



*Creation
Before
Genesis*

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Satan (Devil)

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SATAN

The English word is from the Hebrew term *Satan* in the Old Testament and the Greek term *Satanas* in the New Testament. Its basic meaning is "adversary." It is translated as "Satan," meaning supreme adversary of God and man and tolerated by God within certain bounds for the duration of man's probationary period on earth but is doomed to "eternal fire" afterward along with his agents. (Matthew 25:41) The one exception is when Jesus called Peter "Satan" in the sense of a Satan-like man when he challenged our Lord's prediction of his approaching death in Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33).

Character and Identity

In Revelation 12:9, where he is symbolically represented as a "dragon." He is described as "the old serpent, he that is called the Devil; and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world." The word "Devil" means calumniator, one who makes maliciously false statements or a slanderer. And being called "the old serpent ... the deceiver" is evidently an allusion to the serpent who, as an agent of Satan, by falsehood and slander of God deceived Eve in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3), and led her and Adam into sin that eventuated in physical death for them and all posterity. Accordingly, Jesus said to Jews who were seeking to kill him: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8:44). The apostle Paul speaks of "the serpent [who] beguiled Eve in his craftiness" (2 Corinthians 11:3), of "the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11) And of "his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). He may appear as "an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). Also, oppositely, "your adversary, the devil as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

Origin and Destiny

1. It seems likely that Satan was created as an angel of God of high rank, but not quite the highest, and was leader of "the angels that sinned" and were "cast down," as referred to in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. In the latter passage, it is stated that "they kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation," implying that they were not pleased with their assigned rank and sphere.

2. In Revelation 12:7-9, we read: "And there was a war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred, and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him."

Comment: This was part of a vision John had on the Isle of Patmos, symbolic of what happened as a result of Satan's attempt to destroy Jesus after he had been born, and finally achieve his crucifixion – only for Him to be raised by God from the dead and "caught up unto God, and unto his throne." (12:4-5)

3. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus speaks of the "eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." So, Satan must have been a mighty angel with other angels aligned with him, just as Michael was a mighty angel ("the archangel, "Jude 9) and, according to the imagery of Revelation 12, had still other angels aligned with him. The fallen angels, including Satan, have not yet been cast into the "eternal fire," but are reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2:4) – Jude says "unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). This is no doubt the "day" God appointed for judging the world in righteousness by the "man" he raised from the dead. (Acts 17:31)

4. In Job (1:6,7,7,8,9,12,12; 2:1,2,2,3,4,6,7) we have our first mention of "Satan" by that name – designated in Hebrew as "the Satan," evidently by way of preeminence.

Ancient tradition identifies Job with Jobab, the second King of Edom (Genesis 36:33); and Uz is thought to have been along the border between Palestine and Arabia, extending from Edom northerly and easterly toward the Euphrates river. That part of the land of Uz which tradition has called home to Job was Hauran, east of the Sea of Galilee, a part of which was later called Bashan, also Golan (to this day).

The Devil

The term "devil" has already been described as a smearing calumniator - slanderer – a false accuser. Not all of Satan's accusations are necessarily false, but all are of evil intent, and most of them are false. Being an inveterate {firmly established or of long standing} enemy of God and man, he accuses man to God (Job 1:6-11; 2:1-5; Revelation 12:9-19), and God to man (Genesis 3:1-15). The Greek word more appropriately rendered "devil: is *diabolos*. It is translated "false accuser" in 1 Timothy 3:1 and 2 Timothy 3:3, and "slanderer" in Titus 2:33, "devil" one time (John 6:70), where Jesus said of Judas Iscariot that he was a "devil" – not "the devil."

Belial

This is a Greek form of the Hebrew word *beliyaal*, meaning worthlessness. wickedness, base fellow and ungodly.

Beelzebub

In the Latin Vulgate by Jerome (in the late 4th century A.D.) of the Greek New Testament work *Beelzeboul* in Matthew 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15,18,19), and adopted in most if not all English translations. It was used by the Jewish enemies of Jesus and by Himself as well of "the prince of the demons" and applied to "Satan." (Matthew 12:24-27)

The Tempter

That description occurs in Matthew 4:3 and 1 Thessalonians 3:5 – literally, the tempting one, and the one tempting, respectively. Satan as a tempter solicits evil actions.

The Evil One

See Matthew 13:19, 38-39; 1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; 5:18.

The Deceiver

See Revelation 12:9; cf. 20:3, 8.

The Accuser

See Revelation 12:10; cf. Job 1:11; 2:4-5.

The Enemy

See Matthew 13:39.

Adversary

See 1 Peter 5:8; the Greek word is *antidikos*, which originally meant an opponent in a lawsuit, but came to be used as a general word for an adversary whether in a court of law or not. In the latter passage, Satan is used as a verb, meaning to accuse of, be an adversary. (cf. Zechariah 3:1)

Lucifer??? We Think Not.

Early Bible translations of Isaiah have "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations." But in a note, it says. "Or, O day star." But the context of Isaiah 14:3-23 shows the term to be used in addressing the "king of Babylon" (v.4), the brightest star in the political heavens at that time, not Satan, notwithstanding any comparisons between the two and any hyperbolic descriptions used, most of which represent the king's own egotistical and arrogant pride and ambitious designs, soon to be thwarted by overthrow and downfall.

The context just mentioned represents the second part of a "burden" or oracle against the nation of Babylon itself, beginning with Isaiah 13:1. Another similar prophecy is found in Ezekiel 28: 1-19, against the "prince of Tyre," describing his overweening pride and warning him of approaching death (vs.1-10), followed by a satirical "lamentation over the king of Tyre" (vs.11-19), almost certain to have been the same as the "prince."

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