

The Character of Satan

A. From his names

1. Lucifer

Isaiah 14:12

“How you have fallen from heaven,
O **star of the morning**, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!

The Hebrew word “*helel*” means “shining one” or “star of the morning” (NASB). In his original, created condition, Lucifer was still an angel of light. According to Paul, he can still appear as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

2. Satan

Zechariah 3:1, “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and **Satan** standing at his right hand to accuse him.”

Literally “adversary” or “opposer,” the word appears 47 times in Scripture. Satan is God’s opponent, he opposes God’s plan, program, and people.

3. The Devil

Luke 4:2, “for forty days, being tempted by the **devil**. And He ate nothing during those days; and when they had ended, He became hungry.”

The Greek word “*diabovloß*”, means “slanderer” the word appears 32 times in Scripture. It means “one who trips up through malicious falsehood.” (Sarles)

4. The Evil One

John 17:15

“I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from **the evil one**.”

The term addresses a person, not just the principle of evil. However, Satan is not evil personified.

5. The Destroyer

Revelation 9:11, “They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is **Abaddon**, and in the Greek he has the name **Apollyon**.”

Satan destroys what he can and who he can. Satan’s plan is to destroy as much as he is allowed. It is not certain that he believes that he can pull off destroying God’s plan. He may only be trying to pull down with him as much of creation as he can knowing that he is bound to lose.

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6. The Great Dragon

Revelation 12:3, “And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, **a great red dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads *were* seven diadems.”

Satan appeared as a dragon in John’s vision in Revelation.

7. The Old Serpent

Revelation 12:9, “And the great dragon was thrown down, **the serpent of old** who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”

“The serpent of old” (NASB) is identified as Satan, as the devil himself. He is called “old” because he has been around since before the fall of man, and he is called a serpent because he is deceitful.

B. From his attributes

1. Murderer (John 8:44)

Satan cannot produce life, he can only take it away. Satan’s plan is to destroy as many as he is allowed to. That he is a murderer from “the beginning” probably refers to his fall some time after the creation of the material universe, “the beginning,” but before the fall of man.

2. Liar (John 8:44)

Satan is a liar. His nature has corrupted to the point that whatever he speaks is a lie or contains lies in it.

3. Sinful

Unlike man, Satan did not have someone tempt him into sin. On the contrary, Satan only knew the greatness and goodness of God and His creation when he decided to sin against God. Satan was and is the original sinner, as such he has been sinning longer than any body else. Satan sinned in spite of all the good that he had been revealed, which included his own personal creation by God. God created Satan as the most beautiful and perfect creature and probably gave him the greatest rank in creation. If that were not enough, Satan even had intimate fellowship with God.