

Headquarters, The Church
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AH OPORD 2009-05-04, Fight The Devil (Lifetime)

1. **SITUATION**

General. During the period of embodiment in a finite frame, individuals and groups are beset by the devil. The word devil is a symbol which personifies the phenomenon of evil. Evil is powers of being self-separated, or so it seems, from the Ground of Being, from God, and trying to create anti-being, setting themselves against God, against unity. Because the world or finitude as is is good, including embodiment in a finite frame, fighting the devil or evil is a necessary and inescapable component of life.

2. **MISSION**

Individuals and groups, but especially individuals, will find, fix, finish, exploit and analyze the devil, driving hurt and harm from the world. This is a life-long mission that does not end even at death.

3. **EXECUTION**

a. Concept of the Operation: Evil causes hurt and harm in precisely the amount and extent God has a purpose in allowing it to do so, no more and no farther. Since God's purpose is protection of the righteous and destruction of evil doers, mission execution will proceed on the assumption that operators will not be beset beyond their ability to fulfill the mission.

b. Individual Tactics:

(1) Laugh

(2) Dance

(3) Sing

c. Group Tactics:

(1) Listen

(2) Ruminant

(3) Study

d. Find the Devil:

(1) He will find you. The devil rises up first among the righteous. His favorite venue is a house of worship.

e. Fix the Devil:

(1) He will fix you. Once you are fixed, he is.

f. Finish the Devil:

(1) Execute individual and group tactics as above.

g. Exploit the Devil:

(1) Speak the truth, be strong and be happy.

(2) By example, decision and law, lead the society in directions of expansion, beauty and love.

(3) What you talk about, do. What you cannot do, do not talk about.

h. Analyze the Mission:

(1) Enter situations the devil appears to control and compare them with situations which illustrate the mission fulfillment just accomplished.

4. **SERVICE SUPPORT**

- a. Keep your hearts and houses clean.
- b. Maintain a household oratory with device for holding brief written prayers of thanks, supplication and intercession.
- c. Repeat the Name of God without ceasing.

5. **COMMAND AND SIGNAL**

- a. Maintain Contact
- b. *Sua Sponte*
- c. Mission Project Officer: Every Lover

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Annexes:

A - An essay, "Fight The Devil"

B - An essay, " The Ontological Question: The Fundamental Paradox Of Reason And Reality"

Annex A - “Fight The Devil”

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Introduction

Since we have to fight the devil, or even just because the devil is said to oppose us, should we not fight the devil in the same way that we fight a war, using the same resources of intelligence, tactical skill, strategic and tactical doctrine, logistics, command and control, training, etc. we deploy to fight the armies or combatant minions of foreign nations?

This is a Soldier’s question. It is an important question. Theologians are obliged to treat of it in its own terms, a Soldier’s terms. Every person who seeks God must be a Spiritual Warrior. Every spiritual aspirant is a Soldier in God’s Army.

The mission of God’s Army is to remove evil impulses from the heart of man, to punish evil doers and to reestablish the creaturely realm, namely the universe, on the pillars of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-Violence. God’s Army is deployed to fight and defeat the devil.

The devil is a force working against one. In this sense, he is an enemy. It is a Soldier’s mission, and also delight, to fight an enemy. Therefore, the answer is, “Yes!”, the same resources deployed to fight the armies and combatant minions of foreign nations should be deployed, at least in verbal form, to fight the devil. The resources deployed by a competent military force, such as the Armed Forces of the United States, are the same ones which, in word, concept and physical act as appropriate, should be deployed to fight the devil.

It is not unusual and is often necessary to send a military force, as well as other kinds, to fight the devil. Sometimes fighting the devil entails

putting a bullet in a creature's brain, most often one with at least the appearance of a human being.

However, there is far more to fighting the devil than military forces can accomplish. Far, far more, because the devil is not of flesh and blood, although he assumes flesh and blood frequently. The devil is powers of being opposed to God. These powers are far, far more extensive and powerful than any military force can approach much less defeat. This is not to belittle military forces. It is to say that they are rightly part of the fight against the devil, specifically when he assumes flesh and blood, but other kinds of force are required as well and mostly. Power, for good and for evil, is far, far more than comes wrapped in a physical frame accessible to military force.

Development

It is often the case that people who are not Soldiers do not know how to fight and neither appreciate nor fathom the structure of will and skill that supports fighting well or the joy in skillful and victorious fighting which animates the heart, mind and body of Soldiers. Much less do they grasp or understand the resources and abilities a competent body of Soldiers brings to the execution of their mission.

Theologians love to study and to support Soldiers. Soldiers love to fight and to study and to support those who promote refinement in study and application, the natural condition of man and society.

**"Follow the master, face the devil,
fight to the end, finish the game."**

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Every religion and every sacred scripture enjoins upon man the duty to face the devil and, as the Christian Liturgies of Baptism and Confirmation

put it, “renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways.” To be renounced, the devil first must be faced. And renouncing the devil is fighting the devil.

The secular is the Holy. The Holy is the secular. All life is one. The universe “turns to one.” Duty is God, work is worship.

The act of renunciation which the Liturgy enjoins regarding the devil is significant. One can renounce only that which belongs to one, not that which does not belong to one. The implication is that the devil belongs to one, in this case the believer.

How can this be? We are accustomed to think of the devil as “over there,” foreign to us, outside of us, over against us, certainly not one of us much less our very own possession.

The Liturgy operates from the assumption that this is not the case and the reverse of it is. The devil belongs to us as our personal property, something or someone we have inalienably in the same way that we have powerful, crucial inalienable rights not by gift of government or community but by nature as a condition of and intrinsic to our creatureliness.

The devil belongs to us, he is ours, an inalienable aspect not only of our *Sitz im Leben* but also, and more to the point, of our *Selbst*. The devil is our very own, something which or someone who cannot be taken from us, although apparently there is something about him that we can renounce, including ownership.

Renouncing the devil is declaring our unity with God, our being owned by Him in place of our owning the devil. Renouncing the devil is a radical realignment of the self. Ego will not give up ownership of the devil, not

ever, and the devil will not give up being owned, again not ever. Thus the stage is set for a tremendous battle, which we call the drama of history.

Fighting the devil requires a reversal of common logic. Ordinarily we consider the devil forcing him/herself on us from outside of us, forcing or tempting us to do something we would not ordinarily do, gumming up the works of a perfectly fine system that we wish he would leave alone so we could just work, live and enjoy it.

However, the reverse of this common logic is the actuality: we hold the devil as a permanent aspect of our nature, renounceable but not escapable and ever ready to pounce, to corrupt without our even knowing it. Whatever we want to think the devil does to us, we do to ourselves. We are the architects of our own fate. We are responsible for what befalls us, not the devil.

This actual logic of life is uncomfortable for us and widely uncommon. It points to a truth in Pogo's famous situation report: "We have met the enemy and them is us." And it asserts that when beset by our own fate, which is always, no government, agency or other person, divine, semi-divine or human, can alter that fate one iota.

We are stuck with the devil for as long as we live, except that we can renounce him.

The Sastras have a piquant way of expressing this actual logic. They say that Yama, the god of death, who takes us away with a rope around our neck, does not place that rope around our neck, we do. He merely jerks it when our time is up.

It is not the case, however, that, as Pogo's modern eco-nazi quoters insist, that the devil is us. That ideology oversteps the truth by such a

wide margin as to be insane. Pogo's situation report points to a truth but on its face it is not the truth.

We carry the devil with us as our own possession, but the devil is not us and we are not the devil. We are both less than the devil and more than the devil at one and the same time. We are not the devil. The eco-nazis and their community organizing, liberal arts professing, communication monopolizing fellow travelers, saying that we are the devil, although exempting themselves, are fascist pig-intellec[t]s looking for lunch.

In this context, what does renouncing the devil mean and how do we do it, and if we do it, what then, then what happens? For example, does our life become then better in the sense of more pleasant, easier going, perhaps more certain, less obstructed, less afflicted or conflicted, even possibly more free and affluent?

Find The Devil

The devil is the urge to separate from itself and its source and to piece out that which is whole. The devil is the urge to become two, different, distinct.

The devil himself arises in the whole. The whole has an urge to be many. That urge is the devil and the devil depends absolutely on the whole being whole to be separated from. Apart from the whole there is no devil. Apart from the urge in the whole to be many there is no devil. There must be a whole for there to be a devil to part it out.

We take existence, through conception and birth, in response to the urge that is the devil. Birth occurs because of our desire to be many. It is in this ontological meaning of the devil that Christianity and other religions speak of an unavoidable, continuous and universal deformation of the true and the real as they transit from essence to existence, or from

potentiality to actuality. Mistakenly called “the doctrine of original sin,” this ontological analysis of life as in origin, perpetuation and totality appearing as not what it really is motivates the content and purpose of history and therefore philosophy, moral philosophy and theology.

We are not the devil, nor is the essence of existence, but the urge that produces existence, including our own, is. And that urge deforms existence first, last and always. Existence and life could not happen without being deformed in the urge to happen and every act of happening. Our life itself is a gift of the devil, a bitter gift yet sweetened with its divine origin, a product of the urge to leave the divine bliss, to differentiate and to become many, thus saddened by loss.

Therefore, to find the devil, we look for the urge to take apart, to deconstruct, to disassemble, to be less than whole. That urge is the enemy, but is also the cause of our existence. This double truth is the first paradox of life. The second paradox of life is the appearance of the whole in power in the guise of pieces to reunite -- in actual experience, here and now, under the conditions of existence -- that which is parted out, our life in community and history, with the whole of its essential oneness, the unity of Being Itself or God.

Whoever says, “This has to be different.” or “That has to be changed.” is speaking for the devil. Whoever takes apart a complex system and refuses to reunite its elements, dwelling instead on one or two specific aspects of the system and treating them as all important, is speaking for the devil. Whoever moves to separate one from another or demonize and denigrate one to elevate another is speaking for the devil. Whoever commits aggression for domination is speaking for the devil. Whoever holds a belief or set of beliefs supreme and irreducible is speaking for the devil. Whoever calumniates another or seeks another’s distress or disadvantage is speaking for the devil.

In other words, whatever tries to separate wholes reflects the urge which is the devil. When something is before us and someone says, in effect, “Let us tear it apart.”, there is the devil seeking self-manifestation. The presence of hurt indicates the devil embarked on job security.

The first paradox of which to be mindful is that absent precisely the urge to separate we would not be here, there would be no world, no life, no history, no struggle for fulfillment nor elation in victory. And the second paradox of which to be mindful is that help in the midst of the first paradox is present not only despite it but also because of it.

Of such considerations poets and sages muse in their great restorative efforts on behalf of God, man and life itself.

Fix The Devil

Of this requirement of life the great saints have sung and written in considerable detail. All their songs and writings are included under the general title of spiritual exercises, which also happens to be the actual title of a book by one of them. I will not rehearse their discussions in this regard more than mentioning some which stand out in my experience.

The Rule of St. Benedict is the plenary guide for fixing the devil in the Christian orbit. It has stood through “the tides of times” and is indefatigable even when set upon for piecing up. Add to this as illustrative:

Bernard of Clairvaux, especially *De amore Dei* and *De Laudibus Novae Militiae*; Thomas of Aquin, specifically the Hymns (forget the *Summa Theologica*, “so much straw” in his words); San Bonaventura (born Giovanni di Fidanza), especially *Soliloquium* and *Commentary on the Sentences of Lombard*; Teresa of Avila, especially *Interior Castle* and

Autobiography; Ignatius of Loyola, especially *Spiritual Exercises*; and Jeanne-Marie Guyon, especially *Vie de Madame Guyon, Ecrite Par Elle-Même* and *Commentaire au Cantique des cantiques de Salomon*.

In the Vedantic orbit the songs and writings of Shankaracharya/Adi Shankara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramana Maharshi and preeminently Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba are redolent with discussions of spiritual exercise or *sadhana*.

In the Baha'i orbit, Bahá'u'lláh himself has bequeathed to all creatures songs and meditations the recitation or hearing of which constitute spiritual exercise.

The essence of spiritual exercise in this age is very simple. It is to recite the Name of God, or as Saint Paul says, pray without ceasing. In Vedantic parlance this is called *Ramanam*, continuous chanting of the Name of God. Recitation of the Name alone has power to carry one Godward by renunciation of the devil and through the midst of all his works and ways.

Whatever Name of God appeals to you will do just fine. So pick one, and if someone tells you you need to pay for it or earn it through some process of “accomplishment” they have created to ensnare you in dependency, know that they are speaking for the devil.

Ramanam fixes the devil with absolute certainty. So, recite the Name of God without ceasing and you will have the devil trapped in your cross-hairs. The Name of God is the whole.

Finish The Devil

How do you finish the devil? You do not and you cannot. The devil is more powerful than any mundane agency. The greatest Sages can be

undone by the devil in the blink of an eye. Finishing the devil is God's job and you have to abide His wishes regarding when and how He does it. This means that faith in God, the very context of recitation of His Name, is the place not of safety from the devil, for no such place exists, but of his defeat. Be strong, be happy, have courage, uproot evil impulses in your own heart and trust in God's almighty Providence is the counsel for those who yearn for wholeness, for health, since time immemorial. Only God Himself gives such counsel.

There is, however, something we can do to finish the devil, but only from inside the garden of faith. It does not accomplish the mission fully, but it goes a good distance towards it. We can anticipate and partially achieve victory over the devil. And we can do this in direct experience.

We can anticipate, partially achieve and even preliminarily savor defeat of the devil by employing the Prophetic Spirit or, what is the same thing, the Protestant Principle. I use the terms interchangeably as synonyms

The Prophetic Spirit is defined by three acts, one of mentation, one of renunciation and one of vocalization.

First, the act of mentation. This consists in keeping constantly before the mind's eye the principle called in the Latin Church *via negativa* and in Vedic parlance *neti*. The *via negativa* consists in saying "No!" to every conclusion of the mind and every piece of assumed truth and acquired knowledge. However, this "No" is not a simple denial, it is warning that, whatever it is, conclusion, truth or knowledge, it is partial and there is more to it than one knows.

The sense of the *via negativa* is, "Alright, so far so good, at least perhaps, but that is not the whole story. There is more that is yet unseen by you, unknown and materially affective. Whatever conclusion you assume or think you have in security, whatever you assume or think is the

truth, and whatever you assume or think you know, do not let your efforts stop there, because there is a lot more to it that you do not know, nor know about, and that more may well show that your conclusions are unjustified, your truth false or incomplete and your knowledge bogus, insufficient and misleading.”

Formulaically, the *via negativa* states, “not only that but also” That formula applied continuously to mentation goes very far to finish the devil. It leaves every door open to another horizon, as indeed every door is. No door ever leads into a closed room.

Second, the act of renunciation. This spiritual practice is frequently misunderstood, with undesirable consequences.

Renunciation is pushing away something which rightly belongs to one, and specifically, the fruits of one’s labors, sweet and sour both. It is not possible to renounce the sour fruits of one’s labors but not the sweet ones. Keep one you keep all. The fruits of one’s labors are inseparable, as life is. The whole cannot be cut up.

Renunciation is not going hungry or sleepless or naked. It is not leaving one’s family or job. It is not taxing or harming the body or mind. It is not being illiterate or living on streets and handouts. Renunciation is not giving away one’s possessions, much less selling them off. All of these acts are ephemeral and oppose spiritual practice. They are efforts at self-salvation, which means *ego*, religion of self, the opposite of spiritual practice.

Renunciation occurs in the context of faith in God and love for God and not outside that context. A renunciant accepts the conditions of his life, that he is the architect of his own fate, that all his belongings do indeed belong to him as fruits of his labors in this and previous births ... and then, motivated by love for God and faith in Grace, pushes all of that

away, realizing that its true owner is his owner, God, who alone knows what best to do with it.

Saint Augustine described the nature and depth of renunciation in a famous formula: “Love God and do what you want.”

Secular man, driving by ego, leaves off the conditioning element of that formula -- “Love God” -- and promotes its liberating element -- “do what you want.” Without the conditioning element, of course, the liberating element is enslaving, a perfect storm of antinomian chaos.

When applied continuously in all aspects of a life, Saint Augustine’s formulaic description of renunciation, “Love God and do what you want.” goes very far to finish the devil, farther even than the *via negativa*, which itself is indispensable to spiritual practice.

Third, the act of vocalization. Vocalization means repeating the Name of God. Saint Paul calls it “praying without ceasing.” The most powerful prayer is the Name of God vocalized over and over in the melody of song. Or in other words, chanted either in solo or concert.

Melody means sweet, honey-like. Its root is the Latin word for honey. Chanting the Name of God in a melody or repeating it in loving speech is the very most powerful spiritual practice.

Chanting the Name of God is the easiest, most available and most effective way to finish the devil. As with mentation and renunciation, vocalization is *sua sponte*, self-motivated, unconditioned by reliance on others and so none has an excuse for not doing it.

Vocalization as spiritual practice, chanting the Name of God, is the Protestant Principle in its most complete form. It is the Prophetic Spirit. And it has the power of this benefit, that it can be done outside the

estate of Grace. Mentation and especially renunciation cannot occur outside faith, which only can be inside Grace. Mentation and renunciation cannot occur outside love for God. But chanting the Name of God can.

God draws near to where His Name is spoken, even in vain. The admonition against taking God's name in vain is given to believers, not unbelievers.

Chanting His Name binds God to the chanter. It is that powerful a spiritual practice. God cannot resist recitation of His Name. This is His sole "weakness." Those who chant His Name to abuse Him, however, discover His Presence is mortally terrifying, not reassuring. So the only safe way to repeat the Name of God in continuous prayer is melodiously, in love! Only love is sweet.

The Protestant and every Reformation, including within the Roman Catholic Church, is carried by the singing of Hymns. This is a Christian form of chanting the Name of God. The Hymns -- or in Germany, Chorales -- are the carrying wave of every reformation of every religion that exists or has ever existed. Hymns are vocalized prayers. They are chants of the Name of God. They invoke the Divine Presence.

For the same reason, to invoke the presence of Divine Courage, Soldiers have their cadences and pipers their skirls. These melodious vocalizations drive away the demons of fear and cowardice and advance the power of determination for victory.

The story is told that when the devil came to Siva and threaten Him, Siva laughed at him (i.e., a vocal response) and that laugh made the devil retreat in shame and ignominy.

The *locus classicus* in the New Testament of the principle and practice of vocalization is Saint Paul's commission to pray without ceasing, which is followed in the Church's practice of either hearing the Divine Service (the Mass) sung or singing it around the clock around the world.

Saint Francis of Assisi is almost always shown praying standing up, palms forward forming an universal *mudra* or gesture of hands (see also Buddha) to compliment the oration. Palms forward in prayer is the gesture of utter humility in gratitude.

The Latin word for prayer is *orare*, which means speaking, mouthing, vocalizing. From *orare* we have the words oration, orifice and orotund. An oratory, chapel for prayer, is where prayers are vocalized, orated. Vocalized prayer is Lord Siva laughing at the devil.

The Lord's Prayer, beginning from the nascent churches, is meant to be vocalized, preferably in melody. The devil cannot abide the presence of strong, confident, happy singing of Hymns, Chants and Chorales.

Exploit The Devil

When the devil is not nagging or when his inveigling seductions have been cauterized, he has been finished. He is never not, but when he is finished his effectiveness has been arrested and his agendas immured.

So now it is time to exploit the take down.

This is accomplished by back-filling areas the devil has been holding in thrall: the mind with hardness, the heart with compassion and the society with fairness.

This back-filling consists of (1) speaking the truth, (2) nullifying and discarding tyrannical, ideological or irrational regulations and statutes,

(3) enabling regulations and statutes that foster impartiality and compassion, and (4) doing what one talks about and not talking about what one cannot do.

These acts, committed with assiduity, tear up the devil's supply lines and occupy his former playgrounds with fair games and eager players of them, having fun.

Fun is what we want people having and the devil wants them not. Fun is what people are here for, the reason they are embodied. The devil hates fun.

Analyze The Mission

Analysis is a dialectical undertaking. It involves comparing and correlating sets of experience. Ultimately, analysis is correlating internal experience with external realities.

Analysis is not observation although it employs observation of both microcosm (internal, direct experience) and macrocosm (external, mediated experience) to justify and formulate its conclusions. In analysis, effort is made to correlate direct with mediated experience, or, the world one knows internally with the world one knows externally, or, subject and object.

Analysis is a unifying activity, reuniting subjective and objective experience for the purpose of laying out a new course of action. It is a prodigy of ontologically creative purity.

The subjective component of analysis is always effective during analysis and upon its outcome, but in this positivistic age this fact is rarely acknowledged. It is customary, rather, to assume or pretend that the component of direct, subjective experience does not and should not

enter an analytical regime. This custom relies on denying the dialectical nature of knowledge or suspending recognition of it in order to make a pretense of irrefragability.

Analyzing the outcome of a mission to fight the devil relies as much on awareness of the subjective component of experience as the objective. This means that the object of the mission is both an internal and an external phenomenon. The most salient implication of the dialectical nature of experience is that the subject and the object comprise an essential unity. They are inseparable ontologically and therefore functionally, although they may and should be distinguished in an analytical regime.

To analyze a mission to fight the devil, enter an area which has so far not received the benefit of such a mission. Doing this yields opportunity to compare and correlate subjective experience from the mission just fulfilled with objective experience of circumstances unimproved by a beat down of the devil by just such a mission. From that analysis will come lessons learned in the completed mission and a developmental information operation to suggest a formation of the battle-space of the unimproved situation should a mission against it be resolved and undertaken.

The best way to evaluate what has worked is to compare and correlate one's experience in that situation with one whose indication is a similar kind of work.

Conclusion

Fighting the devil is the most difficult and risky conflict man faces. Everything about it is hard work. Its requirement is for courage, intrepidity and sacrifice. Its success cannot be guaranteed and its necessity cannot be ignored or side-stepped.

On top of all difficulties is this one: fighting the devil puts one inside the most terrifying experiences. While it is true that “the devil hath power to assume a pleasing shape” (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act II Scene 2), s/he also hath power to be so utterly ugly, gruesomely grotesque, as to freeze the heart to death with sheer horror at the sight of it.

The devil is far more than flesh and blood and can appear in death-causing internal and external visions horror of countless numbers.

The Church has always said that fighting the devil requires the greatest sophistication in spiritual warfare, intellectual clarity and moral courage and determination. My personal heroes in these matters are Lakshmana, Hanuman, Jerome, Benedict, Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Teilhard de Chardin, Douglas MacArthur and Paul Tillich. There are others.

The faint of heart cannot fight the devil, not successfully. Nor can the defective. Doubters will be destroyed. And, sooner or later, all must do it and succeed. About that there is no choice.

A.M.D.G.

Annex B - “ The Ontological Question: The Fundamental Paradox Of Reason And Reality”

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August 30, 2007

The question of the unconditional by man presupposes the presence of the unconditional as man.

How does the unconditional "stand out from" (Latin *existere*, English exist and existence) itself as the conditioned? How does that which stands out from itself become estranged from itself?

That the unconditioned stands out from itself and is estranged from itself as the conditioned and also, on its own initiative (only), can reunite with itself as the conditioned beyond conditions and estrangement is the fundamental paradox (*para + docta*, literally, “beside doctrine,” surprising, unexpected) of reason and reality.



A.M.D.G.