that is, entrenched in the Devil’s punitive system?

Satan’s system of Good and Evil is what has brought the human race to the point of high dysfunction that we are in today. We are on a slippery slope in that regard, becoming exponentially more dysfunctional moment by moment. In fact, if the reader cares to investigate, the words “Good” and “Evil” do indeed mean function and dysfunction in Hebrew.

It is no doubt a piercing trial to live under this system, especially when all human beings really need in order to thrive is to know that they are loved unconditionally by God and by their loved ones. That is why God loves godly families, for when they live by His principles of unconditional love, they preserve His eternal law on earth which allows for happiness and high functioning.

And what a trial it is to try to escape this inner balance that we all carry inside of us! The balance with which we judge, condemn, pursue and destroy one another because of the scales of merit and demerit are constantly at work! It is indeed a piercing trial, a very severe test to escape this! This was the real cause of Paul’s wretchedness. Paul was allowed to see deep inside his divided heart of Good and Evil and this was the reason for his earnest exclamation:

O wretched man that I am! (A man who thinks and acts by the law of sin and death, a moral law that is so ingrained into my heart and mind that it dwells deep down in all of my being. A divided, mixed moral law that is merciless, violent, controlling and hierarchical based on an arbitrary ladder of merit and demerit whereby I am good to the good and evil to the evil. The law that kickstarted in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve went into the Devil’s domain of reward and punishment by eating from his tree, whereby all the curses have come upon the world). Who will deliver me from this body of death? (From this body that operates from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? Isn’t this a body of death in verity, for didn’t God say that in the day that we ate of it, we would surely die?).

ROMANS 7: 24

The beautiful answer to Paul’s question is simple and single, and is Jesus Christ, of course! That is also the cure for Laodicea, but we shall come to that later.

Remember that very important message pertaining to the Devil, that we mentioned earlier? That message relating to the foundational principles of his earthly government? This law that lives in our members, this is that very important message pertaining to the Devil that we mentioned earlier. The balance of Good and Evil is the most important element of his kingdom, and in fact it is its



foundation. It is this moral code that witches, sorcerers, magicians, and wizards relay to the world through the supernatural acts they perform by the cooperation of the Devil, acts whereby they are validated. The Devil gives them supernatural powers so that they may have the necessary power to influence humanity. Through their wonderful powers they pour out the Devil's destructive law of sin and death upon the world as a raging flood. Through it they destroy human relationships at home, at work, in society at large.

Dear friends, the Devil has sent his principle of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil into the world to such an extent that it is frightening—it is indeed gushing like a flood! He uses many seemingly harmless trojan horses, riding all over the world through cyberspace, through social media, movies, podcasts, books, children's books, you name it; it is everywhere! It is in all religions, in all the churches (including the Christian churches), in the schools, in the health systems, in the governments, in the universities, and especially in the world's systems of justice. That is where the moral law of Good and Evil flourishes and even becomes ultimate truth. But its symbols give it away, because they are clearly demonic. This is where Satan's "throne of iniquity which devises evil by law" (Psalm 94: 20) has its firm grasp on humanity. The word "Justice." Who would dare to question it?



But worst of all, this condemning and punitive law resides in the heart of every human being. Here she is again, Lady Justice, the symbol of Justice, holding the balances of Good and Evil in one hand and in the other a sword with which to enforce its punishments. All the while at her feet, the author of this principle, the serpent (the demonic symbol), slithers around quietly and surreptitiously and incognito. All we need to do is look at the symbols and interpret them—how much more clearly could it have been given to us?

We, like Paul, need to exclaim: "O wretched (we hope the meaning of this word has become a little clearer) beings that we are! Who will save us from this deadly dividing principle that utterly divides and destroys us?" There is only one answer—there will ever be only one answer: Jesus Christ who unites us in His unconditional love.

At close scrutiny, there can be no doubt that the Devil's moral law of Good and Evil, symbolized here by the balances of Good and Evil, permeates the whole world. That is understandable, after all, the world is his—he is the ruler of this age, the prince of this world.

But Satan's moral law of Good and Evil should not also permeate God's last church on earth, and especially not just before Jesus' Second Advent! If we use and promote the Devil's law of sin and death, how will God win this great controversy?

Laodicea, listen! Are you a messenger from from God or from the Devil? Does your message come from the Tree of Life or from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? Do you have good news to give to the world about a pure, holy, unmixed God of unconditional love who has already saved the world? Are you teaching a God who deals with us not through our works (merits or demerits) but through His grace, His mercy, His unconditional, impartial, freedom-giving, nonviolent, nonforceful principle of the Tree of Life, as exhibited by Jesus Christ while He was here on earth? Is this your message below?



But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit
TITUS 3: 4-5

Or do you preach a gospel of reward and punishment? Do you reveal to the world a God in whom there is no darkness at all? Or do you reveal to the world a god who has a mixture of light and darkness, a god of Good and Evil? Are you so enriched with your own human wisdom which you have gathered from ancient books and philosophies, modern day prophets, teachers, false Christs and human common sense (which is based on the law of sin and death abounding in our members), that you have no room for Jesus Christ's unique heavenly wisdom? Does the love of God permeate your whole mind, heart, and soul? Or are you filled with hatred, fear, and an exacting sense that the "justice" must be meted out to those who step out of line? For yours and for Christ's sake, Laodicea, examine yourself! This is about much more than just your own salvation: this is about standing up for the God who gave His own life for you and who loves you with an everlasting love!

We will end this study with the only place in the Old Testament Septuagint where the word "wretched" is found.

The Psalmist writes:

O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, happy the one who repays you as you have served us!
PSALM 137: 8

The word "wretched" here—also *talaipōros*, G5005 in the Septuagint—is translated to English as the word "destroyed." So if we look at this word in Hebrew we will be sure to unearth some more insights:

DESTROYED: *shâdad*
A primitive root; properly to be burly, that is, (figuratively) powerful (passively impregnable); by implication to ravage: dead, destroy (destroyer), oppress, robber, spoil, (spoiler), utterly, (lay) waste.
STRONG'S CONCORDANCE

As you can see, *Shâdad* is the Hebrew counterpart of the Greek word *talaipōros*—their meaning is the same but one amplifies the other.

We cannot give too many examples of how *Shâdad* is used in the Old Testament, otherwise this article would become too lengthy. But we will provide two examples at least.

Notice this verse:



I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty (Shâdad), but by My name LORD (yehôvâh) I was not known to them.

EXODUS 6: 3

Did you notice that the word “Almighty” is the Hebrew word Shâdad? What? How are we to understand this now? Is God saying that He appeared to Abraham as a burly, powerful, impregnable, ravaging, deadly, destroying, oppressing, robbing, spoiling God who utterly lays humanity waste? Is that how God really was? Did He “show” Himself to them as being like this? Or was God “perceived” by them to be this way? The answer is obviously the latter, for the verse itself explains it: “but by My name LORD (yehôvâh) I was not known to them.” The reader can also check the word “appeared” which has many meanings and one of which is “to perceive.”

What this means, then, is that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob thought that God was a God who operated by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They perceived Him to be a God of violence and terror. Why? Because of the confusion that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil had brought upon the world. Since this controversy began, humanity has perceived God to be a destroyer, and that is how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob perceived Him also. They did not know Him by His true name, that is, by His true character. They did not know Him as a loving Creator, as reflected in the face of Jesus Christ. They saw Him as a harsh, punishing God of reward and punishment.

We will bring in one last example:

He who dwells (yâshab: remains, continues, endures) in the secret place (sêther sithrâh: a cover, hiding place, protection) of the Most High (‘elyôn) shall abide (lûn / lîyn: stay permanently; continue, dwell, endure) under the shadow (tsêl: shadow, shade, from tsâlal: to be or become or grow dark) of the Almighty (shadday, from Shâdad).

PSALM 91: 1

Having in mind everything we have discussed so far, we would then paraphrase this verse like this:

He who remains under the cover and protection of the Most High God—the true God which Jesus revealed—shall endure under the shadow and darkness of the Good and Evil god of this age, Shâdad—the burly, powerful, impregnable, ravaging and deadly destroyer who oppresses, robs, spoils and utterly lays the earth waste.

To confirm this view of Satan, please read Isaiah 14: 3-23, and Revelation 9: 11.

Jesus’ rebuke to Laodicea then, is a warning against being blind, because this end-time church does not realize that it is “wretched.” In other words, Laodicea has been deceived even though it was given so much light! Deception from the one who deceives the whole world, channeled through the many religious witches and wizards of the world, has caused it to adhere itself to the wisdom of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, to the justice system of its harsh and



punishing god. Laodicea actually finds itself in quite dire straits and we can see that its condition is critical! After all, remember that it is about to be vomited out of Jesus mouth!

Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ only can reveal God's justice. If we truly believed this, then we would see that Christ never used the balances of Good and Evil or punitive justice at all. Rather, He showed us an unconditionally loving God who is our Protector, our Helper, our Friend, our Savior. The Father which Jesus came to reveal is the Lover of our souls, and it is His healing love that heals us and our families.

We invite the reader to finish reading Psalm 91 with this new understanding. Believe that God is our Protector and not our Destroyer, and that it is from the Destroyer that He protects us:

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; for He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation."

PSALM 91: 2-16

Laodicea! Listen! God still has not given up on you. He still has a plan for your life. We pray you will fall at the foot of the cross and allow the Savior to make you whole again. Make Him your all in all.