

The Attackers: The Continuing Conflict between Believers & Satan, 1 John 5:19, Ps 34:13–14, 16; the Promise that Evil Will Put the Wicked to Death: Opposition to Divine Policy Ends in the Sin unto Death, Ps 34:21

24. John comments on the continuing combat that rages between believers and Satan:

1 John 5:19 - We have learned that we are from God, and that the entire world is under the control of the evil one [**Lucifer**].

25. David has already addressed some of the ramifications of evil in Psalm 34. In verse 13, He issues two commands against the evil of deceitful speech:

Psalm 34:13 - Guard your tongue from enunciating erroneous thoughts associated with reversionism and your lips from misleading someone by withholding the truth. (EXT)

26. In the next verse, David orders the believer to depart from evil:

Psalm 34:14 - Turn from evil and do the good of advancing spiritually; search for prosperity and pursue it while it pursues you. (EXT)

27. David addressed the historical impact those who practice evil have on a client nation and the divine judgment in store for its practitioners in:

Psalm 34:16 - The judgment of the Lord is against those who accomplish evil deeds; He will cause to cut off positive remembrances of them from the earth. (EXT)

28. In verse 21, David indicates the tragic endgame for those who are involved in evil: "Evil shall slay the wicked."

29. Evil is self-destructive for those involved in it. Saul was driven by evil motivations; Doeg was guilty of evil-inspired act of violence.

30. David spent spells out of fellowship and he engaged in evil acts. His sins were tragic in many ways, but he never developed an evil way of life. He recovered from his failures, suffered the divine discipline, and moved forward in his spiritual life.

31. He came close to the sin unto death, but by the grace God he was able to restore his soul. David is therefore qualified to give his perspective on what prolonged evil can do to a person.

32. The English word that he uses to indicate the sin unto death is "slay," the Polel imperfect of the verb **מָוַת** (*muth*): "to kill, execute, put to death."

33. The Polel stem is used infrequently in the Old Testament. In general, the meaning of the Polel corresponds to the meaning of the Piel. The Piel stem is used to express intensive action while the imperfect tense indicated ongoing action.

34. The catalyst for this continuous action is the law of volitional responsibility. God has standards that are immutably incorporated into the divine decree. Compliance results in blessing and reward while noncompliance leads to destruction and misery.

35. Volition is free to choose whether to follow or not to follow these standards. Those who choose the latter fall victim to their own bad decisions.

36. Repeated decision-making in favor of noncompliance moves the person into evil which is a metastasized conglomeration of sin, human viewpoint, human good, arrogance, hatred, and the stages of reversionism within the soul.
37. Consequently, by means of his free will decisions, a person can think himself into evil and it is his thinking on that level that becomes his executioner.
38. Such a person is classified by David as “wicked,” the noun רָשָׁע (*rasha'*): “Essentially someone guilty or in the wrong and is an antonym to the Hebrew word *saddiyq* (צַדִּיק), meaning righteous.”¹
39. Years ago we introduced the study of *Paul's Behavior Problem* in Romans 7:14–25 with the *Theology of Neurology* which was designed to explain why we do what we do. Among Paul's opening comments, is this verse that summarizes his problem:

Romans 7:15 - For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. (NASB)

¹ Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003), 1080 (7563).