

## SATAN – 2 JULY

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This week we will spend a few hours looking at some aspects of the Satan. This nefarious character is also known as Lucifer, the devil, Prince of Darkness, Beelzebub, Lord of Hell, the Evil One, to name but a few. It is commonly accepted, and I hope no big surprise, that the characterization of Satan has grown through time. One but needs to compare the Old Testament with the New to see this growth.

There is probably far too much here to tackle in one session, but let's see!

*(and this is just part of the theology of Satan!)*

### **Setting the Mood**

Speaking of Satan's growth, a good place to start is the last, and most complete statement on Satan's nature, to be found in Revelation 12:1–9.

- Read that passage.

Now it is very important for us not to assume that every other biblical author had read Revelation (or the Great Controversy). We have access to knowledge and understanding that other biblical authors did not.

Basically, John's Revelation builds on many traditions, images and tales from the Bible. He weaves them together to create a narrative that Adventists have come to call the great controversy. It is useful to look at what John is working with to build his narrative, to better understand what he is doing. So let's try to look at that.

As you read through the rest of this, try to think about how John the Revelator is weaving these threads together. What is he constructing and what is he destroying, what is he joining and what is he splitting, what is he loosing and what is he binding?

### **(The) Satan in the Old Testament**

English translations struggle (or simply fail) to translate and differentiate between the Hebrew forms of *satan* (an adversary/obstacle), *hassatan* (the adversary/obstacle), and *satan* (Satan). Note that the first and last are identical in Hebrew (but not in meaning).

Read these passages that might refer to the satan/Satan in the Old Testament. If can't find Old Nick, you might want to check something like the [Young's Literal Translation](#) (or the Hebrew :D)

- Num 22:22–32
- Zech 3:1–7
- Psalm 109:6–9
- 1 Chr 21:1 // 1 Sam 24:1
- Job 1–2
- 1 Kgs 5:4
- 1 Kgs 11:14–25

### **Sons of God in the Old Testament**

Job 1:6 associates Satan/the satan with the 'Sons of God' (often translated with other descriptive phrases like 'heavenly beings', 'angels of God' or simply 'gods').

Read these passages about the sons of God

- Gen 6:1-4
- Deut 32:8-43 (*make sure you also read the NRSV and look at the footnotes in that version*)
- Psalm 82

### **That Ancient Snake and the Sea**

Revelation 12 hinted at another place we can find Satan in the Old Testament, with the moniker 'that ancient snake'. I'm sure almost everyone reading this immediately thought of the serpent that tempts the first humans, but there is a more ancient snake than that. This is a likely candidate for John's ancient snake or his dragon.

Read these passages:

- Gen 1:1-2, 9-10, 20-23
- Psalm 74:13-14
- Isaiah 27:1

Now our final bit, returning to Revelation, what role does the sea play in the great controversy? What aspect of God's victory could John be highlighting?

- Revelation 4:5-6
- Revelation 15:2
- Revelation 20:13
- Revelation 21:1