

Introducing: Satan

1. Talmud, Rosh HaShanah 16a-b

Why do we blow *tekiah* and *teruah* when we are sitting and when we are standing? To confuse Satan.

2. John Milton, Paradise Lost, Book 1 (with modernized spellings)

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime, / said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
that we must change for Heaven, this mournful gloom / for that celestial light? Be it so, since he
who now is sovereign can dispose and bid / what shall be right: farthest from him is best.
Whom reason has equaled, force has made supreme / above his equals.

3. Talmud, Bava Batra 16a

He is the Satan, he is the *malach hamavet*, he is the *yetzer hara*.

Three Stories: King David, Job, and Joshua the High Priest

4. Samuel II 20:1-2, 24:1-4, 24:10

And to that place was summoned a wicked man, and his name was Sheva ben Bichri, of Benjamin. And he blew a shofar and he declared, "We have no portion in David, and no lot in the son of Jesse. Each to his own tent, Israel!" And all Israel ascended from behind David, to follow Sheva ben Bichri. And the Judeans clung to their king, from the Jordan River to Jerusalem...

And Gd's anger continued to burn against Israel, and He persuaded David against them, saying, "Go, count Israel and Judea." And the king said to Yoav, the general with him, "Travel now among all of the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Be'er Sheva, and count the nation, and I will know the census of the nation." And Yoav said to the king, "May Hashem your Gd double the nation repeatedly, a hundredfold, and may my master the king see it! Why does my master the king want this?!" But the king's word was strong to Yoav and to the military officers, and Yoav and the military officers departed from before the king, to count the nation, Israel...

And David's heart struck him after this, [after] counting the nation. And David said to Gd, "I have sinned greatly in my deeds. Now, Gd, please remove the sin of Your servant, for I have been very foolish."

5. Chronicles I 21:1

And a Satan arose upon Israel, and he persuaded David to count Israel.

6. Samuel I 11:8, 15:4

And he counted them with shards...

And Saul summoned the nation, and he counted them with sheep ...

7. Talmud, Berachot 62b

I am going to cause you to sin in something which even schoolchildren know!

8. Rabbi Meir Leibush (Malbim, 19th century Eastern Europe), Commentary to Chronicles I 21:1

When [King David] saw that they had abandoned him, following Sheva ben Bichri, he no longer trusted them to gather at his command in a time of war. He wished to count them and to record the names of the warriors in the record books, so that each would be bound to enter the army in a time of war. This was the [deceptive] persuasion and urging [of Satan], for Israel truly were whole with him.

9. Job 1:6-12

The day came when the "sons of Gd" came to stand before Gd, and the Satan also arrived among them. And Gd said to the Satan: Where are you coming from? And the Satan answered Gd, saying, "From traveling over the earth and walking in it." And Gd said to the Satan: Have you considered My servant Job? There is none like him

in the land, a simple and upright man, one who reveres Gd and turns away from evil! And the Satan answered Gd, saying, "Does Job revere Gd for nothing? Have You not protected him and his house, and all that he has everywhere? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his property has spread in the land. But send forth Your hand, and touch all that he has, and he will 'bless' You to Your face." And Gd said to the Satan: Behold, all that he owns is in your hand, but do not send forth your hand against him. And the Satan departed from before Gd.

10. Prof. Amos Chacham (20th century Israel), Daat Mikra Commentary to Job 1:7

Satan did not name a particular place from which he had come. Apparently, he meant to say, "I have not come to inform of a particular sin performed in one place; rather, the whole land is filled with sin, for there are no righteous people on earth."...

11. Zechariah 3:1-4

And he showed me Joshua, the High Priest, standing before a *malach* of Gd, and the Satan stood on his right to obstruct him. And Gd said to the Satan, "Gd rebukes you, Satan, and Gd rebukes you, the One who has chosen Jerusalem! Is this not a brand rescued from the flames?" And Joshua was clothed in filthy clothing, and standing before the *malach*. And [Gd] declared to those standing before Him, "Remove the filthy clothing from him!" And He told him, "Behold, I have removed your sin from you, and clothed you in [fresh] clothing."

Satan's Role

12. Talmud, Chagigah 15a

A small [Heavenly] voice called out, "Return, wayward children – except for *Acher!*" He said, "Since I am chased away from that world, I shall go enjoy this world."

13. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (12th century Egypt), Guide of the Perplexed 3:22

It did not say, "And the 'sons of Gd' and the Satan came to stand before Gd," which would have indicated that all were in one relationship, as equals. Rather, it said, "And the 'sons of Gd' came to stand before Gd, and the Satan also arrived among them." Language like this is stated only regarding someone who was not intended or invited personally. When the intended parties came, he mixed into the group as well.

14. Talmud, Sanhedrin 38b

Rav Yehudah said, citing Rav: When Gd wished to create Man, He created a group of ministering *malachim* and said, "Do you wish for us to make Man in our image?" They said, "Master of the Universe, what are his deeds?" He replied, "Such and such." They said, "Master of the Universe, 'What is Man that You remember him, etc.?' He extended His finger among them and burned them. The same happened with a second set. The third set said before Him: Master of the Universe, what good did the first accomplish with what they said? The entire world is Yours, do whatever You want with Your world. When the generation of the Flood and the generation of the Dispersion came, whose acts were corrupt, they said before Gd: Master of the Universe, didn't the earlier groups speak correctly before You? He responded: "Until old age I am He, and until old age I will be patient, etc. (Isaiah 46)"

15. Midrash, Bereishit Rabbah 8:5

Rabbi Simon said: When Gd came to create Adam, the ministering *malachim* formed groups, some saying he should not be created and some saying he should be created... Kindness said he should be created for he performs kindnesses, and Truth said he should not be created because he is entirely of lies, Justice said he should be created for he performs acts of justice, Shalom said he should not be created because he is entirely of quarrels. What did Gd do? He took Truth and cast it to the ground, as it is written, 'And You cast truth to earth.'

16. Rituals Blessing Rosh Chodesh; Shofar on the 29th of Elul; The Chazan's Plea; The Scapegoat